Full Length Research

Assessing Factors Affecting Civic Participation in Community Development: The Case of Selected Woredas In Ilu Aba Bor Zone,Oromia Regional State, Ethiopia.

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This study has attempted to assess factors affecting civic participation in community development the case of selected woredas in Ilu Aba Bor zone of Oromia regional state, Ethiopia. Popular participation can recognize through active involvement and organization of people at community level. The community poor, illiterate and other marginalized groups have not actively participated in decision-making and sharing the benefits from the huge development efforts, neither in proportion to their wishes. After 1991, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia government adopted a people-centered developmental approach in order to achieve peace, development and democracy. Various authors agreed that participation of people in the system which governs their lives is a basic human right and essential for relocation of political power in favor of disadvantaged groups and for social and economic development. Yet, particularly in the study area, inhabitant participation has developed into an ideology rather than a practical mechanism to promote participation by people and to improve local governance. Popular participation is an idea that is often mentioned in community development view. To addresses the purpose of the study descriptive research design was adopted. Qualitative and quantitative research methods were employed in which data was gathered through questionnaires with sampled respondents and interviews with key informant and focus group discussions. Quantitative data were used SPSS and presented with the use of tables, bar graph, pie-charts, frequency tables, verbal explanations and percentages whereas qualitative data was analyzed and presented through description contextually. The study was comprised of five hundred three (503) respondents. Purposive, multi stage and simple random sampling methods were employed. The finding of the study identified lack of understanding as their participation has value in community development; gender biased; low income; outdated attitude; traditional view of people against modern or developed attitudes; opposition and resistance of change; top down approach; lack of community education and awareness; conflict between community leaders and community members; lack of trust in community leaders; lack of conducive institution that capacitated to participate fully in development processes; and illiteracy were mentioned as factors that undermine the participation in community development. It was therefore concluded that adhering and encouraging whole community members contribute positively towards community participation in development. Finally, the researchers recommended actors of development (individuals, households, communities' government, NGOs, civil society organizations and private companies should work actively to cope up factors affecting civic participation in community development of the study area.

Key words: Participation, civic participation, development, community, community development

INTRODUCTION

This study aimed at assessing factors affecting civic or popular participation in community development in Ilu AbaBor zone case of seven selected woredas. Civic participation is the "collective efforts by the people concerned together their pool, their efforts and resources in order to attain objectives they set for themselves according to Oakley (1978). Kumar (2002:24) argued that participation in this regard deals with encouraging participants to take initiatives and actions which are stimulated by their own thinking and deliberation and over which they can exert effective control.

As Theron (2005:115) asserts that if the process is well managed, the members are likely to take ownership of the development processes that are to be implemented. Civic participation is part of "people centered" or "human centric" principles, which have emerged in Western culture over the last thirty years, and has had some bearings of education, business, public policy and international relief and development programs. As Cornwall, (2002), civic participation in community development also faced a number of problems like political, socio-economic and Cultural factors that may have been affecting and arguably encumbering the effective participation of community people in development activities in the study area.

There is a Proverb, which says, if a city or place as a whole makes an effort, the goal is achieved". Website (accessed on October 2, 2016 http:www.scribd.com) "No man is an island. As a result people have to work as a community in order to succeed. It has been proven that the synergetic effort of the community can be a massive force and make a huge difference in community development.

The most popular and widely adopted strategy for ensuring civic participation in local development is identified as decentralization as Rondinelli (1999:2). Phillip(2009) asserted that, civic participation implies consultation and working with and not for people. People will participate and contribute meaningfully to something they feel part of, identify with, and associate with their efforts. Batten (1994:98) feels strongly about this point and emphasizes that for civic participation to be meaningful the final decision must be made by people. However, our communities sometimes do not utilize this opportunity efficiently at all points. The planned social change can only be realized through the participation of the people in all the stages of the development process. The encouragement of civic participation of the community in programs to bring about planned social change is the base or prerequisite for the success of the community development process.

Insufficient understanding of civic participation in community development leads to poverty, partiality and lower development. The first issue is that civic participation includes the involvement of a substantial number of people into community development and collective efforts by the people concerned together their pool, their efforts and resources in order to attain objectives they set for themselves .But, civic participation in community development faced a number of socio-economic and cultural factors that have affecting and arguably encumbering civic participation in community development activities in the study area. In community development, the range of activities involving the mobilization of resources in order to empower people to break away from all structural disabilities that prevent them from enjoying better living conditions (Kakumba and Nsingo, 2008:110).

Kakumba and Nsingo (2008:115) outline the number of challenges facing civic participation in community development processes. In addition to this refusal in participation, minorities, gender biases, income level, literacy rate, lack of homogeneity in community and complex regulatory framework, inadequate rules and regulations.

Further, illiterate people are not effectively participating in government run program/ schemes. Illiterate people are often looked down upon as problematic as they more often cannot articulate their demands and put forward their opinions in a systematic way. Hence, their illiteracy is leading them to non-participation as Cornwall, (2002).

