



## Community Participation Methods and their Influence on Effective Community Participation in Development Programs in Tanzania

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### **Abstract**

It is the wish of every stakeholder to see to it that development programs are successful and beneficial to the intended community. Literature shows that successful development programs must provide opportunities for the intended program beneficiaries to effectively participate in the programs. This implies that program beneficiaries ought to be seen as stakeholders in the program and not as recipients of final program results. This is a community engagement thinking deeply rooted in the stakeholder theory. Hence, by taking into account the importance of community participation in development programs, this study explored community participation methods that were being employed in four different categorized programs and how such methods were influencing effective participation in such programs in Tanzania. These programs were categorized as Locally Funded, Government Funded, Donor Funded and Joint Funded development programs. A combined sample size of 316 participants from all the four programs was employed. Collected data were analyzed through the within-case analysis and the comparative analysis approaches. Results of the study revealed that methods used in Government funded programs were not effective enough in promoting effective community participation when compared to methods used in the other three examined programs. As such, the study concluded by emphasizing on the need to improve on the participation methods used in Government funded programs.

**Keywords:** *Community; Participation; Development; Programs; Methods; Influence*

### **Introduction**

Community participation' is commonly understood as "the collective involvement of local people in assessing their needs and organizing strategies to meet those needs (Nkwake *et al.* 2013). It provides people with the sense that they can address their problems through careful reflection and collective action as a result of working together. In recognition of its contribution to community empowerment, community participation has been referred to as "the heart that pumps the community's life blood" (Reid, 2000).

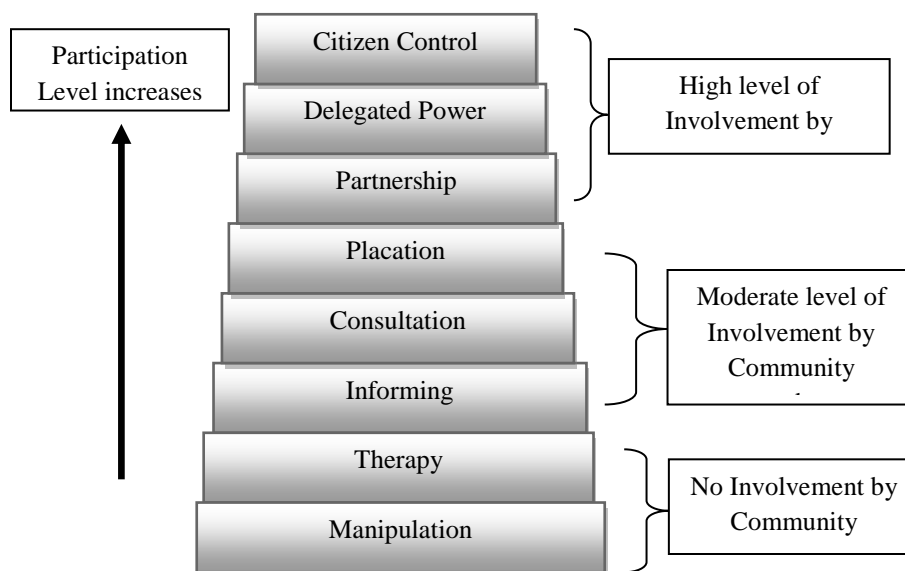
Consequently, Studies have linked community participation to greater program outcomes such as greater access to social services as well as promoting program sustainability due to a greater sense of ownership and responsibility for program activities by stakeholders (Oakley, 1991). This is because

stakeholders are willing and able to mobilize and commit local resources to continue some or all of the program proceeds even after external support is withdrawn or reduced. Hence, it is not possible to disassociate the concept of participation from development programs.

Participatory Development (PD) seeks to engage local populations in development programs and projects and as a result, there is no doubt that community participation has indeed been a constant theme in development dialogues for the past 50 years (Cornwall,2000), Between the 1960s and 1970s, community participation became central to development programs/projects as a means to seek sustainability and equity, particularly for the poor. Since then, community participation found its place in influencing development programs and projects at various society levels including the community level (William,2006). As viewed by different stakeholders in community development issues, the essence of community participation in community development programs is not underestimated. In fact, community participation plays an important role in community development programs on the basis that local people have a great amount of experience and insight into what works, what does not work and why (World Bank,1996). This fundamental relevance of community participation in development programs is further stressed as a gate pass for achieving sustainable community development in any community (Beck and Crawley, 2002). In addition, it is pointed out that participation of the community in any development program that seeks to bring about sustainable community development in such a community is very essential (Schutte, 2016, Weaver and Cousins, 2004).

