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**An Evaluation of Donor Agencies' Policies on Participatory Development:
the Case of Ghana**

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Abstract

This paper critically evaluates guidelines concerning participatory development by the World Bank and USAID. It focuses on the different conceptual frameworks adopted in order to examine the differing ways of adopting participation in their development agenda.

A literature - based method was adopted and the analysis included evaluation of five documented experiences including the Ghana Secondary Education Improvement Project and Ghana Water Sanitation and Hygiene Project from both the World Bank and USAID. Baum project cycle stages have been taken as activities for project participation. The findings are; the need for better planning; ensuring sustainability; and involving beneficiaries.

Introduction

Since the 1970s, the notion of participation has become widely acknowledged as a key component of development programming. In Brett's (2003) opinion, the reason for the emergence of participation is to respond to the recent global demands for a greater individual and social control over the activities of the state and especially to the manifest failures of

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traditional 'top-down' management systems. Also, the UNDP (1993) as cited by Mohan (2002), have observed that many writers today demonstrate an urge to participate in the events and processes that shape their lives. In addition, international and national development agencies emphasise the centrality of participation in development strategies.

According to the Economic and Social Development Department (2003), across the international, government and non-governmental agencies, there is the realisation that the main reason for many unsuccessful development projects was and still is attributed to the lack of an active, effective and a lasting participation of the intended beneficiaries of the projects.

In view of this, the context of this paper considers the rationale for participation put forward by different aid agencies such as the World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) by analysing their policies and frameworks on participatory development primarily focusing on how they have been operationalised in their various development projects.

Since this paper seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge in international development projects in developing countries, it utilises Ghana, a developing country in sub-Saharan Africa as a case study. Considering that the World Bank and USAID are key development partners in Ghana's development, this paper places an emphasis on World Bank and USAID development projects. It examines how the World Bank and USAID have operationalised their policies on participatory development in development initiatives.

This research was carried out primarily by capturing a combination of a number of secondary sources of data such as official project reports and publications that have been collected by institutions such as the World Bank, African Development Bank and other similar global institute. The methodology adopted for this research is the qualitative method due to the inductive nature of the research which inclined towards the narrative and use of case study.

Also, in examining the findings of the research, the descriptive analysis method was adopted as the research tends to analyse policies and frameworks from different organisations on the concept of beneficiary without necessarily quantifying the findings.

Furthermore, because of the fact-finding nature of the study, data were collected by analysis of documentary evidence through a 'problem-oriented approach' and the year limit for the research was between 2011 and 2014. To validate and corroborate the evidence, this study employed cross-referencing to explain the data. Different sources with different interests are used to validate the conclusion that will be drawn. The data collected was to answer the study questions, using concepts to link the data and study questions.

The aim of development advocates and practitioners for participation in development is to obtain development objectives. Therefore the research on which this article is based attempts to evaluate participatory development policies by the World Bank and the United State Agency for International Development (USAID), and to ascertain how they have been operationalised in their development initiatives. To achieve these objectives first, participatory development will be critically examined from different the World Bank, USAID, participant and practitioners points view and a comparative analysis will be presented. Based on the above a summery conclusion and relevant recommendations will be made.

Participatory Development in Perspective

Participation: The Origin

The concept of participation has generally been subject to lengthy debates regarding its origin, theoretical grounding, practical applicability and its critical connotations (Mikkelsen, 2005). Notwithstanding, participation is considered a rich concept with variations in its application and definition to the extent that the way participation is defined also depends on the context in which it occurs. Therefore, for some, it is a matter of principle; for others, practice; for still others, an end in itself (World Bank, 1995). It has also recently been promoted through various community development projects and local decentralization. This has succeeded in becoming a precept in development policy leading to the World Bank alone investing about \$85 billion over the last decade on development assistance for participation (Ghazala and Vijayendra, 2013).

Currently, participation in the view of the population in local level governance has become an ongoing objective of development practitioners in many parts of the world. This can be attributed to the fact that the concept of participation has been influential for many years but has become more politicized through association with empowerment, adding to the fact that development itself as a subject of discussion in recent times has become a convoluted matter especially because it involves many participants who have different interests about development and therefore have different expectations and view-points (James, 1998). Nonetheless, Thin (2002), considers participation as a development goal and part of the means towards achieving developmental goals and sustainable development. Similarly, the World Bank Group (2013) considers participation to be key for ensuring long term sustainability, building ownership as well as playing a significant role in enhancing transparency which results in the effectiveness of development policies and projects.

Participation is thus seen as one of the ingredients necessary to promote sustained development and has therefore become an axiom to state that development cannot be sustainable without participation. This is not to suggest that participation equals sustained development because to achieve sustained development obviously requires more than people participating in the development process (Coetzee et al., 2001). But what is participation exactly?

Participation

According to Drysdale and Purcell (2005) 'participation' is hardly defined and is therefore often used in contradictory ways. The views of Drysdale and Purcell (2005) and Rahman (2012) portray that there are different ideological roots to the use of the term. However, one important distinction of what participation is according to Nelson and Wright (1995) as cited by Ranis, Vreeland and Kosack (2006) is whether it involves empowerment which merely implies control over decision making or a level of rudimentary consultation where decision making powers are very minimally delegated.

Rahnema (2010) in Sachs (2010, p. 127) 'the term participation is a jargon word separate from any context, and has been manipulated by vastly different groups of people to mean entirely different things'. In a similar view Cornwall and Brock (2005) consider the term participation to have what they refer to as extended associations with social movements as well as the struggle for citizenship rights and voice. Politically ambivalent and definitionally vague, 'participation' has historically been used both to enable ordinary people to gain political agency and as a means of maintaining relations of rule for neutralising political opposition and for taxing the poorest.