Civic participation may face by various barriers and challenges in bringing considerable community development. Successful community development will require reducing these barriers and addressing the challenges. Recently, both government and communities have recognized the need for creating ways to facilitate community development and have taken initial steps toward removing obstacles that hinder the community development mainly in developing nations. However, despite these efforts, there are still many barriers and challenges that can stand in the way of community involvement. Understanding and anticipating these barriers and challenges is important when a community is getting organized for or involved in development activities through multiple dimensions. Further, it is important for communities to understand that government also faces barriers and challenges that can hinder its progress in responding to and recognizing the priorities of community development that can be prerequisite for the national development.

In the last quarter century, many countries have engaged in the process of decentralization by transferring responsibilities of the state to lower tiers of government. Such transfer of power is believed to bring not only political stability and contribute to democratic governance, but also improve service delivery and attain equity. Formerly, Ethiopia had made some preliminary attempts at decentralization. One of the earliest such

attempts was in the form of local self-administration at awraja or sub province level. The order establishes a system of elected awraja councils to exercise jurisdiction over local affairs such as building economic and social infrastructure Tegegne (2010). Though this indicates an interest in decentralization, it did not succeed in developing a framework and in fact the order was rejected by the then Members of Parliament and the Ministry of Interior could not defend the order. During the Dreg period, Peasant Associations and Urban Dwellers' Associations were established as the lowest forms of local administration. The officials, although elected by the people, were mainly serving the government and were acting as defenders of the interest of the government.

However, according to Tegegne (2010), the establishment of the Transitional Government in 1991 brought a new era in decentralization of power and administration in the country, as a result of the various acts it introduced. Political decentralization is manifested through a change of government from a unitary form to a federal one composed of regions. The 1995 constitution article 46 (2) of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia indicates that regions are formed on the basis of population, settlement, language and identity. One of the theoretical arguments for decentralization is that it creates a forum for popular participation in planning and implementation, encourages coordinated activities between agents, and promotes multi-sectorial planning. The extent to which these are practiced in Ethiopia could be understood by looking at the present planning structure and processes Yigremew (2001).

Besides, many attempts have been made by both governmental and non-governmental organizations to mark community development through civic participation. Despite active mobilization of resources by international, local NGOs and the Ethiopian government, the national community development of the country has not been improved that much in general and in the study area in particular.

However, Civic participation is essential for community development in the study areas, it has been the community members' continuing practice to leave the development burden to the few. The development programs will be much improved, only when the local community plays a vital role in its implementation. It is believed that civic participation will enable communities to contribute towards designing acceptable and user friendly projects and make communities develop an interest in the operation and maintenance of development projects.

Civic participation can thus be enhanced by addressing barriers to participation while at the same time taking the necessary steps to promote the principles of sustainable popular participation. The principal aim of this study is to assess factors affecting civic participation in community development. Specifically, it looked at development as a

theoretical framework that could guide democratic practice and public involvement in delivery of services by local government. This framework will contribute towards resolving the dilemma facing local government as how to bring about the meaningful civic participation to meet the growing needs of the society while striving for social justice and equity in the distribution of resources and encouraging community people in participation in development planning, implementation and administration.

These all stated problems motivated researchers to conduct the study to come up with some possible solutions. Therefore, general objective of the study is Assessing Factors Affecting Civic Participation in Community Development of the study area. This study work supposed to find mechanisms and strategies to enhance civic participation in community development and also to identify the existing challenges which threat the active involvement of people in community development.

Research Questions

❖   What are the current understandings of civic participation in community development of the study area?
❖   What are the socio-economic and cultural factors that affect the civic participation in community development process?
❖   What are the consequences caused by less popular participation on community development?
❖   What are the procedures required to boost civic participation in community development?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The primary objective of this research was to assess factors affecting civic participation in community development with special emphasis on selected woredas of Ilu Aba bor zone. In order to achieve these objectives descriptive research method was adopted. Besides, in this study a combination of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were employed.

Population, Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

In this study, the researchers employed multistage sampling procedures to determine sample Zone, Woreda and sample households. Oromia is one of the regional states in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Administratively, the region is divided into 18 zones. Out of these Zones, the researchers purposively selected Illu

Aba Bor Zone based on institution approximate. Illu Aba Boris one of the Zone of Oromia National Regional State. It consists of 24woredas. Out of these, seven (7) woredas were selected by lottery method. The rationale behind that led the researchers using lottery method for selection of Woredas   was due to that almost all woredas share identical characteristics   in politics, socio- cultural, economic and other aspects. For the sake of cost and time saving, it's very vital and usual, as well, to take a representative portion of the unit of study. The ever increasing demand for research has created a need for an efficient method of determining the sample size needed to be representative of a given population. The research division of the National Education Association has published a formula for determining sample size (Jeff, 2001:5). Thus, the researchers used the following formula to determine the total sample size for this inquiry.

