

**POVERTY ALLEVIATION AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION
TOWARDS DEVELOPMENT IN BAHIR-DAR, AMHARA REGIONAL
STATE, ETHIOPIA**

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DECLARATION

I, ASKAL TILAHUN WORKU, S211185930, hereby declare that this thesis submitted for MA in Development Studies is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another University or for another qualification.

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ABSTRACT

The objective of the research was to assess the trends and forms of community participation to poverty alleviation in Bahir Dar town. The field study was limited to two projects, micro and small scale enterprise activities and credit service, however the finding and recommendation can be applied to all projects aimed to poverty alleviation and community self sustaining projects.

In order to achieve the research objectives, a review of relevant literature was done. It began by reviewing definitions and concepts of poverty. The literature also over reviewed the importance of community participation to poverty alleviation efforts of a country and reviews the Ethiopian poverty reduction process. The literature further highlighted the role of community participation in achieving development goals.

The data collection was done by means of focus group discussions complimented by face-to-face interviews. The data collected were analyzed thematically with the use of narrative summary and categorization in respect to the objective of the study. The findings of the study showed that there is low participation of community and therefore creating more opportunities for community participation activity and detailed study in the area is recommended.

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CHAPTER ONE

1. BACKGROUND AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1.1. Introduction

In an effort to alleviate poverty and achieve development goals in Ethiopia, expanded and effective use of human resources are crucial issues which need to be considered by policy makers and development agents. These ingredients in development process need considerable participation and involvement of government, development agents, policy makers and implementing partners through out the project cycle. However, there exists no significant change observed through intervention of these stakeholders into developmental activities and there is still a need for more consideration. Thus, here comes the importance of community participation to bridge the gap between planning and attaining the goal towards sustainable development.

Communities need to be considered as development actors themselves, with very different perceptions and motivations from external interventions, but who nonetheless have significant, albeit unrecognized, capacities (David, 2004). Therefore, there is a close linkage between poverty reduction process and contribution of community participation.

In Ethiopia, the importance of community participation in the development sector has been underlined strongly by various authors (Tasew, 2000, Bevan, 2000), all these authors and researchers concluded that participation helps to bring about the required development goals successfully.

Recent global studies have also emphasized the need for community participation to combat poverty. Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that focus on global poverty reduction and emphasize the meaningful participation of local people in their planning and implementation.

It is therefore, important to explore the community participation trends in any development programmes to ensure the successful implementation of the intended goal.

Some aspects of poverty experience vary according to context, others are universal. Recent literature reveal that many countries are at risk of getting stuck in poverty trap which prevents the development endeavors unless coordinated and focused effort is exerted.

In countries like Ethiopia, where poverty is a daily conversation of the government, the level and speed of sustainable development is determined to a great extent by the active participation of the community.

Literatures reveal that community contribution will play a great role in poverty alleviation endeavors. In order to achieve global development agendas for poverty reduction, efforts to foster greater commitment and resources for reducing poverty should focus on participation of communities

The purpose of this research therefore, is to assess the trend and forms of community participation in poverty alleviation endeavors in the country, in particular reference to Bahir Dar city, which is found in the North West part of Ethiopia. It will focus on the role of community in attaining the growth and development plan of the country and the forms of community participation in the process.

It's the belief of the researcher that this study will contribute to development performance through community participation and will draw the attention of the implementers in designing effective methods of community participation towards achieving development in the country.

1.2. Research Objective

The general objective will be

- Assess trend and forms of community participation towards poverty alleviation programs within the Bahir Dar city, Ethiopia

The Specific objectives

- To explore participation of community and their role towards poverty reduction ,
- Describing levels and forms of participation by local community members.

1.3. Sub –foci of the research problem

In order to assess the community participation in poverty alleviation process and further achieve the objective thoroughly, the researcher expands the research problem into smaller unity or specific questions

These questions therefore constitute the research sub-foci

1. What does the current poverty alleviation programme constitute?
2. Are communities involved in the process?
3. If the communities are involved, in what level and in what form?
4. To what extent are their participation realized in the effort towards poverty alleviation goal of the country?

1.4. Motivation Statement

Lack or little intervention practice and research in the role of community participation creates a gap in dealing with the success of poverty reduction process. Assessing the extent of community involvement in countries poverty reduction strategy is linked with the progress in carrying out development goals. So as to improve the development condition in Ethiopia, various programmes exists in national and regional levels which the community participation

is still in question. Therefore, I am motivated to undertake this study to analyze the extent of community participation in the functions and how this participation can be carried out.

As this research aims at investigating the forms and level of community participation in poverty reduction efforts towards sustainable development, it is the purpose of the research and belief of the researcher that the finding of the research will enable the concerned bodies to design effective methods of community involvement and practices to establish and arrest the poverty problem in time.

The fact that the research focus on community participation , will also give a paramount importance for successful implementation of the new Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) in Ethiopia. So as to device effective and appropriate development performance, the study is also expected to draw important recommendations which would be of great importance both for policy makers and development institutions dealing and addressing poverty problem in the country.

1.5. Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study will analyze the community participation in poverty alleviation programmes in Bahir Dar, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia.

The study will be limited only to one city. However, the results of the study and the method of analysis could be applied to other places in the country. It would be more appropriate if the study uses data from the country strategic plan and all stakeholders involved in the programme, but this data may not be easy to get in the given specific time horizon that has been allowed and budget constraints of the researchers as a self sponsored student. The data in focus will be mostly from beneficiaries' side only.

Lack of previous studies related to the topic of interest in the study area in particular and the region in general was another limitation of this study.