Considering an instrumental approach of the concept of participation in the opinion of Drysdale and Purcell (2005) is the fact that it is ideologically based to the use and/or distribution of power. In addition, Arnstein (1969) identified the fact that the rationale for participation could be for laboratory activity. However, her opinion suggests that the idea of participation is sometimes used to manipulate the public. In her view, participation could be defined as ‘the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is the strategy by which the have-nots join in determining how information is shared, goals and policies are set, tax resources are allocated, programmes are operated, and benefits like contracts and patronage are parcelled out. In short, it is the means by which they can induce significant reform which enables them to share in the benefits of an affluent society’. The definition by Coetzee et al., (2001, p. 469) expresses it to mean ‘people involving themselves, to a greater or lesser degree, in organizations indirectly or directly concerned with the decision-making and implementation of development. Hence in a general sense, participation can be expressed as ‘achieving power in terms of access to, and control of resources necessary to protect livelihood’ (Oakley and Marsden, 1984, p. 27) as cited by Coetzee et al., (2001, p. 474). Finsterbusch and Van Wicklin III (1989, p. 575) also understand the term participation to mean the ‘contribution of beneficiaries to the decisions or work involved in the projects’.

Similar to Tandon and Cordeiro (1998); Building on the World Bank (1994) as cited by Blackburn et al., (2002, p. 61) define participation as ‘a process through which primary stakeholders influence and share control of their development initiatives, decisions, and resources’. Further definitions by Mikkelsen (2005, p. 53) suggest participation to mean a voluntary contribution by people in projects but without their taking part in decision-making. Meanwhile, the changing perceptions of participation in development cooperation in the

1990's viewed participation as a partnership, coordination or ownership of programmes leading towards people's control over their resources. Also, the World Bank (1994, p.1) define participation as 'a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives, decisions and resources which affect them'. Meanwhile, other critiques tend to focus on participatory rural appraisal rather than the expectation of demanding a greater reflexivity which requires that participation be acquainted with issues of diversity and differentiation (Cooke and Kothari, 2001). Thus, the populist assumption which believes that participatory learning through the application of local knowledge will help redefine the relationship between the local communities and the various development organizations has been challenged (Tyranny, *et al.*2001). It is however asserted that in spite of the fact that participation is operationally constrained by institutional contexts, it still is considered important as a system of representatives. Authors such as Nicholas Hildyard perceive participatory development to be deep-seated institutionally hence argue that if participatory processes do not take into account the bargaining power of so called stakeholders, they are in danger of merely providing opportunities for the more powerful. On the whole, in considering the discourse of participation, what is evident is the diverse ways in which the analysis of participation has been articulated in both social and cultural practices, and its given a more nuanced understanding of participation in development.

Considering the various definitions of participation draws attention to the emerging importance of participation which reveals that one major rationale for participation is to ensure efficiency and effectiveness in development, and therefore seeing participation as a way of inclusion in order to counter inequalities i.e. the fostering of local initiative and control in development (Mikkelsen, 2005). These comprehensive views seem to accentuate the point that participation is about building ownership and ensuring effectiveness. Building

on the World Bank (1994) cited by Blackburn et al., (2002, p. 61) emphasizes participation as not only ownership but ownership built from the bottom up’.

In summary, participation can be considered as an empowering process that makes a commitment to equity in the development process; a cosmetic label which is used to make a proposed project appear good or a co-opting practice to reduce cost and mobilize labour (Mikkelsen, 2005).

Meanwhile, The Community Workers Co-operative (1997) as cited by Drysdale and Purcell (2005) suggests that, the rationale for any form of participation must seek to answer the questions of who participates, what processes to adopt, how to ensure the marginalised groups are included and finally where the community intends to be after the development.

With these in mind, participation becomes an active involvement in decision making that has an absolute impact on the life of the participants or beneficiaries in the environment that they live and the quality of experiences that empowers them and builds their capacity (NIVT, 1999; Chanan, 2000) as cited by (Drysdale and Purcell, 2005). Finally, the World Bank (1994, p.1) have every evidence that indeed ‘participation can, in many circumstances improve the quality, effectiveness and sustainability of projects, and strengthen ownership and commitment of government and stakeholders’.

Participatory Development: The Critical Perspective

Criticisms of why development projects fail is widespread with one line of criticism being that development projects are too top-down and need to be more bottom-up through the involvement of more participation by beneficiaries (Maguire, 1981) as cited by (Finsterbusch

and Wicklin III, 1987). Following this, beneficiary involvement in the development process has been accepted as good practice within most organisations for many years now so that though participation was initially considered to be a marginal concern within the development circle, development agencies in recent times have embraced the notion that allowing some form of participation by the beneficiaries in development is important for development to be considered relevant, sustainable and altogether empowering (Hickey and Mohan, 2005). However, in the opinion of Craig and Doug (1997), generally, the beneficiaries of most projects participate very little and gain access to a very small proportion of the project's resources. According to them, it is important to note that development projects have to be crafted in ways that will create real prospects for the intended beneficiaries to direct the project in the most appropriate direction to them. Gamer (1976) as cited by Finsterbusch and Wicklin III (1987) typified an alternative development strategy by stating that; a developed system is one which is considered to have emerged from the indigenous and not to be development which has been imposed externally from the local setting. He further argues that irrespective of how benevolent and well-intentioned a development is, it is regarded ultimately counterproductive if it does not effectively integrate into the world of those it purports to develop or assist. This is to support the view that strong participation on the ground by primary stakeholders boosts project performance and development.

Undoubtedly, this has led to more advocacy for beneficiary participation within the context of development among donor agencies and policy makers. Many authors have also proven that participation undisputedly contributes significantly to project success. For instance, the past decade has yielded a harvest and a learning while attempting to bring participation to centre stage in development. This is evidenced 'in the guiding principles of 'ownership and partnership in the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF), the Poverty Reduction

Strategy Papers (PRSPs), and similar frameworks of the Development Assistance Committee and United Nations' (Blackburn et al., 2002, p. 61).