$S = X^2 N P (1- P) \div d^2 (N -1) + X^2 P (1- P)$.
S = required sample size.
X^2 = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841).
N = the population size.
P = the population variability (assumed to be 0.10 since the population is homogeneous in terms of geography, similar social class and similar economic activity.
d = the degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.5).
The total households of the study (N) is 11, 361 and S (total number of Sample) =? X2 = at 95% level of confidence is 3.841, d= 5% or 0.05 and P=0.10. Therefore, using the above formula,

$S = \frac{(3.841)(11,361)\ (0.1)(0.9)}{0.05^2(11,361-1)+(3.841)(0.1)(0.9)}$ = 503 (approximately), 503 respondents were a sampled for this study. (Table 1)

Data Sources and Data Collection Techniques

Both secondary and primary sources of data were utilized in this research as per the requirements. To achieve the above issues and objectives, a brief review of literature (secondary data) were made in relation to the subject matter. This includes review of relevant books, organizations' websites, journals, government's policy and strategy, and published reports of the case under consideration.
Regarding the primary sources of data, both qualitative and quantitative methods, such as key informant (personal) interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaire interviews were employed in data gathering.
 For the purpose this study, questionnaires were prepared for sampled households based on the set

objectives and distributed to the respondents. The questionnaire had both open and close-ended questions. In order to obtain clear information and avoid delay, the researchers have used data collectors. Interviews were conducted with the youth and Social Affairs Office of the seven woredas of Ilu Aba Bor Zone that were selected purposively. The researchers assembled a group of 10 respondents in selected kebeles with youth, daily labor force, social affairs, farmers, merchants to held focused group discussions in addressing the main research themes in selected woreda.

Data Analysis and Presentation

Quantitative   data were analyzed using descriptive way and presented with the use of tables, bar graph, pie-charts, frequency tables, and percentages, descriptive statistics (SPSS version 20) whereas qualitative data were analyzed and presented through contextually.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Investigation of Biographical Information

  As indicated on the Figure 1 (198) respondents represent 39.4 percent of community members which took part in a study were females and 305 respondents represent 60.6 percent were males. The investigator understands that this information represents the gender imbalance amongst the studied kebeles members of respondents as the community development. As indicated above 60.6   percent more male than female. These men have been assumed to be acting as household heads in the absence of partners sought for employment in other community areas which have better economic conditions. According to Gran (1983) in Theron (2005) asserts that participation can give women and other groups of people who are usually marginalized from the community activities the opportunity to influence development initiatives in their communities. Thus, popular participation is the way of ensuring impartiality.
  Figure 2 illustrates the four age categories that were used by the investigator to gather information from respondents. The age distribution of community respondents varied between 18 and >61 years. Of these respondents, only 14.10 percent of community members fell between the ages of 18 to 28 years. Forty (38.40) percent of the respondents were between the ages of 29 to 39 years and 40 percent was between the 40 to 50 years. Lastly, 7.50 percent respondents were between 51 to 61 years of age. The fact that there is no equal representation in age group in the sample makes any generalization about age influence on community participation impossible. Regardless of this point

Table 1: Table of the Seven Sampled Kebeles

| No	List of selected Kebeles	Total Households per kebele	S (N$_{1, 2, 3...}$) /N	Sample Respondents from each kebele
1	Bedelle	2627	503(2627) / 11361	116
2	Mettu 02	2825	503(2825) / 11361	125
3	Hurumu	1309	503(1309) / 11361	59
4	Nopha	588	503(588) / 11361	26
5	Bure	933	503(933) / 11361	41
6	Yayho	1972	503(1972) / 11361	87
7	Darimu	1107	503(1107) / 11361	49
	Total	**11361**		**503**

