Democratic And Pseudo-Democratic Leadership Styles As Correlate Of Sustainability Of Community Development Projects In Southwest, Nigeria

Olanipekun, Olubunmi Adebola[1], Adedokun, Mary Olufunke[2]

[1,2] Department of Adult Education and Community Development, Ekiti State University, Ado-Ekiti

*Correspondence Author: olubunmi.olanipekun@eksu.edu.ng

Abstract

This study explores the relationship between community leadership styles—specifically, democratic and pseudo-democratic styles—and the sustainability of community projects in Southwest Nigeria. Employing a descriptive research design of the survey type, data were collected through self-structured questionnaires administered to 300 community leaders and 1,459 community members across 60 communities in three states. The instruments utilized were the Democratic and Pseudo-democratic Leadership Styles Questionnaire (DPLSQ) and the Sustainability of Community Development Projects Questionnaire (SCDPQ), each designed to gauge respondents' perceptions and attitudes. Descriptive and inferential statistical analyses, including Pearson's Product Moment Correlation, were employed to analyze the data. Findings revealed a significant discrepancy between democratic leadership ideals and actual practices, with community leaders often failing to involve members in decision-making processes, mobilization, or seeking their opinions on projects. Similarly, pseudo-democratic leadership, characterized by token consultation while disregarding community input, was prevalent. However, while democratic leadership exhibited a moderately positive relationship with project sustainability, pseudo-democratic leadership showed no significant correlation. It was concluded that democratic leadership enhances sustainability, whereas pseudo-democratic leadership undermines it. Recommendations include fostering genuine community participation in project decision-making processes and advocating for democratic leadership styles to ensure project sustainability. These findings underscore the importance of transparent, inclusive governance practices for successful community development initiatives.

Keywords: Leadership Styles; Democratic; Pseudo-democratic; Sustainability;, Community Development Projects

1. Introduction

The process of community development has been in existence since ancient times, predating the establishment of colonial authority. Community development takes place when individuals of a community unite with enthusiasm and resolve to tackle their shared issues. This suggests that individuals within a community actively collaborate to identify enduring resolutions to their prevailing socio-economic challenges, without depending on external influences. Alison (2011) asserts that community development is a collaborative process in which community members unite to collectively address shared challenges and devise solutions. Ideally, community development initiatives in developing nations prioritise addressing the perceived requirements and fundamental amenities of the people, including the provision of well-maintained roads, power, healthcare facilities, marketplaces, educational institutions, clean water, and agricultural settlements, among other essential provisions. Community development serves as a measure of both economic and social progress, yielding advantages for all members within a given community.

The responsibility for community development lies partially with the community members, as the government is unable to provide all the requirements and wants of the community. In the majority of

communities in Southwest Nigeria, individuals make financial and non-financial contributions to address their perceived needs, without relying on government or third-party assistance. A significant proportion of communities in the Southwest region have a tendency to proactively address their perceived needs without waiting for or depending on government intervention. According to Adedokun (2019), community development practice is based on the recognition that the government is unable to meet all the requirements of the population. The necessity for mobilising community members towards development projects arises from the fact that they will ultimately reap the benefits of such initiatives.

It was discovered by the researcher that a significant number of communities in Southwest Nigeria established the Landlord Community Development Association (LCDA), which assumes the crucial role of formulating a strategic plan for the advancement of these communities. The LCDA, in conjunction with community members and community development agents, assumes a substantial role in executing programmes that are specifically designed to foster community development. Isibor, et al. (2016) defined a project as a deliberate and organised endeavour consisting of interconnected and synchronised actions aimed at accomplishing specific stated goals within a specified budget and timeframe. The definition suggests that a project is undertaken with the purpose of accomplishing a particular goal within a specified timeframe, and its implementation relies on budgeting and meticulous planning, without which no success can be attained.

According to Abiona and Bello (2013), projects that are exclusively given by the government without the involvement of the people cannot be maintained due to a lack of commitment from the people. The longevity of any community initiative is heavily contingent upon the active involvement of its members. When community members are engaged, they are granted a voice and a degree of influence over the projects.