Based on the above demonstrated relevance of community participation in development programs, it therefore becomes of paramount importance that even the methods employed to entice people to participate in development programs must be accommodating in every sense.

One of the best ways to explain the different levels of participation in terms of community participation in development undertakings is by understanding what Sherry R. Arnstein calls a Ladder of Citizen Participation (Everest-Phillips, 2016). It is explained that this classification is necessary to unveil the manipulation of people in the garb of community participation in programs and projects by professionals and policyholders (Arnstein ,1969). The ladder has eight rungs each depicting a different level of participation, that is, manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control as shown in Figure 1.



**Figure 1: Ladder of community participation**  
Source: Everest-Phillips (2016) cited from Arnsteins (1969)

In the context of this study, the understanding is that effective community participation in development programs can only be attained when people are actively and meaningfully involved in deciding over development initiatives. Hence by looking at Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation as illustrated in Figure 2 above, the level of citizen power is seen to be more appropriate in bringing about effective community participation of program beneficiaries in development programs.

## **Methods**

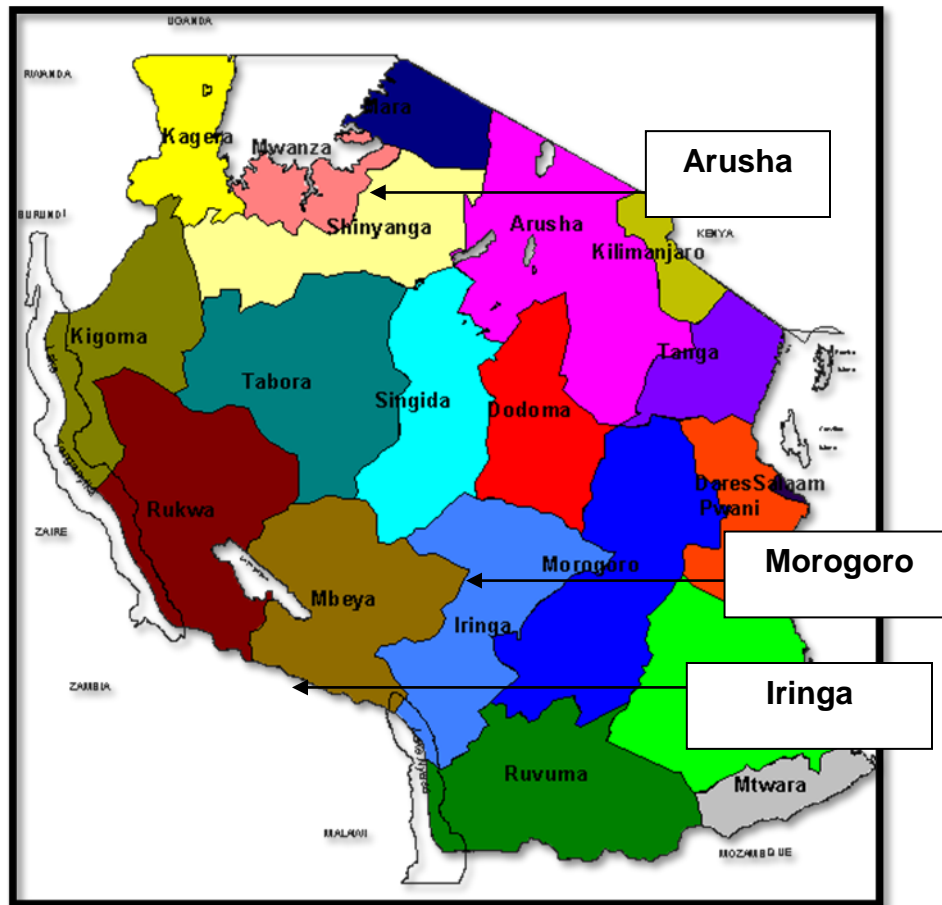
The study employed a cross – sectional research design and a case study research strategy. The cross-sectional research design was used because it is best suited for studies that aim at finding out the prevalence of a phenomenon, situation, problem, attitude or issue, by taking a cross-section of the population. In addition,

Kumar (2011) stress that cross sectional designs are useful in obtaining an overall 'picture' as it stands at the time of the study and designed to study some phenomenon by taking a cross-section of it at one time. As such, this design was chosen in line with the above stated views whereby the researcher was interested in examining socio-economic determinants of effective community participation in development programs.

