



Factors Influencing Community Participation in State Employment and Expenditure for Result (Seefor) Projects in Niger Delta, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the effects of influencing factors on the extent of community participation in the Niger Delta Nigeria. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire from 432 respondents comprising SEEFOR project staff and community oversight committee members that were selected using stratified, random and purposive random sampling techniques. The study objective was assessed with inferential statistics using Partial Least Square in Structural Equation Modelling. The results revealed the factors influencing community participation in SEEFOR projects in the study area as 'adequate information and relevance of project', as well as 'sense of ownership' shows positive and significant relationship in their path coefficients: CINFREL -> BCP ($\beta = 0.482$, $t = 12.636$) and CSEN -> BCP ($\beta = 0.451$, $t = 16.157$). Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that adequate information and relevance of projects as well as sense of ownership are the major influencing factors of community participation in SEEFOR projects in the Niger-Delta, with sense of ownership having the highest effect. The study therefore recommends that there is need for the management of SEEFOR projects to ensure that community members have a sense of ownership of the project by affording their representatives the opportunity to choose the location for siting the project, while providing them with adequate information and effective communication on the relevance of the projects. This will further enhance community participation in other community development projects.

Key words: Community participation, SEEFOR Projects, influencing factors

1. INTRODUCTION

Since 1970, the World Bank has committed more than \$3.5 trillion (N525 trillion) to developing nations. However, a quarter of projects are judged to have had inadequate quality at execution, and a further quarter are rated unsatisfactory at closing. Additionally, numerous development initiatives have been carried out in Nigerian local communities by previous governments, but they have not significantly improved the quality of life for the populace [1]. This type of incident could be caused by the local population being disregarded throughout project selection, implementation, and monitoring. Because there was no sense of ownership, most projects won't be sustainable as a result of marginalizing the local population [2]. In this context, [3] observed that providing infrastructure for the people by the government is insufficient, particularly if it is imposed on the populace. However, when the local population is given the chance to fully participate in projects that have an impact on their lives, they are able to realize their potential, grow in self-assurance, and lead lives of dignity and self-actualization.

In a nation like Nigeria where an increasing number of international donors are executing development initiatives, it is especially important to determine the level of community participation. According to [4] study, "Community participation: Panacea for rural development programmes in Rivers State, Nigeria," Nigeria's successive governments have made fewer efforts to ensure that all community members and the government participate equally in all phases of project implementation. They affirmed that after such decisions have been made by policymakers without consultation from the community, the public only learns the results of those decisions. Numerous development initiatives in nations like Nigeria have recently been discovered to have relatively low project success rates [5,1,6]. This development has been linked to a number of variables in the available research.

The disagreements and lack of togetherness in the community, according to [2] presentation on "Community participation in the rehabilitation of petroleum impacted sites in Ogoni, Rivers State, Nigeria," is one of the major problems preventing people from taking part in projects. Other elements include a lack of knowledge, a lack of education, a weak communication network, a lack of empowerment, a lack of community members, and a lack of political influence [7, 8]. In comparison to other projects that have been heavily publicized, the SEEFOR projects in the Niger Delta have not gotten as much attention in Nigeria. There are underlying influencing variables for people's participation, as evidenced by the already-documented empirical data on beneficiary community participation in development project. The problem statement was based on a knowledge gap that made the requirement for this study necessary because there is not much documented information on the effects of factors that affect the level of community members' participation in development projects specifically in the Niger Delta environment, hence the study.

This study adds to the body of knowledge already available on community participation and SEEFOR projects success in Niger Delta. The study is notable in that it contributes to the growing understanding of SEEFOR programmes in the Niger Delta and other States in Nigeria by offering information on the factors influencing community participation in SEEFOR projects as this is important to both researchers and practitioners. Additionally, if the results of this study are used by the World Bank Project Team in training programmes, it will improve understanding of community participation and SEEFOR project success in Niger Delta, Nigeria.

The study focused on community participation and SEEFOR Projects success in Niger Delta, Nigeria. This study was limited to Community members who are the beneficiaries and end users of SEEFOR projects. These Community members were limited to Community oversight Committee (COC) members who participated in SEEFOR Projects in Niger Delta States, Nigeria. The SEEFOR projects examined were completed and on-going Public Works projects from inception of SEEFOR in Nigeria within the last Seven years (2013 to 2020) in the four benefiting states. These include: Roads and Drainages projects, Water Scheme projects, Electrification projects, Educational construction projects, Market facilities projects and Town Halls Projects. The respondents also included relevant professionals of SEEFOR Staff selected from various Units in the SEEFOR Department. Such Staff included Engineers, Architects, Quantity Surveyor, Surveyors and Project Managers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Concept of Community Participation

The idea of community participation has acquired popularity recently, yet it was first proposed during the time of the Greek philosopher Aristotle. Aristotle wanted to improve people's quality of life and pleasure by enticing them to get involved in politics and other public matters in order to fulfil and improve their human nature. [4] made the further observation that the origins of the idea of public participation in the United Kingdom may be traced to the development of responsive public services, consumer orientation in the 1980s, and community development programmes in the 1970s. However, the idea of participation is a broad one that can mean many things depending on how it is used. Its definition is dependent on the context in which it is used and the applicable principle at the moment.