The long-term viability of any community project appears to heavily rely on the active involvement of its members. Community members' engagement refers to the active involvement of community members in shaping the trajectory of a project. When community members actively participate, they are empowered to exert control over initiatives and contribute to their long-term viability. The active involvement of community members is of utmost importance for ensuring the long-term viability of community development initiatives. It is widely held that the attainment of sustainability in community development initiatives cannot be accomplished through the imposition of responsibility or coercion, but rather necessitates the adoption of appropriate leadership styles. Leaders bear the task of implementing leadership styles that ensure the long-term viability of community development initiatives.

The pursuit of a sustainable community development project has been a subject of extensive deliberation over an extended period. However, the attainment of its maximum objectives appears to be hindered by a multitude of problems. Several issues exist regarding the quality of leadership, which is considered a potential risk to the successful development of communities, as well as the engagement, mobilisation, and involvement of residents in decision-making processes related to community development programmes. The issue of sustainability in rural areas appears to be a significant one, primarily stemming from inadequate leadership or leadership styles.

The notion of leadership has captivated several individuals, spanning from ancient Greek philosophers to contemporary professors specialising in leadership. Scholars

have posited that leadership plays a crucial role in the pursuit of development across various domains, including socio-political, economic, and religious aspects, inside both developed and poor nations (Oruonye, 2013). One could posit that a community lacking a suitable leadership style may encounter challenges in effectively mobilising resources or exerting influence over community development initiatives. Aref and Ma'rof (2009) argue that the successful progress of local communities is contingent upon the presence of dynamic leaders who possess the willingness and capability to proactively undertake projects. The absence of competent community leaders is frequently cited by local residents as a hindrance to the progress of community development. Local leaders play a crucial role in ensuring the long-term viability of community development projects. They serve as the foundation for the success of any community development initiative.

The community leaders exhibit a diverse range of leadership approaches. This study examines the democratic and pseudo-democratic leadership styles, which are commonly observed among community leaders in Southwest Nigeria.

Democratic leadership is often referred to as enlightened leadership due to its emphasis on acknowledging and valuing the self-worth and esteem of each individual. Democratic leaders facilitate unrestricted communication and actively engage community members in the process of decision-making. This suggests that democratic leaders acknowledge and give precedence to the views and opinions of all members within the community. This particular leadership style facilitates the empowerment of community leaders to encourage individual members to propose projects that they deem very significant for their community. Additionally, it permits these members to engage in deliberations regarding the implementation and long-term viability of these projects, with the aim of

enhancing the community's well-being. The behaviours of community leaders who adopt a democratic leadership style seem to be grounded on principles such as trust, integrity, honesty, equality, openness, and mutual respect.

Democratic leaders demonstrate empathy and compassion towards others via attentive listening and comprehension. The followers actively engage in setting objectives for community transformation, particularly those aimed at advancing the community's welfare and fostering their personal growth, education, and advancement. The leader of a democratic system prioritises incentives above punishment. Discipline or correction is provided in a fair and equitable manner. This leader acknowledges the inevitable occurrence of errors in the implementation of community development initiatives and regards them as valuable chances for learning. Thus, all parties involved reap advantages, and the mistakes are unlikely to happen again.

The theory of democratic leadership posits that individuals are more inclined to demonstrate commitment towards implementing decisions in which they have actively participated during the deliberation process. Therefore, the democratic leader encourages the involvement of followers in the process of decision-making, the establishment of performance benchmarks, and the assessment of performance in terms of sustainability. It is evident that the presence of a democratic leadership style within a community is associated with the effective maintenance and sustainability of development programmes.