1.6 Definition of Term

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
NGO	Non Government Organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Concept of Poverty

Poverty has been widely recognized as crucial constraint to sustainable development in developing countries. The term poverty has been defined and measured in different ways in respect to the countries' existing conditions, however most definitions have the element of basic needs fulfillment, i.e. everyone needs sufficient food, access to services such as health care and schools and a secure home with adequate provision for water and sanitation. Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development defined the concept of poverty as "the inability of people to meet economic, social and other standards of well-being". According to World Bank the concept refers to unacceptable human deprivation in terms of economic opportunity, education, health and nutrition, as well as lack of empowerment and security (OECD, 2001)

Definition can be derived from the decision about the best proxy (income or consumption) for material deprivation (Collins, 2005). But still for an individual or a household in a narrow sense is defined as a state of having an income or consumption level below a certain standard, usually known as the poverty line.

According to OECD (2001), Poverty can be caused or resulted from different factors. Studies try to understand the poverty dynamics and causes in different theoretical frameworks. Some studies indicated that pressure of population growth and in-migration is influencing urban poverty since it exceeds the capacity to create employment opportunity or provide services and contribute to poverty status of a country. Where as others hypothesizes to immutabilities factors like climate, geography and history. By contrast, deficient governance, while subjected to change includes a core set of factors that perpetuate poverty (OECD, 2001).

The concept of poverty includes different dimensions and deprivation. In general, it is the inability of people to meet economic, social and other standard of well-being. The multi dimensionality of poverty is now widely accepted. It is based solidly on research that includes major participatory studies of what poor people mean by poverty (OECD, 2001).

The World Bank emphasized poverty as unacceptable human deprivation in terms of economic opportunity, education, health and nutrition, as well as lack of empowerment and security. Adequate concept of poverty includes all the important areas in which people of either gender are deprived and perceived as incapable in different societies and local contexts. It also includes protective, political, economic, human and socio-cultural dimensions.

With a lot of analysis in the area, the base for poverty to under-development is a clearly recognized fact. The lack of economic resources is believed to be a key dimension of poverty as well as major causes of its other dimensions. However, now that much more is known about the economic aspects of poverty, it has become clear to many in the development field that exploitative relationships, and processes of social exclusion and conflict, are major causes of poverty in many contexts that need investigation (David, 2004).

Decomposition of the changes in poverty into growth and redistribution components indicates that the potential poverty reduction due to increased real per capita income has been to some extent counteracted by worsening income distribution. The increase in inequality in an economy coming out of a long civil war is not surprising. The sectors that were most depressed during the conflict were transaction intensive sectors that tend to be lucrative in peacetime (Collins, 2005).

Poverty reduction, therefore, may be the euphemism for the contemporary development consensus, but the term poverty is bound up with the very notion of development and has a long history. The technical prescription for attaining this growth, macro economic, stability, privatization and liberalization- are the assumptions on which the consensus finds its foundation (Cornwal and Brock, (n.d)).

Poverty reduction or poverty alleviation is any process which seeks to reduce the level of poverty in a community, or amongst a group of people or countries. Poverty reduction programs may be aimed at economic or non-economic poverty. Some of the popular methods used are education, economic development, and income redistribution. Poverty reduction efforts may also be aimed at removing social and legal barriers to income growth among the poor.

Poverty reduction however, requires more than an official recognition of the community needs; it has to include a renegotiation of the relationship between city and residents, between

state and civil society, between community and other stakeholders (David, 2004). There should be a recognition and participation of the people whom the development goals are addressed to.

In other words it must be recognized that livelihoods, poverty and well-being are socially and culturally constructed, and that some of them are also government supported. There is a realization to couple community participation with poverty reduction success from the lesson of developed countries.

One of the most important goals of development efforts is obviously poverty reduction. Proper development strategies focus on economic growth and poverty alleviation endeavors.

According to Tasew (2000), by all available indicators, Ethiopia is one of the poorest countries in the world. GDP per capita is around USD 115, while life expectancy, educational enrollment and other indicators of well being are extremely low (Bigsten, 2003).

Although substantial progress towards reducing poverty alleviation was made during the last decade in Ethiopia, in general, and in Bahir Dar region in particular, significant community participation was given less attention in the development endeavor.

Poverty reduction requires dedicated community involvement from planning to implementation stages of projects; this is aimed at attaining development goals. Since poverty concept was discussed in dimensions of lack of basic needs security, education, right, voice, dignity and so on. Poverty reduction is a world wide concern as it is for Ethiopia.

As poverty reduction or poverty alleviation is a process which seeks to reduce the level of poverty in a community, or amongst a group of people or countries, Poverty reduction programs need to focus on the community participation and contribution. Some of the popular methods used for poverty reduction are like education, economic development, and income redistribution. It may also be aimed at removing social and legal barriers to income growth among the poor. But with the whole process, the community is a vital player for developmental success.

Many development thinkers and practitioners have been pondering over community participation for the last two to three decades. For this research purpose, community participation will thoroughly referred to any community led or community participatory

activities in north west part of Ethiopia towards attaining the country's 5 years development plan.

2.2 Community Participation and Poverty Reduction

The word participation has recently gained considerable purchase in the language of mainstream development. It has a long association with social movement, and with the struggle for citizenship right and voice (Commins, 2007). Participation not only humanize bureaucracy, but strengthen the capacities of individuals and communities to mobilize and help themselves, thus dependency on the state will be minimized and ordinary people rediscover their potential for cooperation and mutual endeavor. It is also one way of empowering the disadvantages.

The definition of "participation" is a matter on which there is considerable disagreement among development scholars and practitioners. Some use the term to mean active participation in political decision making. For certain activist groups, participation has no meaning unless the people involved have significant control over the decisions concerning the organization to which they belong. Development economists tend to define participation by the poor in terms of the equitable sharing of the benefits of projects. Yet others view participation as an instrument to enhance the efficiency of projects or as the co-production of services. Some would regard participation as an end in itself, whereas others see it as a means to achieve other goals. These diverse perspectives truly reflect the differences in the objectives for which participation might be advocated by different groups (Paul, 1987).