Participation is "a process by which community stakeholders influence and share control over development efforts and the decisions and resources which affect them," according to [9]. About 40 years ago, the community development movement that was taking place in some regions of Africa and Asia during the late colonial era gave birth to the idea of community participation.

Empowerment, beneficiary capacity building, boosting project effectiveness, increasing project efficiency, and project cost sharing are the goals of community participation. The concept identifies four levels of participation intensity, including sharing information, consulting, making decisions, and taking action [10]. When the community assumes a large portion of the responsibility, community participation is often more successful than when higher level public agencies seek to gauge consumer preferences through surveys or meetings [10]. Projects need unique elements if they are to successfully involve the community. Members of the community can be enlisted to assist in all stages of a project's identification, initiation, planning, implementation, monitoring, maintenance, supervision, and evaluation, among others.

Community participation, according to [4], entails decision-making in a process of community development that enables communities, families, and individuals to take on roles that would enable them to develop capacities that will allow them to significantly contribute to their welfare and development. According to [11], community participation fosters sustainability by allowing users to choose the degree of services they are willing to pay for, to direct important investment and management decisions, and to commit the resources necessary to support these decisions. Participation becomes freedom when people are also involved in making decisions, which is also known as the exercise of voice and choice or empowerment [11]. According to [12], the participation gap may have the consequence of giving some people more weight than others, disregarding their true place in society. In participative procedures, educated middle-class men are typically overrepresented. Therefore, it is important to strike a balance between quantity and quality in meetings so that each group is represented.

According to [13], there are several advantages of community participation in programmes. He claims that community participation assures efficiency since individuals pool their resources to achieve common objectives. He adds that participation ensures projects are completed on time and gives participants a chance to get involved in project reviews, which aids in project management. A community's right to participate in the project's planning and design will also boost project success. People who participate and learn will stop relying on outside help to meet their needs on a regular basis. They will take the initiative to start working on their own solutions, which effectively reduces dependency syndrome. To address their issues, they will enlist their own resources.

Contextually, a range of definitions have been used to address community participation in development initiatives, including definitions that provide lists of duties, explicitly define the phrase "community participation," and definitions that challenge the definitions being used in practice. Even though the phrase is frequently used, few of the papers we looked into offered a clear definition of community participation. Community participation was portrayed in some of the case studies as the dual reality of citizens as project beneficiaries and project decision-makers [14]. Others described it as a list of community-wide activities or even as a particular right (Alfaro, [15,16]). This definition is adopted for this study because the importance of community participation in development projects is clearly stated.

2.2 Factors Influencing Community Participation in Projects

The implementation of geothermal energy projects was the subject of a research conducted by [17]. The goal of the study was to determine the impact of information access, income levels, gender differences, and literacy levels on community participation in the Menengai Geothermal Power Project. It was determined that the majority of respondents were aware of the company, and that up to 78.7% had learned about it through awareness meetings prior to the company's participation in the region. The respondents added that their participation in the project was influenced by their level of awareness. The researcher advised the company to establish a satellite office close to the project for information-sharing reasons because it was discovered that community participation, which was seen as a crucial success factor, was influenced by awareness.

Additionally, [8] conducted research on the variables affecting community participation in constituency development fund projects in Kenya's Moyale District. The researcher was interested in learning more about, among other things, how community awareness levels affected participation in CDF Projects. The results showed the existence of weak communication networks, which were related to weak community participation in the projects. The researcher suggests that all stakeholders be included in site meetings and that there be more seminars held at the local level to increase community knowledge and engagement. The relationship between two factors, trust and communication, and the success of international development projects was examined in research by [18] titled *The Success of International Development Projects, Trust and Communication: An Africa Perspective*. They discovered that communication and trust between the local project coordinator and the task team leader for a World Bank project are key factors in project success. [19] confirmed that there is a substantial correlation between monitoring and evaluation tools and the project "profile," but they were unable to establish a link between the local project coordinator's usage of planning tools and project success. However, it's crucial to remember that the focus of these two research was on African local project coordinators.