Based on the researcher's visit to various communities in Southwest Nigeria, it was noted that the implementation of a democratic leadership style is conducive to the successful execution of community development programmes. It was noted that community members who were granted permission to participate in the implementation of some

initiatives made every effort to ensure the projects' long-term viability. Ukaidi (2016) argues that democratic leadership fosters a sense of accountability among followers, resulting in increased productivity.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that several community leaders also adopt a pseudo-democratic leadership style. These leaders exhibit a democratic leadership style towards the group, while in reality, they portray an autocratic leadership style. The leader in this context solicits recommendations and opinions from members, yet fails to effectively incorporate them. Olagboye (2004), as referenced in Ogunyinka and Adedoyin (2013), defines the pseudo-democratic leadership style as one that presents itself as democratic but is actually dictatorial. The individuals in subordinate positions mostly assume a supportive role rather than actively participating in the maintenance of community initiatives. The longevity of community projects is contingent upon the leadership, as the recommendations put forth by followers often remain unimplemented and fail to be implemented.

In view of the above, the study determined the relationship between community democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects; and the relationship between community pseudo-democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects.

Research Hypotheses
Ho1: There is no significant relationship between community democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects.
Ho2: There is no significant relationship between community pseudo-democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects.

2. Literature Review

Democratic leadership is a form of leadership characterised by its liberal nature and inclusive approach. He actively participates in group discussions and encourages recommendations. He maintains a firm awareness of the group's objectives and strives to ensure that his subordinates likewise have a clear understanding of the group's objectives and purpose. In general, he outlines the objectives of both the group and the individual and proposes two or three options from which a decision must be made (Ashibi, 2005).It highlights the need of collective involvement in policy-making. The group's objectives are determined through consultations and engagement with many individuals in the community. The leader endeavours to ensure that every individual perceives their significance within the group. The process of communication involves a multi-directional flow of ideas between subordinates and the leader. The leader assigns responsibilities to individuals who possess the necessary qualifications, experience, and availability. The leadership style under consideration focuses on the aspects of performance and individuals (Bhargavi & Yaseen, 2016; Puni et al., 2014).

Under this particular style of leadership, subordinates are granted autonomy in selecting their colleagues, and the allocation of tasks is delegated to the collective decision-making process. This form of leadership involves actively seeking input from subordinates and incorporating their feedback into the decision-making process. It is characterised by participatory leadership, where responsibilities are shared and decision-making and communication are structured around consultation, deliberation, and group participation. According to Ashibi (2005), it is desirable for group members to exhibit initiative, originality, intelligence, a keen interest in formulating plans and policies, and active involvement in the decision-making process.

This leadership style is associated with improved management-labor interactions, increased morale, and enhanced satisfaction. This approach demonstrates efficacy in situations where the subordinate possesses substantial experience and commitment, enabling them to operate autonomously with minimal guidance. Consequently, it results in a significant degree of efficiency and contentment. Subordinates experience an enhanced sense of self-worth as a result of the significance attributed to their thoughts and contributions, leading to undoubtedly elevated subordinate morale.

Imariagbontua (2016) posits that Pseudo-democratic leadership is characterised by a leader that professes democratic principles in their administration, while in reality exhibits dictatorial tendencies. This leader consistently solicited the thoughts and opinions of their followers, however chose not to implement them. The leader feigns democracy, while internally, he exhibits autocratic tendencies. He unilaterally establishes policies and procedures, disregarding the input and opinions of his followers in things that directly impact them. The pseudo-democratic leadership style is characterised by its outward appearance of democracy, while its underlying foundation lies in deception and pretence. Olagboye (2004), as referenced in Ogunyinka and Adedoyin (2013), defines the pseudo-democratic leadership style as one that presents itself as democratic but is actually dictatorial.

Whenever a community initiates a project, a leader who espouses pseudo-democratic principles selects individuals to serve on different committees, thereby facilitating the deliberation and execution of various phases of the project. He facilitates the exchange of knowledge and expertise across the committees, actively soliciting comments and ideas from the members during the decision-making process, but refrains from integrating them into the final decision. He unilaterally makes the decision.