Practically community participations which are intended to reduce poverty are highly multidimensional. Community participation has been defined and interpreted in different ways mostly with the type of the participation and design of project, forwarded but still all shares same ground concept, involves community at large and has involves and keep the community responsible for the benefit of their community and their country. It can also refer to some kind of input or contribution to the project in order to enhance its chances of success and correspondingly personal economic profit.

As the idea of community participation is a new idea in development studies, current community participation concepts are based on a rich legacy of ideas and practical agendas

which have helped to facilitate the formulation of present day proposal for the involvement of local people in social development. It has become widely advocated methodological principles for intervention practice and a range of participatory methodologies and techniques have been proposed in order to functionalize it (Leeuwis, 2000).

Community participation and development efforts are recently inseparable in any aspect of development endeavors. Different researches and practices have witnessed the contribution of community participation for successful implementation of projects and attainment of programme goals.

The term participation has become an umbrella term for a supposedly new style of development intervention. It explains an active process by which beneficiaries or client group influences the direction and execution of development projects with a view to enhancing their well being in terms of income, personal growth, self reliance or other value they cherish.

It also refers to some form of involvement of people, with similar needs and goals, in decisions affecting their lives. Charles Abrams in (Paul, 1987) book defines community participation as, “the theory that the local community should be given an active role in programs and improvements directly affecting it” (Paul, 1987: 23) . It is only rational to give control of affairs and decisions to people most affected by them. Besides, since no government or authority has the means to solve all the public problems adequately, it is necessary to involve people in matters that affect them (Paul, 1987).

It is also a strategy that provides people with the sense that they solve their problem through careful reflection and collective action. It provides a mechanism for people to participate in activities that have the potential to impact positively up on their health. It’s a strategy that provides people with the sense that they can solve their problem through careful reflection action (Cornwal and Brock, (n.d)).

In countries like Ethiopia, still striving to articulate a coherent poverty reduction , involving people actively in the development process, attempts to promote economic and social progress is a wise option. Community participation leads to developing true democratic processes and higher rates of resource acquisition and use, better results due to higher levels of volunteerism and community spirit (Dhimole and Tobiyo, n.d).

2.3 Types of community participation

There are different types of community participation in development endeavors of the country. There is a notion reveals that involving beneficiaries in programmes which intends to benefit the livelihood of them will not only be more cost effective but it would also have important developmental spin-offs. These would include improved cash income opportunities, skill development and a greater sense of ownership. It can also help people not only by improving their material situation, but also by making them more conscious and more aware of their power to bring about changes in their lives stressing the importance of active community participation, and promotion of social groups. Sustainability is a catchy word that we often encounter in development forums (Reid, 2000).

Involvement of community participation builds a true community in the place we live and work and develops the sense of ownership to individual people of a community. In some types of participation which requires the community for direct involvement in the initial stages of the project formulation may be of high costs in terms of time and resources but it benefits the public in long run. As Dhimole and Tabiyo,(n.d) explained, the involvement of the community in the process of development and maintenance of the roads may lead to the reduced construction and maintenance costs and will also help in faster economic development and social transformation.

There are other types of participation as voluntary and assigned, some community participation represents a voluntary action carried out by community members who participate with each other in different kinds of work to achieve desired goals. Other base on individual expertise to contribute to a specific activity (Commins, 2007).

Participation also includes people's involvement in decision-making, in implementing programs, sharing in the benefits of development programs and their involvement in efforts to evaluate such programs (Paul, 1987).

Community participation is not an idle principle. Communities that have chosen to follow it find that not only do they derive more satisfaction from the joy that comes from open community involvement, but they also achieve more results, more rapidly, and with greater benefit to the community as a whole. In short, participating communities succeed better than those that only pay lip service to this important principle (Commins, 2007).

In simple terms the participation is the active involvement of a community to take part or share in an activity. Different types of participations are suggested and they cannot see how the support for local processes can strengthen poor communities' capacity to secure their own and external resources.

As discussed by Paul (1987) participation can take different forms, i.e. people participate by living in the area of the project. They may be told what is going to happen or has already happened but will have no other input. Participation for material incentive people participate by being paid for labor in food or cash, for a pre-determined project. Participation can be through provision of resources. People participate by contributing a resource such as labor or money, to a pre-determined project. Participation by consultation, people might participate in development activities by being consulted and they give their views. Their view may or may not be considered (Paul, 1987). Interactive participation, whereby people participate by joining with external professionals in analysis of their situation, developing action plans and determining common projects. And spontaneous mobilization is also when people participate by taking their own initiative independent of external professionals to change their situation. This may lead to self-help projects or requests to other institutions for assistance (Dhimole and Tobiyo, (n.d)).

Community participation is key to building an empowered community and critical to community success. Participating communities are open to involvement by all groups, and responsibilities are divided up so that the special talents and interests of contributing organizations are engaged. Power and responsibility are decentralized. Participating communities have many centers of activity, and community action engages the natural enthusiasm and talents of citizens leading develop higher rates of resource acquisition and better results (Reid, 2000).

Rural development efforts can be accelerated by involvement of people at grass root level. The community should step up from the planning to implementation and evaluation of the project process. The approach of "community participation" now stands as an established development strategy to promote a more equitable meeting of the basic needs of poor persons in developing countries (Aref and Redzuan, 2009).

2.4 Ethiopia in Poverty Reduction Process

As in many developing countries, in Ethiopia the practice towards poverty reduction is becoming a main issue and the government is determined to work more effectively to reduce poverty in the country. The set of recent development goals and transformation plans need individual and collective efforts. Community participation in this aspect is believed to play great role in the country's effort to make poverty history.