On the other hand, the case study research strategy was used because it is open to use of other approaches of analysis including both qualitative and quantitative approaches that the study intended to use. Yin (2003) observed that case study research strategy can accommodate both qualitative and quantitative approaches, thus allowing the researcher to get a rich mix of data for the study.

Sampling procedures included purposive sampling for key informants and random sampling for program beneficiaries. Using a 95% confidence level and Yamane 1967 formula for sample size determination, a sample of 316 program beneficiaries. This sample size was drawn from four examined program categories that included the locally fully funded program, government fully funded program, and donor fully funded program as well as the joint fully funded program.

Findings of the study were analyzed based on two analysis approaches that included the within case analysis and comparative case analysis. In the context of this study, the within case analysis was used as an analytical approach in which each single case in the study was examined independently and in detail while the comparative case analysis was an analytical approach used to compare findings from different single analyzed cases. Three study areas that included Arusha, Morogoro and Iringa within Tanzania were involved in the study as shown in Figure 2.



**Figure 2: Geographical Locations of Study Areas**  
Source: Consulate of the United Republic of Tanzania (2019)

## Results and Discussion

### Adopted Community Participation Methods in Locally Fully Funded Development Programs and their influence on Effective Community Participation

Locally fully funded development program in the context of this study referred to a program that did not receive any funding from either the government or any institution/ individual outside the community where the program was being implemented. Such program for the purpose of this study was the Sexual Reproductive Health Program for Youths that was being implemented by a local non-governmental organization called Kinara for Youth Evolution based in Morogoro Municipality.

With a sample size of 100 youths out of the 475 program beneficiaries, the within case analysis approach for this particular program revealed that two methods of participation were employed in implementing the program. They included the partnership method where by program beneficiaries worked hand in hand with program implementers to realize program activities and the delegated method where by some activities were left to program beneficiaries for implementation. These methods enabled them to negotiate and make decisions in program activities.

In the case of the partnership method, fifty-one-point nine percent (51.9%) of the respondents indicated that this method was largely adopted in the program and beneficiaries were to a large extent

involved in determining the activities of the program and implementing them. One of the interviewed respondents in this program commented that:

*'The program implementers work with us closely and we engage every time an event is to be done. Our program coordinator is very encouraging and engaging which makes us feel this is a good program for us as young people'*

Consequently, there was also delegation of certain activities to the youths by the program implementers but these were done under a close watch of the program implementers. Hence, forty-eight-point one percent (48.1%) of the respondents in this program revealed that there were activities such as organizing awareness creation sessions with fellow youths and registering of new youths to the program that were under their responsibility but had to submit reports on such activities to the Program Coordinator. As such, they did the negotiation and decision making over such activities. One of the interviewed youths pointed out that:

*'One thing that impressed me about this program is that we are given the opportunity to handle certain program activities on our own. For instance, I came up with the idea of debates on sexual reproduction among youths. I explained it to the Program Coordinator and we tried it out in Chamwino Ward. This worked and now we are using it in all Wards'*

In the context of this study, the process of having participants in this program negotiate and make decisions over certain activities in the program was equated to the delegated power method of participation as pointed out by Arnstein (1969) in her ladder of citizen participation. By adopting these methods, the implication is that there were high chances of ensuring that program sustainability would be achieved since ownership of program activities was to some extent ensured.

This contributed to the smooth implementation of the program. These findings tend to concur with the views of Mitchell and Parkins (2005) as well as Riggs (2012), who pointed out that participatory partnership plays a great role in ensuring program sustainability by promoting collaboration and cooperation among intended program beneficiaries. For instance, as cited by the scholars, through participatory partnership, shared decision making was ensured in a resource and land management process in British Columbia (Mitchell and Parkins (2005), Riggs, 2012).