Thus, in the view of Coetzee et al., (2001, p. 474), Roodt (2001) and Dodds (1986), participatory development is reflected in what has become known as a people-centred development, more so a paradigm which seems to draw and stress the participation of the majority of the population especially women, youth and the illiterate in the process of development. This involvement is considered the bottom-line for the successful implementation of any project or programme. Levin and Weiner (1997, p. 254) as cited by Coetzee et al., (2001, p. 474) further argue that, 'participation must not merely become a legitimating process but it should be an essential component of a broad political programme in which local knowledge becomes a driving force for social transformation'. To conclude, Drysdale and Purcell (2005, p. 12) agree to the crucial principle for participation as stated by the United Nations Development Project (1998) which states that 'people's interests, their needs and their wishes must be allowed to underpin the key decisions and actions relating to (development). It is not a question of including people as and when it is felt by project management to be convenient; people must sit centre-stage'.

The Discourse on Ownership and Partnership

According to Chesterman (2007) the term ownership seems to neither have form or substance but rather a term used figuratively. Following the announcement by the then World Bank President James Wolfenshon in 1999, the concept of the ownership agenda has emphatically been promoted in the Comprehensive Development Framework (CDF). With the aim of reducing poverty on loan receiving countries, a new approach was introduced through a strategy identified as the *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper* (PRSP). The PRSP having been

introduced emphasized how policy ownership of loan receiving countries could be achieved through participation of major stakeholders ranging from common public to private sector and civil society organizations (Rahman, 2012). Wolfensohn (1999) as cited by Rahman (2012) debated ownership in very simple terms and can be cited as having said, ‘the loan receiving countries must be in the driver’s seat and set the course. This means that the countries must determine the goals and the phasing, timing and sequencing of programs. In other words, no external meddling is expected in the process of agenda setting and implementation’.

Helleiner (2000) similarly defined ownership as the ‘widest possible participation of beneficiaries in development actions that were essentially the process of planning, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation which have to be driven by the recipients. He further points out that a new kind of partnership became quite essential to adapt purposefully between the rich and poor nations in aid relationships by analysts and policymakers by the mid- 1990s. This became necessary as a result of the donor-driven character of aid programs and the limited local ownership that unavoidably complemented them. Meanwhile on the dialogue of partnership, Helleiner (2000) cites Patel, (1971:305) as saying

‘Unfortunately, the concept of a genuine partnership in development...lacks credibility. There has never been any real sense of equality between donors and recipients even when they attend the same consortium meetings and sit around the same table in many other forums. For the recipient to be frank about the policies or attitudes of donors in a forum where aid is to be distributed is as difficult as a proverbial passage of a camel through the eye of a needle Criticism of donor policies, even when it comes from non-recipients, is seldom answered in the manner in which recipients are obliged to answer the most far-reaching criticism of their own policies. There are obviously two sets of rules ... A mere equality of

opportunity in engaging in dialogue cannot establish parity in decision- making.

The doctrine of mutuality in monitorship or genuine partnership in development is impractical...’

Rahman (2012) emphasizes that it is very prudent and needful for recipients to be committed and seize ownership in development initiatives since the fact that they are recipients and participants of aid would not necessarily transfer ownership to them. To concur with the view of Rahman (2012), Shimomura and Ohno (2005) suggested that there should be an exit plan from aid where they proposed true ownership in three dimensions namely the goal of aid, scope of ownership and creativity of ideas. However, notwithstanding the various views on the discourse of ownership and partnership in the perspective of participation, ultimately, whether it is ownership or partnership, ‘there has to be a shift away from a relatively passive mind-set, common among aid recipients, towards active leadership in the development of home-grown development programs (Helleiner, 2000). In conclusion, notwithstanding the assumption that the PRSP framework is a standard which is entrenched in the concept of ownership, the views of Patel (1971) on partnership and Helleiner (2000), Wolfensohn (1999) and Rahman (2012) on ownership highlights the point that participation indeed may help the perception of ownership but does not actually equal ownership.

Approaches and Tools to Participatory Development

In order to understand the role of participation in development, it is imperative to review the strategies and approaches employed in participatory development. Arnstein (1969) as cited by Drysdale and Purcell (2005) in her write up identifies some approaches to employing participation in development. She identifies these as manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control. In her critique of the various strategies employed, she clearly objects to the idea of manipulation and therapy as an

appropriate method of participation as they are merely attempts to gain support of already made decisions. However, she is strongly of the opinion that citizen control, delegated power and partnership are effective strategies to adopt to engage beneficiaries effectively since there is equal distribution of power. The UNDP however argues that participatory approaches can challenge existing status quo and power relationships and therefore can be considered a destabilising factor in development or even much worse used by agencies to shift the burden for development to the poor. They therefore advocate that agencies seeking to employ participatory approaches in their development agenda must seek to clearly understand the requirements to make the approach successful.

According to the World Bank (1996), development practitioners employ a wide range of tools and techniques suitably tailored to complement participatory development. The World Bank illustrates in its framework, *The World Bank Participation Sourcebook* (1996), different methods that have been employed in different development situations. These include the workshop-based methods, community-based methods, methods for stakeholder consultation and the methods for social analysis.

Table 1: Participatory Mechanisms Used by the World Bank

Method	Types
Information Sharing Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information Seminars, presentations and public meetings• Translation of local languages
Consultative Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consultative meetings• Field visits
Joint assessment mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beneficiary Assessment• Participatory Assessments and evaluations
Shared decision-making Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Participatory Planning Techniques• Workshops• Meetings to resolve conflicts
Collaborative Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Formation of Joint committees with stakeholder representatives• Stakeholder groups with principal responsibility for implementation
Empowering Mechanisms	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Capacity Building of Stakeholder Organizations• Support for new initiatives by stakeholders

Source. Compiled by Authors (2016)

Apparently, in the opinion of The World Bank Operations Policy Department (1994) the mechanisms information sharing, consultative and joint assessment are methods that promote learning and allows participants to participate actively leaving the remaining mechanisms to provide opportunities for influence and share control of development initiatives.

Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA)

The term Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) is considered a common participatory approach to enable local people to share, enhance and analyse their knowledge of life that assists them to plan and act in their best interests (Mascarenhas et al., 1991) as cited by

(Chambers, 1994). The World Bank (1996) refers to it as a collaborative decision-making approach which agrees with Mascarenhas et al.'s (1991) opinion that it is a label that emphasizes local knowledge allowing local people to do their own appraisals and analysis. From the viewpoint of Mikkelsen (2005), PRA is considered to be an unavoidable concept in development. As an approach to participatory development, it consists of tools and techniques that facilitate the gathering, sharing and analysing of information for development planning and action. The catalogue of methods includes participatory diagramming, construction and analysis of maps, models and diagrams, triangulation, case stories, workshops and participatory planning. According to Chambers (1994), PRA has evolved and is quite widely practiced in some parts of West Africa especially Francophone West Africa. He concurs with the idea that PRA in practice has been found to empower but as to how equitable the empowerment is, leaves room for debate. Hence, Chambers (1994) cites Scoones and Thompson (1993) as having stressed the danger of empowering only male elite, those already better off or those of high status to the disadvantage of the poor and the low in status. Chambers (1994) therefore suggests that the employment of PRA in participatory development must always ensure equitable empowerment.

Another author, Kumar (2002) as cited by Mikkelsen (2005) from his viewpoint identifies new variants of the PRA under varying categories. He classifies PRA methods under Space-related, Time-related and Relational methods. Kumar (2002) systematically presents his methods categorizing mapping as a space-related PRA method useful for exploring spatial dimensions with a focus on how people perceive and relate to space. Notwithstanding the issues, judging by the acceptability of the PRA in participation discourse, PRA seems to be of significant importance in diagnosing problems and highlighting possible solutions in development (Mikkelsen, 2005). Considering PRA as a model approach, Chambers (1994) as cited by Chikadzi and Osikhena (2014) contends that it was necessary to move away from the

Rapid Rural Appraisal (RRA) towards the point where development practitioners could engage with the poor and appreciate local realities. In his opinion, PRA is a better option for doing this. Chikadzi and Osikhena(2014) also cite Duraiappah, Roddy and Parry, (2005) as having suggested that PRA as a participatory approach also assists researchers to learn about communities in addition to developing relevant interventions communities. PRA is effective in cooperating with the subject communities to evaluate their constraints and the prospects that can have an impact on them, hence assisting to make decisions regarding development projects (Alam and Ihsan, 2012) as cited by (Osikhena and Chikadzi, 2014).

Participants in Participatory Development

In many cases it has been argued that participation has generally been selective such that groups and individuals who are out of favour from key implementers of a project or the government are usually neglected. In several instances, in countries like Ghana, Senegal and Bolivia, the marginalized and the intended beneficiaries of development projects have expressed their views of the selected participants as not being necessarily representative of their interests as beneficiaries (Christian Aid, 2005; Philips, 2002; SGTS et al 2000, p. 2) as cited by Ranis, Vreeland and Kosack (2006).

But essentially, who participates in participatory development is a matter of concern that raises awkward questions. It is noticeable that usually women are marginalized in participatory projects (Mayoux, 1995) as cited by (Cornwall, 2003). Moreover, even when they are involved, their role is limited to implementation (Guijt and Kaul, 1998; Lind, 1997) as cited by Cornwall (2003). Oakley (1995) cites that Paul's (1987) work which was carried out on behalf of the World Bank pioneered the use of beneficiaries in the development community. Oakley (1995) however asserts that recent times have seen a change to the general term beneficiaries emerging to the term stakeholders in participatory development

projects. He further goes on to describe the different categories as borrowing stakeholders which he describes as governments; primary stakeholders literally describing those who are to be affected or to benefit from the project including the marginalized and the poor; and finally the secondary stakeholders which refers to the technical expertise.

Paul's (1987) ascription of participants in participatory development to be beneficiaries can be considered limiting as it does not consider other participants with stakes. Reasonably, Oakley (1995) gives a better description of who should participate in the development process. Hence, it can be concluded that anyone who has a stake and influence in a project can participate in a development project and this Oakley (1995) suggests should include the government, those affected negatively or positively by the project, the poor, marginalized and finally those with technical expertise to contribute to the project.

Benefits and Challenges of Participatory Development

It is expected that numerous benefits are derived from participatory development. For instance, the UNDP report identify some core benefits of participation (Drysdale and Purcell, 2005; Chikadzi and Osikhena, 2014). Generally, participation in the view of Finsterbusch and Van Wicklin III (1989) is theorised to enhance four basic benefits in particular. These they identified as social benefits which includes reduced social costs, equality, community capacity, and the sustainability of projects. From the point view of Mohan (2001); Chambers (1997); Shah and Baporikar (2012) as cited by Chikadzi and Osikhena (2014), so long as participatory development makes room for local people to participate in development initiatives, generating local knowledge of their situation is ultimately an advantage to the development initiative. Thus, proponents of participatory development suggest that development practitioners must aim to relinquish their preconceptions about having supposed

knowledge of the circumstances of the poor and allow the intended beneficiaries to determine their development path because they are the experts with the relevant knowledge needed for their progress.

Participatory development which is considered a move away from the traditional top-down approaches according to Chikadzi and Osikhena (2014) makes it possible for the social and human capital within the societies of development to exploit their own assets so that development is achieved at their own pace. Hence, participation in development tends to increase the efficiency of developmental activities through the mobilisation of skills and local resources and the assurance that development projects are actually relevant to the local needs of the community (UNDP) as cited by Drysdale and Purcell (2005). Chambers (1994) also suggests that there is a potential benefit for participants such as women and young people to have a collective awareness to confront development practitioners and argue their case. This is considered a potential benefit that seeks to empower beneficiaries. To this point, Steven's (1995) opinion of empowerment concurs with Chamber's (1994) opinion of empowerment as a potential benefit, as he suggest that, when people are empowered through participation, the government or community of the development are provided with a pool of expertise out of the beneficiary participants who input significantly in the decision-making that sustains development.

