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Decentralization of Local Government and Rural Development in Rivers State, Nigeria

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Abstract

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Eddy B. Kaka

MS, DePaul University, 2006

BA, DePaul University, 2004

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Rural communities in Rivers State, Nigeria are fraught with underdevelopment crises despite the accrual of wealth from oil and gas. Community Development Committees (CDCs) are established by the Rivers State government in each town and village to facilitate community development. However, the CDCs have failed to generate substantive development in rural communities. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the perceptions of local stakeholders as to the factors that have contributed to this policy failure. Benet's theory of polarities of democracy was used in this study. Twenty-two participants in the Khana region of Rivers State were interviewed regarding why the CDCs have failed to promote rural development in the Khana Local Government Area in Rivers State, Nigeria. Saldana's method of coding and content analysis were used for data analysis. The results from the analysis revealed that CDCs protected personal and political interests of the elites, excluded the voice of the local citizens, lacked representation from the minority, and CDC officials mismanaged funds and resources. To improve the lives of the rural people in Rivers State, Nigeria, it was recommended that CDCs become more inclusive. Also, CDC leaders need to work closely with all local stakeholders so that each stakeholder and not just the elites of the community will benefit from CDC policies or programs. Implementation of these recommendations might bring about more social justice and equity in the local communities served by CDCs. They might also help to promote reasonable distribution of government wealth through the provision of viable projects in the rural communities in Rivers State, Nigeria.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Rivers State, Nigeria has accrued wealth from oil and gas revenues, but the problem of underdevelopment persists. Residents in rural areas of Rivers State, Nigeria have accused the federal government of providing unfair distribution of resources because the government only developed infrastructures and provided basic amenities in the urban areas (Afinotan & Ojakorotu, 2009; Osaghae, 1995). The unequal distribution of government services became a problem because the needs of the rural areas were not being addressed. This study was conducted to examine the public policies in Rivers State, specifically redistributive policies. Findings from the study might be used to develop public policies that could help increase rural development and improve the lives of individuals in rural areas in Rivers State, Nigeria.

In this chapter, I discuss the context and background for the study. I also state the purpose of the study and the research question and present the conceptual framework about decentralization policy. Finally, I discuss the significance of the study.

Background of the Study

People living in rural areas in Rivers State, Nigeria have accused the government of prioritizing the needs of the urban areas while neglecting the needs of the rural areas. One way to provide services that are more equitable to individuals living in rural and urban areas is through decentralization. Ink and Dean (1970) showed that decentralization was a process that enhanced participation in government at the grassroots level. Community Development Committees (CDCs) were established by the Rivers State government in each town and village to facilitate community development. CDCs should

have the freedom and authority to make decisions concerning developmental projects in their domains without outside influence. Bilouseac (2010) conceptualized decentralization as the delegation of authority to others at the lower levels in a political administrative spectrum. Bilouseac maintained that the main objective of decentralization was to reinvent the administrative branch of government and transform it into performance-based branch of the government. Bilouseac further argued that decentralization was a transformation that enabled the government to provide the basic amenities to the rural people. Decentralization might provide avenues for the government to address the needs of individuals living in the rural community.

Decentralization is an ongoing phenomenon for development in third world countries as a result of globalization. Globalization refers to an increasing interaction across national boundaries that affect many aspects of life: economic, social, cultural and political (Scherer & Palazzo, 2008). Bardhan (2002) noted that as many countries aim for globalization, decentralization offers a way to have effective and efficient governance as well as adequate economic growth. Conyers (1983) suggested that decentralization should ensure the adequate planning and management of rural development projects. Bardhan (2002) postulated that the logic behind decentralization was about weakening the central government authority or local groups assuming power over the government authority. To Bardhan, decentralization was essentially about balancing participation and representation to enhance development, which was a focal point for this research. Decentralization is one of the ways to improve the performance of the government in addressing the needs of the nation, especially in rural communities.

The failure of development at the rural level may be explained by the multiplication of government agencies saddled with similar or the same duties (Ayo, 1984). In Rivers State, the functions of organizations like the Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA), Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) intertwine with the responsibilities of local government in terms of community development. Akpan (1990) and Abegunde (2009) supported a decentralization policy that establishes multiple layers of local governments because lack of contemporary structures impede development in the rural areas. Hence, these authors argued that it was imperative to organize community groups as think-tanks for community development. This multitier concept formed the basis for the formation of CDCs to promote collaboration and cooperation of citizens and government on rural development.

The government should be the primary institution to address the needs of the community. Crook (2003) posited that government response to the needs of the rural people was commonly associated with political patronage. Alasah (2011) also postulated that corruption, coupled with a lack of modalities for translating plans into action, were responsible for community underdevelopment and not necessarily lack of citizen participation. Jutting (2005) claimed that there was no clear relationship between decentralization and reduction of poverty, but the failure of the state to provide enough financial support to local government was the bane of rural development. Jutting suggested that the activity of the Rivers State government should be monitored by the legislative branch of the government to ensure checks and balances. In the case of the

Rivers State, there should be an examination of what the government has done in response to development situations in the rural communities in the state.

The problems of rural communities need to be solved through the cooperation of the community and the government. According to Nwinee (2009), the problems of rural communities were complex, leading to past efforts of both government and the communities failing to promote rural development. Houghton and Blume (2011) argued that the original purpose of community empowerment programs was to encourage collaboration between government (through its agencies) and the communities to engender rural development. However, the lack of cooperation between the communities and these government agencies weakened this original purpose. In Rivers State, for example, government agencies such as RSSDA, OMPADEC, and NDDC that were meant to work with communities to promote rural development were less effective because of a lack of such collaboration (Nwinee, 2009).

There are various studies on rural community development initiatives and strategies in Nigeria. The private-public programs, such as the CDC, reportedly built as a partnership between the community and local government in Rivers State of Nigeria, have failed to increase rural development (Nwinee, 2009). In this study, I explored the reasons why the CDCs have failed. There was a need to understand why the CDC failed to promote rural development in Khana Local Government Area in Rivers State, Nigeria, which I also explored through this study.

Problem Statement

Rural communities in Rivers State, Nigeria are fraught with underdevelopment crises despite the accrual of wealth from oil and gas (Osaghae, 1995). As a result, people are hurting in various ways because of lack of basic community services, such as schools, health care facilities, roads, portable water, markets, and civic or recreational centers. To address these perennial problems, the Rivers State government introduced participative governance through the establishment of CDCs (CDC, 2012). The CDCs were created to bring about rural community development. The committees were institutionalized in all towns and villages as the driving force for rural development. The CDCs serve as an interface between the government and community in the choices, decision making, planning, execution, and analysis of their own development tasks (CDC, 2012; Fung, 2002; Nwinee, 2009). It was important to determine if the CDCs were effectively performing these statutory functions or if there were certain problems hindering its performance.

I investigated why the CDCs failed to promote rural development in Khana Local Government Area in Rivers State, Nigeria. The Khana Local Government Area was one of the 24 local government areas in Rivers State, Nigeria. I chose the Khana Local Government Area for this research primarily for data collection purposes. It was manageable and cost effective, and more importantly, the Khana Local Government Area was diverse in nature, would not compromise my safety, and language would not pose a problem because the residents predominately speak English.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural development in the Khana Local Government Area have failed. I interviewed and analyzed the experience of 22 participants comprising of community leaders and institutional reform advocates about their views of CDCs in the Khana Local Government Area. In addition, I conducted document analysis. A clear understanding of their views helped me to address the crucial question of whether any stakeholders, including the government, had an adverse role in shaping the operations and outcomes of the CDC in the Khana Local Government Area.

Research Question

The main research question the study addressed was the following: What are the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed?

Theoretical Framework

The purpose of this study was to examine the failure of CDCs in Rivers State, Nigeria. In the process, I explored the decentralization policy and rural development in Rivers State, Nigeria that gave birth to CDCs as the solution to rural underdevelopment. Because the CDCs were a modern vehicle for rural development and change, I examined it through the lens of Benet's (2006, 2012, 2013) polarities of democracy theory. Benet (2006) presented this theory as a guide for achieving sustainable social change efforts.

Decentralization was one of the concepts related to the polarity of participation and representation within polarities of democracy theory. Through decentralization,

members of the community, who knew the community best, would have a voice and ownership in the policies and opportunities in their community. Ink and Dean (1970) stated that the concept of decentralization entailed "placing responsibility for program operations and decisions at the level closest to the public consistent with effective and responsible performance" (p. 61). The dilemma associated with transferring statutory power from local governments to CDCs to promote accountability and effective program management might go unrecognized. Therefore, Ink and Dean's explanation of the concept of decentralization fit into and accentuated Benet's (2006, 2012, 2013) polarities of democracy theory, which drew on Johnson's (1996) work on polarity management.

The polarities of democracy was the main theoretical framework supporting the current study. This theory enabled the analysis and examination of participative governance with the different elements of polarities of democracy. Under polarities of democracy theory, 10 elements were categorized into five polarity pairs. These included freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). In this theory, each element had positive and negative aspects, and the objective was to manage the polarities successfully so that the positive elements were maximized while the negative elements were minimized (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). This theory could assist the social economy toward significant changes. This theory of democracy was the most appropriate for understanding social change and was considered a unifying theory because it accounted for all elements linked to democracy. According to the polarities of democracy theory, democracy was a solution to the problem of oppression experienced

across historical periods (Benet, 2013). To advance democracy, these 10 elements must be successfully managed as five sets of interrelated polarities (Benet, 2013).

Nature of the Study

The nature of the study was a qualitative case study. A case study is primarily used to explore issues and answer questions through an inductive process. According to Creswell (2009), it is a research design where the researcher explores one or more individual events comprehensively. I analyzed the patterns and themes from interviews and relevant documents to draw conclusions and make recommendations about CDCs in Khana, Rivers State, Nigeria. Yin (2003) affirmed that a case study was appropriate for a study that tended to answer "how" and "why" questions. Yin (2009) also contended that the case study gives room for observation of "holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life event" (p.4). Thus positioned, a case study was the most relevant method to explore decentralization of local government and rural development in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The data collection method for this design entailed interviews of local government officials, community leaders, and institutional reforms advocates. I also conducted a review of current and archival documents from the Rivers State Ministry of Information such as the legislative acts that established CDCs; the operations of local and international nongovernmental organizations in local communities; the Nigerian Constitution; local government acts; and government agencies' annual reports, strategic plans, budgets, memos, and directives responsible for sustainable development in rural

areas. The documents reviewed were auxiliary-supplementary materials for background information only.

Definitions

Community development: A process where community members come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems (Frank & Smith, 1999).

Community Development Committee (CDC): A CDC that was aimed to bring about rural community development. The CDCs were institutionalized in all towns and villages and served as the interface between the government and community in terms of rural development (CDC, 2012).

Decentralization: The placing of responsibility of the operations and decisions of a program closest to the public, which is consistent with effective and responsible performance (Ink & Dean, 1970).

Development: Development is a process of structural societal change (Thomas, 2004).

Assumptions

There were several assumptions in this study. The first assumption was that the participants were knowledgeable in CDC efforts to improve rural development in Khana. Another assumption was that participants would answer truthfully during the interviews. It was also assumed that the findings of this study could be representative of the population, which was the community in the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

Theoretically, it was assumed that the findings from the study would lead to suggestions on how public policies may help improve rural development in the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. Again, I assumed that conducting interviews and reviewing data from individuals who represented various perspectives and positions on the topic, such as community leaders and institutional reform advocates, would help me understand why CDC was not working.

Methodologically, it was assumed that a qualitative case study would be the most appropriate research design and methodology for the study. It was also assumed that the interview method was the best way to gather data from the participants. Moreover, it was assumed that each participant would interpret the questions in the same manner based on the terms, definitions, and descriptions located in the interview questions.

Scope and Delimitations

I explored the perceptions of local government officials, community leaders, and institutional reform advocates about the failure of CDCs. The subjects in this study included individuals who have knowledge about CDCs. The study targeted the chairmen of the local government areas, nine representatives from the CDC, and 10 representatives from the institutional reform advocate groups as the participants. I examined and triangulated archival data and official records about operations of local and international nongovernmental organizations in local communities; the Nigerian Constitution; local government acts; and government agencies' annual reports, strategic plans, budgets, memos, and directives that were responsible for sustainable development in rural areas.

This research was delimited to an exploration of CDCs in Rivers State, Nigeria. The next delimitation was that only various leaders in the Khana region were included in the study. The various leaders were the chairmen of the local government areas, the chairmen of CDCs and their secretaries, and the leaders of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the Ogoni Solidarity Forum. The final delimitation of the study was that I focused only on why CDCs failed to promote rural development in the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

Limitations

The chosen methodology for the study presented two limitations. First, one criticism of the case study design is the difficulty in delineating the limitations of the study, resulting in a study that is too broad (Baxter & Jack, 2008). I addressed this by limiting the context of the phenomenon, which was the failure of the CDC. Similarly, it was acknowledged that political, social, and economic conditions varied from area to area. The variations were recognized and discussed in the interpretation of the results.

The second limitation was that while I collected data from a sample that represented various perspectives on the issue of the CDC's failure, this sample might not represent all the views relevant to the topic. This sample accounted for the views of the local government officials and CDC members but did not include the people who comprised the population of the Khana Local Government Area. In addition, while I recruited participants from various sectors, sampling was conducted using a purposive sampling and criterion sampling.

Limitations are perceived as weaknesses in research (Creswell, 2009). The unavailability of participants could have hindered data collection needed for the study. While participants were expected to answer truthfully, the results were based on their experiences, which could be biased. The study was also limited to the various leaders in the town if these various leaders agreed to participate in the study and answered the interview questions to the best of their knowledge.

Another limitation was that 22 participants were recruited for the study. Silverman (2011) stated that 10 participants were a sufficient sample size for qualitative studies that use interviews. While more emphasis could be put on the individual experiences of the leaders, generalizability could not be achieved. The results and interpretation of this study could only be made to a specific group of people or location. In this case, the results were only applicable to the local government in Khana, located in Rivers State, Nigeria. One limitation was that the findings of this study would apply only to the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State in Nigeria.

Significance of the Study

The issue of rural underdevelopment was of paramount concern to those who resided in the rural areas in Rivers State, Nigeria. Residents in rural areas of the state continually accused the government of double standards. They argued that the government developed and provided basic amenities and infrastructures for the urban areas but abandons the rural communities (Nwinee, 2009). In this study, I examined the government policy that established CDCs as an avenue of development in all towns and villages in Rivers State and possible reasons for why they failed in the Khana Local

Government Area.

It was my hope that the results of this study would lead to suggestions on how public policy in Rivers State, and by extension Nigeria, might be shaped to help improve rural development. I used Benet's (2006, 2012, 2013) polarities of democracy theory as a theoretical lens. The theory provided the theoretical framework to help determine why the CDC was not working in the Khana Local Government Area in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The results might lead to improvement in public policies that might better the lives of the rural people in Rivers State, Nigeria. In addition, it was my hope that the results of this case study might benefit government officials, community leaders, and institutional reform groups in the Rivers State and Nigeria. Implementation of the recommendations might bring about more social justice, equity, and promote reasonable distribution of government wealth through the provision of viable projects in the rural communities. These recommendations might help strengthen community-local government relations, diffuse community tensions, lower crime rates in the state, reduce urban migration, and boost local business entrepreneurships and opportunities.

Summary

In Chapter 1, I introduced the problem that I aimed to investigate, which was the failure of CDCs in Rivers State, Nigeria. Previous studies have only investigated rural community development initiatives and strategies in Nigeria. However, there was no research about the relationship of rural development and decentralization in terms of their relationship to participative governance and democracy. This study aimed to contribute

findings that would lead to the improvement of public policies in Rivers State, Nigeria and the improvement of the lives of individuals living in the rural areas.

In the next chapter, the literature supporting the current research is reviewed in greater detail. The review is used to determine the gaps in the literature and formed the basis for the current qualitative case study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

There are various studies on rural community development initiatives and strategies in Nigeria. However, scholars have not examined rural development and decentralization using the theory of polarities of democracy. The underlining factors behind the failure of these private-public programs, such as the CDC, built on mutual relationship between the community and local government in Rivers State, Nigeria, was unknown. It was not known if the lack of information on devolution of power or inefficient management of the polarities of democracy contributed to lack of development in the rural community.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of local stakeholders about the failure of rural development efforts in Khana. I also explored the decentralization policy in Rivers State, Nigeria that created CDCs as the solution to rural development. To provide a foundation for this study, a literature review was conducted on CDCs, community involvement, decentralization, and rural development.