[20] conducted research on the subject, focusing on the establishment of a rural water project in Kenya's Matete Sub-County. The study's goal was to discover the particular elements that affect community participation in rural water projects in Matete Sub-County. The study concentrated on how socioeconomic factors, water technology, community water management, and development agency strategies affected community involvement in rural water projects. The research's conclusions demonstrated that the socioeconomic status of the population, the strategies used by development agencies, the administration of water projects, and the water technologies employed all had an impact on community participation in water projects. It was discovered that the choice of water technologies was the most expensive in terms of implementation, operation, and maintenance, resulting in the least amount of community participation. It was also discovered that the community's low-income level had an impact on its members' capacity to contribute to the implementation, operation, and upkeep of the community water project in the research region.

Additionally, the lack of democratic methods for choosing management committee members and the gender gap in the management of water projects in the study area could have led to limited community participation in the management of water projects through water user committees. Accordingly, it was determined that: poor social economic factors, inadequate project management, the choice of complex water technology, and a lack of community-centered development agencies approach did not encourage community participation and negatively impacted community participation in the rural water projects in Matete Sub-County. As a result, the study made the recommendation that the local community's socioeconomic condition be improved and that it be equipped with the information and skills necessary to engage in development projects. In order to create a synergy between the implementing agencies and the communities, partnership in the implementation of rural water projects should be community-centered. The community should use water technology that is suitable for their needs. As a way to ensure sustainability, it should be reasonably priced and cost-efficient to operate and maintain.

In Malawi's Chiradzulu District, [21] looked at the factors influencing community participation in forestry management. In this inquiry, data were acquired utilizing both qualitative and quantitative techniques. According to the findings, almost equal numbers of male and female respondents worked in forestry management. According to the findings of the Logit model study, which show that education has a favourable and statistically significant impact on participation in forestry management, education is a crucial element in determining how many families participate in forestry. Only the age group of 45 to 59 years was statistically significant; nevertheless, it had a negative coefficient and a slight marginal effect at 59% ($r = 0.59$), indicating that this age group participated in more forestry activities than other age groups. When the size of household land ownership was employed as a proxy to signify household wealth and then connected with participation in forestry activities, a positive and substantial correlation between households that owned 1 to 2 acres and 3 to 5 acres of land was discovered. The quantity of land a family owns can be extrapolated to be one of the key factors influencing their participation in forestry management. Furthermore, it was clear that there was a connection between the distribution of land size and how it affected environmental resources.

[22], investigated the factors influencing effective community participation in maternal and new-born health program planning, implementation, and evaluation by conducting a secondary analysis using the Supporting Research Evidence framework of effectiveness studies discovered through systematic literature reviews of two community participation interventions, quality improvement of maternity care services, and an intervention to improve the quality of care. The results showed that community participation might take several forms, from educational service projects to communities participating fully in decision-making. Underreporting of implementation considerations was common. Also, Intercultural sensitivity, connections to a functional health system, such as through stakeholder committees, connections to favourable policy and financial environments, and an emphasis on interventions to improve community capacity to support health were major facilitators of community participation.

It was further discovered that participation levels and participative strategies frequently changed as the community's ability to interact with health services grew throughout the course of programs. The study's findings indicate that implementation necessitates careful consideration of the surrounding conditions, including prior participation experience, people who would be participating, gender norms, and the timescale for implementation. It is necessary for all pertinent stakeholders to actively participate, especially those who are typically excluded from the decision-making process. According to the few research that is currently available, the ability of the community to be involved and to improve health, as well as the view of community participation as a process, may be essential for long-term success.

[23], performed a survey in Tanzania to determine the elements that influence community participation in public developmental projects. 100 respondents, including staff, members of the development committee, residents, and councillors, were studied using a descriptive design. At their workplaces, respondents were handed self-administered questionnaires in order to gather data. The data analysis employed frequency, percentage, mean, and Pearson's product moment correlation to ascertain the effect of independent factors on the dependent variable. The study's findings revealed a strong and positive correlation between participation and information access of 0.322. Additionally, there was a strong correlation between political will and community participation in public development projects (0.357). The findings of the Pearson's moment correlation test indicated a positive link between civic education and community involvement (0.285). The study found that information access, political will, and civic education all contributed to the high level of community participation in development projects. The one of the three factors that had the most influence was political will, followed by information access and civic education.

3. METHODOLOGY

A survey design was used to find the level of relationship between the two variables and assess the contribution of influencing factors to community participation SEEFOR project. This design was preferred because the questions raised in the study required collecting data through administration of questionnaires and it is effective when the study involves a large population. Survey instrument was developed for the study. However, the use of survey instrument was complemented with physically observing certain events of interest during the course of the study.