Okoji (2014) conducted a study on the impact of leadership styles on the implementation of community development initiatives in rural areas of Akwa Ibom state, Nigeria. The survey included 179 respondents. Descriptive analysis and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation were employed to analyse the given data. The results of the study indicate that community leaders that demonstrate democratic leadership styles promote collaboration and teamwork, whereas autocratic leaders tend to exhibit inflexible thinking and perspectives when it comes to implementing community development initiatives. The study advocates for the necessity of effective communication between rulers and followers. By means of documentation and information dissemination, followers can exchange best practices and gain knowledge from one another.

3. Research Methods

This study adopted the descriptive research design of the survey type. The descriptive research design was considered appropriate because the study describes the existing situation regarding leadership styles and sustainability of community development projects in southwest Nigeria. The population of this study consisted of all community leaders and community members who are adults (above 18 years) living in all the communities in the southwest geo-political zone. The six states in the geo-political zone are Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ekiti, and Ondo States. The sample for this study consisted of 300 community leaders and 1,459 community members, who were selected from 60 communities in 3 states in Southwest Nigeria. The sample was selected through a multi-stage sampling procedure.

In stage one, 3 states (Ekiti, Osun and Oyo) were selected through a simple random

sampling technique. The second stage involved the selection of 20 Local Government Areas from the 3 states earlier selected through a proportionate stratified random sampling technique. In stage three, 3 communities were selected from each of the Local Government Areas using simple random sampling technique. In stage four, 5 community leaders were purposively selected, while 25 community members who are adults were selected from each community using a simple random sampling technique.

The data for this study were collected through the use of two self-structured questionnaire. The two self structured questionnaire tagged "Democratic and Pseudo-democratic Leadership Styles Questionnaire (DPLSQ)" and "Sustainability of Community Development Projects Questionnaire (SCDPQ)" were used to gather useful and relevant data for the study. The Democratic and Pseudo-democratic Leadership Styles Questionnaire (DPLSQ) was administered on community members and it was divided into two sections, namely Section A and B. *Section A* of the instrument sought for comprehensive bio-data of the respondents. *Section B* consisted of 12 items which sought for information on democratic and pseudo-democratic leadership styles. Each of the statement is rated on modified 4-poit Likert Scale; Strongly Agree (SA) – 4, Agree (A) – 3, Disagree (D) – 2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) – 1. The acceptance level for any questionnaire item is 2.5, which is the mean (x) of the rating scale, any mean value from 2.5 and above indicated acceptability of the item while mean value below 2.5 does not.

The Sustainability of Community Development Projects Questionnaire (SCDPQ) was administered on community leaders and community members. It was divided into two sections, namely Section A and B. *Section A* of the instrument sought for comprehensive bio-data of the respondents. *Section B* consisted of 14 items which sought for information on the sustainability of community development projects. The instruments w ere prepared using 4 points Likert-type scale, which was used as follows: Highly Sustained (HS) - 4, Moderately Sustained (MS) - 3, Fairly Sustained (FS) -2 and Not Sustained (NS) -1. The respondents were expected to pick one out of the options. The acceptance level for any questionnaire item is 2.5, which is the mean cut-off value of the rating scale. This implies that any mean value from 2.5 and above indicated acceptability of the item while mean value below 2.5 does not indicate acceptability.

The validity of the instruments was ensured using face and content validity. The items in the questionnaire were presented to experts in the fields of Tests and Measurement, Adult Education and Community Development. To ensure the face validity of the instrument, the experts helped to determine the face validity of the instrument in measuring what it purports to measure. Their observations were used to effect the necessary corrections on the instruments. In so doing, all irrelevances and ambiguous items were eliminated.