Following that participatory development is very much advocated for by development practitioners, it cannot be regarded as a practice without challenges. Undoubtedly, there are key analytical problems associated with the practice especially in Africa (Coetzee et al., 2001). Evidently, the practice is susceptible to social, environmental and cultural influences that inevitably confront its smooth implementation. An identification of some of these issues includes the limitations of the organisational setting. For instance, Fowler (2003) as cited by

(Plan International, 2005) suggests institutional commitment to the understanding of participatory development is a very crucial element for the success of participatory initiatives in development. However, very often as recorded by Plan International (2005), there is very little scope for flexibility where the management structure obstructs the extent of participation for the realisation of a truly bottom-up participatory approach.

Another inherent problem identified in initiating participatory approaches in development projects concerns issues where although indigenous peoples have been made to engage in various developmental processes in several instances; they have not been empowered because their influence does not result in decision making (Montoute, 2000) as cited by (Simpson, 2006). Some of the factors that hinder this process include lack of capacity; the participation of self-selected groups which are undemocratic and unrepresentative; grassroots organisations not having access to global governance forums; and disillusionment with the ability to affect the process.

Also, in spite of the knowledge claims of participatory development, critics such as Neef (2003) have raised opposing opinions as to how reliable and valid local knowledge acquired for development may be; referring to them as myths of local knowledge. Following his critique, Plateau (2006) argues that local knowledge gathered can indeed be distorted. The resultant effect is where communities express some form of biased preferences to capture the interests of donors in order to secure funding. Notwithstanding these challenges, there is still some optimism and support for development initiatives that rally for participatory development (Diamond et al, 1988) as cited by (Coetzee et al., 2001, p. 477).

Development in Ghana: The World Bank and USIAD

Ghana is recognised among the few African countries expected to meet the Millennium Development Goal (MDG), that is, to achieve the level of becoming a lower- middle income status (USAID, 2012). Regarding development, USAID's development work in Ghana includes sectors such as agriculture, increasing the availability and quality of water, improving sanitation and increase community capacity in using and maintaining water and sanitation facilities. The agency has, through a Global Development Alliance, brought clean water to about 26,800 people in the Volta region. Its development initiatives also include the building of latrines and hand-washing facilities at schools, markets and clinics. With agriculture providing the major drive towards reducing poverty in southern Ghana, USAID has taken an initiative which is aligned with the Feed the Future project in Ghana to integrate an approach towards a sustainable natural resource management. In the middle of year 2012, USAID and Ghana, like several other donor agencies signed the Government of Ghana/ Development Partners Compact 2012 to assist the country's implementation of its development agenda. Currently, USAID has agreed to work with Ghana on the objectives of equitable improvements in health status; sustainable and broadly shared economic growth; improved reading performance in primary schools; and strengthened responsive democratic (Daily Guide, 2013, p. 9) as cited by USAID (2014).

On the other hand, The World Bank continues to maintain an influential role in the development of Ghana following its fifty year history of involvement in key sectors of development in Ghana's developing economy (Honkaniemi, 2010). Consequently, since joining the World Bank Group in September 1957, Ghana has benefited tremendously from the World Bank supporting a wide range of programs, projects and investments. To date, development projects by the World Bank in Ghana have included the Ghana sanitation and

water projects, Sustainable Land and Water Management and school projects such as the Ghana Secondary Education Improvement Project (World Bank Group, 2014).

A Comparative Review: World Bank Action Plan and USAID Statement of Principles for Participatory Development

Fundamentally, the idea of participation in development from the World Bank and USAID although unique in their presentation, attempts to identify similar steps in undertaking participatory development which have been broadly identified in the analysis of their individual framework. Although not a policy document on participation, The World Bank have outlined in The World Bank Participation Sourcebook (1996), guidelines for supporting participatory approaches in economic and social development. Likewise USAID have produced a similar document in the statement of principles for participatory development.

These steps are considered primary and include the recognition of governments as principal stakeholders in addition to the main beneficiaries, as well as technical expertise as emphasised by Oakley (1995). Furthermore, the use of similar participatory tools and methods such as stakeholder consultation, and Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) are upheld by both the World Bank and USAID; a clear indication that both are aware of the effective and necessary tools to employ in participation. However, it's not enough to know about the tools but also knowledge about how to effectively use these tools to achieve the desired goals is required. Also, both emphasise the need to provide personnel training for their staff towards achieving an effective participatory development in the field. This consideration on the part of both agencies can be considered as very significant since it brings to the fore that in spite of their role as donors or development practitioners, it is very laudable for them to also be equipped to enhance effective interactions with stakeholders and beneficiaries during the development process.

In addition, both frameworks seem to address some importance and advantages of employing a participatory approach to development such as building the capacity of beneficiaries and the acquisition of local knowledge (Chikadzi and Osikhena, 2014). On the other hand, the statement of principles by USAID addresses one hindrance to participatory development. This has been identified, in their opinion, as challenging rigid procedures or otherwise the organisational setting of donors or development practitioners (Fowler, 2003) as cited by (Plan International, 2013). Notwithstanding, their statement of principle balances this hindrance by stating that they would ensure sustainable development through flexible procedures where necessary to ensure participation.

More critically, for both the World Bank and USAID, the frameworks for employing a participatory approach to development are merely steps towards getting the participants, both on the national level and local level, on board the development process. Arguably, these can be considered as ways of penetrating and winning over communities and countries to accept their development assistance especially in instances where communities or societies are sceptical knowing that they may not have a voice in developments undertaken. Nevertheless, the idea of having a document makes it easy for references to be made in cases where it becomes necessary to do so both for the donors and recipient societies or communities. What is most important is how effective these principles are in the development process. Both their principles however are streamlined towards the two schools of thought identified by Oakley (1995) where the idea of participation is considered to be, the inclusion of human resources in development efforts, and secondly participation as tackling the structural cause of poverty instead of being a general input into the development process.