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016
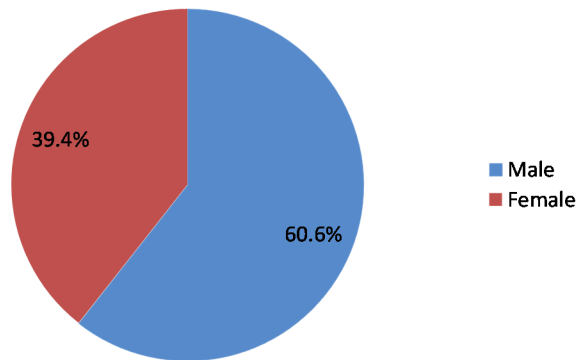
 Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016
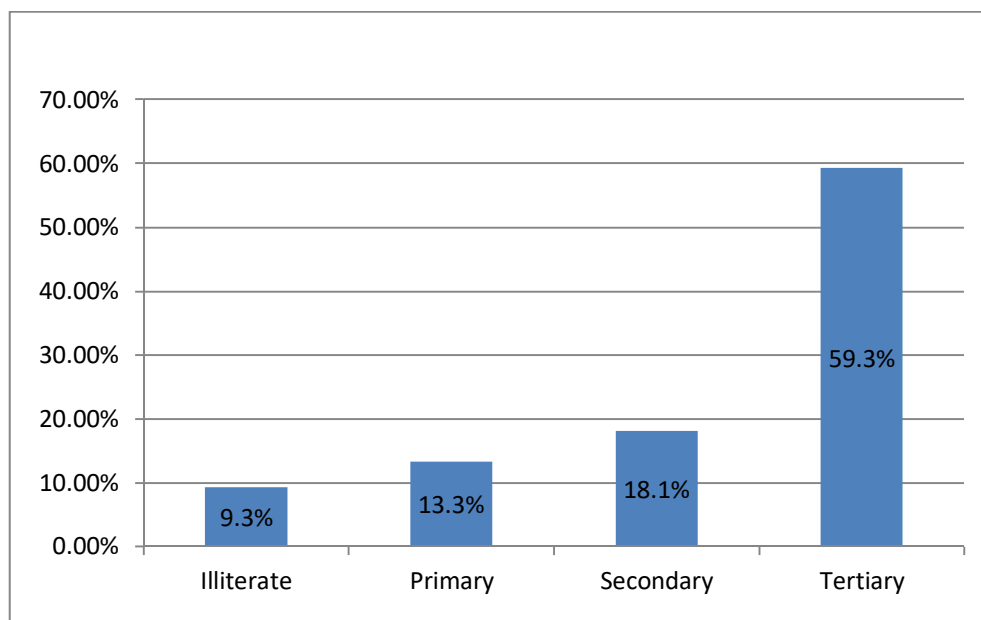**Figure 1.** Gender of Community Respondents Group
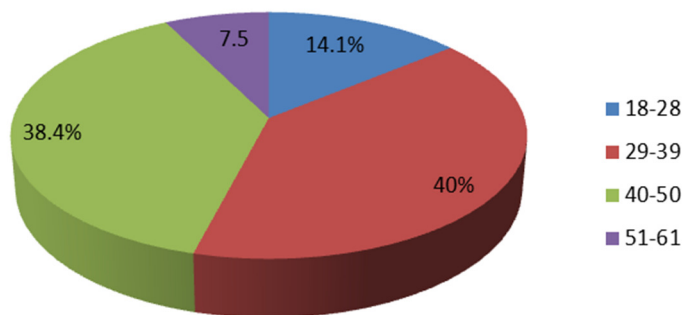
Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016
Figure 2. Age Distribution of Respondents
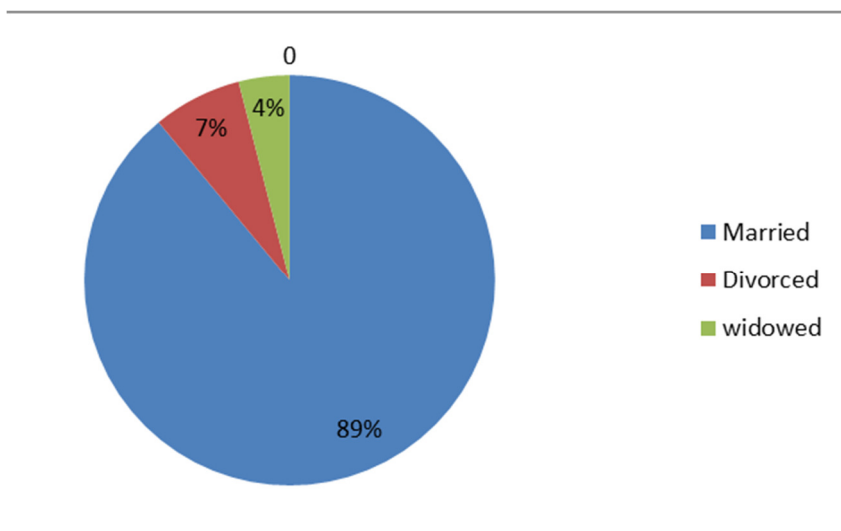
Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016
Figure 3. Marital Statuses of Sample Respondents

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016
Figure 4. Distribution of Respondents According to Educational Qualification

however, all respondents revealed a positive attitude towards community participation irrespective of age group.

Figure 3 illustrates the marital status of the community respondents. The researchers noted that this variable also contributes to poor participation by the community. As reflected in figure 4 that 89 percent of the total sample reported that they were   married. Another 7 percent of the total sample stated that they were divorced and 4

percent of the total sample stated that they were widowed.

Figure 4 indicates that (47) participants, representing 9.3 percent of the total sample were illiterate. Another (67) participants, representing 13.3 percent that they have primary education. Also (91) respondentsrepresenting18.1 percent stated that they had acquired secondary education. In addition, (298) participants representing 59.3 percent that they have

Table 2. Distribution of respondents by Occupation

Economic Characteristics	Total Sample (N = 503)	
Occupation	No. respondents	Percent (%)
Farmers	51	10.1%
Merchants	173	34.4%
Civil Servants	256	50.9%
Daily Labors	23	4.6%
Total	503	100%

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016

Table 3. Distribution of Respondents by Monthly Income

Economic Characteristics	Total Sample (N = 503)	
Monthly Income	No. respondents	Percent (%)
<500	34	6.7%
501-1000	108	21.5%
1001-1500	107	21.3%
1501-2000	196	39%
>2000	58	11.5%
Total	503	100%

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016

tertiary. The above analysis indicates that participation rate is higher in tertiary than that of illiteracy. The investigators understand that the general level of education of the people has a significant relationship to their standard of living and to actively participate in their community development. According to Theron (2005) also states that illiteracy is an inhibiting factor in popular participation. This is because illiterate people may be marginalized by professional and technical communication during the popular participation process.

The table 2 shows that (51) respondents represent 10.1 percent of community members were farmers, (173) respondents represents 34.4 percent in a study area were merchants, (256) respondents represents 50.9 percent in a study area were civil servants and (23) respondents represents 4.6 percent in a study area were daily labors. The researchers understood that in community civil servants occupation is higher than that of other occupations.