The government embarked on an aggressive programme to accelerate poverty alleviation. A considerable research in the country revealed that poverty has partly resulted from high population growth, less productivity, resource base and recent history challenges (Tasew, 2000).

Currently Ethiopia adopts new growth and development strategies to speed up economic growth in the country. It is a plan of commitment to pull Ethiopians out of poverty and deprivation and lead them on the road towards a better future. The Growth and Development Plan (GDP) set out an agenda to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and possibly double the size of the economy, all within the next 5 years. It also emphasizes commitment to community participation and development of different activities at the different levels.

The programme includes education to create human capacity, expanding infrastructure as rapidly as financing and capacity will allow, opening the economic building institutions and decentralizing government (Wegelin and Borgman, 1997). In case of Ethiopia since most practices have failed to either significantly reduce poverty or eradicate it, now community participation is becoming a part of strategy toward development process (Tasew, 2000). The idea of community participation gets a growing view that local communities and beneficiaries should be involved in the development, implementation, and monitoring of interventions designed to reduce poverty (Bevan, 2000).

As earlier cited the area of study is Bahir Dar city which is found in North West part of Ethiopia. It is a capital city of Region Three, Amhara Region. There have been a lot of development efforts being implemented by the Ethiopian country.

As a recent phenomenon, in Ethiopia, literature is lacking or little is known about the level and nature of community participation in poverty reduction process towards achieving growth and development plan. Thus, the need for research is to find ways of involving community in developmental projects.

As a developing country, a lot of attention has been paid to improving ways of assessing the effectiveness of development interventions. This is to be welcomed, especially with regard to community-based or participatory aid projects, since considerable resources are currently being earmarked for these by almost all types of donor agencies, including large international organizations.

There is a recent realization in the country that community participation is one of the domains of community capacity building. It is one of the mechanisms to employ people to take part in community development and an essential part of community development and one of the involvement of people in the different stages of decision making. Increased communication participation is a means to achieve community capacity and resolve community problems.

The World Bank recognized the lack of community participation as a reason for failure of many community development attempts in developing countries. From available literatures, it was recognized that community participation often means the involvement of people or community in decision making and design of projects. However, this study focused on the type and forms of community participation in poverty reduction and self sustained development attempts.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Description of the Study Area

Community participation in achieving poverty alleviation effort of a country is an undeniable fact. The underlined motto of poverty reduction is enabling community to take part in tackling their problem hence developing their countries. For this particular study, the community participation will involve beneficiaries and that they realize their contributions towards development projects.

In Chapters 2 and 3 the importance of inculcating the concept of community participation to attain sustainable development was explained. This chapter discusses the research methodology that was used in conducting the study. The chapter explains the research design, sampling procedure and the data collection methods.

The study area is found in North West part of Ethiopia. The Amhara National Regional State is one of the nine states of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Its home to Lake Tana, the largest lake in Ethiopia , as well as the Blue Nile and the highest peak of the Semien Mountains. The people are a diverse mix of individuals who are proud of their history, their culture and their country. With a total population of nearly 20 million, it's the second largest state in Ethiopia and its capital is Bahir Dar. Bahir Dar town is the study area of this research.

Meanwhile, the region in general and the capital Bahir Dar has been known for its history of low growth and development. The government and non government organization works to reduce poverty as part of the country plan. Involving the community for attaining development goals is becoming a crucial issue in the region in particular and the country in general.

3.2 Research Design

This research was structured in such a way that it responds to the objectives of the study which was to:-

- Assess trend and forms of community participation towards poverty alleviation Programs within the Bahir Dar city, Ethiopia

And a general research question was set as

- What is the current poverty alleviation programme constitute
- Are communities involved in the process
- If the communities are involved, in what level and in what form
- To what extent is their participation realized in the effort towards poverty alleviation goal of the country.

The over all approach of my research was qualitative. With open ended, narrative and descriptive ways of researching. As a qualitative research, the research is descriptive and subjective type of research. It involved collection of narrative data in order to gain insight of community participation in the study area towards poverty reduction endeavors of the country. The research paradigm of my study fall under interpretive dimension: the how and what community participations should be towards poverty alleviation. It was believed to help to understand participation type and level in poverty reduction projects in the study area.

3.3 Type and Source of Data

The type of data was direct from the people who were used as a primary data and secondary data was taken from documents and reports available in the study area as suiting to the research. The direct (primary) data from the community and stakeholders helped to learn the activities involved the community, to understand the type and level of community participation in poverty reduction process.

The secondary data was taken through document review of the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of the country, project reviews of the micro and small scale enterprise and credit and saving microfinance office and also some related literatures was used to get clear idea on the effect of the community participation and progress observed in the project life time and to its development contribution.

For the purposes of this study some interviews of officials, focus group discussions of some community members and document reviews were used because I wanted to gain insight to the understanding, role and forms community involvement in the study area. In an attempt to address the objectives of this research, the qualitative method of collecting data was used for the study. It was collected from primary sources and secondary sources to understand the community participation and analyze the problem under study. Qualitative approach is concerned with process, meanings, and the nature of participation as a phenomenon (William, 2006) and this feature makes it ideal for this particular research since it deals with the nature of community participation in as part of poverty alleviation efforts of the country.

Open ended questions were used so that the wide range of opinion will be grasped and avoid limit of information in the subject matter. Although this type of question is time consuming in selecting relevant information in data collection time, I believed that such responses will give a way to see the matter in depth.

In the focus group discussion also some check lists were administered. This helped to avoid the risk of missing the discussion matter as it involves more than one person. Written documents, reports, plans and were also looked at.

3.4 Source and Method of Data Collection

The community and related literatures were used as the source of primary and secondary data sources respectively. It was used to generate appropriate qualitative information for the study. The primary data was collected from key informants, communities and regional/local government officials. The primary data from community members was collected in regard to their participation in poverty alleviation programs implemented in the area. Data from government institutions was again gathered in regard to the form and extent of community participations in place and efforts made to deal with the development endeavors.