Apparently, there is not much difference between the two donor agencies regarding their principles for participatory development. Thus, both present the idea that participation is

essential for the sustainability of development. Although the question of how these principles are each applied and incorporated in practice is what makes the difference, the outcome of it being operationalised in development activities will help identify any shortfalls.

Table 2: Summary of World Bank's Action Plan for Participatory Development

World Bank's Action Plan
1. Identification of Government as Stakeholders
2. Identification of Beneficiaries
3. Strengthening of Bank's Capacity Towards Participatory Development
4. Establishment of Inter-Agency for Participation
5. Application of Unbiased Techniques for Local Inclusion

Source: Compiled by Authors (2016).

Table 3: Summary of USAID Guidelines to Participatory Development

USAID's Statement of Guiding Principles
1. Identification of Government as Stakeholders and Beneficiaries
2. Supporting Existing Local Initiatives
3. Relying on External Technical Expertise
4. Capacity Building and Empowerment
5. Application of Unbiased Data Collection Tool
6. Accountability to the End-User
7. Sustainable Development through Flexible Procedures
8. Focus on Local Experience which is Result- Oriented
9. Partnership with Indigenes and Development Organizations
10. Empowering USAID Personnel

Source: Compiled by Authors (2016)

Table 4: Similarities and Differences between USAID and World Bank’s Participation in Practice: World Bank and USAID Projects

Similarities	Differences
USAID and the World Bank both recognize the leadership of the countries they assist as critical to ensuring the success of participatory development	The USAID considers and supports already existing local initiatives when undertaking participatory development projects but the World Bank does not make this clear
Both agencies identify the need for local inclusion by ensuring that the interest of all intended beneficiaries to their development initiative is represented.	USAID demonstrates a willingness to adapt flexible procedures during their development processes if need be in order to incorporate effective participation of principal stakeholders and beneficiaries.
There is the adoption of both agencies to employ unbiased data and information collection methods in order to arrive at concerted decisions that address the desires of the local people. For instance , the World Bank employs such approaches as consultation whiles the USAID adopts PRA methods	
Both the World Bank and USAID recognize that building their own capacity is essential for successful participatory development	
While the World Bank as part of its action plan intends to establish an Inter-Agency for Participation USAID in the principles consider partnering with the indigenes and other development organizations to enhance participation	

Source: Compiled by Author (2016).

The World Bank case study projects selected for assessment are the Ghana Secondary Education Improvement Project (World Bank, 2013), the Health Insurance Project (World Bank, 2007) and the Building the Capacity of the Urban Poor for Inclusive Development in Ghana Project (World Bank, 2011). (See Table four).

Evidence of Participation in World Bank Projects

I. G-SEIP:

According to the Resettlement Plan of the project, evidence of participation was measured through the Bank's maximization of the involvement of project affected persons (PAPs) at all stages of the project, and also through the participatory method of consultation with the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service in all cases of school developments. As part of the beneficiary communities' participation, the required land parcels for the school sites were donated without misgivings, through their traditional heads- chiefs or Tindaana for the project.

II. Health Insurance Project:

As described in the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), for an effective participation in the project, the beneficiaries of the Health Insurance Project were first identified. These included;

- the National Health Insurance Council (NHIC)
- the District Mutual Health Insurance Schemes which would have streamlined mechanisms for local level administration; and the Providers including Ghana Health Service (GHS)
- the teaching hospitals,
- Christian Health Association of Ghana (CHAG) and
- the health service providers from other ministries, and other providers who will have improved financial management and administrative mechanisms to improve their overall management performance.

With the aim of the project meant to strengthen the policy adaptation and implementation capacity of the National Health Insurance Council, participation techniques adopted involved stakeholder coordination with the beneficiaries. While financial and management training,

which are recognised as capacity building techniques to sustain the project, was organised with respect to the component to improve the skills in Health Insurance Administration for staff working for the Ministry of Health (MOH), National Health Insurance Council (NHIC), District Mutual Health Insurance Schemes which DMHISs, and the providers.

III. Building the Capacity of the Urban Poor for Inclusive Development in Ghana project:

Participation was employed by the World Bank through the following:

- Mobilization of communities to actively participate in local planning and development through the establishment of savings groups
- Identifying and training community leaders on methods of community profiling
- Savings
- Consultation with selected urban stakeholders in the validation of community profiles.

Table 5: Summary of participation and participation techniques adopted by the World Bank

Project	Identification of Government and Beneficiaries	Application of Participatory Method	Participation Technique
G-SEIP	Yes	Yes	Consultation with all stakeholders and Focus group discussions
Health Insurance Project	Yes	Yes	Stakeholder Coordination
Building the Capacity of the Urban Poor for Inclusive Development Project	Yes	Yes	Consultation with selected stakeholders

Following the opinion of Gamer (1976) as cited by Finsterbusch and Van Wicklin III (1987), the Bank's action plan for participatory development expects to interact with the government and beneficiaries of the recipient country in order to ensure there is an ownership of the intended development activity. Critical analysis therefore indicates a fulfilment of this principle in the various case studies through the inclusion of the Ministry of Education and the Ghana Education Service in G-SEIP. Similar conclusions can be made for the Health Insurance Project who liaised with the National Health Insurance Authority (World Bank, 2007).

However, based on Isham, Narayan and Pritchett's (1995) opinion, scoring participation should not be based only on the survey and identification of beneficiaries and participants but should focus also on the progression of information sharing, in-depth consultation, shared decision-making and control over decision-making. Building the Capacity of the Urban Poor for the Inclusive Development Project demonstrated its participation as opined by Isham, Narayan and Pritchett (1995) through the mobilisation of communities to actively participate in the local planning, decision-making processes and development through the establishment of savings groups and selected stakeholder consultation (World Bank, 2011). This similarly took place in GSEIP and likewise in the Health Insurance project through stakeholder consultation, focus group discussions and stakeholder coordination respectively.