The study area covered some selected States in the Niger Delta region. Niger Delta is the delta of the Niger River sitting directly on the Gulf of Guinea on the Atlantic Ocean in Nigeria. It is typically considered to be located within nine coastal southern Nigerian States, which include: all six States from the South South geopolitical zone, one State (Ondo) from South West geopolitical zone and two States (Abia and Imo) from South East geopolitical zone. However, for the purpose of this study, only some selected States in the South South was considered. These selected States are Bayelsa, Delta, Edo, and Rivers. This decision was informed by the fact that only these four States were approved by World Bank as SEEFOR beneficiaries in Nigeria.

The target population of this study consisted of SEEFOR Public Works Project initiated in the selected States in Niger Delta, Nigeria. These States are Edo, Delta, Bayelsa and Rivers. Since SEEFOR World Bank assisted

intervention started in 2013, the study examined completed and on-going Public Works project within the last seven years (2013 -2020). The target respondents for the study included the End Users/community members who were beneficiaries of SEEFOR projects. Others were SEEFOR projects Staff under the Ministry of Budget & Economic Planning who is the parent ministry responsible for the implementation of SEEFOR in the selected States in Niger Delta, Nigeria.

The list of SEEFOR projects that were examined for this study included completed and on-going Road and Drainages projects, Water Scheme projects, Electrification projects, Educational construction projects, Market facilities projects and Town Halls Projects in the various Local Government Areas of the selected states where SEEFOR Public Works projects were being executed. Preliminary investigation showed that, in Edo state, through the SEEFOR Public Works Component, 177 road Contracts were awarded with 177 completed and no on-going project. In Rivers State, 48 road Contracts were awarded with 47 completed and 1 still on-going. In Delta State, 59 road Contracts were awarded with 51 completed and 8 still on-going, and in Bayelsa State, 37 road Contracts were awarded with 32 completed and 5 still on-going.

According to SEEFOR, every project being executed has a Community Oversight Committee (COC) made up of three members from the host community. Furthermore, we found out that the SEEFOR department is made up of eight (8) Units comprising Monitoring and Evaluation Unit; Engineering Unit; Social Accountability Unit; Administration and Operation Unit; Communication Unit; Environmental Safeguard Unit; Finance and Accounting Unit; and Procurement unit. The study selected Two (2) key Staff that represented each of the SEEFOR Units from their respective States (Table 3.1).

Table -3.1 Targeted population of the study

State	Population size for SEEFOR Projects	COC members on each SEEFOR Projects (3 Per project)	SEEFOR Project Staff	Total population for each State
Edo	177	531	16	539
Rivers	48	144	16	152
Delta	59	177	16	185
Bayelsa	37	111	16	119
Total	321	963	64	995

Source: SEEFOR (2013-2020)

Data were collected through a structured questionnaire from 432 respondents comprising SEEFOR project staff and community oversight committee members that were selected using stratified, random and purposive random sampling techniques. The study objective was assessed with inferential statistics (Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling).

The structural equation model is represented below:

- i. The effects of influencing factors on the extent of community participation in SEEFOR projects in the Niger Delta;

$$SPS = f(IF)$$

$$SPS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 REL + \beta_2 SEN + \beta_3 INF + \beta_4 CBT + e_1$$

where, SPS = SEEFOR Project Success

IF = Influencing Factors

SEN = Sense of Ownership

CBT = Capacity Building and Training

β_0 is Constant, β_1 to β_4 is Regression coefficient,

REL = Relevance of Project

INF = Adequate Information

e_1 is Error term.

3.1 Procedures for Partial Least Squares (PLS)

This study utilized the procedure of partial least square in structural equation modelling to examine and present the second, third and fourth objectives. The model is generally described by two components which are: (1) measurement model which relates the manifest variables with relative latent variables and (2) structural model that shows the relationship between various latent variables. It is a 2-step process as suggested by [24] which involves calculating partial least squares (PLS) model parameters separately by solving out the blocks of the measurement model and then estimating the path coefficients of the structural model. These two components were examined in this thesis to establish that indicators from each of the constructs are reliable and valid before any meaningful conclusion can be drawn on the relationships in the objectives of the study. Hence, the study presents the report on the measurement model for all the indicators and constructs used in this paper.

3.2 Evaluation of the Measurement Model (MM)

Measurement model evaluation is aimed at evaluating the consistency and validity of the manifest variables. The individual manifest reliability explains the variance of individual manifest relative to latent variable by calculating the standardized outer loadings of the manifest variables [25]. Manifest variable which has an outer loading of 0.7 or higher is to be considered highly satisfactory [24]. A loading value of 0.5 is regarded as acceptable, the manifest variables having loading values of less than 0.5 should be removed [25]. [26] opined that loading of 0.4 should

be an acceptable value while [24] suggested that manifest variable with loading values between 0.4 and 0.7 should be reviewed before elimination. If the elimination of the indicator increases the composite reliability value, then consider its removal otherwise retain the factor. Even though for this study the cut-off value taken for outer loading is 0.5, an iterative process is adopted for elimination of the manifest variables by considering [24] suggestion.