The Secondary qualitative data for the study was gathered to get information on the description of the study area including demographic and population culture and historical aspects of the development status. Thus, document analysis of the newel growth and transformation plan, semi structured interview, direct observation was also administered.

Semi-structured interviews were used to generate data from key informants, government officials whereas the focused group discussions were conducted with purposively selected community members who represent different participation forms.

Data was collected through focus group discussion, direct observation and semi- structured interviews. Tape recording and field notes were used for data collection. The observation helped to gather accurate information about how the communities are engaged in poverty alleviation projects and self sustain activities.

3.5 Sampling Methods

Purposive sampling was seen as suitable sampling procedure to draw the final sample of the study. Project participants were identified and they included officials from the Department of Social Development and the project members. I conducted interviews to collect data. Some other information was gathered through document review and focus group discussion.

The study area was selected purposively for its conveniences for me and liable to the development programmes implementation in the country. The main actors involved in the development endeavors in the area are communities and stakeholders

Sample size of 10 people was selected randomly from the two community oriented programmes intact and officials working in the area, this depends on the accessibility of the sites and availability of the informants both in the community and offices. Qualitative data for the study was, therefore, obtained from purposively selected participants who were believed to yield the most information about the issues under investigation. 3- 4 focus group discussions with purposively selected containing 4-5 members and 4 interviews was administers so as to capture the objective of the study, I couldn't make further deep interview in the study matter because of time and budget constraints. Other issues were those in relation to time and cost effectiveness.

3.6 Methods of Data Analysis

The qualitative data obtained through the focus group discussion, face to face interview, observation and document review data collection methods was analyzed using appropriate methods for analysis. The qualitative data was analyzed through categorization, interpretation, conceptual generalization. Based on the objective set for the research the data was arranged to answer the research question and under each research question the concept of the finding was explained.

Categorizing, discourse analysis and concept generalization of the responses of sample group was administered based on my research objective and research questions. It was analyzed and interpreted and summarized in a box to give a clear highlight of the problem assessed. The narrative data was summarized and presented in a summary box and reflect the main idea of the discussions in relation to the objective of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data collected and discuss the findings of the study. The objective of the study was to assess the community participation towards poverty alleviation programs of study area. The presentation is through a series of narration and summary under each research question formulated for this specific study. It will start with the data collected from the officials followed by substantiated analysis of research objective. The results are then discussed in accordance with the theme identified for the study and guided by research questions.

Ethiopia is in the stage of understanding and including element of participation in any development dialogues. Participation is becoming the most useful tool to engage communities to help themselves and their country and sustain efforts in development work. Communities in development efforts are no longer seen as recipients of development programs; rather they have become critical stakeholders that have an important role to play in countries poverty alleviation programs in the country (Eshetu and Mamo,2009).

Ethiopia has developed a new Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) of five years (2010/2011-2014/2015). This plan is the continuation of the Plan for Accelerated and Sustainable Development to End Poverty (PASDEP) which laid out the directions for accelerated, sustained, and people-centered economic development as well as to pave way for attainment of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015.

The countries long term vision, achievement and lesson drawn from PASDEP are the bases for growth and transformation plan. The Ethiopia long term vision in this plan is “ *to become a country where democratic rule, good governance and social justice reign, up on the involvement and free will of its people; and once extricating itself from poverty and become a middle income economy*” (MoFED, 2010).

4.2 Growth and Development Plan (GTP)

As one of the data collection methods was document review, the study reviewed part of GTP document and tried to highlight the major points of the plan in respect to the idea of the study. This is believed to understand the government effort towards poverty alleviation in the five years plan the country set. Although the document has wide range of ideas to be discussed, for this specific study, I focus on how the community is assisted in the poverty reduction process through credit provision and in small and micro scale enterprises especially in Bahir Dar in Amhara regional State, Ethiopia.

The GTP emphasized the countries strategy for sustaining the rapid growth plan to fall under specific pillars. These pillars include sustaining faster and equitable economic growth, maintaining agriculture as a major source of economic growth, creating favorable conditions for industry to play key role in the economy, enhancing expansion and quality of social development, building capacity and deepen good governance and promote women and youth empowerment and equitable benefit.

The overriding development agenda of GTP in Ethiopia is to sustain rapid and broad-based growth path witnessed during the past several years and eventually end poverty. The plan has major objectives like maintaining average real GDP, expand, ensure quality of education, health and attain Millennium Development Goals social sector, ensure favorable condition to create stable democratic and development state and ensure growth sustainability (MoFED, 2010).

The GTP also constitutes big plans under different sector. It includes the macro economic framework and growth plan, economic sector development plan, social sector development plan, capacity building and good governance and cross cutting sector development plan. The economic sector development plan consists of small and micro scale enterprise and credit and saving service development as main tool targeting to attain the economic development in the country urban areas.

The Economic sector development plan, therefore, gave special emphasis particularly to two major sub-sectors. The effort towards these is exerted to vastly develop the micro and small enterprises sector, which is the most important sub-sector towards employment generation.

As a plan, during the five GTP period, the document explain the industrial sector will have the following major development objectives: Developing the micro and small-scale enterprises sector so that it contributes, to the development of the industrial sector as a whole serve as the basis, and contributes to the development of the agricultural sector and create employment opportunities. The overall objective of the small and micro scale enterprises is to enable the micro and small scale enterprises play significant role in the national development activities and poverty reduction (MoFed, 2010). Emphasis is given to promote the community participation in development efforts of the country.