In the literature review, I discuss the framework for the study. I then discuss studies on rural development. After a discussion on literature covering rural development, I examine decentralization and its role in rural development in general, covering topics such as the goals of decentralization, decentralization activities, the benefits of decentralization, as well as the determinant hindrances to the success of decentralization activities. Following this is a discussion on the CDCs in general. Lastly, a section is allotted to the discussion of the conditions in Nigeria, specifically Rivers State, regarding

rural development, decentralization, and the success of its CDCs. I also provide a

summary of the literature review.

Literature Search Strategy

To find source materials for this literature review, I conducted searches through

electronic databases such as Academic Search Complete, Academic Search Elite,

Business Source Complete, Business Source Elite, CINAHL, Health Business Elite,

Political Science Complete, Public Administration Abstracts, SocINDEX, and Urban

Studies Abstracts. Key words used were *community development, community*

development committees, decentralization, decentralization activities, the benefits of

decentralization, and determinants hindrances to the success of decentralization

activities, poverty reduction, and decentralization in Nigeria, and *decentralization in*

Rivers State Nigeria. A majority of the studies used for the literature review have been

published within the last 5 years.

Theoretical Framework: The Polarities of Democracy

In the current study, I used the polarities of democracy theory. The polarities of

democracy theory was developed by Benet (2006, 2012, 2013) to serve as a guide for

social change efforts that could contribute to creating sustainable communities.

According to Benet (2006, 2012, 2013), people all over the world have embraced

democracy and its ability to bring about positive social change and respond to challenges

that are environmental, economic, and militaristic in nature. However, Benet found that

there was no unifying definition of democracy that could be used to guide social change

efforts, thus, he developed the polarities of democracy theory to provide a theoretical framework for positive social change.

To develop the polarities of democracy theory, Benet (2006) used Johnson's (1996) polarity management concepts as the conceptual framework. According to Johnson (1996), sometimes there were solutions to problems, but sometimes there were dilemmas that went on because these consisted of polarities that must be effectively managed. In that case, Johnson argued that when these polarities existed, there were positive and negative aspects to each pole. For Johnson, the objective was to manage the polarities so that the positive aspects of each pole were maximized while the negative aspects are minimized.

Benet (2006, 2012, 2013) posited that the polarities of democracy theory could be used to plan, guide, and evaluate social change efforts. According to Benet, democracy could be a solution to the problem of oppression experienced across historical periods. The theory could be used to determine social change projects' effectiveness in maximizing positive aspects of the elements that made up the model. The 10 elements of polarities of democracy included freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). The 10 elements of democracy were managed as five sets of interrelated polarities: freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). The elements and their pairings were generated through an extensive review and analysis of the literature (Benet 2006, 2012, 2013).

These aligned with Johnson's (1996) polarity management concepts, wherein each

element of the theory had positive and negative aspects. A social economic change was

said to be successful if it could maximize as many possible positive aspects of these

elements and minimize their negative elements (Benet 2006, 2012, 2013).

These pairings were sets of opposites, which could not function well independent

of each other (Johnson, 1996). The two opposites, which laid at the two sides of a

polarity, were interdependent (Johnson, 1996). When trying to solve a problem, one side

could not be chosen while forgetting the other side. There was a need to get the best of

both opposites and avoid the limits of each. Those on the left side represented one

polarity, while those on the ride side represented another. If polarity management was not

done properly, there was a tendency to shift from one polarity to another. As such, it

became impossible to experience to benefits or upsides of both poles at the same time.

The more time spent on one pole, the less would be spent on the other (Johnson, 1996).

The polarities of democracy theory was used by some researchers in their studies.

For example, Strouble (2015) used the polarities of democracy theory to examine the

effects of racism on social capital in African American communities in America. Strouble

explored the role of racial oppression in influencing the development of social capital

among communities made of mostly African Americans. Strouble conducted focus

groups and semistructured interviews with 20 residents from these included communities.

He also gathered data from two majority Black communities in Florida by reviewing

local news reports, voter turnout reports, as well as community health evaluations. The

polarities of democracy model was specifically used to see the relationship between

racism and social capital. Through inductive coding analysis, Strouble found several themes, one being that perceived racial disparity inhibited bridging and linking social capital in the communities included in the study. Another theme was that racism leads to social capital deficiencies as well as a dysfunctional community culture, which made collective issues more difficult to address and correct (Strouble, 2015). Strouble's research was relevant to this study because the polarities of democracy was used as the theoretical framework and the participation and representation pair (as in my study) was a key polarity in his study.

Tobor (2014) conducted another study that used the theory to evaluate the effects of a social change program, particularly the amnesty program within a community. Tobor used the theory to determine what aspects of the Urhobo culture might improve the amnesty program within the community and stop Urhobo ex-militants from committing violence again. The study was ethnographic, and Benet's polarities of democracy theory served as the theoretical framework. Gathering data from 20 Urhobo ex-militants, Tobor assessed what factors could prevent them from returning to violence. Findings showed that specific factors of the Urhobo culture, such as communal obligations, respect for the elderly, and commitment to social justice and equality could lead to a better amnesty program and violence prevention (Tobor, 2014). Tobor's research was relevant to this study because both were conducted in the same Niger Delta region in Nigeria, and these both used the polarities of democracy.

Because CDC was a modern vehicle for rural development and change, I examined this study through the theoretical lens of Benet's polarities of democracy

theory. This enabled the analysis and examination of CDCs, focusing on the elements of the polarities of democracy theory. I explored the decentralization process in Rivers State, Nigeria and determined the extent to which the polarities of democracy elements were being managed in ways that contributed to or detracted from the ability of the CDC to promote rural development in the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

Community Involvement in Development Programs

Positive Role of Community Development

Community involvement has become a foundation for each developing job in establishing nations (Johnson & Issah, 2011; Norman & Massoi, 2010). The principle of community involvement in development became the typical currency of exchange in development discourse in the 1970s, and since then, literature on the topic has expanded (Banks, Butcher, Orton, & Robertson, 2013; Wu, 2014). However, the purposes and outcomes of much involvement in practice have been questioned or discarded even though it has a role to play in building and developing nations (Ferguson & Dickens, 2011; Warburton, 2013).

Community involvement plays a role in the development of a nation and has been defined as actions of community playing a main role in the discourse of rural development specialists and policy makers (Speer & Vasquez, 2013; Torgerson & Edwards, 2012). It also refers to the participation of the community, especially the disadvantaged—such as women, children, seniors, handicapped, and the impoverished— in the choices or decision making, planning, execution, and analysis of their own

development tasks (Fung, 2002). Community involvement includes the recipients

influencing the instructions and the execution of a task instead of waiting to get their

share of development benefits and advantages (Padmavathy & Poyyamoli, 2011). The

recipients engage to improve their well-being in regard to earnings, individual

development, self-reliance, or various other standards of living (Padmavathy &

Poyyamoli, 2011). What was at first an extreme review of development has turned into a

staple for development tradition (Dzinavatonga, 2008). The incorporation of the

community residents in development tasks has been something that virtually every

company discussed. Companies have recognized that the top-down strategy to

development had significant repercussions in job sustainability. For that reason, this new

method of community involvement in development has been deemed a remedy for the

sustainability of jobs at the community level (Dzinavatonga, 2008).

Community development has been particularly important for developing

countries. According to Nour (2011), in most developing countries, cities have been

undergoing changes demographically, economically, and socially. These changes,

however, were placing a burden on the local authorities, who had limited capacity to offer

housing as well as urban services. Providing enough services that cater to the needs of the

communities cannot be met through investment and technical facilities alone (Nour,

2011). In addition, the necessary funding was not yet accessible or available to meet the

evolving and increasing burden faced by the local authorities as their cities underwent

demographic, economic, and social changes. Nour (2011) claimed that this was where

community involvement can play a role. Active cooperation between the government

users and housing and urban services users, as well as private sector actors, should occur

(Nour, 2011). According to Nour, participation should be justified based on the goals of

the development practices. While participation could serve some higher and broader

political goal, encouraging community involvement should be done in the context of the

programs' goals. Community involvement was expected to be beneficial because it was

associated with empowering the community and participants (Nour, 2011).

Negative Role of Community Development

Even though the discourse on involvement has been accepted as an option for

sustainable development, its implementation has ignited debate. Regardless of its

approval as a beneficial strategy to rural development, numerous tasks were still not

performed or completed because of challenges such as inflation and the absence of

financing (Abbott, 2013; Green & Haines, 2011). Issues have therefore been raised on the

efficiency of community involvement in job sustainability due to the incompatibility of

concept and practice (Abbott, 2013; Green & Haines, 2011).

Despite the vital role played by community involvement, it is rife with some

problems. Swanepoel (1998) noted that one of the troubles associated with this was the

synchronization and integration of varied interests into the task plan and application.

When community involvement includes numerous varied teams, combining their various

demands in the design and execution of the task could to be difficult (Tanga & Maliehe,

2011). An additional dominant weak point of community involvement has been the

community misconception and rhetoric (Dillon & Yong, 2011; Soresi, et al., 2011). Some

critics suggested that there was nothing like the perfect community, as there was no ideal

society with ideal individuals, whose habits were conventional and shared the same values, traditions, and norms. Governments were still unwilling to decentralize and offer choices and decision making power to the community for the community to spearhead its own development. In some contexts, the chance to be involved was used by government authorities to obtain political mileage against opposition parties, thereby rendering any intervention inadequate.

Despite developing politics, it could still be suggested that community involvement has a place in development discourses as a remedy for development interventions. The problem is in the confusing meaning of involvement, which was evasive in development discourse. Considering the intricacy of community involvement, it is required to first understand the terms *community* and *involvement* and to clarify the idea of community involvement. Participatory development can be provided as a continuum of involvement levels from passive involvement, where contributor or government-initiated concepts are advertised, to energetic involvement where the recipients were associated with all phases of a development task (Singh, Lample, Jones, & Earnest, 2014). Community involvement included the stakeholders of a specific development task to be associated with the issue recognition, solution, planning, execution, management, supervision, and examination, in addition to discovering options to their issues and problems (Renaut, Robert, & Tollari, 2012). Involvement will produce a sense of ownership of community members over their own development process and make them participate even more (Renaut et al., 2012).

Nour (2011), although encouraging community involvement as it was critical for development programs to work, said that there were limitations to this participatory theory. Nour highlighted that the administrative procedures and practical interests of the external support agencies could affect the goals and scope of these development programs. Sometimes agencies also want to control the timing and expenditures of development projects, which would tend to limit the beneficiaries' role in the planning process into a one-way consultation approach. This discredited the genuine participation in decision making, which should be the ideal case. Community involvement has also been restricted and could lead to adverse outcomes because of the absence of a workable theory (Nour, 2011). When there is bureaucratic resistance, community involvement approach could crumble. Despite the existence of a will to ensure participation of the community members, the lack of knowledge of required inputs of time, skills, and resources could generate unworkable compromises (Nour, 2011).

<div align="center">**Limitations of Community Development**</div>

There was evidence to show that community development was an extension of the benefactor company's or sponsors' politics on poverty and underdevelopment. In the sub-Saharan Africa community, development has been hindered by dispute, antidevelopmental politics, corruption, and inadequate authorities to enhance benefactor firms' efforts as well as gender variations in neighborhoods (Campbell, 2011). Invention projects in Lesotho fell short, regardless of utilizing the participatory techniques. One significant reason was that the task had no clearly stated objectives to guarantee sustainability upon the withdrawal of the contributor's help (Low, 2010). Second,

although women and the handicapped were managed and included in the process, they were not given the key roles of initiators or empowered to take on bigger roles with decision-making capabilities (Tanga & Maliehe, 2011).

Community development has been jeopardized by development sponsors, particularly the representatives from the developed countries, who brought with them alternative methods of engagement in job application in the Sangwe communal lands in Zimbabwe (Dzinavatonga, 2008). In Africa as a whole, poverty reduction policies and development strategies tended to be affected by the theories of development used in other parts of the world. Therefore, modernistic policies and strategies were top-down, with disregard of the natives' voices. African development was considered as the responsibility of the metropolitan states, and as such, help came in packaged forms, based on the ideas and perceptions of economically powerful states (Matunhu, 2011). Beneficiaries of the development were those belonging to a minority or marginalized group (Matunhu, 2011). Instead of true development, help from the metropolitan states made Africa lose its right to determine its way to development. There was a need for the African communities to become part of the solution to the continent's underdevelopment. Consideration should, therefore, be given to the African renaissance theory, which viewed Africans to be both the problem and solution to their development, as a developmental model (Matunhu, 2011).

This section revealed the argument over the importance of community involvement in development tasks. Cases have shown that community development without involvement from the community members would not work. There was no one

developmental model pertinent in all contexts (Dzinavatonga, 2008; Matunhu, 2011). The culture, the nuances, and the voices of the community members needed to be considered. Despite overarching objections, community development stood as an excellent possibility to be among the methods that could spearhead sustainable development in establishing countries.

<center>**Rural Development**</center>

To achieve the purpose of the study, it was important to understand what rural development entailed and what the literature said about it. Rural development was a procedure intended to enhance the standard of lives of individuals staying in the rural areas. This incorporated procedure included social financial, political, and spiritual development of the poorest areas in the society (Chambers, 2005). Rural development made it possible for rural women, men, and children, to have access to life's standard requirements (Chambers, 2005). According to Lulloff and Wilkinson (2014), a renewed interest in self-help methods as well as a renewed recognition of rural poverty led to more attention being devoted to rural development and planning, the core of which was the formation of rural development strategies.

Planning was indispensable to rural development. Rural development planning was multifaceted as it consisted of spatial or physical development, financial or monetary development planning, farming land use or land use procedures, and natural deposit management such as water, ecological, national forests, and forestry planning. The development of rural areas needed a detailed and holistic method, requiring a multi-sectoral effort and a bigger pool of organizations (Cloke, 2013). It included social,

financial, political, and ecological procedures, congruent to efficient rural planning (Cloke, 2013; Dent, Dubois, & Dalal-Clayton, 2013). Rural planning was, for those reasons, a crucial requirement for sustainable rural growth. Rural planning can be specified as a procedure of developing, with research and analysis, a set of objectives, goals, and approaches in an offered space or location (Rezvani & Mansourian, 2013).

Despite its positive aspects, efficient rural planning dealt with a variety of difficulties (Dent et al, 2013; Scott et al., 2013). For example, efficient rural planning could be a time-consuming procedure, because it was a process whereby the professionals and the community worked together to create a development plan. Resources should also be made use of and accounted for (Cloke, 2013). Aside being a time-consuming procedure, rural planning incorporated different facets to be considered. It involved financial planning, land-use planning, natural deposit planning, ecological planning, and social planning (Frank & Reiss, 2014).

Financial planning was an important component of rural planning (Frank & Reiss, 2014). Although farming continued to play a vital role in rural areas, enhancement in rural economic climates was necessary if diversification of financial tasks was to be undertaken. With the introduction of market based reforms, or reforms toward liberalization and open economy, financial pressure on rural areas was anticipated to enhance rural community's past capacity in farming manufacturing, poverty alleviation and food safety recognition (Frank & Reiss, 2014). As such, financial planning was a necessary component, as it included tackling how to handle and allocate financial resources like land, farming tools, and raw materials, as well as access to micro finance

and credit to rural community members in a way that will benefit them best (Ardic, Heimann, & Mylenko, 2011). Rural development planning also included land-use planning, which was necessary for the sustainable distribution and use of land resources (Cloke, 2013). Included in land planning were decisions on how to consolidate grazing land, nucleate domestic land for financial service arrangement, develop woodlots, yards and orchards, offer close access to clean, potable water, and accomplish preservation of resources that would best benefit the rural community (Allen et al, 2013; Bates, 2012). Land use planning in the rural areas was also concerned with the needs and abilities for cropping land, grazing land, woodlands for wood, charcoal, medications, town sitting of houses and community services, ancestral land, and water resources where available (Allen et al., 2013). Villagers had moral obligations to the lands. Community-established and driven land use planning was an essential means to minimize land use disagreements and enhance the efficient ability of agro based rural neighborhoods (OECD, 2001). Usual land use in rural land consisted of farming, communal grazing locations, burial sites, and sometimes, land was allotted for town development.