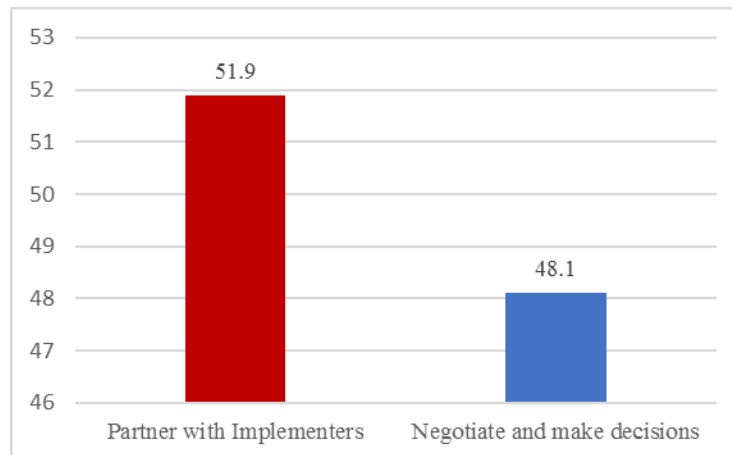
In addition, according to the interviewed youths, the program mainly required one to be willing to volunteer. That meant that one could as well decide on what he or she could do based on his or her ability as long as it was in line with the program activities. As a result, the implementers had to a great extent rely on the willingness of the participants to implement what they had agreed upon. One of the interviewed youths stated that:

*'This program is for volunteering. If an individual is not willing to volunteer, then you will not be part of it. Some of our friends dropped out of the program because they expected to get certain things which the program could not offer.'*

This perception was confirmed by the Program Coordinator as key informant. According to the Program Coordinator: *'the program is purely a volunteer program and so anybody interested in joining it should be willing to do so. We therefore make sure that this is understood by all program beneficiaries at all times.'*

Generally, on the basis of the above results, it was noted that in the case of the examined locally fully funded program, two participation methods i.e., partnership and delegated power were the adopted methods employed in implementing the program. These findings concur with findings from Mitchell and Parkins (2005), who pointed out that participatory partnership plays a great role in ensuring program sustainability. Similarly, Mak et al. (2017) in their study in rural area of Tai O in Hong Kong, China, found that delegation, if employed well, ensures that participants' views are taken into consideration in

decision making arena and they are empowered to make decisions about development. Figure 3 shows summary of this analysis.



**Figure 3: Adopted Participation Methods in the examined Locally Fully Funded Program**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

With regard to whether the adopted methods influenced them to fully get involved in the program, results revealed that eighty three percent (83%) of the interviewed affirmed that the methods enabled them to fully participate in the program while only seventeen percent (17%) felt that the methods somehow enabled them to do so. According to those who indicated that the adopted methods somehow enabled them to participate revealed that the methods were engaging but at times a participant needs some funds to engage in certain activities.

In addition, respondents revealed that the partnership participation method that was being employed in the Sexual Reproductively Health Program for youths had been very influential in enabling them to fully get involved in the program. According to the interviewed respondents, this method was mainly enabling them in being able to easily communicate their views, a perception that was attested to by 61.1% of the respondents in this program while 55.9% revealed that the method had also enabled them to contribute to decision making. One of the interviewed respondents commented that:

*‘For sure, by partnering we are much involved in program activities and can also make decisions without pressure from Kinara Program Coordinator’.*

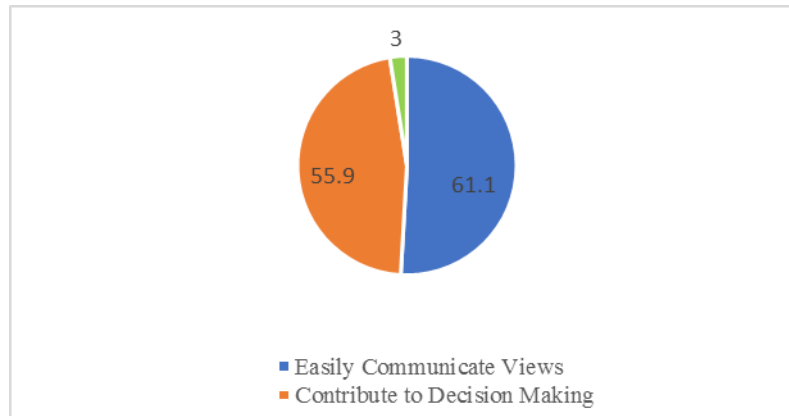
This perception was largely seconded during the Focus Group Discussions where members equally revealed that the manner in which they were being involved in the program activities was very friendly and a learning encouragement that made many youths to feel a part of the program.