Box 1. Summary of Growth and Development Plan of Ethiopia

GTP is a medium term strategic framework for the 5 years period (2010/2011-2014/2015).It is based on the previous plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to end poverty(PASDEP)

The plan emphasis is to attain MDG, by 2015. It aimed to attain rapid and broad based growth in the country and achieve the long term vision of the country. For these purpose the community participation is taken as one of the vital tools for development efforts of the country.

4.3 Community Participation

The study main theme is community participation toward development endeavors of the country. The areas identified for these are small and micro scale enterprises and credit associations. The idea is how the community participates in the growth and development plan as part of countries effort to sustain development and improve community livelihood.

Community participation is emphasized as the central agenda to ensure citizens ownership for sustainable development and good governance initiatives. Many current studies regarding the

relationship between community participation and increased development attainment are based on the premises that in traditional society, ‘unity is power’ (David, 2004).

Different studies describe the micro and small enterprise in Ethiopia emerged as a better way for poverty reduction and as a platform for sustainable development and productivity. It plays an important role in providing people with livelihood and income generation opportunity, providing income and service to people who can not get employment in the formal sector.

The study found out major areas that communities participate and contribute to the improvement of their lives and the development efforts of the country. Although there is a wide range of micro and small enterprises operating in different sectors, when asked to describe the ways community are currently involved focus group discussants in the study area described an extensive range of activities that include different actions. Most common ones observed in the data collection however are limited. These include:

- Metal and wood work
- Food preparation and processing
- Solid waste collection and others
- Production of construction materials
- Textile and garment

Information from the government officials was obtained through face to face interview. There was a difficulty of getting a lot of officials for most of them were in training. However, some leading questions were also distributed to available government offices responsible for development project implementation. Response to specific questions like the role of community towards development was almost the same in all areas of study. There is a consensus on the significance of participation to development. In the study area the role of the community was emphasized in different development strategies and the growth and transformation plan document. The practicality however differs and a limited number of communities participate in few projects. Their role was limited to the project implementation stage only. The focus group discussion revealed that some of the project areas neither did nor consider the priority of the community need and capacity. Most of the members, therefore, prefer to use credit service to involve in activities of their choice and capacity.

Box 2. Summary on community participation in the study area

The study found out that the community participation in the study area is minimal. Some of the activities observed during data collection time show less number of participation as compared to population size and unemployment rate. Participation was observed in specific activities like metal work, textile, construction, and material and food production.

4.4 Level of Participation

Participation is about taking part in planning, decision making, implementation and development of programs and projects, in the monitoring and evaluation of development programs, projects and also in sharing the benefits of development (David, 2004). In the study area however the level of participation in different stages of the project life is almost none. In FGD the discussants explained that they were just told what sort of projects were coming to their areas, not asking them what projects communities need. This shows that there was little or no participation of communities.

An interview with government officials emphasised that in order to achieve the MDGs a development and transformation plan was to designed and shared country wide. The objective of this plan is to alleviate poverty in the country. The plan consists of a strategy to involve community at large. The government and the communities are believed to have a great role in poverty alleviation effort of the country. The respondent also explained that the projects are on tract and that they are beneficial to the country population .It was further discovered that despite the plan being designed with gap filling ideas but it lacked community representation in such projects that affects communities.

Participation in projects will help communities to be aware of what, why and how they do it with sense of ownership and passion. The focus group discussion, however, revealed that the communities have little idea about the project except the fact that they get jobs for daily consumption. It was observed that the level of participation is at the implementation point of the project only.

The rationale behind low participation in the study area was low educational attainment and awareness. The finding of the empirical study on community participation in development projects of Bahir Dar showed that the lack of capacity and low awareness is considered critical in explaining the slow progress in terms of making the community to participate. The survey also observed the need for education and training in the study area. Despite the efforts made for inclusion of the community in development program at all project phases, capacity challenge is holding the progress back in some extent. The research, therefore, highlights the lack of training and proper education as relevant element explaining why participation remains in question.

The researcher, however, believed the need for vast study to understand the cause of low community participation in the study area which can not be studied in this particular survey because of time and budget constraints.

Box.3 Summary of level of Participation

Theoretically in development projects, participation stands for being involved in planning, designing, decision making, implementing, monitoring and evaluation phases of the project life. The study, however, revealed that participation in the study area, Bahir Dar, is incomplete in a way it focuses its implementation stage of the project. The reason for this was low awareness and literacy level of participants.

4.5 Forms of Community Participation

The government of Ethiopia has followed an Agriculture-Led policy to address poverty in rural and urban areas. The scope of the study inclined to focus only on the urban development activities which aimed at income generation and community self sustaining efforts to contribute to the development plan.

Community participation can be seen in the context of issues related to social, economic and political issues and development projects including education, health, social, economic and environmental efforts both in rural and urban parts of a country. In the study area, Amhara regional state, Bahir Dar, the small and micro scale enterprise and micro finance service

development strategy and plans were implemented in the urban areas of the country for same purpose. The information from government offices explained the reason why new small and micro finance strategy is different from the previous one. The current strategy focuses on involving communities in projects that affect them.

As community participation is one tool for urban development, small and micro scale and micro finance are strategies. In the interview it was learnt that in doing so the first move towards achieving the intended goal is to create awareness. The other was women and youth are targeted for this purpose. The third is provision of cash, material and product selling place are included in the manual. The data form micro and small enterprise shows that the job market in the micro and small finance enterprises has enormously increased within a year. At a country level, the plan is providing comprehensive and accessible development support for the enterprises. Accordingly, countrywide the following targets are set in the sub-sector for plan period.

- □ Creating employment opportunities for about 3 million people through the provision of a full-fledged support.
- □ Provide training of trainers (ToT) for 10,000 professionals in the sub-sector.
- Provide training for about 3 million operators in the areas of entrepreneurships, handicraft, technical and vocational.
- Develop 15,000 hectares of land, construct shade and buildings for operators organized in enterprises. (MoFED, 2010).