Rural development planning also included spatial planning. Spatial planning referred to the discussions on how to best handle ecological, social, and financial alternatives and offer a systematic vision for enhancing human negotiation. Vital to spatial planning was spatial information, which needed to be conveniently provided to prepare efficiently (Short, Baker, Carter, Jones, & Jay, 2013). Natural deposit planning or management was an additional vital element in rural development as well. The significant natural deposits in rural areas are water, wildlife, woodlands, and the environment. Rural

areas in Zimbabwe such as Matabelel (specifically Bulilima-mangwe), Mutoko, and

Kariba have had effective ecological plans that have brought to life the Communal Areas

Management Program for Indigenous Resources (CAMPFIRE; Dent et al., 2013). This

has concentrated on the development of neighborhood organizations, particularly in rural

areas for the management and sustainable usage of communal wildlife resources,

allowing areas and households to benefit financially from wildlife in their locations.

Various other planning measures consisted of water planning that enabled equal chance

to all to gain access to water which, in turn, has promoted social development,

accomplished integration between different sectors such as farming, mining, domestic use

and ecological requirements, and engendered sustainability so that future generations

could enjoy the resource along with saving water for effective use (Dent et al., 2013).

 The function of ecological planning was to advertise and help with the integration

of regional techniques and measures for the security and management of the ecology into

plans and programs for social and financial development (Zhang, Luo, & Wang, 2014).

District Environmental Action Plans were needed to determine the ecological and

development concerns and issues. These action plans were equally needed to determine

chances, concerns, and develop strategies to handle the problems and issues of the

location (Oosterveer & Van Vliet, 2010). In addition, efficient planning was based upon

participatory methods that included participatory rural appraisal (Cornwall & Pratt, 2011;

Ricaurte, Wantzen, Agudelo, Betancourt, & Jokela, 2013).

 Lastly, social planning was an additional method that looked to foremost put

location safeguard, civil services, community cohesion, and various other aspects of

development that were indicated to benefit the community like wellness and education, to promote human and social development (Ramanathan & Dutta, 2013). Social planning included many benefactor firms that, particularly in Zimbabwe, have played a significant function in rural development. Chivaura and Mararike (1998) asserted that social development was the primary step to human development. Social development was a countrywide concern in Zimbabwe, as the government had developed a wellness policy and many academic programs that looked to address the imbalances that existed in these sectors in between the metropolitan and the rural areas. Social planning was, therefore, important as it led the way for the development of the community members, primarily the rural individuals who were more disadvantaged compared to the urban individuals.

All these facets and types of planning were indispensable for sustainable rural development. Although it could be complicated procedure, planning was critical because it enabled development firms to comprehend the complicated nature of rural areas, which were defined by reduced literacy levels, cultural rigidity, large spread of lack of knowledge, poverty, and inequality (Cloke, 2013). Rural development suggested better quality of life, in addition to higher social improvement (OECD, 2001). To establish rural areas, therefore, there was a need for the community to recognize their capacity. Rural areas were not to be viewed as issues; they presented financial chances to contribute favorably to competitiveness, development of micro companies, particular niche markets, and the enhancing function of female business owners. A thorough rural development task that made use of participatory techniques, was said to incorporate native

understanding systems, existing possessions, neighborhood companies, and governance structures (Mararike, 2011).

Examples of Community Development in Rural Areas

There are different examples of successful community development programs in rural areas (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). This section shows the importance of effective rural planning. Examining successful community development projects could serve as a background to examining the failure of CDCs in Rivers State, Nigeria, which was the purpose of this research.

An effective rural development task, which made use of a participatory method, can be drawn from the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)/German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) Chivi Food Security Project (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). The project was designed to resolve the localized persistent food insecurity experienced in semiarid locations of Zimbabwe. The project's goal was to ensure the neighborhoods become self-dependent with their food supplies (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). The project was also designed to determine the causes of food insecurity and resolve them to improve and maintain food security at the grassroots level. Food security at the grassroots level was considered a cornerstone of sustainable rural development. In particular, agricultural extension was perceived to be catalytic and crucial for rural development (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). Ultimately, the project's success was attributed to it having a participatory model. The project was carried out within the structure of participatory research and extension methods, where farmers arranged themselves into teams of 70 to 80. The groups take part in project identification,

planning, as well as improving action plans. The goal of such setup was to make the farmers feel empowered. It was also designed to make the farmers more well verse in using and adopting modern technologies (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002).

Traditionally, farmers toil using only basic technologies (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). However, under the project, farmers were given the opportunity to get to know and use modern dirt and water preservation technologies, such as infiltration pits as well as contour ridges that can retain water on the land, called the fanyajuu. Apart from being exposed to new technologies, they were also given the opportunities to use new practices and strategies. If they encounter difficulties with these novel methods, they could easily go over the issues themselves and recommend possible options themselves because they meet to discuss these (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). They were also constantly updating each other during field days, evaluation meetings, field visits, and competitions. There were even look-and-learn tours if the farmers had extra funds to spare. To exemplify how participatory the project was, the project enabled farmers only to use technologies based on their preferences (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). Farmers adapt technologies and then test their own adaptations. Farmers were also not forced to adopt whole technologies. They were encouraged to try out bits and pieces of technologies depending on their needs and preferences (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002).

The project's success was demonstrated in various ways (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). Farmers in the Chivi area have tried a wide range of technologies and adopted them. Those living in these semi-arid areas experienced better quality of lives and improved socio-economic conditions. Some poor farmers could even be seen buying their

own cattle. Farmers' voices were also heard through the established local farmer institutions. Farmers' demands for effective institutional capacity building led were heard and implemented (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). It can be said that the success was based generally on its use of participatory techniques, its aim of pushing income demand, and its acknowledgement of neighborhood native understanding. It also revealed that community participation and involvement, as a method is pertinent in concept and practice in developing jobs.

While the Intermediate Technology Development Group (ITDG)/German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) Chivi Food Security Project (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002) was successful, this is not always the case in all contexts. The German Technical Cooperation Coordinated Agricultural and Rural Development GTZ CARD Program carried out another program in Gutu. This program was carried out in Gutu Area, and it highlighted land management and focused on land-use planning and application, crop renovation, livestock development, and agro-forestry (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). Millions of dollars were invested on the program; however, when it was terminated in 1994, it appeared not to have had any influence on the ground. According to informants, there is still no proof of the grazing schemes that were expected to have been developed (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). There can be several reasons why community projects emphasizing on participation can fail. The reasons for the task's failure consist of benefactor pressure and using top-down strategies (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002). Program recognition and execution were both based on top-down methods inclusive of aspects like planning, which were performed in workplaces on the presumption that expatriate

specialists comprehended the regional individuals' issues. In short, the program was influenced by contributor pressure and fell short to include neighborhoods in job recognition, preparation, and energetic involvement throughout execution. The failure of this top-down technique however, does not invalidate the usefulness of participatory methods in development tasks. It just highlighted that all such programs must be managed well to be successful (Hanyani-Mlambo, 2002).

Participatory modeling is a helpful device to guarantee ownership and sustainability of development (Vanclay, 2010). Batanai town found in the Mafungautsi area of main Zimbabwe recommended participatory modeling in their broom turf task (Vanclay, 2010). Brooms contributed to significant family earnings of Batanai community members. Community engagement with discovering and participatory modeling assisted them to acquire a brand-new understanding of the resource and the opportunity for marketing their items. The villagers established shared vision, created a model that enabled them to check out choices, and conceptualized their plans to discover cutting-edge choices under the assistance of Richard Nyirenda (Vanclay, 2010). Therefore, it is clear from the aforementioned case history that community involvement is a vital component for the success of development jobs and assisted the Batanai community to handle the issues of typical home resources.

An additional case history from Vietnam validates the significance of community involvement in development jobs. Vietnam has crucial lessons in involvement, rural development, and poverty relief. In the past, the share of individuals residing in poverty fell from 58 % in 1992 to 37 % in 1998 and 29 % in 2002; rural poverty fell from 45.5 %

in 1998 to 35.6 % in 2002 (Markanday, 2004). The International Fund for Agricultural

Development (IFAD) and the World Bank advocated rural development jobs in Vietnam

that uses a participatory, bottom-up method. The most vital first-generation job, the

Participatory Resources Management Project (PRMP), was made in 1993. The task

looked to make sure that there was equitable admission to all development planning with

the complete involvement of neighborhoods in the province of Tuyen Quang, among the

poorest in the nation. The job presented brand-new strategies to poverty decreasing

strategies, consisting of decentralization and promotions of rural autonomy, to advertise

meals safety, construct management capability at the community level, and present

participatory, demand-driven strategies in establishments offering rural support services.

These tasks have done an excellent task of targeting inadequate individuals, and

decentralization and involvement have empowered rural individuals to determine, plan,

carry out, and examine interventions, providing them a higher stake in development

efforts (Markanday, 2004). Aspects describing the nation's success in decreasing rural

poverty consist of the presence of an environment helpful to rural development, with a

nationwide policy concentrating on poverty decrease and a policy of financial reforms

that has provided amazing development for a significant period. Community involvement

is a requirement for task success (Thwala, 2010). The Jeppe Reef case history for rural

water system job used the participator technique and was successful in offering water for

more than 90% of the Mpumalanga Province in South Africa (Thwala, 2010).

Decentralization

Poverty is a serious problem around the world and decentralization has been cited as a way to alleviate it. Many pro-poor policies have been implemented around the world in an effort to reduce poverty, and decentralization is one such policy. Decentralization is often defined as the distribution of administrative functions or powers of a central government among several local governments (Bardhan, 2012; de Palencia & Pérez-Foguet, 2011). Three forms of decentralization need to take place to ensure that decentralization is successful. Fiscal decentralization is defined as the assignment of responsibilities, including sectoral duties, as well as the assignment of own-source revenues to sub-national governments. Furthermore, the researchers insist that intergovernmental transfers are critical to closing this fiscal gap as well as in alleviating interregional resource disparities (Bardhan, 2012; de Palencia & Pérez-Foguet, 2011). As a result, fiscal decentralization must be definitive because if it is not political and institutional decentralization cannot be successful (Bardhan, 2012; de Palencia & Pérez-Foguet, 2011). The second form of decentralization is institutional or administrative, which involves the redistribution of authority and responsibility for funds among various levels of government. Successful institutional decentralization creates accountability structures. Public accountability can be affected by the two factors of political and institutional decentralization (Bardhan, 2012; de Palencia & Pérez-Foguet, 2011). The third form of decentralization is political decentralization, which is connected to political reform. Although institutional and fiscal decentralization are important, political decentralization is necessary to bring about true decentralization. Moreover, political

decentralization can be difficult and even dangerous to establish in some countries (Bardhan, 2012; de Palencia & Pérez-Foguet, 2011).

Conyers (1983) pointed out that decentralization is an ongoing phenomenon for development in the third world countries because of globalization, collaboration, and cooperation among many international organizations and governments. According to the researcher, decentralization should ensure adequate planning and management of rural development projects. Ink and Dean (1970) showed that decentralization is a process that empowers those at the grassroots level to participate in their own development. In particular, decentralization allows CDCs to make decisions concerning developmental projects in their domains without outside influence. Akpan (1990) supported decentralization policy that establishes multiple layers of local governments because lack of contemporary structures impedes development in the rural areas; hence, it is imperative to organize mutual community groups as think tanks for community development. This multi-tier concept formed the basis for the formation of community development councils to promote collaboration and cooperation of citizens and government on rural development.

Bardhan (2002) outlined the overwhelming benefits of citizen participation in governance through decentralization. Improving community planning capacity as well as citizenship participation through the local government system could lead to a great sense of ownership among community-implemented projects and encourage higher quality community planning, budgeting and project management skills. Bilouseac (2010) conceptualized decentralization as the delegation of authority to others at the lower levels

in a political administrative spectrum. Bilouseac (2010) claimed that the main objective

of decentralization was to reinvent the administrative arm of government and transform it

into performance-based. Bilouseac claimed that decentralization is a transformation that

brings enabling environment for the government to provide the basic amenities to the

rural people.

Decentralization is a process that can differ from region to region (Caldeira et al.,

2014; Faguet, 2014). Furthermore, Johnson (2003) asserted that beliefs about the

potential success of decentralization are rooted in the idea that central state planning

utilizing centrally administered bureaucracies are wholly inadequate and destructive as it

pertains to allocating resources in the country that it serves (Johnson 2003). Three types

of decentralization were discussed throughout the current research, namely fiscal

decentralization, institutional decentralization, and political decentralization. The

following paragraphs described the types of decentralization in detail.

Fiscal decentralization is described as the assignment of responsibilities, including

sectoral functions, as well as the assignment of own-source revenues to subnational

governments (Smoke, 2013). The author further explained that there was a serious

shortage of sub-national own-source revenues when compared to assigned sub-national

expenditure requirements. Smoke (2013) asserted that intergovernmental transfers were

critical to closing this fiscal gap, as well as in alleviating interregional resource

disparities. Therefore, fiscal decentralization must be clearly defined if political and

institutional decentralization without properly defined fiscal decentralization, political,

and institutional decentralization cannot be successful (Smoke, 2013). In addition, poorly

defined roles and resource shortages can disable local governments and subvert incentives for local officials and elected representatives to perform successfully.

Institutional decentralization is defined as the redistribution of authority and responsibility for funds among various levels of government (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). Effective institutional decentralization creates accountability structures (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). The authors explained that public accountability includes at least two different instruments, which are affected by both political and institutional decentralization (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). One approach to reduce the probability of elite-takeover of decentralized programs is to strengthen poor peoples' own organizations within communities and through cross-community networks. However, the more effective and sustained approach is the strengthening of rule of law and of democracy in general, which is not just a matter of local initiative (Von Braun & Grote, 2000).

Political decentralization is associated with political reform. Smoke (2013) asserted that even though institutional and fiscal decentralization are important, political decentralization is needed to bring about true change. It is believed that the concept and implementation of decentralization is essential to poverty reduction because it affords citizens greater access to a community-centered bureaucracy, and, as such, stimulates the entire nation to partake in national development planning (Assibey-Mensah, 2000). Bird and Rodriguez (1999) asserted that local government and citizen involvement in local government could be essential components in improving economic conditions. More specifically, it has been argued that there are three reasons why decentralization could prove effective in the reduction of poverty. Poverty reduction policies require specific

local knowledge, which is the most accessible through a system that is decentralized and

locally accountable (Bird & Rodriguez, 1999). In addition, when we assume that the

people in a society should get what they want instead of what others want them to want;

poverty reduction policies must reflect local variations in preference (Bird & Rodriguez,

1999). With this understanding, decentralization would be positive. However, the positive

potential of decentralization can only be realized through political accountability and the

need to strengthen local delivery capacity (Bird & Rodriguez, 1999).

The use of decentralization as a means to reduce poverty in developing countries

has been at the forefront of poverty alleviation policies since the 1980s (Dreher &

Fischer, 2011; Smith, 2012). The 1980s and 1990s saw a rise in the demise of communist

governments, which in some cases created social and political instability that led to

poverty. In other cases, years of underdevelopment and corruption led to the inability of

poor citizens to have the resources they needed to sustain themselves and build better

communities, such as education and employment (Azila-Gbettor, Harrison, & Tibu, 2014;

Ghani, Iyer, & Mishra, 2012). As a result, people in developing countries were not privy

to some of the wealth that came from technological advances taking place in the

industrialized world (Dreher & Fischer, 2011; Smith, 2012).

The World Bank and the International Monetary Fund wanted to develop a plan

of action that would allow local officials to distribute resources easily to those with the

most pressing need (Marchesi & Sabani, 2012). The organizations felt that

decentralization would be the most effective way of accomplishing this. In some nations,

democratic decentralization brought this type of change. For example, Ahmad,

Devarajan, Khemani, and Shah (2005) wrote in World Bank working paper that in reality,

decentralization is a complicated process wherein there would be occasional reversals

taking place. However, the decision to decentralize is as important as the mechanism

needed to manage the process and cannot be undermined (Ahmad et al., 2005). However,

according to Marchersi and Sabani (2012) the World Bank and other international

financial institutions have found that in some locales, the implementation of a

decentralization project has not been well received. There were many reasons for this and

they were examined later in this discussion. However, one of the main issues involved the

unwillingness of the central government to delegate authority to local officials (Marchesi

& Sabani, 2012).