Regarding monthly income, farmer's respondents were doubtful to consistently estimate their income, the family cash income was estimated based on the sale of cash crops, especially coffee, and chat even if there were some other crops like maize and off-farm income that the farmers earned in the study area. Accordingly, the average monthly income of sampled respondents was about 500 Birr with the minimum and maximum income of above 2000 Birr per month, respectively (Table 3). The survey result also reveals that the majority of the respondents earn income on the base of their occupations:- (34) respondents represent 6.7 percent of community members which earn less than 500 Birr,

(108) respondents represents 21.5 percent in a study area were earn between 501-1000 Birr, (107) respondents represents 21.3 percent in a study area were earn between1001-1500 Birr, (196) respondents represents 39 percent in a study area were earn between1501-2000 Birr and (58) respondents represents 11.5 percent in a study area were earn above 2000 Birr monthly.

Analysis and Discussion

The table 4 reveals that 362 respondents, representing 72 percent of the total sample, do not know about popular participation. Then, only 141 respondents, representing 28 percent of the total sample know about popular participation. The researchers understood that, the few respondents know about the concept of popular participation. However, Raid (2000) appeals that democratic policies state that public activities are not considered to be the special vicinity of the knowledgeable few, perhaps the same elite leadership who always run community affairs, but it is the business of everyone in the community.

The given table 5 reveals that 345 respondents, representing 68.6 percent of the total sample, do not participate in development program. Then, only 158 respondents, representing 31.4 percent of the total sample participate in development program. The researchers understood that, the few respondents participate in development program; development is not achieved through the participation of few. However,

Table 4. Distribution of Respondents about Popular Participation

Do you know about popular participation	Total Sample (N = 503)	
	No. of respondents	Percent %
Yes	141	28%
No	362	72%
Total	503	100%

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016

Table 5. Distribution of Respondents about Participation in Development Packages

Did you participate in community development actively	Total Sample (N = 503)	
	No. of respondents	Percent %
Yes	158	31.4%
No	345	68.6%
Total	503	100%

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016

Table 6. Poor Popular Participation

Poor popular participation	Total Sample (N = 503)	
	No. of respondents	Percent %
Yes	387	76.9%
No	116	23.1%
Total	503	100%

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016

factually development requires active participation of stakeholder's from many dimensions. So, the researchers deduced that there was poor participation in the study area. The reason why respondents had lower participation in this study area, as they stated that they didn't understand that their participation has value in community development, less awareness creation from concerned bodies. In addition to this, majority of respondents stated that lack of accountability is as one factor in community development.

Table 6 indicates that 387 respondents representing 76.9 percent reveals that there is poor popular participation in community development. These show that poor popular participation is higher in study area. Then (116) respondents, representing 23.1 percent have not seen poor popular participation in community development.

As majority of respondents replied, the consequence of poor popular participation is low development. This shows that, peoples not participated actively in their own affairs; the development should be lower. Then, another consequence of poor popular participation is bad governance. This reveals that poor popular participation encourage bad governance. It also leads to high poverty

and low development cams through poor popular participation.

Socio- Economic Factors Regarding Popular Participation in Community Development

Figure 7 reveals that only (84) respondents, representing 16.7 percent of the total sample, have seen participation of all in development program. Then, majority (419) respondents, representing 83.3 percent of the total sample replied that, there was no participation of all in development program.

Based on this finding, the researchers understood that, if the few people participate in development program; development is indeed not achieved.

As majority of respondents that gender biases was one of the reason that prevent participation of all. In the study area, priority was given for men than women. Besides, low income another problems that hinder participation of all. In addition, illiteracy and lack of uniformity were mentioned in study area as factors that undermine the participation of all in community development. Illiteracy is an inhibiting factor in popular
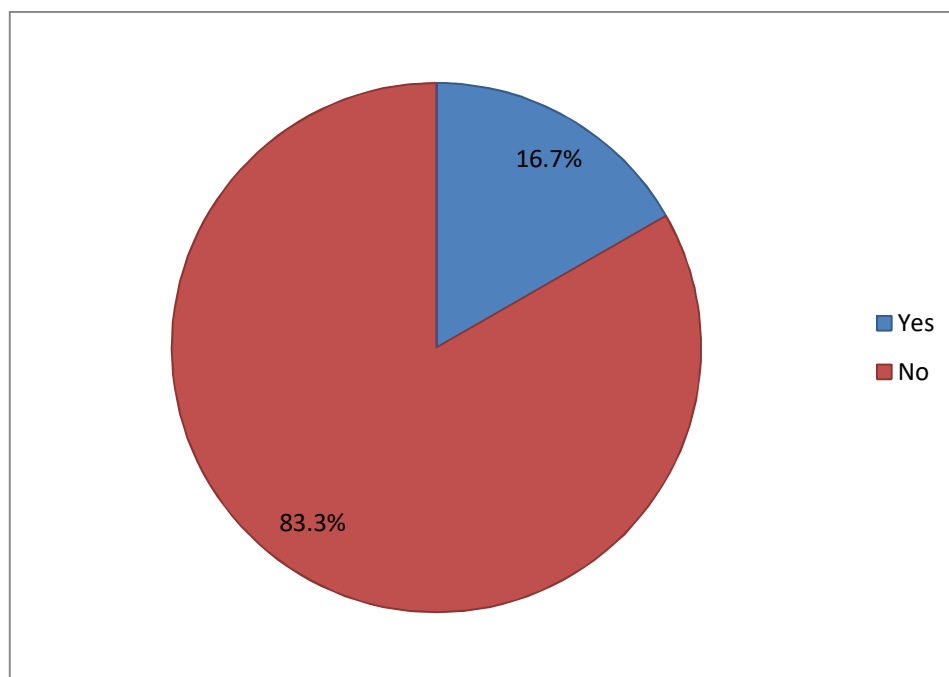
Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016
Figure 7. Participation of all in Community Development