Second measure for internal consistency evaluation was the construct reliability which is evaluated by two parameters, that is, Cronbach's alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR) as proposed by [25]. Both CA and CR have a threshold of 0.700 with higher values indicating a higher level of reliability. However, some fields of study agreed to suitable reliability range between 0.600 and 0.700 with the other validity coefficient expected to be adequate. The study followed the procedure stated by [25] for Smart-PLS software.

All the items were modeled as reflective indicators on their respective constructs (Figure 3.2). In this study, the constructs for the second objective are: Identification stage (bIden), Initiation stage (bInit), Planning stage (bPlan), Implementation stage (bImpl), Monitoring and Evaluation stage (bPme) closure stage (bClosure), Relevance of Project (cRel), Sense of ownership (cSen), Adequate Information (cInf) and Capacity Building & Training (cCBT). All variables measuring influencing factors on community participation in the study area were ten (10) latent variables and fifty-six (56) manifests.

Initially, all factors influencing community participation in SEEFOR projects in the study area had 56 manifests and ten constructs, but due to the discriminant validity issues encountered with some constructs (bIden, bInit, cInf, cRel, bImpl and bPme), constructs bIden and bInit were merged to become Identification and Initiation (bIdenInit). Constructs cInf and cRel were merged to form Information and Relevance (cInf Rel). Constructs bImpl and bPme were also merged to become Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation (bImplPme).

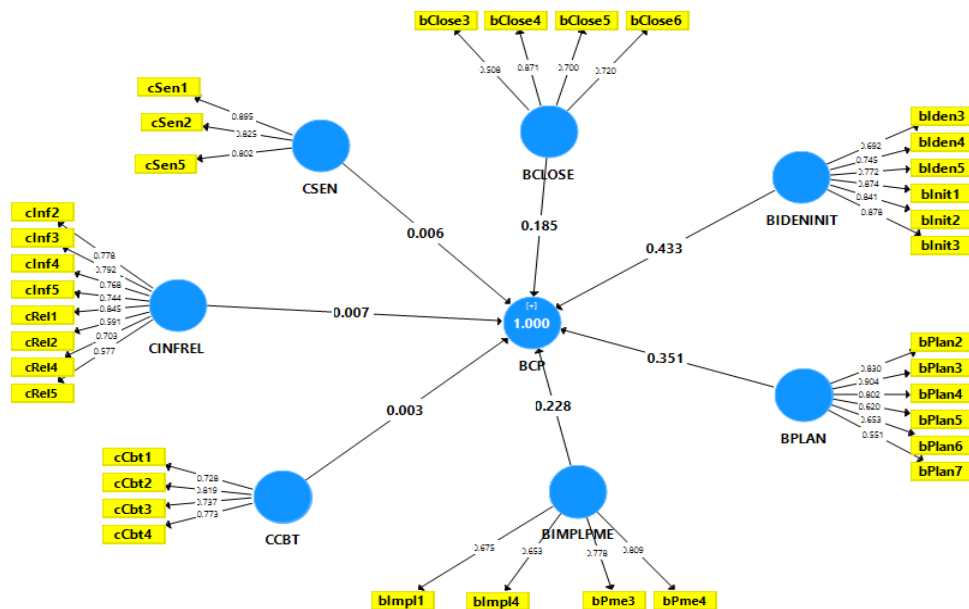


Fig. 3.2 Measurement Model for Influencing Factors and Community Participation

The items with poor outer loading (bClose:1 and 2; cSen:3 and 4; bIden:1 and 2; bInit:4; cInf1; cRel3; bplan1; cCb5; bImpl:2,3,5,6 and 7; and bPme:1,2,5,6 and 7) were all deleted to improve the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values above the threshold. All of these reduced the factors influencing community participation in SEEFOR projects in the study area from ten to seven constructs and 35 items. cCb1, cInfRel and cSen were first order constructs while bClose, bIdenInit, bImplPme, bPlan were second order constructs.