In another World Bank working paper, Bahl and Martinez-Vazquez (2006)

claimed that lack of local government capacity and commitment could lead to half-

hearted decentralization, which can be worse than a fully centralized system. In many

instances, some programs designed to implement decentralization have been successful.

This success was possible because participants at all levels of government and society

were willing to work to make it possible. In these instances, decentralization proved to be

empowering for local officials and aided in the reduction of poverty because local

officials could provide people with the resources needed (i.e., food, water, and education)

to alleviate poverty (Constantino, et al., 2012; Gomez & Buenaventura, 2012). A recent

IMF working paper by Sow and Razafinmahefa (2015) showed that fiscal

decentralization could improve the efficiency of public service delivery. However, this

can only take place under specific conditions. First, the decentralization process should

take place in adequate political and institutional environments (Sow & Razafinmahefa, 2015). Second, there must be sufficient degree of expenditure decentralization (Sow & Razafinmahefa, 2015). Lastly, the decentralization process can be successful in areas with sufficient decentralization of revenue. Without these conditions, fiscal decentralization could worsen the efficiency of public service delivery instead of improve it. The next section of the review of the literature provided a discussion of the conceptual link between decentralization and poverty reduction.

Conceptual Link between Decentralization and Poverty Reduction

Studies put forward that there was a strong conceptual link between decentralization and poverty reduction. Ayee et al. (2000) described decentralization as a lengthy and complex process of reform that, beginning with constitutional and/or statutory changes at the center, ideally progressively distributed responsibilities, resources, authority, and autonomy from center to periphery. Secondly, local governance obtained when localities were able to effectively manage their public affairs in a way that was accountable to local residents (Ayee et al., 2000).

There seems to be a consensus that decentralization aided in the reduction of poverty because it allowed local governments to distribute the resources for which central governments were normally responsible (Ali Khan, 2013; Eaton, Kaisser, & Smoke, 2011). Local distribution of resources was said to be more effective because local governments had a better understanding of the people who lived in their communities than the central government did. Therefore, by decentralizing the government, local

officials could distribute resources to those who have the greatest needs (Ali Khan, 2013).

Additionally, Khan (2013) indicated that decentralization empowered the citizenry because they have greater access to government officials and resources. In many cases, decentralization has come because of the introduction of a democratic political system in a particular region or country. Democracy should empower citizens to get involved in the political process. Those who are involved in the political process are usually active in pursuing certain issues including poverty (Imai & Sato, 2012; Ward, Wilson, & Spink, 2010). Imai and Sato specifically evaluated the Integrated Rural Development Programmes (IRDP) and Rural Public Works (RPW) using National Sample Survey data and the Election Commission's election data and found that if there is a greater inequality in land holdings, there is also less participation in the program.

The success of decentralization in poverty alleviation depended on whether the disadvantaged groups had the ability to participate in local politics. It was important that the democratic process could enhance the accountability of the government for decentralization to work (Imai & Sato, 2012). Ward et al. (2010) found the same in the context of the countries that were studied, such as Mexico, Brazil, and the United States. Decentralization, democracy, and poverty alleviation went hand in hand (Ward et al., 2010). Moreover, recent studies found the same (Fox & Aranda, 2013; Sepulveda & Martinez-Vazquez, 2011). These studies found that there was a significant relationship between decentralization and poverty reduction because there were greater levels of accountability (Fox & Aranda, 2013; Sepulveda & Martinez-Vazquez, 2011). When

decentralization was implemented into the strategy of a nation, it could allow the citizens

to have access to records detailing the distribution of funds. Local governments were thus

subjected to a greater level of accountability. This resulted in higher standards and the

proper distribution of goods and services (Fox & Aranda, 2013; Sepulveda & Martinez-

Vazquez, 2011).

Caldeira, Foucault, and Rota-Graziosi (2014) and Faguet, (2014) argued that

decentralization reduced poverty because the implementation and the design of transfers

displayed a positive or negative effect on local spending decisions. For example, the

efficient allocation of revenue and expenditure responsibility at various levels of

government was evidence that local government would be dependent upon transfers from

the central government (Caldeira et al., 2014; Faguet, 2014). If decentralization was

implemented, it did not waive the central government's responsibility in the reduction of

poverty; rather, some examination and experimentation must take place to ensure that the

transfer was efficient (Caldeira et al., 2014; Faguet, 2014). Mastery of this transfer would

be essential to ensuring that the local government had sufficient resources to accomplish

goals and that the goals accomplished were in accordance with the goals of the nation

(Caldeira et al., 2014; Faguet, 2014). The relationship between decentralization and

poverty reduction accentuated the importance of transfer design and the desirability of

providing for periodic re-evaluation of that design (Caldeira et al., 2014; Faguet, 2014).

The correlation between decentralization and poverty reduction was dependent

upon how local governments chose to target poverty alleviation (Caldeira et al., 2014;

Faguet, 2014). For instance, local governments could broadly or narrowly define their

poverty reduction strategies. Because there were variations in resources, capacities, needs, costs, and preferences that characterized most nations, some local governments will need financial and technical support that others will not (Caldeira et al., 2014; Faguet, 2014). This issue existed because some local governments had greater direct access to their own fiscal resources, and those who had a tax base could get more revenues, while those who did not, could not (Caldeira et al., 2014; Faguet, 2014). A decentralized poverty strategy, therefore, demanded some degree of equalization related to larger transfers to poorer regions, and not necessarily to poorer people as in the case of fiscal transfers from the central government to localities (Caldeira et al., 2014; Faguet, 2014).

Additionally, Johnson (2003) asserted that various studies concerning the implementation of decentralization have illustrated that the transference of authority could enhance systems of local governance in many ways. For example, the empowerment of local resource users could boost the way local residents administered and used natural resources, thus improving the resource base on which poor people were often disproportionately dependent (Johnson, 2003). Additionally, the relationship between the local government and the local resource users could result in positive outcomes. These positive outcomes included improvements in which government officials cooperate with constituents to provide services and goods that would not be available to them without government help.

Overall, decentralization could aid in the reduction of poverty because it could establish systems of government that were steadfast and accountable to the people that

they served (Johnson, 2003). Such accountability encouraged greater equality as it related

to the distribution of state provided resources, which could then be given to the poor and

other vulnerable groups (Johnson, 2003). In addition, it was argued that democracy

produced lasting mechanisms of accountability, leading to the enhancement of the

distribution of benefits to groups that have been traditionally marginalized by both the

market and the state (Johnson, 2003). In addition, those who were proponents of the

strategy claimed that decentralization has been viewed by some as a mechanism for

encouraging horizontal competition among governments, enhancing economic growth,

and staving off pressures for regional disintegration (Johnson, 2003).

Role of the World Bank and Other IFIs in Decentralization

The World Bank and the IMF have been clear players in efforts to use

decentralization to alleviate poverty. According to the World Bank, over the past 20

years, decentralization has been a key focus in the poverty reduction strategy program

that the World Bank has embarked upon with the assistance of the IMF (Ehrentraut,

2011). The World Bank asserted that there are five underlying principles that encompass

the poverty reduction strategy program (Ehrentraut, 2011). These principles included

country-driven initiatives, which involved broad participation by society and the private

sector through each facet of development. The second principle involves results-oriented

progress that focuses on results that benefit the poor. The third principle included a

partner-oriented plan that incorporated the coordination and participation of development

partners. The fourth principle involved a comprehensive plan that recognized the various

facets of poverty and the scope of reform needed to eradicate poverty. The last principle involved a long-term perspective for poverty alleviation (Ehrentraut, 2011).

The World Bank asserted that decentralization was both a global and regional practice that has been experimented with in locales around the world (Ehrentraut, 2011). The organization further explained that it was committed to ensuring that people living in poverty-stricken regions were provided with the resources needed to live full and productive lives (Ehrentraut, 2011). This meant that the World Bank will work with other international, national, and local organizations to improve the conditions faced by some people. The support comes in terms of both financial and administrative assistance (Ehrentraut, 2011). Enabling nations to enable their citizens was viewed as an important endeavor because it allowed for the rejuvenation of entire countries that may have been destroyed through war or political turmoil. Implementing such programs come with certain barriers. The World Bank recognized that the constraints on any given project include a mixture of national political and economic policies, adverse conditions affecting the area and population served by the project, and institutional weaknesses and rivalries. However, in making concerted efforts to decentralize countries in the world, these organizations could increase the quality of life for people living in these regions (Ehrentraut, 2011).

Barriers to Effective Decentralization as Poverty Alleviation Tool

Although many believed that decentralization ultimately led to a reduction in poverty, there were those who opposed such a policy (Ivanyna & Shah, 2011; Ko & Zhi, 2013). Those who opposed such a policy asserted that many imperfections in the local

provision of services could prevent the realization of benefits from decentralization. For example, local bureaucrats may be poorly trained and thus inefficient in delivering public goods and services (Gatti, 1999). Those opposed to decentralization also argued that the process was complicated and may result in more negative effects than positive effects (Ivanyna & Shah, 2011; Ko & Zhi, 2013).

Additionally, Von Braun and Grote (2000) asserted that other disadvantages associated with decentralization and the impact that it has on the poor exist. For instance, there could be hindrances related to expenditure controls, which were more complex in a decentralized system when compared to a centralized system (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). These complications could lead to the capture of public resources by both the elite and the local leaders. The author also insisted that a strategy that embraced decentralization could lead to the exclusion of the poor and fragment the society for local official (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). Decentralization was also often associated with corruption, stemming from financial and material allocations being distributed to local governments (Von Braun & Grote, 2000).

Furthermore, decentralization has been globally associated with fueling political tensions amongst different nations or ethnic groups living near one another (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). These tensions could arise when there were large disparities between natural resource allocations and income levels (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). When one considered the economies of scale as it related to public goods and services, and the need for synchronized fiscal policy, a centralized government was more prepared to internalize externalities (Von Braun & Grote, 2000).

Von Braun and Grote (2000) conceded that although the successful implementation of decentralization could result in improved responsiveness and efficiency in relation to addressing the needs of the poor, when decentralization was not successful, both political and economic stability were threatened. The authors also stressed that "If decentralization were to raise economic welfare, but combined this with increased poverty, there could theoretically be a call for compensation of the poor. In view of the complexities involved, however, this would seem difficult and farfetched" (Von Braun & Grote, 2000, p. 6). After understanding the conceptual link between decentralization and poverty reduction, it was also important to determine the involvement of the World Bank and other international financial institutions in decentralization programs around the world.

Despite the benefits to poverty alleviation, there were also studies that suggested some oppose decentralization because it can led to corruption. They argued that in some cases, local governments were given the responsibility to distribute funds but instead they kept the funds or distributed them in a fashion that was unfair (Alexeev & Habodaszova, 2012; Lessman & Markwardt, 2010; Matei & Popa, 2010). These studies were instrumental to understanding the barriers to community development in general and in Nigeria, in particular. This was usually the case in regions with insufficient monitoring of resources. Hence, it would be worthwhile to look at this study with the polarity pair of freedom and authority to determine how they affect the CDC. The investigation found that the World Bank and other international financial institutions were active in pursuing decentralization programs. In fact, the World Bank has implemented decentralization

projects in regions around the world. The World Bank and other international financial institutions provided both financial and administrative support for these projects. The World Bank is committed to ensuring that poverty reduction occurs because of decentralization efforts (Alexeev & Habodaszova, 2012; Lessman & Markwardt, 2010; Matei & Popa, 2010).

Crook (2003) posited that government response to the needs of the rural people was commonly associated with political patronage. These corrupt practices negated justice and due process of polarities of democracy. Alasah (2011) postulated that corruptions coupled with lack of modalities for translating plans into action were responsible for community underdevelopment and not necessarily lack of citizen participation as argued by some schools of thought. Moreover, Jutting (2005) claimed that there was no clear relationship between decentralization and reduction of poverty, but the failure of the state to provide enough financial support to local government was the bane for rural development. This suggested that the legislative arm of the government to ensure checks and balances should monitor the activity of the Rivers State government.

An earlier study Ayo (1984) hypothesized that the failure of development at the rural level was caused by multiplication of government agencies saddled with similar or the same duties. The importance of this article to this study cannot be overlooked because it described how the functions of organizations like Rivers State Sustainable Development Agency (RSSDA), Oil Mineral Producing Areas Development Commission (OMPADEC), and Niger Delta Development Commission (NDDC) intertwined with the responsibilities of local government in terms of community development. Therefore, it

was imperative to examine if the freedom of the CDC to choose developmental projects were impeded by the authority.

Decentralization Efforts in Africa

Over the years, many efforts have been made to reduce poverty through decentralization (Ayee et al., 2000). This section of the literature explored the experiences with decentralization that have taken form in regions around the world. The review of such literature would seek to link the concept of decentralization with real world experiences. Of all the developing regions of the world, the continent of Africa has suffered the most with issues of poverty and the social issue that are connected to poverty. Over the years, there have been concerted efforts to reduce poverty in Africa through decentralization (Ayee et al., 2000).

According to Ayee et al. (2000), these efforts have been successful in some countries in Africa, while other countries on the continent have not been able to implement a decentralization plan effectively. Ayee et al. (2000) also asserted that unlike other countries that have had experiences with decentralizations, some of the studies concerning decentralization in Africa were rather limited in their scope. In particular, the author noted the decentralization policies that have been experienced after the democratic upsurge of the 1980s (Ayee et al., 2000). An investigation of the World Bank's decentralization policies found that the decentralization programs in Africa were the least studied, although they made up the largest proportion of the World Bank's decentralization programs. The authors also pointed out that even though there are some reports concerning national decentralization programs in Ghana, Uganda, South Africa,

Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, and Nigeria, there are very few systematic and detailed studies of these countries' experiences with decentralization (Ayee et al., 2000). While the efforts to decentralize regions on the continent of Africa have not been as well documented as in other regions, there was still a great deal of information available concerning decentralization and certain African nations.

Sub-Saharan Africa is composed of 52 nations. In encountering research about decentralization, the nations of sub-Saharan Africa were often grouped together. In some ways, this was problematic because there were very different social and political conditions that existed in the various nations of the sub-Sahara (Ribot, Lund, & Treue, 2010). According to Von Braun and Grote (2000), there have been efforts to decentralize Ghana since reforms took place in 1983. These reforms were developed to institute decentralization at the district level. The councils and committees that compose local government in the country have been instrumental in the plans to decentralize since 1988. However, they were not established until 1999 with elections to the Committees (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). The authors contended that a study of the traditional authorities illustrated that most of the traditional chiefs viewed the concept of having a District Assembly in a positive light (Von Braun & Grote, 2000). The authors also conceded that the programs aimed at decentralizing Ghana have been met with much success, although there have been many problems and deficiencies related to the implementation of the decentralization program. The authors asserted that the process must be monitored carefully for the success to be sustainable.

Decentralization efforts were also present in Uganda. According to Onyach-Olaa (2003), decentralization programs first began in Uganda in 1992-1993. The author asserted that there have been many accomplishments since the inception of decentralization in 1992. These accomplishments included regular election that took place in 1986, 1989, 1992, 1998, and 2002. In the last four elections, the turnover rate of councilors has been about 75% (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). In addition, citizens were demanding that elected officials be held accountable for their actions (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). The author also reported that the lower local government (lg) level, which included counties and town councils, have not been as successful at decentralization as the higher-level LGs in cities and districts (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). This was mainly because of the differences in capacity that existed between the two.

The plans of decentralization in Uganda were characterized by the district development program and the local government development program (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). These programs combined sanctions and incentives to local governments based on clearly described local governance (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). One of the main features of the DDP/LGDP design involved annual evaluations at every level of local government (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). These evaluations assessed the local governments using pre-set governance and performance standards (Onyach-Olaa, 2003).

The results of the assessment determine whether a local government can receive the development grant (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). In addition, the performance evaluation of the local governments determines whether they will be penalized or rewarded when finances are allocated for the subsequent year. Additionally, the decentralization plan in

Uganda utilizing the DDP and the LGDP offers a form of non-sector specific

development and capacity building grants to local governments in Uganda (Onyach-Olaa,

2003).