Table 7. Opposition of People in Participation

| Opposition in Participation	Total Sample (N = 503)	
	Frequency	Percent %
Yes	475	94.4%
No	28	5.6%
Total	503	100%

Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016

participation. This is because illiterate people may be marginalized by professional and technical communication during the popular participation process as Thorn (2005). There is a general assumption that higher income level, higher the participation. As a result, it can be said that lower income level affects participation. Economic condition of people also determines their active participation in development run by local government.

Table 7 indicates that (475) respondents, represents 94.4 percent stated people opposed participation due to different reasons, (28) respondents, represents 5.6 percent stated that no opposition of participation in community development. In study area, traditionally and culturally people particularly socially enlightened class and female folk are non participatory in nature. The socially enlightened class is self-centered and always tries to avoid involving into existing participatory practices rather thinking it as an unnecessary disturbance.

As respondents replied, the reasons that hamper active participation were caused by outdated attitude, traditional view of people against modern or developed attitudes. Also, they stated that opposition of participation was resistance of change. When, new technologies entered among the people; the rate of accepting new technologies were very low. Improved technologies are used change traditional living standards of societies in to modern way living standards of the societies. Moreover, low participation was caused by lack of community education and lack of awareness about development plan. Not only these but also as majority of respondents stated low participation was caused by conflict raised between community leaders and community members and lack of trust in community leaders causes opposition in participation at community development. In fact, development without support of people is not sustainable. Sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations.
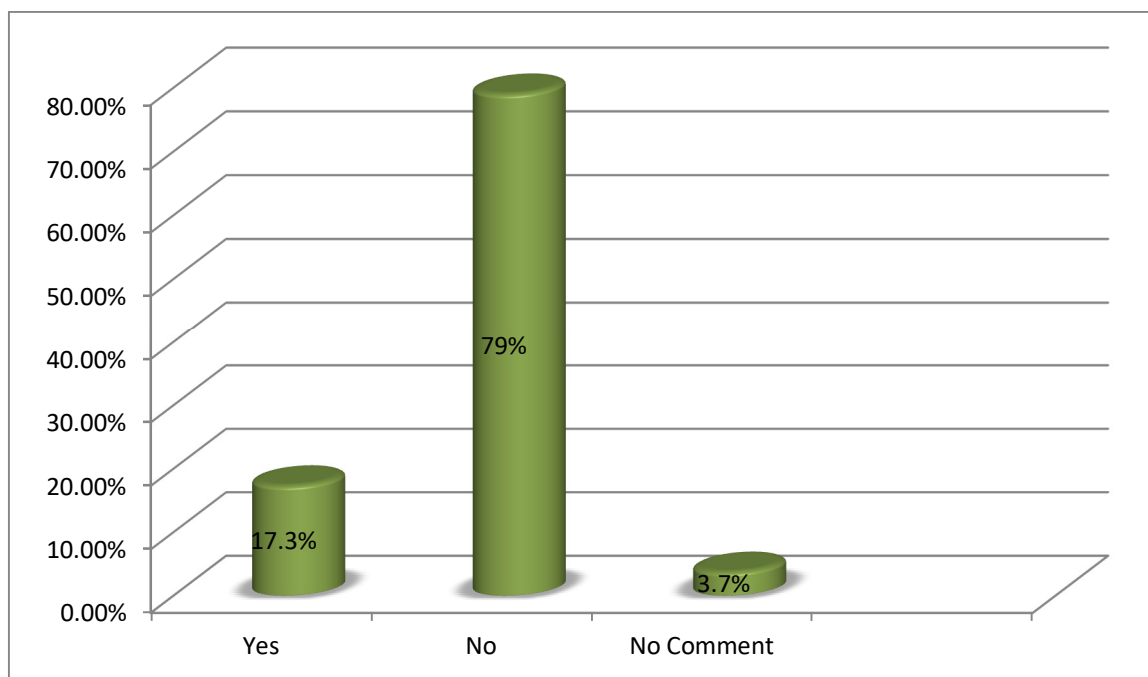
Source: Researchers' Survey, 2016
Figure 8. Conducive Institution /Regulatory Basis.

Knowledge about Institutional and Regulatory Framework

Figure 8 indicates that 79 percent of respondents stated there was no conducive institution, Power in the center and the bureaucratic tendency of establishing control on local council, communities has failed to emerge as a well-structured local government institution where as 17.3 percent stated there was conducive institutional structure in the study area. But about 3.7 percent had no idea regarding on conducive institutional structure.