It is revealed on Table 3.2 that the CA have values from 0.674 to 0.889, and CR also have values from 0.798 to 0.915, which is an indication that the constructs have no problem relating to reliabilities as they surpass the recommended thresholds for both tests [25]. Table 3.2 also shows the outcomes of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) which is an indication of the convergent validity; it measures the degree to which the latent variable correlates with its relative indicators by determining the amount of variance captured by latent variable from its relative manifest variables due to measurement errors. [25] argued that a minimum 50% of the variance from manifest variable should be captured by latent variables. This implies that AVE value of the construct should be greater than 0.5. The value ranged from 0.506 to 0.708 which are above the threshold values recommended by [25]. The measurement model further presents the distinctive characteristics of the manifest variables by examining the discriminant validity of the constructs. Discriminant validity is carried out to confirm that the manifest variable in any construct is relevant to the designated latent variable where its cross-loading value in latent variable is greater than that in any other constructs [25]. Based on the above criteria, measurement model is evaluated by iterative process to discard the weak manifest variables from the developed model.

Table -3.2 Reliability and Validity of Influencing Factors and Community Participation

	Cronbach's Alpha (CA)	rho_A	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
BCLOSE	0.674	0.714	0.798	0.506
BIDENINIT	0.889	0.908	0.915	0.645
BIMPLPME	0.707	0.716	0.821	0.536
BPLAN	0.825	0.864	0.874	0.544
CCBT	0.766	0.775	0.849	0.586
CINFREL	0.874	0.896	0.900	0.533
CSEN	0.793	0.800	0.879	0.708

Source: Researcher’s Field Report, (2022)

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Data Presentation and Treatment

This chapter presents the results and discussion on the “Assessment of Community Participation on State Employment and Expenditure for Result (SEEFOR) Projects in Niger Delta, Nigeria”. Therefore, in order to achieve the objectives of this research two sets of questionnaires were prepared for representatives of State Government on SEEFOR projects and that of the host communities. A total of four hundred and Sixty-four (464) copies of questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and four hundred and twenty-three (423) copies were properly completed and returned representing a percentage of 91.2% as shown in Table 4.1. According to [27], the result of a survey could be considered significant, if the response rate is not lower than 30 – 40%, which validates the response rate for this thesis to be adequate for the analysis.

Table -4.1 Response Rate of Questionnaire Distributed and Retrieved

Questionnaires	SEEFOR	COC
Number distributed	64	400
Number Retrieved and used	58	365
Percentage	90.6%	91.3%

Source: Researcher’s Field Report (2022)

4.3 Structural Model on Effect of Influencing Factors on Community Participation in SEEFOR Projects

The study had earlier presented and ascertained the quality of the data collected for this objective’s stated hypothesis: ‘influencing factors have no significant effect on the extent of community participation in SEEFOR projects in the Niger Delta’ which represents the first hypothesis. The procedure for structural model after the measurement quality has been ascertained is therefore presented. It includes the collinearity, the coefficient of determination (R^2), path coefficient (β) and effect sizes (f^2). Table 4.4 shows the inner VIF of influencing factors of Community participation. The Table reveals (2.238, 4.206, 2.523, 2.445, 1.998, 4.146 and 3.077) for the following indicators (bClose, bIdenInit, bImplPme, bPlan, cCbt, cInfRel and cSen) respectively, all on the community participation variables (bCP). The results show that there is no multicollinearity issue among the latent constructs since they are below the suggested threshold value of 5 [1].

Thereafter, the study conducted the PLS-algorithm (Figure 4.1) and bootstrapping (Figure 4.2) with 5000 resamples using PLS 3.3.3 to get the standard path coefficient t-statistics values, standard deviations, and P-values (Hair *et al.*, 2017). Table 4.7 shows the corresponding results obtained from the analyses.

Hypotheses

H0₁: Influencing factors have no significant effect on community participation in SEEFOR projects

- i. **H0_{1a}**: *Sense of ownership have no significant effect on community participation in SEEFOR Projects.*
- ii. **H0_{1b}**: *Adequate Information and Relevance of Project have no significant effect on community participation in SEEFOR Projects.*
- iii. **H0_{1c}**: *Capacity Building and Training have no significant effect on community participation in SEEFOR Projects.*

Note: When T-Value is greater than 1.96 and P value is less or equal to 0.05, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternate hypothesis is accepted, otherwise, null hypothesis is accepted while the alternate hypothesis is rejected.

Table -4.2 Inner VIF of Influencing Factors of Community Participation

	bCP
BClose	2.238
BIdenInit	4.206
BImplPme	2.523
BPlan	2.445
CCbt	1.998
CInfRel	4.146
CSen	3.077

Source: Researcher’s Field Report, (2022)