In Bahir Dar town only, it was documented that so far there are 10,000 small and micro enterprises from these 22 enterprises are developed to medium investors. Around 10,000 people got job opportunities. The main goal of small and micro scale enterprise is also to create employment and self sustaining opportunities among the community. The credit service in the other hand plays a vital role in creating suitable condition for the community to work and grow.

It was observed that the poverty relief program is targeting unemployed people who live below poverty line. The emphasis is more on women and youth although there are a great tendency of women dropouts from the project. The fact that the sample respondents were found unemployed showed that the projects focused on creating employment for the

unemployed. The Millennium Development Goal addresses the plan to create income earning opportunities, but also to ensure improved capabilities, empowerment of the poor in the sphere of state/ social institutions and security against variety of shocks.

As discussed, the study focus only on the community participation in small and micro scale enterprises and microfinance service though participation required deep and wide range of study.

Different literatures hypothesized credit to have a positive impact on enterprise revenue, fixed asset, and employment and transaction relationships, thus providing great opportunities for escaping poverty. It is also believed to have positive influence on household level variable household income, income diversification, household assets, education, nutrition and coping strategies and the contribution to the community livelihood at large (David, 2004).

From the interview information of the officials working in the micro finance service, it was explained the microfinance service is meant to improve the living condition of the poor in terms of the four poverty dimensions.

- Expanding opportunities
- Improved capabilities
- Reduce vulnerability and
- Empower individuals

During data collection time it was explained that the credit service and micro and small scale enterprise expands opportunity and improved the capabilities of the community. Beneficiaries of the credit service and small and micro enterprises were seen to reduce vulnerability and resist minimal shocks as it's compared to non beneficiaries. One of the community participant oriented projects was also explained to empower individuals.

The interview and focus group discussion revealed that the members who had been participating for more than 3 years had changed their lives with minimal basic need fulfillment. Almost all members visited during the data collection time explained that they have no idea of plan and design of the project and are always involve once the projects is on ground.

4.6 Training and Capacity Building

Training is a very important for introducing projects or new ideas. The study noticed that the participants have not gained any formal training on credit management which result into failure of their businesses. On the other hand lack of patience on part of participants and mobility (moving from one place to another) leads to another failure. Though both the government officials and community members agree on the need of over all training for a better result, trained project beneficiaries are few in number.

4.7 Benefits

Small scale and credit service are considered as the most effective interventions for empowering the poor in their economic and social involvements. The basic idea behind such intervention is that access to micro-finance services such as credit, savings to the poor could help them, among others, to expand their businesses that will allow them to pull out of poverty. In the study area, Bahir Dar, it has been considered as one of the best entry points for bringing sustainable development. During FGD, it was explained that the benefits they are getting ranges from cash, to market of products.

The result show that almost all of the respondents believed that the assistance from the government helped them to improve socio-economic status of their households. The government has dedicated credit provision of small and micro-job opportunities to keep the poor participating in the countries poverty eradication plan.

4.8 Job Opportunity

In Bahir Dar, the small and micro enterprise and credit services have given job opportunities for a considerable number of unemployed youths and women. From the interview with the government officials, it was learned that there are around 23,000 youths unemployed in the region.

Much of women contribution to urban development is often not recognized. Women are deprived from full legal and civil entitlement because of home assignment and less exposure to public work. Men are usually in charge of decision making posts, greater waged jobs and fulltime jobs. Some of the research area visited during data collection time shows unequal distribution and participation of women and men. It was noticed a less number of female participants.

As explained by government officials in the area more than 10,000 people are engaged in different income generation activities and are helping their families like children go to school

Activities such as metal and wood work, cultural garment production, dry food preparing and processing, solid waste collection, production of bricks have open up job opportunities.

4.9 Credit Service

Most of the places visited during data collection and focus group discussion shows how community members benefited from credit service in their respective area. Below is a success story of one of the group discussion member. Her name was Fantu.

Fantu is a mother of six children, who has lived in Kebele for 20 years. Her husband, Agumasee, died ten years ago when he was serving in the military. It was during the internal strife between Eritrea and Tigray, which ended in 1991. Fantu didn't have a permanent income or any external support and her children stayed home. She used to make her living my selling charcoal and firewood which said was collected from the nearby forest which sometimes put her in trouble if caught. Her living changed as one of her neighbor connected her to a credit service provider and now all her six children can go to school, she has a small shop and she said that her life has really improved much better and has a plan to expand her business.

The study was able to observe that some community members are running their business with the credit service they get from the government. But the participation is still minimal as compared to the number of unemployed people in the study area. The credit and saving

officer reasoned out for the fewer beneficiaries as a low fund for loan and the higher number people dependent on the credit service.

The Government is promoting these self help members of the community through provision of credit, training and giving a market place for selling products and marketing network and promotion works. This is believed to encourage the rest of the community to take part and participate and create a sense of competition.

In the interview time it was explained success of the projects considers three steps, i.e. by its capital, the employment opportunity it creates and quality of the products and so on.

Box 4. Summary on Forms of Participation

Small and micro scale enterprises and credit services are the main focus of this study to understand the forms of participation in Bahir Dar. At a country level target was set to these sub- sectors as part of the development plan. In the study area 10,000 small and micro scale enterprises were documented. Researching and analyzing these however needs more time and budget. But it was observed that job opportunities are opened for considerable number of youth and women in the study area. Both forms of community participation intended to expand opportunities, improve capabilities, reduce vulnerability and empower individuals. Promotion of participation in the data collection time was seen from training and capacity building, benefit, job opportunity and credit service perspectives.

4.10 Sustainability

Sustainability is the other theme of the study. It is a catchy word that we often encounter in development forums. Many literatures present an opportunity to study the long run impact of community participation on sustainability. Participation nowadays is used in all kinds of poverty alleviation program in the belief that it creates sustainability.