As majority of respondents replied that the reasons for not conducive institutional structure/ regulatory basis was multipart or complex regulatory basis; bureaucratic trend; disarrangement of institutions and narrow scope of institutions. As Khan, (1991) lack of expertise in technical matters and absence of gradual institutional reform has made the existing community structure non-participatory. Appropriate legal provision is very important in shaping the institutional procedures as well as ensuring and protecting the participatory right of community people in development schemes. The indicator has been used to assess the extent of influence of the existing rules, regulations and guidelines of community in encouraging local people into the participatory practices at local.

Ways of Encouraging Active Popular Participation

As majority of respondents agreed that, the most ways of encouraging active popular participation in community development through community education. Like that capacity building, self sufficient, and empowerment are other elements by which active popular participation achieved effectively. Based on this finding, the researchers concluded that educating community was the dominant ways of boosting popular participation in community development.

Theron (2005:122) argues that issues of popular participation and empowerment in the planning process for service delivery are central to sustainable development. Fitzgerald (1997) as cited in Nekwaya (2007:27) an individual becomes empowered by feeling able to do things not done previously, gaining an ability to do these new things and having opportunities opened up which were previously deprived of. Popular participation is an essential part of community development and one of the factors in the community capacity building process, which allows involvement of people in the different stages of decision making. Cook (1997) as cited in Nekwaya (2007:26). Rahman (1993:19) argues that self-reliance is a state of mind that regards one's own mental and material resources as the primary stock to draw on in the pursuit of one's objectives, and finds emotional fulfillment not only in achieving the objectives as such but also in the very fact of having achieved them primarily by using one's own resources. People must feel and believe that it

is their own efforts that are driving the development process.

Procedures Required to Boost Popular Participation in Community Development

As majority respondents stated that, the most crucial procedures to enhance popular participation in community development is creating conducive environment and making community inclusive. Some of the respondents also said applying bottom up approach, active communication and openness as mechanisms to boost popular participation in community development. Fokane (2008) argued that bottom-up approaches allow people to retain control over how resources are used and also be able to influence direction, planning and processes of the development schemes. The traditional community was either government driven, government led or at least sanctioned and tacitly approved by government (top down approach). But bottom up approach was more room for individuals and groups of people and tends to be more independent and ideas or views emanated from grassroots levels. Other respondents also mentioned flexibility, developing clear objective and respecting divergent values and views as instrument to promote active popular participation in community development.

Comment from the interview and Focus Group Discussion.

Data from key informants and focus group discussants which support the findings through questionnaires

Theme 1: Universal Understanding of Popular Participation

Popular participation is a vague concept which acts as an umbrella term for a style of development planning intervention (Theron, 2005:113). Burkey (1992:56)also mentioned that participation of the community poor in their own development has been measured as a key factor in the success of schemes. The findings indicate that there are mixed feelings and understanding about popular participation amongst the people who were part of the focus group. Literate people have better understanding of popular participation than people at grass root level. The understanding of popular participation by community members in the study area is reflected by the following quoted common responses:

> *"I think popular participation is the involvement of community members in activities which seek to improve the standard of living of the entire*

> *community." "Is an input by the community indecision making and planning process when there is developmental activity taking place. "Popular participation in development is still minimal; there is a lot that needs to be done."*

The above quotations indicate that most community members in the study area did not understand what popular participation is all about. However, it is not being practical implemented. This implies that there is a need to explain more to the community about its participation in development process, development sustainability and service provision system. They stated that, although the community members have a problem of working together, popular participation is still essential, because only when the whole community participates, can the goals of the community be achieved. The community can only develop when people work in organized way. Key informants similarly suggested that, popular participation is a new concept.

Theme 2: Ability Building

Ability building as a building block of people-centered development. Ethiopia illustrates that, development is not about the delivery of service to a passive citizenry. This means that ability building is about the involvement people and provision of adequate knowledge to people at grass root level. All respondents agreed that empowerment of community members to participate in community process is still lacking. The community expressed the feeling that they were not capacitated to participate fully in development processes due to the inadequate knowledge which should prepare them for their responsibilities. They highlighted that there is a need for workshops and training which would intend to educate communities why it is crucial to partake in development programs taking place in the area. It is, therefore, the burden of the community leaders in the study area to capacitate and empower communities in order to take part in developments and make informed decisions. The respondents claim that they had never been empowered on the development procedures and project processes. This lack of knowledge is reflected in the following quoted common responses:

> *"We have not been told that our contribution is needed and crucial." "The communities need to be educated about the importance of their involvement in developments taking place in the society.*

It is practically impossible for the governments to offer training to all community members. They believe that community members are relevant people who should be capacitated with Procedures and process of community

development and when their participation is needed.

Theme 3: Prerequisites Documentation

Diverse writers stress that popular participation takes place if the community is given an opportunity to direct their own development journey. This goes as far as giving the community a right to identify what should be done. Understanding that people at grass root level know their needs better than development agencies. However, community respondents recognized the role of popular participation in needs identification process as important. Respondents also suggested that projects should be listed according to their order of importance in a community document.

Respondents stated that it was their constitutional right to identify prerequisites and problems which they wanted to see being addressed in their area. The respondents reflected on this theme as follows:

> "*We should identify things that we want to see happening.*" "*Community should mention issues that they want to be solved.*"

In addressing community prerequisites and problem, community respondents agreed on their role as one of identifying and generating a list of needs in their discussions. In conclusion, the government should give community members a chance to identify their needs and also be given an opportunity to raise their views freely regarding development.