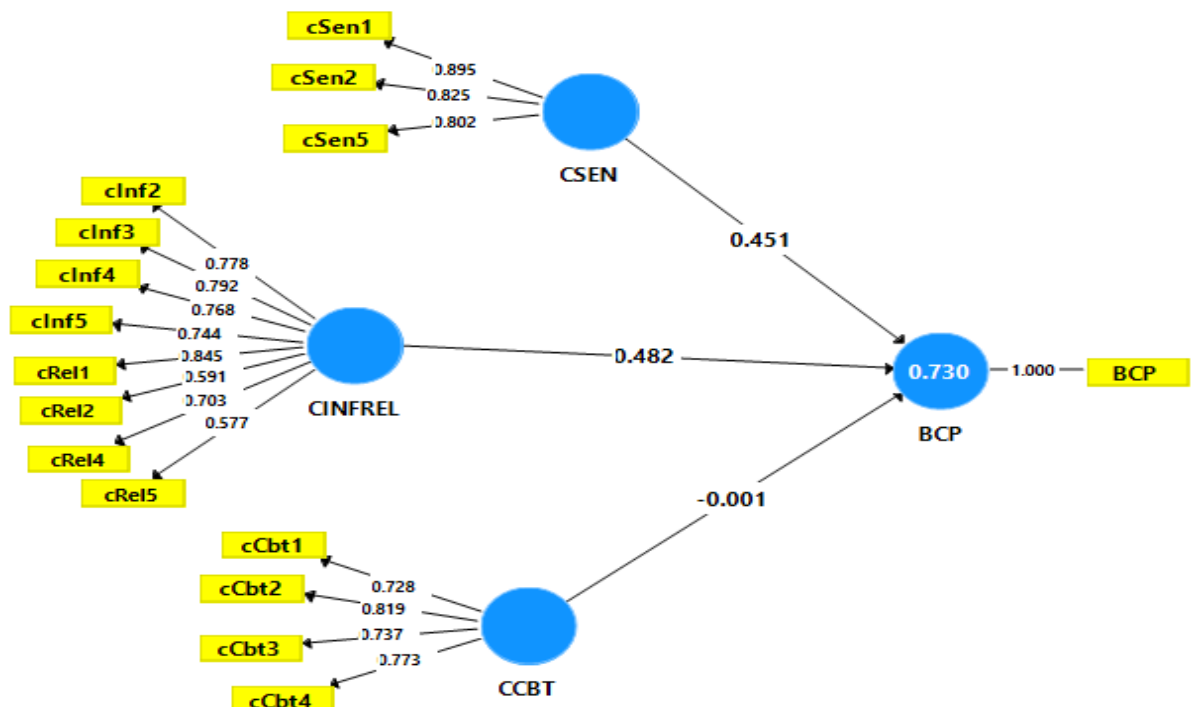


Fig. 4.1 Structural Model for Influencing Factors and Community Participation (Algorithm)