However, a few of the respondents’ three percent (3%) felt that there was a limit to what they could do even if the partnership and delegated power methods of participation were being used. This group of respondents revealed that sometimes they are ready to get involved in certain activities of the program but when money is needed, they find themselves not in position to join the activities. One of the respondents in this group stated that:

*‘Sometimes Kinara organization organizes functions but one has to financially support him or herself in order to participate in the activities and if you don’t have the money, you just miss out but this is in very rare occasions. Most of the time we work with officers from Kinara to implement program activities’*



These findings concur with the findings of Thwala (2010) who in examining community participation in rural water supply projects in South Africa found that when community members lack financial capability, their level of participation in community projects is at times limited. The implication of this is that, a certain group of people who are financially incapacitated will be left out of the program/project and hence inclusive development and the sustainability of that particular program/project could be compromised (Odoyo, 2013). Figure 4 provides a summary of this analysis on how influential the adopted methods in the program were enabling program beneficiaries to fully get involved in the program.



**Figure 4: Influence of the adopted participation methods on Participation of Community Members in the examined Locally Fully Funded Program**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Based on these findings, this study found that partnership and delegated power methods were the preferred methods of participation in the examined locally fully funded development program. According to Arnstein (1969) as cited in Everest-Phillips (2016), the rungs of partnership and delegated powers call for a high level of involvement of the intended program beneficiaries in executing program activities. Hence, these findings show that for locally fully funded development programs, participatory methods in the lower rungs below that of the partnership rung may not be effective in encouraging community participation in development programs of this nature.

In addition, the results further suggest that as much as partnership and delegated powers methods may be suitable for this kind of programs, they may not sufficiently on their own bring about effective community participation in locally fully funded programs of this nature. There is need for a spirit of self-willingness to participate in the program among the intended program beneficiaries. This is because as noted from the results of this study in the context of this kind of program, intended program beneficiaries need to voluntarily agree to commit themselves to the program.

Overall, an insightful finding with regard to the adopted participation methods in the examined locally fully funded development program was that methods that had a higher degree of involving program beneficiaries in the program such as partnership and delegated power methods stood a higher chance of ensuring effective community participation in the program. This was because program beneficiaries felt they had the opportunity to easily communicate their views and to also make decisions on various aspects of the program.

In addition, based on the nature of the program that mainly involved volunteering by program beneficiaries in some of the program activities, this study found that aspects such as *Self Willingness* of the target program beneficiaries to participant, *Commitment* to the program by the targeted beneficiaries

and *readiness to* be part of the program by the intended program beneficiaries were equally key to fueling peoples' participation in the examined program.

Hence, the findings on the examined locally fully funded development program affirm the views put forward by Mubita et al. (2017) who stressed that the prevailing evidence on the benefits of community participation does not really indicate which method or approach works best. This explains why a combination of more than one method was revealed by the respondents as having been employed in the program. Similarly, Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) as cited in Preston *et. al.*, (2009) pointed out that one of the benefits of participation is the aspect of voluntary contribution in the form of time, resource or community-based knowledge. The findings in the examined locally fully funded development program showed that through the adopted methods of participation, the benefit of voluntary contribution in terms of time and limited resources from the intended program beneficiaries had been made available and used for the implementation of program activities.

Generally, it can be stressed that, in this program, ownership and responsibility for program activities was displayed by program participants through the adopted participation methods.