The researcher personally administered the instrument with the help of a trained research assistant from each of the states sampled in the study. This made it possible for the researcher to explain and interpret some items of the questionnaire to the respondents. The researcher's personal contact and visit to the respondents helped in ensuring a better understanding of the items of the questionnaire and also eased retrieval of the questionnaire. The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Hypotheses 1 – 2 were tested using Pearson's Product Moment Correlation Analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

4. Result and Discussion

Table 1: Descriptive analysis of democratic and Pseudo-democratic leadership style among community leaders in Southwest, Nigeria

S/N	Items	SA (%)	A (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	SD	Remark
	Democratic Leadership Style							
1.	Community leaders usually seek the opinion of members before commencement of project.	174 (11.9)	208 (14.3)	815 (55.9)	262 (18.0)	2.20	0.87	Disagreed
2.	Community leaders usually mobilise community members towards project implementation	87 (6.0)	353 (24.2)	844 (57.8)	175 (12.0)	2.24	0.74	Disagreed
3.	Community leaders usually link community members with government before implementation of community projects.	58 (4.0)	408 (28.0)	790 (54.1)	203 (13.9)	2.22	0.73	Disagreed
4.	Community leaders usually hold meeting with community members.	58 (4.0)	203 (13.9)	673 (46.1)	525 (36.0)	1.85	0.80	Disagreed
5.	Community leaders usually seek opinion of community members on project.	145 (9.9)	175 (12.0)	877 (60.1)	262 (18.0)	2.14	0.82	Disagreed
6.	Community leaders usually involve members in decision making.	58 (4.0)	294 (20.2)	1048 (71.8)	59 (4.0)	2.24	0.59	Disagreed
	Pseudo-Democratic Leadership Style							
7.	Community leaders usually seek the opinion of community members on project to be initiated but choose the project that interest him	39 (2.7)	340 (23.3)	715 (49.0)	365 (25.0)	2.04	0.77	Disagreed
8.	Community leaders usually seek the opinion of community members on how the projects should be implemented but ignore their opinions during implementation.	39 (2.7)	481 (33.0)	790 (54.1)	149 (10.2)	2.28	0.68	Disagreed
9.	In most cases, opinions of community members do not count at the end when there is need to take decisions on issues that affect the community	187 (12.8)	556 (38.1)	410 (28.1)	306 (21.0)	2.43	0.96	Disagreed
10.	Community leaders pretend to serve as link between community members and government but act otherwise	162 (11.1)	476 (32.6)	472 (32.4)	349 (23.9)	2.31	0.96	Disagreed
11.	Community leaders pretend to seek opinion of the majority of community members on project sustainability	30 (2.1)	416 (28.5)	821 (56.3)	192 (13.2)	2.19	0.68	Disagreed

12.	Community leaders pretend to influence the development of the community but serve their own interest at the end	132 (9.0)	412 (28.2)	630 (43.2)	285 (19.5)	2.27	0.88	Disagreed

Mean Cut-Off: 2.50

From table 1, the majority of respondents disagreed with statements indicating democratic leadership. For instance, community leaders were perceived as not seeking members' opinions before project commencement, not mobilizing them for implementation, and not holding meetings or involving them in decision-making processes. The mean scores for these items are below the cut-off of 2.50, indicating disagreement. Similarly, respondents disagreed with statements indicative of pseudo-democratic leadership. These statements suggest that leaders may solicit opinions but ultimately act in their own interests or disregard community input during decision-making. Again, the mean scores are below the cut-off, indicating disagreement.

Overall, the findings suggest a significant gap between the democratic ideals of leadership and the actual practices perceived among community leaders in Southwest Nigeria. There seems to be a disconnect between the rhetoric of community involvement and the reality of decision-making processes, indicating potential issues with transparency, accountability, and genuine participation in governance.

Testing of Hypotheses
Ho1: There is no significant relationship between community democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects.

Table 2: Relationship between democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects

Variables	No of communities	Mean	Stand Dev	r	P-value
Democratic Leadership Style	60	12.90	3.43	0.364*	0.000
Sustainability of Community Projects	60	27.07	5.62		

*P<0.05

Table 2 showed that the r-value of 0.364 is significant at 0.05 level of significance because the P-value (0.000) < 0.05. The null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that there is significant relationship between community democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects. Democratic leadership

style is moderately related to sustainability of community projects.

Ho2: There is no significant relationship between community pseudo-democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects.