Ethiopia development plan has major objectives which includes sustainability in almost all strategies. It includes maintaining sustainable average GDP, expand and ensure quality of

education, health, attaining MDG in the social sector, creating stable democratic and development state, ensure growth sustainability.

Poverty reduction is one of the most important goals of development efforts and sustainability is the most important concept in any development endeavors.

Sustainability although has a widely used phrase and idea and also has different meanings, for this particular study it is used to indicate the harmony of the projects to environment, social and economic shocks and have a prolonged project life to use now and in future.

In the interview with government officials it was explained that sustainability will depend on the growing awareness and effort to shift to better activities among the community. It was emphasized that project can phase out in anytime but what matters is to make most of it while it is intact. The development plan has a promising emphasis that there will be an expanded effort and commitment to eradicate poverty in the country and improve the livelihood of the community.

The communities in the focus group discussions on the other hand expressed their fears and doubts on sustainability of the projects. They claim the skyrocketing living costs and price fluctuations is a problem to cope with hence failure of their businesses.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Conclusions

Ethiopia is adopting a new growth and transformation plan for 5 years. For this plan to be effective there is need to engage communities in projects that solve their problems, this will enhance poverty reduction in the long run.

It is worth mentioning that levels of community participation in the study area were low. The communities are involved in selected projects and most of times they are involved during implementation stage disregarding other important project stages such as planning, designing etc. This has made communities to have minimal role in need assessment and project designs.

During data collection time, it was discovered that low participation is due to lack of awareness of intended projects and literacy levels.

Level of community participation in the study area showed that different poverty alleviation projects were stopped or finished poorly. This is because participation was in the final stages of the project life, implementation, though community participation should be at every project stage such as planning, designing, implementing, monitoring and evaluation.

The government is handling this issue by providing training, job opportunities, skill acquaintance, and credit provision.

The most active forms of community involvement, as part of poverty alleviation efforts in the study area were few in number. For this study only the two was taken for conveniences of the researcher. The two community oriented activities selected in the study area are the small and micro scale enterprise and the credit service.

The overall structure of the research was designed in 5 chapters which deals different steps of the study process.

In **Chapter 1** the introduction, background and rationale to the study, the statement of the problem as well as the objective and limitation of the study was discussed. The purpose of the research was to assess forms of community participation in poverty alleviation efforts and sustainability in the country with particular focus to Bahir Dar, one of the towns in Ethiopia. For this research, objectives were drawn and research questions were formulated which were believed to be answered at the end of the study. The scope of the study was stated. It was in Bahir Dar and was not done in depth study for challenges of time and budget. This chapter also tried to familiarize new terms which were used through out the country.

In **Chapter 2** the literature reviews concept of poverty and community participation. The role of community and types of community participation activities was also explored. The first section of the chapter discussed the definition and concepts of poverty. The concept of the term includes an unacceptable human deprivation of in terms of economic opportunity, education, health and nutrition as well as lack of employment and security. The second section dealt on community participation and poverty reduction. Community participation has a direct relation with development success. The more the community participated in development efforts, the more the success will be. The term participation has been a controversial issue but there is a consensus that it is positively affect the success of development projects at any level to enhance its chance of success and corresponding personal, social, economic and political benefit. The type of community participation was explained in this chapter. The Ethiopia poverty alleviation process and contextualization of community participation was highlighted and in relation to the concept under study.

Chapter 3 dealt with the methodology part of the study. It started by description of the study area followed by the research design. The study area is found in the north west of Ethiopia, called Bahir Dar. There are 14 regions in the country and Bahir Dar is a capital of region 3. Poverty alleviation as part of the countries 5 years plan is an ongoing with much emphasis to community participation in self sustaining and contribution to the country development too.

To conduct the study, an appropriate methodology was used. Qualitative type of data was used from both primary and secondary sources. Project reports, strategies and plans were

reviewed. Data was collected through focus group discussions, direct observation and semi structural interviews. Tape recording and field note was used to collect data. A sample of 10 people was selected purposively for the research convenience considering time and budget constraints. The data was analyzed through categorization based on the objective of the study and interpreted accordingly. Data was interpreted and presented in narrative form and by drawing summary at each theme discussed. The study made use focus group discussion and semi structured interview which was conducted face to face with the officials working in the area matter related with the study

The focus of **Chapter 4**.dealt with the findings, conclusion and recommendations drew from the secondary and primary information. Findings were categorized as follows:

- Growth and transformation plan
- Community participation and small and micro scale enterprises
- Level of participation
- Forms of participation (Training, benefit, job opportunity and credit service)
- Sustainability

The researcher believed there is a need for a deep and broad study in the same concepts to get a more reliable and strong results for intervention suggestions. Due to the scope of the study, this was limited and seeks more elaborated discussion. Based on the findings of the secondary and empirical research, however, some recommendations are made.

5.2 Recommendations

This chapter focuses on drawing up the conclusions and to provide recommendations based on the research that was conducted. Based on the research findings, the researcher suggests the following recommendations to tackle the problem under study and assist in improving levels of community participation in poverty alleviation and sustainable development in the country.

Community participation in poverty reduction activities works directly on development outcome the country plan and helps empowering of the people's life. It is therefore useful to:

- Engaged communities at large with the aim of empowering them
- The co-operation between community members and government projects
- Intensive awareness and trainings and involvement of NGOs in such activities
- Conduct in depth research on the area to contribute to policy design
- Design sustainable Strategies to enhance community participation

The current study has only focused on the Bahir Dar Poverty Reduction process in credit and small and micro enterprises services. Poverty Reduction Programme cut across all the sector departments and development plans. A study that will look at the Poverty reduction by various programmes and towns of the county is needed in order to measure the actual effect of community participation on poverty reduction efforts of Ethiopia.

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