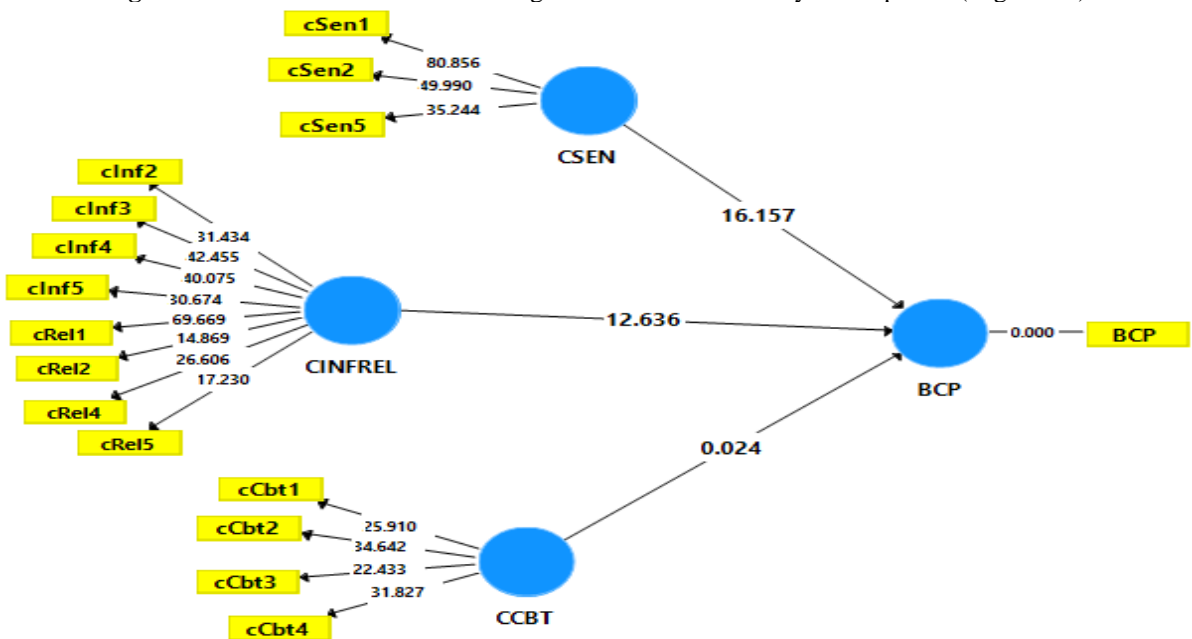


Fig. 4.2 Bootstrapping for Influencing Factors and Community Participation

4.4. Path Coefficient of Influencing Factors and Community Participation

Table 4.5 shows the direct path coefficients for cSen (sense of ownership), cInfRel (adequate information and relevance of projects), cCbt (capacity building and training) and community participation (bCP). Table 4.5, Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 show positive and significant relationship with CINFREL -> BCP ($\beta = 0.482, t = 12.636$) and CSEN -> BCP ($\beta = 0.451, t = 16.157$), while CCBT -> BCP ($\beta = -0.001, t = 0.024$) shows insignificant relationship with community participation in SEEFOR projects in the study area. Table 4.5 also presents the value of the coefficient of determination (R^2) as 0.730 and the adjusted R^2 as 0.728. As reported in [28], R^2 values of 0.26, 0.13 and 0.02 should be considered as substantial, moderate, and weak respectively (based on the study of Cohen, 1992). Therefore, the R^2 obtained for this study can be said to be substantial because it is more than 0.26, as suggested. Hence, the exogenous constructs were able to explain about 73%, of the variance in the endogenous construct (bCP).

The study further examines the effect size (f^2), which according to the study of Cohen [29] the values of the f -square effect size 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 are considered as small, medium, and large significant effects on the exogenous constructs respectively. Following this guideline, Table 4.7 shows that cInfRel and cSen have large effect sizes (0.323 and 0.406) on the endogenous constructs bCP.

From the results obtained, it is implied that cSen (sense of ownership) in Figure 4.1 has the largest weight (structurally) and cSen1 (“The community were allowed to choose the location for siting the project”) shows that the community members in the study area have identified that allowing them to choose the location to site the projects certainly influences their participation in the SEEFOR project. Therefore, all SEEFOR projects stakeholders must identify with this resolution that in order to ensure effective community participation, allowing the community representatives to choose the location of the projects is very essential.

Table -4.5 Path Coefficient (Objective 2)

	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values	Bias	2.50%	97.50%	f square	VIF
CCBT -> BCP	-0.001	0.034	0.024	0.981	0.002	-0.069	0.063	0.000	1.796
CINFREL -> BCP	0.482	0.038	12.636	0.000	0.000	0.402	0.553	0.323	2.664
CSEN -> BCP	0.451	0.028	16.157	0.000	-0.001	0.398	0.507	0.406	1.858
R Square	0.730								
R Square Adjusted	0.728								

Source: Researcher’s Field Report, (2022)

From the results obtained, the Null hypotheses 1a and 1b (H_{01a} & H_{01b}) were rejected while the null hypothesis 1c (H_{01c}) was accepted.

These results show a slight distinction from the report of [30] who in their study of factors influencing people’s willingness to participate in sustainable water resources management in Malaysia posited that adequate information through awareness creation and capacity building affects people’s willingness to participate in community development projects. However, the findings of this study corroborate with previous studies stating psychological ownership otherwise known as sense of ownership as a major factor influencing community participation in development projects [31]. The literature suggests three important media through which sense of ownership emerges: (1) coming to know the target intimately, (2) self-investment in the target, and (3) exercise of control over the target of ownership.

Generally, communities with high levels of sense of ownership are likely to experience the projects as extended part of themselves. As a result, sense of ownership will greatly influence pride, responsibility, commitment, caring and protective behaviours directed towards the delivery of the development projects.

5. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study examined the effects of influencing factors on the extent of community participation in the study area and the result showed that adequate information and relevance of project (cInfRel) and sense of ownership (cSen) are significant and have positive effect on the extent of community participation (cCbt). On the other hand, capacity building and training is not significant. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that adequate information and relevance of projects as well as sense of ownership are the major influencing factors of community participation in SEEFOR projects in the Niger-Delta, with sense of ownership having the highest effect.

The findings of this study have important policy implications on SEEFOR projects implementation in Nigeria. Based on the findings, it is hereby recommended that there is need for the management of SEEFOR projects to ensure that community members have a sense of ownership of the project by affording their representatives the opportunity to choose the location for siting the project, while providing them with adequate information and effective communication on the relevance of the projects. This will further enhance community participation in other community development projects.

Previously, there was little or no known research on the factors influencing community participation, SEEFOR projects success in Niger-Delta, Nigeria. With this new knowledge and awareness on such an important area of community development, this study is highly essential for researchers as it helps to establish the key drivers of community participation in community development projects which promotes national development. Thus, the study helps to fill the knowledge gap that existed on this subject.

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