In a further analysis, although all three case studies employed participatory tools for participation, Building the Capacity of the Urban Poor for Inclusive Development employed a biased technique in validating community profiles for the project. This was clearly stated in the report as selected urban stakeholders and arguably unfair to other stakeholders. The inference is that other stakeholders were not given the chance to participate unless these selected urban stakeholders are considered true representatives of all the different interest groups or stakeholders which in this case was not obvious from the project report. In reference to Plan International (2013), carrying out participation using bias methods offers local people limited opportunities to take part in decision-making and planning for themselves suggesting that the participation method is not neutral (Plan International, 2013). On the other hand, beneficiary assessment which is considered essential to obtain client feedback (World Bank Sourcebook, 1996) was employed in the Health Insurance Project; while GSEIP stated the methods of focus groups discussions and stakeholder consultation as participation mechanisms in the project.

Participation in Practice: USAID Projects

In the case of USAID, the following case study projects, Partnership for Accountable Governance in Education Project and the Water, Sanitation and Hygiene Project were comparatively analysed to see participatory development in practice. This analysis was based on USAID's guidelines for participation in their statement of principles for participatory development. Analysis was thus addressed in the context of beneficiary identification, support of local initiatives, capacity building and the application of participatory tools (See Table five).

Table 6: Evidence of USAID's Statement of Principles for Participatory Development in projects

Project	Identification of Beneficiaries	Supporting Existing Local Initiatives	Capacity Building and Empowerment of Beneficiaries	Application of Participatory Tools	Participation Method Adopted
GWASH	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Stakeholder consultation and capacity building programmes
Partnership for Accountable Governance in Education Project	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Capacity building

While supporting already existing local initiatives in pursuit of their global objective regarding participatory development, both USAID projects surveyed and identified the beneficiaries who represented a wide range of views and interest in the country's education system. This includes the district assembly and education officials, head teachers, civil society organisations, school management committees, and parent-teacher associations as well as the water and sanitation issues, for example the Brekum Clinic.

Also, with capacity building considered a benefit of participatory development (Schenck Nel and Louw, 2010, p. 6) as cited by (Chikadzi and Osikhena, 2014), the beneficiaries of the USAID's project are seen to clearly enjoy this benefit through the training of Watsan communities in GWASH, capacity building of school management committees (SMCs) and parent-teacher associations (PTAs) to be empowered to sustain the development process in their community (Audit Report, 2013).

The capacity building programmes in both projects can be considered as participatory tools as recognised by the World Bank Operations Policy Department's (1994) employment mechanisms. In addition to this, the GWASH project also used beneficiary assessment through stakeholder consultation method which was made evident where personnel were brought in to demonstrate how the USAID had appreciable impact on the lives of the rural Ghanaians who were the intended beneficiaries. A further comparative analysis of participation in the case study projects was the identification of various stages during the project at which participation was employed (See Table five).

Table 7: Stages of Implementing Participation in the various case study Projects using Baum's Project Life Cycle

Source: Compiled by Author (2016)

Table 7 presents participation of beneficiaries at different stages of the project cycle: project identification, planning, implementation, appraisal, selection and evaluation which is the Baum cycle (World Bank, 1997). There is no argument that the critical principles outlined by the World Bank and USAID have been fairly followed and applied in the various case studies analysed. But more importantly in this analysis is consideration of what stage of the

Case Study Project	Stages of Participation in Projects					
	Identification	Planning	Appraisal	Selection	Implementation	Evaluation
Ghana-Secondary Education Improvement Project (G-SEIP)	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Health Insurance Project	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Building the Capacity of the Urban Poor for Inclusive Development	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Partnership for Accountable Governance in Education Project	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
GWASH	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes

development process participation was attempted in any of the projects.

With reference to the comparative analysis in Table 3 which is based on the five stage Baum Project Life Cycle, (World Bank, 1979); USAID initiated participation in the GWASH at the planning, implementation and evaluation stages likewise the Partnership for Accountable Governance in Education Project. Meanwhile, in the World Bank projects, Building the Capacity of the Urban Poor for Inclusive Development project was not clear as to what stage of the project cycle participation was initiated. Thus, this could not be determined even though mention was made of stakeholders participating through active participation in the local planning and decision-making. On the other hand, participation was attempted at the planning and implementation stage for both the Ghana- Secondary Education Improvement Project (G-SEIP) and the Health Insurance Project. An important finding from the case study projects is that relatively, participation seems to be applied more at the planning and the implementation stages of these projects.

Analysing the comparisons, the differing stages of participation seem to suggest that the type of development projects being undertaken as well as the type of outcome expected of the project is important. For instance the basic education project by USAID has the objective of improving access to basic education. For the project to be successful it will be important to consult with stakeholders such as the Ghana Education Service as well as the student beneficiaries at the beginning of the project to identify the root cause of their inability to access basic education which without a doubt will impact positively when they are participating at the implementation stage.

Another significant point that makes a critical difference is in reference to the method or tool which was employed for participation in the projects. Numerous studies and evaluations have been made of the performance of various participatory or bottom-up approaches. The analysis revealed that beneficiary assessment and systematic client consultation were the tools used by

both agencies. This can be attributed to the reasoning behind the use of systematic listening tools which are used to reach the poor as well-as the hard to reach beneficiaries (The World Bank Operations Policy Department, 1994). Moreover, considering the nature of the projects, beneficiary assessment and client consultation seem to be more appropriate tools to employ in these projects. In addition, despite the participation techniques employed, within the five projects, beneficiaries seem not to have power in resource control or decision-making which is actually supposed to be a benefit of participation (Chambers, 1994; Chikadzi and Osikhena, 2014).