Another important aspect of the implementation of decentralization in Uganda has

been monitoring and evaluation. The author confirmed that the decentralization programs

in Uganda were monitored and evaluated biannually (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). The initial

assessment involved the minimum conditions and performance (Onyach-Olaa, 2003).

The second assessment was designed for evaluating both policy and implementation

matters (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). The author reported that during the implementation of the

decentralization policy, two of the monitoring and evaluation reviews were performed.

The first occurred during fiscal year 1998 and the other during fiscal year 1999 (Onyach-

Olaa, 2003). The author also noted the DDP/LGDP strategy for decentralization in

Uganda (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). For instance, the author contended that the strategies

introduced by this alliance have affected the status of decentralization in the region at

various levels (Onyach-Olaa, 2003). The author asserted that at the local government

level, the monitoring and evaluation reviews provide the local government with feedback

as it pertains to allocation planning and administrative responsibilities (Onyach-Olaa,

2003).

Mugunieri and Omiti (2005) reported that the independence and services provided

to Kenyans from 1963 until the 1980s was fashioned by the central government.

However, in the 1990s, Kenya was undergoing liberalization (Mugunieri & Omiti, 2005).

This movement came amid concerns that the central government did not have the

capacity to extend services to the people of Kenya (Mugunieri & Omiti, 2005). These

concerns eventually led to decentralization. The authors asserted that three factors led to

the nation's move toward decentralization, including the inability of the central

government to handle the complexity of context-specificity required by extension

services, the inability of the government to finance the requisite range of services, and the

idea that democracy is best served through devolved functions with enhanced

participation at the local level (Mugunieri & Omiti 2005).

Efforts to decentralize in Kenya have been dominated by two main tactics

(Mugunieri & Omiti, 2005). The first tactic was the decentralization of government duties

for extension through structural reform with the purpose of transferring extension to other

institutions and improving both accountability and receptiveness (Mugunieri & Omiti,

2005). The second tactic involved the decentralization of management programs via

farmer participatory programs. Such programs forced the end user to accept some

responsibilities for designing curriculum and spreading the information. The authors

explained that this form of decentralization has four types of delivery systems. These

delivery systems are as follows:

1. Public delivery and public finance-this system involved the traditional

   government agricultural extension that continued to run although with greatly

   reduced outreach and limited by a lack of adequate funding (Mugunieri &

   Omiti, 2005).

2. Public delivery and private finance-this system allowed government staff to be contracted by private agencies to deliver extension services (Mugunieri & Omiti, 2005).

3. Private delivery and private finance allowed commercial organizations to provide their suppliers with the extension services necessary to enhance their technical efficiency. This system of delivery was dominant in commodity out-grower designs and extremely commercialized high-value agriculture (Mugunieri & Omiti, 2005).

4. Private delivery and public finance involved the outsourcing of extension delivery to private sector providers similar to NGOs and CBOs. This method of extension provision was promising as a central pathway, as it provided several comparative advantages over the other systems, including grassroots contacts and use of participatory approaches (Mugunieri & Omiti, 2005).

These systems of delivery were a formidable challenge to Kenya's efforts to decentralize. The authors asserted that with the increase in delivery methods brought about by decentralization, one major challenge facing extension in Kenya was how to re-orient the extension system to improve its efficiency, to enhance the access that those requiring such services have through the various sources available, to hold providers accountable to their customers, and to assure the relevancy of the services provided by eliciting the participation of the end-user (Mugunieri & Omiti, 2005).

Rural Development and Decentralization in Nigeria

Okojie (2009) reviewed the constitutional provisions for political, administrative, and fiscal decentralization in Nigeria. Okojie (2009) specifically assessed its effects on public service delivery. Okojie also reviewed the effects of decentralization on rural access to public services as well as the effects of rural service delivery on the state's agricultural productivity and other development outcomes. The researcher even evaluated the several constraints on public service delivery. Okojie (2009) claimed that the country has entrenched decentralization in its constitution. However, Okojie (2009) claimed that the country (Nigeria) was yet to realize the intended effects of decentralization on the country's service delivery. Like decentralization in other parts of Africa, Nigeria's experience with it showed that state and local governments were unable to deliver public services. The country has experienced constraints on its fiscal and administrative decentralization. There were no clear guidelines on how education, health, and local governments should interact with each other. Moreover, Okojie (2009) found that in Nigeria, to increase their power and influence at the local levels, the ruling parties at both the federal and state levels often advocated for decentralization.

Okojie (2009) also found that insufficient finance, as well as tax power, could hinder local government performance. Local governments rely heavily on the national and fiscal decentralization. Certain countries have been marked by the inadequate political support received by local governments from their central and state governments. Central and state governments were not keen to devolve authority or facilitate an enabling environment. They were not keen to implement decentralization activities. The

Okojie concluded that decentralization in Nigeria was still at the level of de-concentration of public functions from the central to the state or local government (Okojie, 2009). However, this cannot be observed on its budget. The most that local governments could do was to hire and fire local staff without consulting state governments. In Nigeria, local governments were under the supervision of state-level Ministries of Local Government.

Literature Summary

Through the literature review, I learned that decentralization became the main strategy of implementation as the World Bank and other organizations have attempted to reduce poverty. There was also a strong conceptual link between decentralization and poverty reduction. For instance, there was a consensus that decentralization aids in the reduction of poverty because it allowed local governments to distribute the resources for which central governments were normally responsible. Additionally, local distribution of resources was said to be more effective because local governments have a better understanding of the people living in their communities compared to the central government does. Local officials could distribute resources to those who have the greatest needs. There were both good and the bad aspects of decentralization. While decentralization could be beneficial in many cases, it could also be detrimental and lead to corruption if it was not properly monitored.

The review of the literature revealed that in some countries, such as Ghana and Uganda, decentralization was successful and in the case of these two countries, the conceptual link between decentralization and poverty reduction was evident and the theory seemed to be correct. However, in other places, such as Bangladesh and Indonesia,

the implementation and development of decentralization plans became stagnant. The review of literature provided substantial research, as it pertained to the development of decentralization schemas in various countries.

The literature review established that decentralization was the actual transfer of authority from the central government to the local government to create a system of allocation that met the needs of the most destitute members of society. Moreover, the World Bank and other institutions provided funding and support for the development and implementation of decentralization projects. In some areas of the world, decentralization projects were successful in transferring greater authority to local governments, which enabled these to provide citizens with the necessary sustenance so that poverty could be reduced.

One of the main lessons that the World Bank and other institutions could learn from these real-life experiences was that the client nation must have some level of political and social stability if the decentralization plan was to be successful. Overall, there were many different challenges that the countries and the organizations that were attempting to help them were facing, as it related to the implementation of a decentralization strategy. For instance, in some regions, the government was unwilling to surrender some of its authority and responsibilities to the local governments, which created tension. Additionally, in some areas of the world, a great deal of social tension already existed before plans involving decentralization. If this social tension was not resolved, there was difficulty in establishing a decentralization strategy. There might also be hindrances associated with the culture and tradition, which cannot be easily overcome.

For the World Bank and countries that desired a more accountable form of governing that increased transparency and reduced poverty, there was a great deal of planning and development that must take place.

Despite the abundance in the literature regarding rural development and decentralization, the concept of polarities of democracy had not been used as the theoretical framework. Moreover, there was a need to look at the phenomenon in Rivers State, Nigeria. The present research would close this literature gap.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Despite the accrual of wealth from oil and gas revenues, the problem of underdevelopment has persisted in Rivers State, Nigeria. To address this issue, the functions of local government were decentralized through the establishment of CDCs (CDC, 2012). These CDCs were collaborative efforts between the community and the local government of the Rivers State of Nigeria. However, the impact of this initiative was weakened by different government policies that created and mandated other government agencies for direct rural development (Houghton & Blume, 2011). Previous studies have focused on rural community development initiatives and strategies in Nigeria, but none of the studies included investigations of the underlying factors behind the failure of private-public programs such as the CDC.

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of local stakeholders about the reasons of the failure of rural development efforts in Khana. This chapter contains a discussion of the methodology of the study as well as a description of the research design and its appropriateness, a restatement of the research question, and a discussion on the population for the study. In this chapter, I also discuss the sampling strategy and data collection and analysis procedures. I conclude with a discussion on the assumptions, limitations, validity, and the reliability of the study, as well as the ethical considerations associated with the study.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of stakeholders as to why the CDC failed to improve the lives of the rural people through development. Based

on this purpose, I formulated one main research question: What are the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed?

Given the purpose of the study, I determined that the qualitative method was the most appropriate methodology. Qualitative studies are inductive in nature, researchers collecting data in the form of observations or narratives and using these data as a basis to draw generalizations and conclusions (Silverman, 2011). For this qualitative study, I implemented a case study design to address the research question. The use of a case study design allowed me to examine the phenomenon in question within the context in which it occurred (Thomas & Magilvy, 2011; Yin, 2009). I investigated the failure of the CDCs to improve the lives of the rural people through development within the context of the local government area of Khana, located in the Rivers State of Nigeria. Multiple data sources were used in this study, in line with the requirements of the case study method (Stake, 2010; Chorba, 2011). I used interview data from individuals who represented various perspectives and positions on the topic—such as government officials, community leaders, and institutional reform advocates—to help me understand why CDCs were not working to increase development in the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria. I also conducted a review of current and archival documents such as the legislative act that established the CDC from Rivers State Ministry of Information and the operations of local and international nongovernmental organizations in local communities. Other archival documents reviewed were the Nigerian Constitution, local government acts, and government agencies' annual reports, strategic plans, budgets, memos, and directives that were responsible for sustainable development in rural areas.

Role of the Researcher

I was the interviewer for the study. My skill, competence, and rigor in conducting an interview were critical to obtaining responses that were both comprehensive and credible, as I was the primary instrument for this research. During the interviews, translation was not needed since I was familiar with any local language used in Nigeria as well as the English language, which was the official language of governance in Nigeria.

This study was conducted in Nigeria, where the government was structured at three levels—namely, the federal government, the state government, and the local government. Within Nigeria, there were 36 states including Rivers State. In Rivers State, there were 24 local government areas. This study focused on the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State, Nigeria.

The population for this study included the heads of the local government area, known as the chairmen, and the chairmen of CDCs and their secretaries. The CDC was a representative group whose members were appointed from other interest groups in the community for a 4-year term of service. No previous experience in government was required for members of the CDC. The population of the study also included institutional reform advocates, in particular the leaders of the Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People (MOSOP) and the Ogoni Solidarity Forum. I have no personal or professional relationships with the prospective participants of the study.

Methodology

Participant Selection Logic

To recruit participants for this study, I implemented a purposive sampling strategy. The sampling for this study was purposive because representatives from each of the specified groups were recruited. A purposive sampling strategy is used in studies to recruit a population to serve a specific purpose, most often based on a set of criteria defined in line with the objective of the study (Barratt, Ferris, & Lenton, 2015; Barratt & Lenton, 2015; Petty, Thomson, & Stew, 2012). A purposive sampling technique was used alongside a snowball sampling technique, which required the identification of individuals who met the criteria for inclusion in the study sample and asking them to recommend others who meet the inclusion criteria (Goodman, 2011; Heckathorn, 2011; Petty et al., 2012). These sampling strategies were chosen to ensure that data would be collected from individuals who had the requisite experience and knowledge to speak authoritatively about the subject under investigation.

The targeted sample size for the study was set at 20 participants—namely the chairman of the local government area, nine representatives from the CDC, and 10 representatives from the institutional reform advocate groups. The sample size was determined based on the experience of qualitative researchers that in interview-based studies, very little new information was collected after more than 20 interviews (Green & Thorogood, 2009). As such, a sample size of 10 to 20 participants was determined to be adequate about providing detailed accounts of beliefs, perceptions, and personal experiences (Silverman, 2011). In addition, based on the concept of saturation for data

collection in qualitative studies, more data did not necessarily mean more valuable

information. Lastly, the nature of data collection and analysis in qualitative studies was

more labor intensive and time consuming when compared to quantitative studies.

Therefore, the use of a large sample size was not recommended (Mason, 2010).

Instrumentation

I collected data through interviews, using a semistructured interview guide

(Appendix A). I drafted the interview guide composed of open-ended questions

pertaining to areas of interest on the topic with the help of literature sources, particularly

those studies that assessed CDC and its effectiveness in rural development. I chose to use

open-ended questions to allow the participants to express their views in their own words

on the failure of CDCs to improve the lives of the rural people through development. The

use of open-ended questions also afforded me a certain amount of latitude to clarify

certain points expressed during the interview. An interview with open-ended questions

also helped me prioritize participants' welfare by allowing the participants to respond to

the interview questions with as much or as little detail as they were comfortable with.

Lastly, using a semistructured interview guide helped me ensure that all the aspects of the

topic relevant to the investigation and the research question were discussed during the

interview.

Data Collection

Before conducting any data collection procedures, I obtained the necessary

approvals for the study. Once IRB approval (01-06-17-0227040) was obtained, I started

making calls to the past and present chairmen of the Khana Local Government Area, the

CDC, and the institutional reform advocate groups to invite the necessary participants for the study. I also furnished these officers with a formal invitation letter containing a brief description of the study and its purpose, why they were invited to participate, the nature of participation required, and the corresponding time commitment for participants. A copy of the letter of informed consent was attached to the invitation letter. The letter of informed consent outlined the rights of the participants, the policies, and procedures that were implemented to protect participants' privacy and data confidentiality, as well as the voluntary nature of participation in the study and the policies on withdrawing from the study.

The invitation letter was individually addressed to the chairman of Khana Local Government Area, and the chairs and secretaries of the CDCs. However, a letter was addressed to MOSOP and the Ogoni Solidarity Forum groups, requesting for participants for the study. The invitation letters included my contact details should the invitees have any questions or clarifications regarding the study. The letter also stated that I would conduct a follow-up call within a week for all invitees. For the advocate groups, I requested for a list of potential participants from the administration. Individual letters were provided for the individuals on the list.

I scheduled individual face-to-face interviews at a time and date convenient to both myself and the interviewee. On the day of the scheduled interview, I started the session by reiterating the procedures of the study and the expectations from participants. I also requested that the participants sign a copy of the letter of informed consent and a waiver for the audio recording of the interview. I emphasized to the participants that the

audio recording was solely for data collection and analysis. Once all preliminary procedures were addressed, I commenced with the interview. After each interview, I transcribed the audio recordings for data analysis.

I used Rivers State Ministry of Information and Rivers State House of Assembly library facilities to conduct a review of current and archival documents. These documents included the operations of local and international nongovernmental organizations in local communities; Nigerian Constitution; local government acts; and government agencies' annual reports, strategic plans, budgets, memos, and directives that were responsible for sustainable development in rural areas. The documents reviewed were auxiliary-supplementary materials for background information only.

Data Analysis Plan

The aim of data analysis was to develop themes that represented the views of the individuals interviewed for this study (such as government officials, community leaders and members, and institutional reform advocates) on the issue of the failure of the CDC to use development to improve the lives of the rural people. For the purpose of developing and analyzing these themes, I used Saldana's (2009) coding methods to process the data. I also used NVivo11, a qualitative and thematic analysis software program, to facilitate the process of qualitative content analysis.

According to Saldana, (2009), a code refers to a word or short phrase that captures the essence of the data. Saldana further stated that coding should be done through two coding processes: First Cycle and Second Cycle. In the First Cycle, Saldana pointed out

that the code can range from a single word to a complete sentence and even to an entire page. The first part of the data analysis involves identifying the initial codes.

Saldana (2009) noted that the Second Cycle of coding data includes a reconfiguration of the codes. Saldana stated that the processes in the Second Cycle were more challenging because they involve synthesis, abstraction, conceptualization, and theory building. For the second part of the data analysis, the codes were more defined.

I used "the actual language found" (Saldana, 2009, p. 74) for my analytic memo writing and coding. In this process, as I read the interview transcripts, I attuned myself to the words and phrases that caught my attention and highlighted them. If the same words or phrases were used by the participant and seemed to merit an In Vivo code, then I applied them in order to capture the processes that explained to me the basic perception of the participants. Following the analytic memo writing, for the First and Second Cycles, I reviewed all the In Vivo codes and reanalyzed the initial work to condense the number of In Vivo codes.