Theme 4: Decision-Making

Popular participation is about bringing people who are outside the decision-making process into it. One may say popular participation allows all community stakeholders to have a word and decide on development concerns. The community respondents expressed concerns regarding their participation in decision making phase as they perceived that our government was imposing the already made decisions (top-down approach). This element violets the notion of democracy and perpetrates the legacy of the past, where people were deprived of rights to decide on what they want to see happening in the society. Popular participation emphasizes the point that people at grass-root level should play a central role in addressing their developmental issues.

Theron (2005:23) agrees that development is about people. This implies that people should be at the center of any development effort and that development effort should be meaningful to them.

Theme 5: Community Education

Community education process approach extends the

principles of bottom-up planning and popular participation by arguing that change agents and development organization should adopt an education attitude. This calls for an integration of the three elements of community education. These elements into projects design, planning, and implementation to create a culture of mutual learning and partnership between the study area communities.

These three are as follows: The community and the service delivery system, the capacity of the people and expected output must be integrated, the community and the community organizations: the formulation of the needs and demands by the people and the decision-making process of the organization should be integrated and the program/project and the community. organizations: the program/project objectives have to be in keeping with the capacity of the organization and that of the community.

> "*Community education is the most important hence is not given to community members effectively as key informant and group discussions*"

Theme 6: Self-Sufficiency

Self-sufficiency is a state of mind that regards one's own mental and material resources as the primary stock to draw on in the pursuit of one's objectives, and finds emotional fulfillment not only in achieving the objectives as such but also in the very fact of having achieved them primarily by using one's own resources. People must feel and believe that it is their own efforts that are driving the development process. Self-sufficiency makes a positive effect on rural communities by participating in development. It helps to do away with the mentality of dependence, promotes self-awareness and confidence, and people participate in to solve their problems. Self-sufficiency is the question of attitude rather than money and material. Burkey (1993:50) indicates that self-sufficiency teach people how to form and manage their own organization. This means that people must have confidence in their own knowledge and skills, in their ability to identify problems and find solutions in order to make improvement in their own life. This would help the study area community in terms of resource mobilization and acceleration of popular participation implementation.

CONCLUSION

On the basis research finding the study identified that people in the study have insufficient understanding of popular participation. This influences the capacity to participate in community development programs. Yet, civic participation in the study area as a key factor in the

success and sustainability of development schemes. Therefore, giving value for popular participation and making it a spontaneous activity to do, in order to carry out development initiatives. The findings of the study showed clearly that the views, feelings and opinions of the community should be heard and applied by development structures in ensuring community involvement.

In the case of the study area, community could be said that there are community members who are trying to avoid clash by not saying all they have to say at the meetings. This should not be the case as conflict should not be avoided when it comes to popular participation. Discussions could take place, and in the process the stakeholders could have a common vision, but other people's views could also be appreciated. However, it could be concluded that the success of community meetings should not be measured against the attendance but by its ability to transform needs and wants into tangible results.

The findings indicated that there was a lack of popular participation in development process. Decisions relating community development is taken by only community leaders, without the involvement of community members. It can be concluded that current decision making process does not allow the community an opportunity to inform the progress. The literature and practical study show that the principal phase in achieving reliable popular participation contains a process whereby communities should become more aware of their own situation carefully understand socio-economic reality around them, have mutual understanding amongst community members, knowing their problems, the causes of these problems, and what measures they themselves can take to begin changing their condition. A universal method to development at the local, national and international levels should be followed to tackle the challenges of popular participation.

At the same time, there should be continual enhancement of the recognition and promotion of the community. The recognition and mobilization of the potential of all stakeholders and the people themselves can make a significant contribution to achieving effective popular participation. It is concluded that in the study area, conducive environment should be created for enabling participation and this should include addressing the factors influencing civic participation as well as the capacity gaps within the community in order to achieve popular participation effectively.

RECOMMENDATION

The following specific recommendation, among others, should be considered in the efforts to strengthen popular participation: Methods to boost popular participation

devices are required. Some of them are as follows

➢   Active application of existing policy agenda for popular participation.
➢   Involvement of people in decision making system.
➢   Creating forums for meetings, workshops, and conferences to discuss and debate relevant issues open and engaging all relevant stakeholders during the planning stage of the developments.
➢   Traditional authorities should be included in the development of community.
➢   Local government should strengthen community awareness on the information technology and sustainable development
➢   Some structural changes can bring awareness and power among the marginalized groups breaking the traditional patterns. However, desired outcomes may not come immediate. In this context, local government working with the marginalized section in the communities need to be included in the local development process through public opinion mobilization, design and planning process. This may gradually help to institutionalize the participatory practices in the development process.
➢   The researchers recommended actors of development (individuals, households, communities' government, NGOs, civil society organizations and private companies should work actively to cope up factors affecting civic participation in community development of the study area.
➢   Popular based Monitoring Team can be introduced to promote and to ensure popular participation in community development practices at the local level. In line with this view, a committee may be formed as civil society members, local media, school teachers and socially enlightened persons, which would work as a watchdog and recommend measures to improve popular participation. With the fulfillment of the above recommendations, popular participation would be accelerated, the community will be empowered and the lives of the community will be improved.

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