Challenges: USAID and World Bank Projects

In accordance with the thinking of Fowler (2003) as cited by Plan (2013), difficulties arise in involving beneficiaries in participation. Such was the case in the GWASH project where Peace Corps Volunteers (PCV) had difficulty on occasions in getting artisans who were considered participants in the project to show them the locations of each Household latrine (HHL) in certain communities. As a result PCV's had to figure out these locations through the use of GPS to enhance their work. Secondly, during the performance period of the GWASH project, the USAID project Progress Report (2013) records that collaborators within the Ghanaian Government through their participation, challenged the approach USAID adopted to rural sanitation. This was resolved through a conference where questions were answered from the audience to clear up any confusion the participants and beneficiaries had. This type of situation, in the opinion of (Padmavathi, 2003 in Ackermann et al, 2003, p.13) as cited by Plan International (2005), are situations of conflict that tend to arise and challenge smooth implementation of participatory development.

Also, the USAID education project encountered some challenges where there were project delays because district accountants required training to keep proper records of the projects and how to account for disbursement of funds for the project initiatives. This challenge can be categorized under lack of capacity and competence on the part of the local people as identified by Montoute (2000) cites Simpson (2006).

Implication for Development Practitioners

From the analysis of how the World Bank and USAID have operationalized participatory development, other development practitioners can infer from their operations that first of all, participatory development is not just allowing country recipients, societies or beneficiaries to indulge in the participatory approach. Participation is communication between both parties which becomes shared understanding and empowerment leading to joint decision-making (International Fund for Agricultural Development, 2001). This implies that if donors or development practitioners work alone, developments will not be sustained and likewise if beneficiaries, country recipients or communities are allowed to participate without guidance or interference from development practitioners.

Also, it can be recalled that the World Bank and USAID share the same perspective of what participatory development should involve (USAID, 1993) and (World Bank Operation Policy Department, 1994). By implication, development practitioners should partner with each other and learn from each other so that the pitfalls of one are avoided by the other party, bearing in mind that participatory development is not without challenges (Coetzee et al., 2001). Generally, the basic implication of the analysis of this research to development practitioners is that utilising participation in development projects is very possible as seen in the World Bank and USAID projects. It basically requires commitment from both parties, and an

attitude to learn and be corrected as seen in the GWASH project. This way, participatory development is likely to be enhanced with the assurance of improved sustainable development projects.

The highlights of this discussion have considered the different approaches to participatory development by the World Bank and USAID through the analysis of some of their development initiatives. Key similarities were noted in both principles such as identifying governments, intended beneficiaries and the use of participatory methods like beneficiary assessment and consultation in the case study projects.

Furthermore, although not all the projects clearly stated the stages at which participation was used, one significant difference between how the World Bank and USAID carried out participatory development, is the stage of initiating participation. This major difference can be attributed to the type of projects being carried out. The analysis also highlights some challenges encountered and how these are resolved during the development process. In spite of this, emphasis is still placed on the fact that participatory development plays a significant role in sustaining development.

Summary of Findings, Recommendations and Conclusions

A number of development practitioners share the view that participation in development projects especially by intended beneficiaries improves project performance. Not debunking this view, this research assessed the policies on participatory development by the World Bank and USAID and their implication on development. The assessment was to determine how the policies were operationalised in their development initiatives. Hence, the major objectives of the research have been to critically review the relevant literature on participation by various

authors with participatory development in perspective; to analyse the different frameworks to participatory development used by the World Bank and USAID and more importantly how these have been applied in development. Focusing on Ghana as a case study, the research considered projects from USAID and the World Bank. The central findings of this study indicated the followings.

- The stage at which participation was attempted in the projects is illustrated presented in terms of a comparative analysis (See Table 5)
- Also, despite the commitment and advocacy for participatory development by both donor agencies, it was realized that participation was very difficult to achieve for a number of reasons such as structural constraints and the need to train beneficiaries with appropriate skills to enhance their participation.
- The discourse in the literature showed that there are many different interpretations of what participation means. But it concluded on the precept that participation seeks to empower people and build capacity whiles eliminating exclusion and inequality in addition to sharing power where there is active involvement of beneficiaries.
- The discussion also considered the use of Participatory Rural Appraisal as a significant tool for participation making reference to the different types such as beneficiary assessment and stakeholder consultation.
- The research also proved that major donor agencies such as the World Bank and USAID show a high level of commitment to employing participation in their development activities by clearly outlining these in an action plan and statement of guiding principles respectively which are similar in content and aimed at sustaining development.
- Finally, the implication of the findings in this research does not discriminate on participation as a positive input in the development process but rather highlights the

current issues encountered by pioneering agencies. This way, participatory development is improved as development practitioners embrace an attitude of learning from one other.

In preparing this study, a variety of information sources were assembled from project documents. However, the scope of the research was limited as first-hand information was not accessible. Hence it was impossible to tackle some issues in detail which has limited the researcher's ability to provide a comprehensive review.

Conclusion

While careful consideration of the experiences of USAID and the World Bank highlights some current issues in participatory development, it indicates that there are factors within and without institutions that may be barriers to an effective practice of the concept of participation. Thus, good research and planning can help forestall the pitfalls of earlier development practitioners in this case USAID and the World Bank. Finally, this research also concurs with the debate that participatory development plays a significant role in sustaining development.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, it is recommended that for future reference, development practitioners should document their participatory development initiatives with well - defined roles of beneficiary participants in the activity as this was difficult to ascertain in the projects assessed in this research.

It is also recommended that further research should be carried out by development practitioners on what beneficiary capacities need to be enhanced prior to the start of their projects to avoid delays during actual development activity.

A final recommendation is that the current documentation of the principles and guidelines for participatory development for both USAID and the World Bank should be reviewed and updated. It is expected that this would incorporate current issues in the development process where participation is concerned. They should then be made accessible to other development practitioners and agencies for the enhancement of participatory development.

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