Issues of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness was very important in research because it certified that the findings of the study represented the data that were actually collected. Therefore, it must contain the following essential elements: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability (Guba & Lincoln, 1985). I ensured that the study was credible, transferable, dependable, and confirmable. Credibility is defined as the acceptable representation of the constructs of the social world in the current study (Bradley, 1993, p. 436). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), to make sure findings were credible, the

researcher should immerse in prolonged engagement in the field, and carry out consistent observation, triangulation, negative case analysis, and checking interpretations against raw data, peer debriefing, as well as member checking. For this study, I ensured credibility by carrying out data triangulation and member checking. To carry out member checking, I asked the participants to check the transcripts to see if my interpretations and data notes were correct and in line with what they said.

Transferability is defined as the extent to which the researcher's findings and conclusions can be applied in another context or another study. Merriam (2014) suggested researchers made sure they had a rich and elaborate description of responses so that the findings might be transferable. To observe this, I collected and presented extensively detailed descriptions of the data gathered from the participants. In qualitative studies, credibility and transferability associated with internal validity and external validity, respectively, in quantitative studies.

Dependability is defined as "the coherence of the internal process and the way the researcher accounts for changing conditions in the phenomena" (Bradley, 1993, p. 437). To ensure dependability, member checking and field-testing of the interview guide were the two most common methods (Carlson, 2010). I also carried out member checking for this study. In addition, data triangulation, which involved the use of multiple sources of information, representing differing perspectives on the same subject, was implemented. In this case, the issue of the failure of CDCs to improve the lives of the rural people through development was explored based on the perspectives of the local government officials and CDC leaders (Guion, Diehl, & MacDonald, 2011).

In some studies, data triangulation is used to determine consistency of the information between different sources. However, data triangulation can also be used to find points of convergence and divergence, providing a more thorough and well-rounded depiction of the phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Considering this, convergent points in the data contributed to the overall validity of the study. However, it should not be taken to mean that differences between the information provided by the participants equated to diminished validity. Rather, divergence between data presented an "opportunity to uncover deeper meaning in the data" (Guion et al., 2011).

Confirmability referred to "the extent to which the characteristics of the data, as posited by the researcher, can be confirmed by others who read or reviewed the research results" (Bradley, 1993, p .437). I ensured the confirmability of the findings by showing in detail how the data were reviewed and how interpretations were arrived at. This strategy helped reduce the effect of my bias as researcher and made the study more transparent and objective. I also conducted an audit trail to show the data collection process systematically and what documents were reviewed, as further suggested by Guba and Lincoln (1985). Dependability and confirmability were the qualitative counterparts of reliability and objectivity, respectively.

The policies and procedures that were implemented to protect participant privacy and data confidentiality also contributed to the validity of the study results, by helping to ensure participant honesty during data collection procedures (Shenton, 2004). Copies of the letter of informed consent were provided to the participants as an attachment to the formal letter of invitation to the study, which gave the potential participants time to make

an informed decision on whether to participate in the study or not. This ensured that the

participants in the study were genuinely willing to participate and contribute information.

Lastly, the importance of honesty during the interview was emphasized to the

participants, by telling them that answering honestly during the interviews would add to

the reliability of the study findings.

Ethical Procedures

Before conducting any data collection procedures, I obtained the necessary

approvals for the study. Once IRB approval (01-06-17-0227040) was obtained, I started

making calls to the offices of the chairman of the local government area, the CDCs, and

the institutional reform advocate groups to invite the necessary participants for the study.

Throughout the course of conducting the study, I prioritized participant privacy and data

confidentiality. In line with this step, all participants were required to indicate informed

consent by signing the informed consent form.

During the recruitment phase of the study, I attached a copy of the letter of

informed consent to the letter of invitation sent to potential participants. Through the

informed consent form, I communicated the policies and procedures that were

implemented to protect participant privacy and data confidentiality. I emphasized the

voluntary nature of study participation. As such, there were no negative social or

economic consequences to declining to participate in the study.

Similarly, those who chose to participate in the study did not receive any

compensation or incentives. As explained in a previous section of this chapter,

participants were encouraged to respond to the interview questions with candor, but

might choose to share as much or as little information as they were comfortable with. The participants were also allowed to decline to answer any questions they did not feel comfortable answering. Lastly, the participants were free to withdraw from the study at any point with no penalties. I discarded all data collected from participants up to the point when they chose to withdraw.

As part of the protection of the participants' rights, I implemented strict policies to ensure participant privacy and data confidentiality. First, I de-identified all the data collected. No identifying information, for example, names, was collected during the study. Because I collected data from individuals representing various views on the subject, in all transcriptions and draft, participants were referred to as "Advocate # 1", "Official # 1", "Committee Member # 1", and so on. Second, procedures for storage also served to protect the participants and the data. All hard copies of the data, including drafts and printouts of the transcriptions, would be stored in a locked filing cabinet in my personal office. The electronic copies of the data would be secured with a password that was known only to me. All data would be accessible only to me. The data would be stored for a period of five years after the completion of the study. After five years, all hard copies of the files would be shredded, and all electronic files would be permanently deleted.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the perceptions of stakeholders as to why the CDC in the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State had failed to improve the lives of the rural people through development, as anticipated. In

this chapter, why the qualitative method was the most appropriate methodology to use was discussed. The sampling and recruitment strategies were also discussed. For data collection, face-to-face interviews were conducted. I also used NVivo 11, a qualitative and thematic analysis software program to facilitate the process of qualitative content. The results of the data analysis procedures are discussed in the next chapter of this study.

Chapter 4: Presentation of Findings

Introduction

This chapter contains the qualitative thematic analysis of the interviews with the 22 participants who have first-hand perceptions and experiences with the CDC efforts in the Khana Local Government Area. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed. The 22 participants were community leaders and institutional reform advocates of CDCs in the Khana Local Government Area. A qualitative thematic analysis was performed to develop themes that would address the purpose and main research question of the study. NVivo11 by QSR was also employed to systematically organize and tabulate the codes into final themes. The main research question that guided the study was: What are the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed? The chapter also contains the following sections: demographics, data analysis, results, and chapter summary.

Demographics

The study had 22 participants composed of local stakeholders such as community leaders and institutional reform advocates of CDCs in the Khana Local Government Area. From the 22 participants, two failed to provide their personal background and information. The ages of the participants ranged from 31 years and older, with the oldest being about 45 (although this is an approximation). Fifteen participants were male and seven were female. The occupations of the participants were social workers, public or civil servants, private company owner, medical workers, professionals (lawyer, engineer,

etc.), and a student. Their annual income also varied due to the different occupations reported. Table 1 contains the breakdown of the demographics. Appendix B also contains the summative interview table of all 22 participants.

Table 1

Breakdown of the Demographics of the Participants

	Age	Sex	Occupation	Annual Income
Participant 1	41 years old and above	Male	Social Worker Medical	$50,000
Participant 2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Participant 3	41 years old and above	Male	Public Servant	$8,300
Participant 4	41 years old and above	Male	Public Servant	$8,300
Participant 5	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Participant 6	31-40 years old	Female	Civil Servant	$3,400
Participant 7	41 years old and above	Female	Nurse	<$100,000
Participant 8	31-40 years old	Female	Student	N/A
Participant 9	41 years old and above	Male	Civil Servant	$4,200
Participant 10	41 years old and above	Female	Civil Servant	$4,500
Participant 11	41 years old and above	Male	President/CEO of a Private Company	$50,000
Participant 12	41 years old and above	Male	Legal Practitioner and Environmental Activist	$17,000
Participant 13	41 years old and above	Female	Politician/ Public Administrator	$40,000
Participant 14	31-40 years old	Male	N/A	$50,000
Participant 15	41 years old and above	Male	Attorney	$13,400
Participant 16	41 years old and above	Male	Self-Employed	$2,800
Participant 17	41 years old and above	Male	Businessman	N/A
Participant 18	41 years old and above	Male	Engineer	$5,600
Participant 19	32 years old	Female	Civil Servant	$2,300
Participant 20	41 years old and above	Male	Teacher	$55,000
Participant 21	41 years old and above	Female	Assembler D intermediate	$48,000
Participant 22	41 years old and above	Male	Civil Servant	$3,700

Data Collection

Interviews were obtained by making calls to the past and present chairmen of the local government, the CDC, and other reform groups who could give access to the potential participants. Formal invitation letters were also sent and distributed containing the intent or purpose of the study and the contact information/schedule of interviews in case potential participants were willing to join the study. Once potential participants

agreed to take part in the activity, they were asked to sign the informed consent forms that contained the confidentiality clauses of the study. Interviews were scheduled according to the most convenient time and place for the participants. Participants were ensured that all data recorded for the interviews, their identities, and other information would be stored within a secured vault and after 5 years will be destroyed. Upon the collection of all interviews, I analyzed the data.

Data Analysis

The data for this qualitative case study were analyzed using a thematic analysis. Following Saldana's (2009) coding methods, two cycles were performed in the current study as elaborated in the previous chapter. The two cycles were aimed to breakdown the data and then carefully classify and group the codes according to the meanings of the participants' shared responses. Saldana emphasized the need to analyze the shared perceptions and experiences *In Vivo* where the participants' voices were described accordingly and given the highest importance. Transcripts were initially uploaded on NVivo11 by QSR to know the frequency of the words from the responses of the participants. This step aided in acquiring an initial knowledge of the data addressing the phenomenon of the study. The words identified were also used as the initial codes during the initial review of the interviews. The word frequency allowed me to gain an idea of the study flow and probable findings in the next steps of the study. Figure 1 contains the word cloud from NVivo11 and Table 2 contains the breakdown of the top 15 words from the frequency results.

Figure 1. NVivo word frequency

Table 2

Word Frequency Count Breakdown

Word	Length	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)
cdc	3	129	5.35
community	9	70	2.90
participant	11	58	2.40
people	6	43	1.78
cdcs	4	33	1.37
members	7	32	1.33
political	9	29	1.20
government	10	28	1.16
communities	11	27	1.12
development	11	24	1.00
interest	8	24	1.00
interests	9	20	0.83
projects	8	20	0.83
elites	6	19	0.79
shared	6	19	0.79

Following the initial coding, I performed the thematic analysis of the interviews

with the aim of identifying the most common patterns and perceptions from the

responses. Interviews were read multiple times to develop the codes pertaining to the research question of the study. From these codes, similar ideas were clustered and organized. Upon a constant review and systematization of the data, codes were then assigned with names and descriptions. The names were then transformed into themes addressing the research question of the study.

The file containing the manually developed themes was uploaded on NVivo11. The software assisted in methodically coding the responses of the participants according to their meanings. This process helped in determining the significance of the themes based on the number of sources and references coded under each theme. Figure 1 shows the final content of the NVivo workbook. It must be noted that the final theme that received the highest number of sources from the participant responses was considered as the *primary theme* of the study or the most significant perception discovered. Meanwhile, those that received fewer sources from the participants were referred to as the *secondary themes* or the other significant perceptions and experiences shared.

I also included one theme which was considered a *discrepant case* given that it discussed one of the positive factors of the CDC and not a factor of failure, which was the key inquiry of the study. It was included in the analysis to present an unbiased and detailed report of the data collected. Furthermore, secondary themes that received two sources and below were not discussed in-depth as they may need further research to ensure the credibility of the data. The next section contains the breakdown of the findings and discussion as supported by the verbatim responses of the participants.

Issues of Trustworthiness

As reported in Chapter 3, Lincoln and Guba's (1985) essential elements of a

qualitative study were ensured—credibility, transferability, dependability, and

confirmability. The credibility of the study was determined by performing member

checking with the 22 participants. The member checking was completed by asking the

participants to review and check if the transcripts as well as the interpretations from the

data notes were correct or according to perceptions of the participants. The second

element was the transferability of the study where I ensured that the data collected from

the interviews were complete descriptions of the study. This was done to guarantee that

the data can be comprehended and useful to successfully apply them into another study.

The third element was dependability, which was also achieved through member

checking. The results of the member checking were then used to maximize and discover

more in-depth data. Finally, confirmability was achieved through an audit trail of the

research steps to certify that the internal process was based on hard data.

Results

Main Research Question

The main research question asked was: What are the perceptions of local

stakeholders as to why the CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed? From

the analysis of the interviews, 64% reported that the main reason of the CDCs' failure is

the perception that they are protecting the personal and political interests of the elites.

Subsequently, nine secondary themes or significant perceptions were identified on why

the CDC was deemed to be unsuccessful or ineffective. The results, both the themes and

the discrepant cases, are found in Table 3. Participants found that other key factors were

excluding the voice of the local citizens from the communities and lacking representation

from the minority. The mismanagement of funds and resources by the CDC was also

reported by four of the participants. Meanwhile, participants agreed that the CDC needs

to do much improvement in terms of monitoring the programs. Despite the majority's

belief that the program has been ineffective, three participants shared that the program is

doing a great job in representing the locals to the larger body of government. Other

discovered causes of failure were the lack of awareness on the purpose of the CDC,

inability to fulfil promises and expectations, and the lack of support from the local

government. Finally, one participant believed that there is an inconsistent leadership and

management.

Table 3

Breakdown of the Results of the Main Research Question

Themes	# of Participants	% of Participants
Protecting the personal and political interests of the elites	14	64%
Excluding the voice of the local citizens	9	41%
Lacking representation from the minority	8	36%
Mismanagement of funds and resources by the CDC officials	4	18%
Needing much improvement in terms of monitoring the programs	3	14%
Representing the locals to the larger body of	*3*	*14%*

government		
Lacking awareness on the purpose of the CDC	3	14%
Inability to fulfill promises and expectations	2	9%
Lacking support from the local government	2	9%
Inconsistent leadership and management	1	5%

*Note: n=22; *Discrepant case/s*

Primary Theme

Primary Theme: Protecting the personal and political interests of the elites.

The primary theme of the study was that the main reason for the failure of CDCs is their

act of protecting the personal and political interests of the elites (who are affiliated with

them), which was the perception of 14 of 22 participants or 64% of the total sample.

Participant 1 shared various statements on how the CDCs only work for their own

benefits and interests. The participant explained how the CDCs protect and prioritize

their personal motives first rather than the needs of the communities. With the greed

observed by the citizens, the CDC is deemed a disappointment by Participant 1:

> The CDCs would only entertain grievances but would hardly act to address such
>
> concerns, especially if it affects the powerful and influential members of the
>
> society. If it affects members of the CDC, such concerns are as good as dead
>
> because they won't be addressed.
>
> The CDCs in some cases don't respect the rights of the people because
>
> members constitute themselves into an authority in the communities and act like
>
> lords, instead of agents of change and development and representatives of the
>
> people.

Participant 2 expressed that the CDC is biased especially if an individual's party is from the opposition. From the statement, it was discussed that the CDC serves the interest of the ruling political groups alone:

> In respect of equal treatment of the CDC to everyone in the community development, the CDC by its composition need not to be biased but CDC in the real sense have been turned partisan and such if you are not in the same political grouping your community will suffer. Most especially when an opposition leader is from your community, you will be denied projects until such government is out of power. So, most CDCs don't treat their citizens or everybody equally.

Participant 7 indicated how decisions under the CDC are based on the individual interests of their members. She added that recently, the greediness and strong influence of the political groups have affected the reputation of the CDC as a program:

> At its initially inception, the CDC was focused on the people therefore fairness and justice was applicable in its activities. Of late, greed and the influence of political parties have made it difficult for leaders to demonstrate fairness and equality.

Participant 9 also stated that the CDC is highly affected by the political interests and support present in the system. Due to the presence of the political motives, the voices and roles of the locals are overlooked and ignored: "Overriding political interest and patronage. They adopt the *top-to-bottom* [emphasis added] approach to satisfy their political interest instead of the *bottom-to-top* [emphasis added] approach which is community generated." Meanwhile, Participant 11 shared how the CDC is composed of

individuals with personal motives and interests. With the presence of such CDC

members, it has been difficult to fully achieve the main goals of the program in assisting

the local communities. Participant 11 added how the actions and decisions of the CDC

members are not genuine but geared only for personal profits:

> The reality is that mutual respect is achieved in an atmosphere in which everyone
>
> is being treated with respect. In the case of people involved in social services to
>
> the benefit of the community, it is extremely difficult not to let a prejudice and
>
> conflicting interest affect their judgment. Most CDC members do allow their
>
> various philosophies to come between their policy and self-interest making it
>
> difficult for community progress.