Table 3: Relationship between pseudo-democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects

Variables	No of communities	Mean	Stand Dev	r	P-value
Pseudo-democratic Leadership Style	60	13.52	3.43	-0.004	0.886

| Sustainability of Community Projects | 60 | 27.07 | 5.62 | | |

Table 3 showed that the r-value of -0.004 is not significant at 0.05 level of significance because the P-value (0.886) > 0.05. The null hypothesis is not rejected. This implies that there is no significant relationship between community pseudo-democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects. Also, it must be noted that there was negative relationship though not significant.

Discussion

The study also revealed that there was significant relationship between community democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects. The probable cause could be as a result of the components of democratic leadership which involves consultation, deliberation and joint decision. The implication of this finding is that democratic leadership style will guarantee sustainability of community projects. The finding corroborates the report of Babatunde and Olaleye (2020) that the relationship between the impact of democratic leadership style and decision making was one of the determinants of effectiveness of community organization. The finding of this study also supports the study of Amakye (2017) that there is a positive relationship between democratic leadership style and community development. Democratic leadership styles forster open communication among the leaders and the members in the community, encourage team work and inclusive participation of all the community

It was however revealed that there was no significant relationship between community pseudo-democratic leadership style and sustainability of community projects. There was in verse relationship though not significant. The probable cause could be due to the deceitful nature and pretense embedded in pseudo-democratic leadership style. This

leadership style appears on the surface to be democratic but which in reality is an autocratic style of leadership. The implication of this finding is that sustainability of community projects will fail under a pseudo-democratic leader.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that democratic, leadership style contributed to sustainability of community development projects while pseudo democratic leadership style was detrimental to sustainability of community development projects.

6. References
Abiona, L.A. & Bello, N.W. (2013) Grassroots participation in decision making process and development programmes as correlate of sustainability of community development programmes in Nigeria. *Journal of Sustainable Development, 6*(3), 47 – 54.

Adedokun, M. O. (2019). *Introduction to Adult Education In Mathew Borode(Ed). Community Development*. Ado-Ekiti: Petoa Educational Publisher

Alison, M. A. (2011). Quality of life in natural and built environment – an introductory analysis. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *101*, 33–43.

Amakye, K.G. (2017). Understanding community development in Sekyere Central DistrictGhana. *Bandung: Journal of the Global South,*Retrieved from https://bandungjournal.springeropen.com/articles/10.1186/s40728-0170042-9

Aref, M. & Ma'rof, R. (2009). Community leaders' characteristics and their effort in building community capacity for tourism development in local communities,

International Journal of Business and Management, 4(10), 187 – 193.

Ashibi, N.I. (2005). Assessment of the application of testing skills among secondary schools teachers in northern Cross River State, Nigeria. An unpublished M.Ed. thesis, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria

Babatunde, A. F. & Olaleye, Y. L (2020). Leadership styles as determinant of community organization effectiveness in Epe Local Government Area of Lagos State, Nigeria. *Journal of Positive Psychology and Counselling 6(2), 7-14.*

Bhargavi, S. & Yaseen, A., (2016). Leadership Styles and Organizational Performance. *Strategic Management Quarterly,* 4(1), 87-117.

Ogunyinka, E.K. & Adedoyin, R.C. (2013) Leadership Styles and Work Effectiveness of School Principals in Ekiti State: Case Study of Ado Ekiti Local Government Area. *Developing Country Studies, 3(3),* 64-73

Okoji, O.O. (2014). Influence of leadership styles on community development programmes' implementation in rural communities of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. *International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia, 8*(33), 83-95.

Olagboye, A.A (2004). Introduction to Educational Management in Nigeria. Ibadan: Daily Graphics (Nigeria) Limited.

Oruonye, E.D. (2013). Grassroot Democracy and the Challenges of Rural Development in Nigeria: A Case Study of Bali Local Government Area of Taraba State. *Asian Journal of Humanities and Social Sciences (AJHSS)* 1(1), 12-19.

Ukaidi, C. U. A (2016).The Influence of Leadership Styles on Organizational Performance in Ni geria. *Global Journal of Human Resource Management*.4 (4), 25-34