Participant 16 shared how the CDC has redirected and readdressed their goals due to the

influences of the political parties and the elites of the society. The participant described

the CDC as a group managed by oligarchs who are working to develop their personal

interests over the needs of the majority or the communal people:

> CDC is responsible to attract development to the community. Currently, it has
>
> derailed and derelict in it duties. There is generally lack of commitment to the
>
> developmental yearning of the community.
>
> The aim of this social organization includes, to attract developmental
>
> projects, facilities, enlightenment, education and social upliftment or interest of
>
> the community. However, with the current in the community, it is not incorrect to
>
> say that, CDC has deviated from the interest of the community to the selfish
>
> interest of few elites—the oligarchs.

Participant 18 stated that the composition of the CDC is defective as only a very few

elites and influential individuals benefit from it. He indicated how the CDC is being used

to develop the projects of the controlling elites rather than those of the locals who

desperately need assistance from the government:

> Over here is government driven with imposed stooges. [Project site and selection]
>
> This is also being influenced by their pay masters . . . YES, this is because the
>
> composition is faulty, it is being politicized and party loyalist appointed. Instead
>
> of community development, it is used to project their pay MASTERS.

Participant 19 highlighted that the interest of the CDC is not for the community but has

been affected by the personal motives of the members of the government and other

groups, "Yes, they have failed because the CDC has been influenced by the government

and other groups; the interest of the community is no longer their drive." Meanwhile,

Participant 20 reported that the elites and political groups influence the project allocations

and distributions. Therefore, only the powerful benefit from the developmental projects

rather than the local communities:

> No! by the way, how can the CDC treat everybody equally when, in most parts,
>
> allocation of projects within a community, is politically influenced? It is of clearer
>
> knowledge that areas, precincts, or locales with the most influential political
>
> figure(s) within a community, for instance, dictate the distribution of community
>
> development projects within that community.

Finally, Participant 22 stated that projects are determined based on political affiliation. From this factor alone, it can be substantiated that the powerful members of the society control the committees; working to serve their own motives and interests:

> During the political dispensation, most projects are based on political affiliation, and the CDC being a community based organization cannot do much in terms of attracting development since it is non-political. The CDC does not have much authority, because most of the developmental programmes are political in nature.

Secondary Theme 1: Excluding the voice of the local citizens. The secondary theme that followed the primary experience was the perception that another key cause of the CDC failure is the observation of the stakeholders that they are deliberately excluding the voice of the local citizens. For the nine participants or 41% of the study, the CDC does not listen to the collective decisions or suggestions of the majority; but instead, they favor the personal desires and interests of the influential. Participant 1 believed that the CDCs do not provide the opportunity for the public to be heard. In addition, the participant shared that the CDCs only pretend that the inputs and concerns of the communities matter; however, in the end, only the personal interests and motives of the influential CDC members are favored:

> I don't think that CDCs give the people enough opportunity to participate in the decisions that affect their lives.
>
> The CDCs summon meetings of members of the community and pretend as if their inputs matter, but at the end, it is what they decide that prevails,

notwithstanding if majority of the community members are against the CDCs'

decision.

Participant 3 shared that the decisions are only made by the powerful politicians

and their groups; while the minorities are often left out: "No. Decisions are usually taken

by the politicians and their loyalists especially the elites… Never, privileges are given to

the elites especially in decision makings." Participant 7 stated that the final decisions are

often made without consulting the locals or the members of the community: "I do not

believe it is a true representation of the people because decisions made are not always in

consultation with the people." Subsequently, Participant 8 expressed that most of the

time, the consent of the people is not heard; and that the CDC is biased to their own

interests and motives: "Not really in most cases the consent of the people is not sought.

They are biased in most cases." Participant 11 then shared that the CDC does not respect

the community members as most of the time, the suggestions of the members are rejected

and that overall, the minorities are isolated: "It is my belief that CDC does not respects

the community rights, and community members hardly show respect for a CDC that they

consider have rejected and isolates them since most CDC members do not believe in

collective action." Participant 12 stated that from his experience, most of the CDCs at

present do not consider the views and perceptions of the community members. He then

recommended that there is a need for a participatory assessment to be performed to

ensure that all members' voices are heard and considered:

CDCs have conflict resolution frameworks and if that doesn't provide required

solution, the council of chiefs and elders are usually consulted. There is however

the need for CDCs to undertake a participatory needs assessment before settling

on a development project. Many CDCs don't do this right now.

Finally, Participant 22 explained that most decisions are made without the consensus of

the locals or the people. Participant 22 believes that most decisions are affected by the

personal interests of the CDC members and influential people affiliated to them:

No, most decisions are taken independently without the consent of the people.

(the sitting of Bane community town hall at nyo bana. It was supposed to but due

to power play it tend to look toward the needs of a few.

It they do not carry every community base group along in decision

making, and does not care for their need, then they have failed.

Secondary Theme 2: Lacking representation from the minority. Another

secondary theme that followed was the perception of the eight or 36% of the participants

that the CDC lacks the representation from the minority groups. The eight participants

believed that the CDC is mainly composed of the powerful members of the society or

controlled by political groups. Participant 3 stated that the composition of the CDC does

not represent the people or the locals; he shared how the CDC has left out the women,

youth, and other minorities: "The CDCs in most communities in Khana do not truly

represent the people because they are composed of mostly the elite. The youth, women

and other interest groups in the community are left out." Participant 4 expressed that the

CDC is not a true representation of the people, this is because he shared: "In my opinion,

CDC does not and cannot treat everybody equally. CDC respects the rights of some

persons but pretends to be fair to all… To a large extent, CDC is not a true representation

of the people." Meanwhile, Participant 12 stated that the CDCs are usually composed of the elites. It has been observed that the gender and other vulnerable groups have been overlooked and that the fairness and equality have since been questioned:

It is very usually composed of educated elites within the community… Often, gender and vulnerable groups within the community are completely left out of the picture when decisions on developmental processes are being taken. In many instances, CDCs are committed to the interest of the community. However, in resource rich communities the reverse appears to be the case. CDCs are often captured by a few connected persons who act as gatekeepers between the community and oil companies… But their biggest failing to my mind lies in their inability to properly integrate gender and vulnerable groups (e.g., aged, disabled, widows, etc.) in development.

Secondary Theme 3: Mismanagement of funds and resources by the CDC officials. Another secondary theme that emerged was the belief that there is a mismanagement of funds and resources by the CDC officials. The perception was shared by three or 18% of the total sample interviewed. Participant 3 believed that another factor that caused the failure of the CDC is the wrong management of the funds and resources allotted to the programs of the organization. The participant shared how the CDC is being used as a front for some politicians and elites to tap the public's funds:

The resources are being either diverted or mismanaged by the body itself so there isn't any way it can ensure justice when that happens. There aren't any systematic steps. The committee together with its loyalists decides on which project it's feels

suitable and then apply for it to the government. The government approves it and

the funds released to the CDC. The committee decides on either to divert the

complete funds or build a mockery project for the community at inflated prices.

Yes, it has failed because it is being used as an instrument to syphon public funds

for individuals use.

Participant 9 highlighted the, "Inability of the local government to allocate funds or

resources for the implementation or completion of planned programmes and projects for

the communities." Lastly, Participant 12 stated that there needed to be transparency and

accountability in terms of the CDC's management of the funds and resources.

Furthermore, the CDC needs to exert more effort in marketing and maximizing the

current resources for the success of their projects:

There is as yet no clear link between the CDC and the budgetary process at the

local and state tiers of government. Inputs from CDCs should form the framework

for a bottom up budget. This is perhaps why there is very little in terms of

development coming from government. They have also not succeeded in

marketing the resources in the community in terms of attracting tourists,

investments both from government and the private sector and supporting

education and retraining to enable acquisition of appropriate skill set. There is

also the failure to create a development template to mobilize indigenes both at

home and in the diaspora to support development efforts.

Secondary Theme 4: Needing much improvement in terms of monitoring the

programs. Another theme was the belief that the CDC needs much improvement as they

are lacking effort in monitoring the programs. Three participants or another 18% of the participants stated the perception. Participant 4 believed that the CDC has not completely failed, and some improvements may be done to salvage the current situation: "CDC efforts in Khana has not completely failed but it needs overheads, modifications and monitoring." Participant 6 echoed: "CDC have done well, but there is still room for improvement." Finally, Participant 15 also added that: "Really, but there is room for improvement."

Secondary Theme 5: Representing the locals to the larger body of government. The fifth theme discovered was a discrepant case as it is the belief by three participants that the CDC has been successful as they are representing the locals to the larger body of the government. Participant 6 shared that the CDC has done a commendable job in representing the people as well as the needs of the local communities. She identified how the CDC has been doing its job of addressing the issues of the different communities:

> CDC's effort can be regarded as fair enough in treating everybody equally, since it's a type of governance that is much closer to the people or the community as the case may be. So, I can safely say, a fair level of equality can be maintained among everyone concerned.

> Yes, without a shadow of a doubt, CDC will always remain a true representation of the people. Because it addresses the issues confronting these communities.

Participant 13 argued that the CDC represents all citizens from the different classes. For

Participant 13, both the elites and the various groups of individuals are given the

opportunity to participate and communicate their concerns to the CDC:

> The CDC is not mainly composed of the elites, rather its composed of people of
>
> integrity in the community such as youths, elders, women, men, and elites.
>
> Yes, CDC respects the rights of the people because everybody contributed
>
> to any decision that will affect them. Secondly, CDC is composed of all groups in
>
> the community and decisions are taking through town hall or town square
>
> meetings. This gives opportunity to anyone to express his/her opinion.

Secondary Theme 6: Lacking awareness on the purpose of the CDC. The sixth

theme established was the perception that another cause of failure was lacking awareness

on the purpose of the CDC. The theme had three occurrences or 14% of the total sample

interviewed. Participant 7 shared that the leaders of the CDC in various communities do

not have enough knowledge and understanding of the CDC's purpose and existence:

"The leadership of CDC in various communities in Khana does not understand the reason

for its existence. Participant 10 believed that the CDC has not failed in their purpose and

mission to the communities. However, they must improve their activities and programs to

make more people aware of their presence: "No, to me they have not failed but they need

to create more awareness for people to know what they do and for community

development committee (CDC) to improve on their activities." Finally, Participant 20

shared that there is a lack of enlightenment of the stakeholders on the actual functions of

the CDCs. Furthermore, misunderstandings and misinterpretations about the CDCs are also present:

> The gap here is entrenched in lack of enlightenment of the people by government on the actual intention of government vis-à-vis the CDC and its functionalities. Unless the people fully grasp this angle (government intention for initiating the CDC, they will not have the needed leverage to freely participate in making developmental decisions on issues that affect them.

Secondary Theme 7: Inability to fulfill promises and expectations. Another theme that followed was the factor that the CDC is unable to fulfill their promises and expectations. This was shared by two or 9% of the total number of participants. Participant 1 stated that one of the factors on why the CDC efforts in Khana are believed to have not been effective is because of the inability to act upon and fulfill the promises of the CDC to the people: "CDCs have not performed up to expectation in Khana and that is why we see abandoned projects in most communities, yet CDCs exists." Meanwhile, Participant 9 admitted that another factor was the failure of the government to fulfill their promises to the people: "Failure by the local government authority to keep faith with promises and complete projects and programmes initiated by them or by previous administration."

Secondary Theme 8: Lacking support from the local government. The eighth theme that emerged was the belief that the CDC is lacking support from the local government. Again, the theme was shared by two or 9% of the total number of

participants. Participant 13 again shared that the CDC has not failed; however, the local

government of Khana should also support the CDC to make it more effective:

No, CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have not failed yet, because they still

drag projects to their respective communities. The issue is that the government has never

supported them as expected; therefore, I suggest Khana Local Government should

support CDC to more effective.

Secondary Theme 9: Inconsistent leadership and management. Finally, the last

theme was the factor of the inconsistent leadership and management of the CDC. Given

that the theme was only shared by one participant, further research is needed to

strengthen the validity of the finding. Participant 9 stated that the inconsistency in both

the leadership and management is another issue and factor of ineffectiveness:

"Inconsistency on the part of the local government authority due to the too often change

of leadership in the local government council."

Summary

This chapter contained the presentation of the findings from the analysis of the

interviews with the 22 participants of the study. The purpose of this qualitative case study

was to investigate the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural

developments in Khana have failed. The data were analyzed using the thematic coding

strategy noted by Saldana (2009) to discover themes that would provide meaning to the

purpose and research question of the study. Through the analysis, the main research

question of: What are the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural

development in Khana have failed? was then addressed.

From the analysis, one primary theme and nine other secondary themes were generated. The results of the study indicated that the chief reason for the failure of the CDC was the practice of protecting the personal and political interests of the elites. The top three causes that followed the primary theme were: excluding the voice of the local citizens; lacking representation from the minority; and the mismanagement of funds and resources by the CDC officials. Other secondary themes also followed which allowed for the enlightenment on the different perceptions of the participants on why the CDC was considered unsuccessful. The fifth chapter contains the discussion of the findings in relation to the literature and the theoretical framework; the limitations and recommendations gathered from the study; the implications of the findings; and conclusions.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Rural communities in Rivers State, Nigeria are fraught with underdevelopment crises despite the accrual of wealth from oil and gas (Osaghae, 1995). The citizens are being negatively affected because of lack of basic community services such as schools, health care facilities, roads, water systems, markets, and civic centers. To address these problems, the Rivers State government introduced participative governance through the establishment of CDCs (CDC, 2012). The CDCs serve as an interface between the government and community in the choices of decision making, planning, execution, and analysis of their own development tasks (CDC, 2012; Fung, 2002; Nwinee, 2009). It is significant to determine whether the CDC is effectively performing these statutory functions or if there are problems hindering its performance. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed.

The current study used the polarities of democracy theory. The polarities of democracy theory was developed by Benet (2006, 2012, 2013) to serve as a guide for social change efforts that could contribute to creating sustainable communities. Benet presents the polarities of democracy as five sets of interrelated polarities: freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation.

The primary finding of this study was that the chief reason for the failure of the CDC was the practice of protecting the personal and political interests of the elites. The

top three causes that followed the primary theme included excluding the voice of the local citizens, lacking representation from the minority, and the mismanagement of funds and resources by the CDC officials. For example, most of the findings associated with justice and due process related the ineffectiveness of the CDC to the prevalence of corruption in Nigeria. On the other hand, the results also linked the sets of freedom and authority and participation and representation with failure of CDC rural development efforts. This linkage suggests that the CDC's rural development efforts might have failed because the polarities of justice and due process, freedom and authority, and participation and representation were not properly managed. Several other secondary themes also followed which allowed for the enlightenment on the different perceptions of the participants on why the CDC was considered unsuccessful.

Interpretation of the Findings

Primary Finding: Protecting the Personal and Political Interest of the Elites

The main research question that guided the study was about the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed. The primary theme of the study was that participants perceived that CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed because of the practice of protecting the personal and political interests of the elites (who are affiliated to them). This finding is supported by previous studies. For example, Alasah (2011) postulated that corruption, coupled with a lack of modalities for translating plans into action, are responsible for community underdevelopment and not lack of citizen participation. Campbell (2011) also stated that development may be hindered by dispute, antidevelopmental politics, corruption, and

inadequate authorities to enhance benefactor firms' efforts as well as gender variations in neighborhoods. Azila-Gbettor, Harrison, and Tibu (2014) and Ghani, Iyer, and Mishra (2012) also cited that corruption has led to the inability of poor citizens to have the resources they needed to sustain themselves and build better communities, such as education and employment.

Using the lens of the polarities of democracy, this finding is best explained through the polarities of freedom and authority and justice and due process. The practice of protecting the personal and political interests of the elites is unjust and might not have undergone due process. Corruption is also an injustice to the individuals in the community as only a few will benefit from the decisions biased toward the rich and powerful individuals. Due process might also not be followed if corruption exists; corruption may be reduced if authorities would strictly follow due process in every transaction in the community. When elected governmental authorities abuse their power, this undermines the freedom of the citizens of Khana. Governmental authorities who let corruption occur in the community abuse their power (Ghani et al., 2012). The elected governmental authorities have the power to decide on projects, policies, and programs in the community so long as it is biased in favor of the citizens of Khana (Afinotan & Ojakorotu, 2009).

Under the circumstances, the people are forced against their will to accept the status quo and/or go with decisions inimical to the development of their communities. To balance the equity, it is necessary to conduct a policy review and improve the accountability of the CDC by the Rivers State government, which should include the

opportunity to hold town hall meetings and public hearings by CDC officials. These meetings and hearings should be devoid of political angling and give the people chance to speak their minds concerning developmental issues. A public opinion review committee should also be set to sensitize the people on CDC development plans/programs and projects and to collect, collate, and review public opinions on CDC development plans/programs and projects.

The authorities who let this practice happen also abuse their power and limit the freedom of the citizens of Khana. They use their power to override the people's freedom and authority. As such, the people are denied the opportunity to openly express themselves about what affects them. In addition, they have no outlet to either seek redress, lodge complains, or demand for the regulations of the authorities' undue impositions. The result is not only a mismanagement of power but also an imbalance of power and a curtailing of the people's freedom. There is equally no regulatory body, for example, an Independent Regulatory Board in place that ensures accountability in the CDC, checks the excesses of the authorities, and provides the people opportunity to seek redress in the event of undue impositions.

Secondary Findings

Secondary finding: Exclusion of voice and lack of representation. Another factor that was found in the study was the exclusion of the voices of the local citizens of Khana communities from developmental issues that affect or will affect them and the lack of representation from the minority. This finding confirmed the conclusion of previous researchers that the voices of the natives are disregarded in the development and

implementation of policies (Dzinavatonga, 2008; Matunhu, 2011). The CDCs were also lacking representation from the minority. Specific representations that were lacking in the CDCs were those of women, youth, the academia, farmers, fishermen, and local community unions and groups. The voices and representation of the minority are significant since they are the individuals who need something and can contribute to what they think would be the best developmental policies to implement in the community. Moreover, representation of the minority in CDCs would also translate to support from the local community.

The polarity of participation and representation would best be applied to the lack of representation. Because there is a lack of representation from the minority, who are the natives of the land, it might be inferred there would be a lack of participation from the local people. With the voices of the minority groups not heard in the programs and policies of the community, there is limited representation for their needs and concerns in the decision-making process. If the minority groups felt that the developmental policies and programs do not address their needs and concerns, then they would not participate in these projects. The minority groups would think that they are being disregarded and would not be motivated to participate in the developmental policies and programs. Being part of the decision-making process is important for individuals to feel that they are being represented and would motivate them to participate in the projects. Lack of representation and participation would lead to failure of CDCs. The inclusion of the voices of women, youth, the academia, farmers, fishermen, and local community unions and groups rather than just political cronies would result in diversity of opinions and viewpoints.

Invariably, such diversity in opinion and viewpoints would beget useful communal planning, decision making, as well as the evolution of developmental policies acceptable to the community. More communal involvement would boost the CDCs' standing, give wider acceptance and support, and invigorate collective contributions.

There is, therefore, need for a general policy change that would enact guidelines for equal representation. For example, these guidelines would set down a defined process by which each local grouping (indicated earlier on) in the community would select its own representative(s) for membership in the CDC. The final list of selectees would then be vetted and approved by the Independent Regulatory Board, to ensure minority and equal representation.

Secondary finding: Mismanagement of funds and resources. The mismanagement of funds and resources by the CDC were also reported by several participants. This finding is consistent with previous research. For example, Cloke (2013) asserted that resources are an important aspect of efficient rural planning. Moreover, resources should also be made use of and accounted for (Cloke, 2013). Previous researchers attributed mismanagement of funds and resources to corruption emphasized the significance of resources; linking resources with corruption (Azila-Gbettor, Harrison, & Tibu, 2014; Ghani, Iyer, & Mishra, 2012). However, until this study, there have been no previous findings that spoke to the issue of mismanagement of funds and resources in the CDCs in Khana specifically or Rivers State in general.

The polarity of justice and due process can be best used to explain the mismanagement of resources. Mismanagement of funds and resources are acts of

injustice. For example, several participants described how funds meant for CDC

development projects were diverted into personal accounts and resources converted for

personal use by contractors in collusion with prominent individuals or politicians who

call themselves stakeholders. Affected projects were then abandoned to the detriment of

the community. Such cases of injustices on the part of the individual would also

negatively influence due process in the community. In relation to the primary finding,

corruption was found to be a negative factor in the developmental projects. Corruption

leads to injustice, as it cheats other people who follow due process. This finding also

revolves around money and resources. Mismanagement of funds and resources would

lead to the reduction of credibility of the individuals involved in the program. If due

process is also being implemented, then there will be less opportunities for

mismanagement of funds.

Secondary finding: Monitoring needs much improvement. The CDCs need

much improvement in terms of monitoring the programs and projects. This confirmed the

previous findings about the need to have a better monitoring and evaluation program

about the implementation of decentralization. This is consistent with Onyach-Olaa

(2003), who emphasized the significance of monitoring and evaluation reviews.

The polarity of justice and due process can be applied to the need to improve

monitoring. The implementation of monitoring and evaluation programs is one example

of how just actions and practices can be achieved. Monitoring is part of the due process

because of accountability. Monitoring of any program would ensure that the program

implements its proposed projects and policies. Any program should also be evaluated to

determine its effectiveness. The evaluation of a program is crucial to determine whether any policies or projects needs to be developed or modified. Monitoring and evaluation programs would also require due process to ensure that the results of the reviews are credible and valid. To this effect, it is suggested that CDCs form a Project Monitoring Committee (PMC) in each community in Rivers State. The main function of the PMC would be to monitor, review, and write quarterly and annual reports to CDC Board, local and state governments, and community leaderships. These reports should reflect the statuses community programs and projects and allocations due communities.

Secondary finding: Representing the locals. Some participants believed that the CDC is doing a great job in representing the locals to the larger body of government. This is a new finding as previous researchers had concluded that there was lack of representation of minority in the CDC (Crook, 2013, Nwinee, 2009). This finding speaks to the contrary.

The polarity of participation and representation can provide a lens to this finding. The CDC is a program that somehow provides representation of the locals to the larger government body in Rivers State, Nigeria. This representation is also linked with the participation of the locals to the programs implemented by the CDC. When the individuals do not feel that their needs are not being represented then they would not participate in the development program. The locals need to be represented since they have the right to be included since they live in the community.

Secondary finding: Other factors that caused the failure of CDC. Some causes for the failure of CDC include the lack of awareness on the purpose of the CDC,

inability to fulfil promises and expectations, and the lack of support from the local government. These factors contribute new knowledge about the failure of CDC. The underlining factors behind the failure of these private-public programs like the CDC, built on mutual relationship between the community and the local government in Rivers State of Nigeria, is unknown.

The polarity of representation and participation is applicable to this finding. For locals to be able to represent themselves and participate in CDC programs, they must be aware of the purpose of the CDC. When the locals participate in the development programs then every stakeholder participates in the process. In this way, any CDC program will surely be more effective compared to other times when the locals did not fully participate. Moreover, the locals must also affirm that their expectations and promises made to them are fulfilled.

Secondary finding: Inconsistent leadership and management. Inconsistent leadership and management were also hindrance in the success of CDCs. This finding contributes to the knowledge about failure of CDCs. There has been no study that linked inconsistent leadership and management to the failure of CDCs in Khana.

The polarity of freedom and authority best explains this finding. Consistent leadership and management is better for a program to be able to have long-term projects. Although, leadership and management are related to authority, there needs to be a consistent leadership and management structure for any program to succeed. However, ensuring that there is only one leader in the CDC programs could limit the freedom of some individuals. Stakeholders should have the freedom to be critical to any leadership.

There must be one vision that will be set to ensure consistent leadership even if there are different leaders or program heads from time to time.

In a situation where leadership is inconsistent, management as well as the program's stability and direction are in jeopardy. It is not established that there are working guidelines or bylaws that specify durations and duties of CDC leaderships in Rivers State. It is, therefore, suggested that if formed, the Independent Review Board (IRB) should develop both a CDC General Guideline and Bylaws as working instruments for CDC leaderships in the Rivers State. In addition, consistent with the provisions of the Bylaws and Guidelines, selected or elected members should be from their community; responsible, and with track records of proven integrity, diligence, and commitment to communal development.

Limitations of the Study

The chosen methodology for the study served as a limitation to this study. The use of case study design was linked to the difficulty in delineating the limitations of the study, resulting in a study that is too broad (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This was addressed through limiting the context of the phenomenon to the failure of the CDC.

The second limitation was the sample for the study. While I collected data from different local stakeholders such as community leaders and institutional reform advocates of CDCs in the Khana Local Government Area, this sample may not have represented all the perspectives relevant to the research problem. The sample size also served as a limitation to the study. Only 22 participants were included in the study. The results and

interpretation of this study can only be applied to a specific group of people or location - the Khana Local Government Area of Rivers State in Nigeria.

The use of the interview as a means to collect data also served as a limitation. While participants were expected to answer all the questions truthfully, the results are based on their experiences, which can be biased. Participants were assured that all data recorded for the interviews, their identities, and other information would be stored within a secured vault and after five years, should be destroyed.

Recommendations for Future Research

Future researchers could explore other qualitative research designs such as phenomenology or ethnography to investigate the experiences of the participants. The use of a case study design could also be changed to multiple case study design to allow for more collection and analysis of data. Quantitative method could also be used in future studies to determine the degree of relationships between variables that have been identified from the results of this study and previous studies.

An increase in sample size or having a more heterogeneous sample could also be done in future studies. The increase of sample size could be used in quantitative studies. Having a more heterogeneous sample could be used in qualitative studies. A heterogeneous sample includes a sample with varied sexes and varied backgrounds to improve the generalizability of the results.

Future researchers could also conduct their research through other means. For instance, to collect and analyze data, future researchers could use methodologies such as focus group discussions, immersions, and observations. If a researcher intends to use a

survey questionnaire, then he or she should find a validated survey questionnaire that is appropriate in the context of the study. On the other, new researchers could also aim at developing a validated survey instrument based on their studies.

A comparison study with other rural communities that have implemented CDCs could also be conducted. This is to determine whether the failure of CDCs has similarities or differences across rural communities. The results of this study could provide insights to how to implement CDCs programs in specific locations.

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Implications of the Findings

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The primary finding is that the practice of protecting the personal and political interest of the elites are causing the failure of CDCs. Since this central problem or other factors have been initially identified that cause the failure of CDCs could bring about policies or programs that could help in mitigating or eliminating it. Leaders of CDCs should work hand-in-hand with all of the local stakeholders so that each stakeholder will benefit from a program or policy and not just the elites of the community.

One of the main issues that emerged was the exclusion of the voices and lack of representation of the locals in the CDCs. CDCs should include the locals and make room for their representation since they are one of the stakeholders of the program. Guaranteeing that their voices are heard and that the locals are well-represented could strengthen the support of the local community for CDC programs.

The findings are consistent with the current theory of democracies available in the field. Moreover, the findings are consistent with the polarities of democracy. Under polarities of democracy theory, 10 elements are categorized into five polarity pairs. These

are freedom and authority, justice and due process, diversity and equality, human rights and communal obligations, and participation and representation (Benet, 2006, 2012, 2013). These polarities were used to explain and interpret the findings of the study. The polarities of justice and due process and participation and representation were appropriate in explaining the findings of the study.

The findings of the study helped in advancing the understanding of the failure of CDCs in rural communities. Using the qualitative method provided rich and detailed information about the phenomenon under investigation. This research could be the foundation of future studies about CDCs and the factors that cause its failures.

The findings of this study may be beneficial to all stakeholders of CDCs such as program leaders of CDC, the government of Khana, and the local community. The program leaders could use the insights from this study to strengthen the policies about CDC to result in rural development and improve the lives of the local people. The results of this study could lead to suggestions on how public policy in Rivers State, and by extension Nigeria, may be shaped to help improve rural development. The results may lead to improvement in public policies that might improve the lives of the rural people in Rivers State, Nigeria.

The government of Khana could also use the insights from this study. Improvement of the CDCs could bring more social justice and promote reasonable distribution of government wealth through provision of viable projects in the rural communities. The results could bring about positive social change because it could provide recommendations that may help to strengthen community-local government

relations, diffuse community tensions, lower crime rates in the State, reduce urban migration, and boost local business entrepreneurships/opportunities.

Conclusion

Community Development Committees (CDCs) are committees established by Rivers State government in each town and village to facilitate community development. CDCs aim to improve the lives of locals in rural communities, where there are many poor people. CDCs have been implemented in various rural communities in Rivers State, Nigeria; however, they seem to be failing. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to investigate the perceptions of local stakeholders as to why CDC efforts at rural development in the Khana Local Government Area have failed.

Given the theoretical framework, it was expected that one of the primary causes of the failure of CDCs is linked with both corruption and lack of representation of the locals in the programs. Previous researchers have concluded that failure of decentralization programs is linked with corruption, lack of representation of locals, and lack of support both from the locals and the government. These expected findings were found in the results of the study. The primary finding from this study showed that the practice of protecting the personal and political interests of the elite was important factor responsible for the failure of CDCs in rural communities. Three of the factors that caused failure of CDCs included excluding the voice of the local citizens; lacking representation from the minority; and the mismanagement of funds and resources by the CDC officials.

    In this chapter, the findings and the conclusions were discussed. The limitations and recommendations for future research were presented. This chapter concludes the study.

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Appendix A: Interview Guide

The following questions were asked during the interview:

1. What is your perception about the effectiveness of CDC efforts in generating rural development?

2. Do you think that CDC gives the people leverage to freely participate in the decisions that affect them?

3. To what extent does CDC have authority that affect the community without interference by the government or other interest groups?

4. How does CDC ensure justice when there are grievances over allocation of developmental resources?

5. What are the steps taking by CDC to ensure due process in determining appropriate project and site selection?

6. What is the composition of CDC? Is it mainly composed of the elites?

7. Do you feel that CDC efforts in enhancing community development treats everybody equally?

8. Do you think that CDC respects the rights of the people? If so, explain.

9. Do you believe that CDC is committed to community interest or for the needs of select few?

10. How does CDC encourage community participation in the decisions that bring development?

11. Do you think that CDC is a true representation of the people?

12.   Do you think CDC efforts at rural development in Khana have failed? If so,

explain.

Appendix B: Summative Interview Table

Table B1

Interview Summary

PA#	Category (Leader/ Reform Advocates)	Status	Source	Saturation	Format	Length	Recording	Transcript
PA1	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/10/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	45 min.	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA2	Advocate	Conducted in person– N/A	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	40 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA3	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/29/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	42 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA4	Leader	Conducted in person– 2/05/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	30 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 2 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA5	Advocate	Conducted in person– N/A	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	45 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA6	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/27/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	50 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 4 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA7	Advocate	Conducted in person– 1/14/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	50 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 4 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA8	Advocate	Conducted in person– 2/13/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	35 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA9	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/20/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	45 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA10	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/28/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	32 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 2 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA11	Advocate	Conducted in person– 1/16/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	40 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 1.0 spacing
PA12	Advocate	Conducted in person– 1/31/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	45 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA13	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/20/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi-structured interview	50 min	Audio-recording	Transcribed/ 4 pages; 2.0 spacing

(table continues)

PA#	Category (Leader/ Reform Advocates)	Status	Source	Saturation	Format	Length	Recording	Transcript
PA14	Advocate	Conducted in person– 2/16/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	35 min	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 2 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA15	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/28/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	35 min	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 2 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA16	Advocate	Conducted in person– 1/12/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	35 min	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 2 pages; 1.0 spacing
PA17	Advocate	Conducted in person– 1/25/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	30 min	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 1 page; 1.0 spacing
PA18	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/12/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	40 min	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 2 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA19	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/31/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	30 min	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 1 page; 1.0 spacing
PA20	Leader	Conducted in person– 1/17/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	I hour	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 5 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA21	Advocate	Conducted in person– 1/15/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	47 min	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 4 pages; 2.0 spacing
PA22	Leader	Conducted in person– 2/08/2017	Sample frame	Yes	Semi- structured interview	40 min	Audio- recording	Transcribed/ 3 pages; 2.0 spacing