### **Adopted Community Participation Methods in Government Fully Funded Development Programs and their influence on Effective Community Participation**

Under the program title Education Programme for Results (EP4R), the study examined the participation methods that were being employed in this program as a government fully funded program by the Government of Tanzania. Results showed that participation of the respondents in the program was done through two main participation methods. First, participants revealed that their participation in the program was largely based on being persuaded to participate in the program for administrative compliance. This revelation was attested by over sixty-one-point five percent (61.5%) of the respondents. One of the respondents pointed out that:

*'Our involvement in the decision-making process or even planning is almost non-existent. What happens is that the government through its structures decides on the program, does all the planning and then we are instructed to implement the program. For instance, in the case of this EP4R, I was just given a letter from the Secondary Education Officer that my school has been selected to be funded for a sanitation improvement program by the Government and I have to comply to meet the administrative needs of the program'*

During an interview with the Secondary Schools Program Monitoring and Evaluation Officer as a key informant, the views put forward appeared to strongly support what had earlier been revealed by the interviewed intended program beneficiaries. According to the key informant;

*'Normally government programs and projects are well stream lined in terms of what needs to be done and how they should be executed. Hence, as soon as we receive communication concerning the program, we institute mechanisms on how the program is to be implemented within the city. For instance, the EP4R program was channeled through TAMISEMI and all we had to do was to identify schools and get the program implemented in those schools'*

Generally, in the context of this study, this kind of participation totally amounted to a therapy method of participation which according to Arnstein (1969) as cited in Berman (2017), is a non-participation method which has actually been contrived to substitute for genuine participation. In addition, Arnstein (1969) as cited in Berman (2017), stresses that the real objective of therapy participation is not to enable people to fully participate in undertakings that have influence in their lives but rather to enable power holders to use the notion of participation to achieve already predetermined

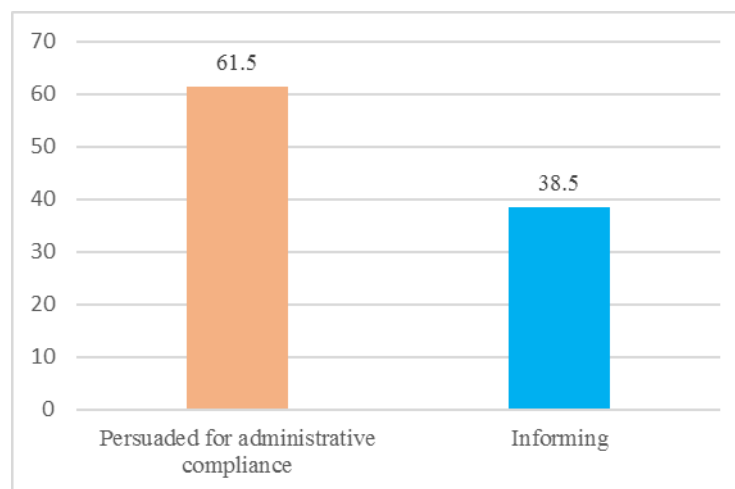


goals. The participation method of this nature does not allow incorporation of local knowledge in the planning process of programs. For instance, Morrissey, (2000) and Kamuzora *et. al.*, (2013) revealed that community participation is very important in strengthening programs such as health systems programs. However, using only community representatives to identify community needs may jeopardize the extent of community participation in such programs.

The second method of participation that was revealed by participants in the EP4R program in Arusha was the informing method. The analysis from the interviewed revealed that 38.5% of the study respondents were just informed about the coming of the program to their schools but were never involved in deciding, planning or effective implementation of the program. One of the study respondents stressed that:

*'My school needed to be financially assisted with the refurbishing of our administration block by replacing iron sheets and doing some painting. I had communicated with the authority at the City Council but after a while I was only shocked to be informed on phone the following day that contractors were coming to construct two additional classrooms in an effort to increase student enrolment and so I should receive them. When I consulted the authority about our earlier funding request for the administration block, I was told no funding had been secured for this kind of development. So, at times it's frustrating when we are never involved in the process but that is how things seem to work here in Arusha'*

Informing, according to Arnstein (1969), is the third rung method of participation from the bottom of Arnstein's ladder of community participation. This method is considered to have a moderate level of community members' involvement in development programs or projects (Marijani, 2017). However, it does not allow people to be involved actively and meaningfully in deciding over development initiatives. Hence, in the context of this study, it can be decisively pointed out that although there was some moderate form of participation in some activities within EP4R program using the informing method, the two adopted participation methods i.e., therapy and informing were not enough to guarantee full involvement of the intended program beneficiaries. This situation casts doubt on the future sustainability of the activities under the EP4R program as well as the sustainability of the program as a whole. Figure 5 presents findings in relation to this analysis.



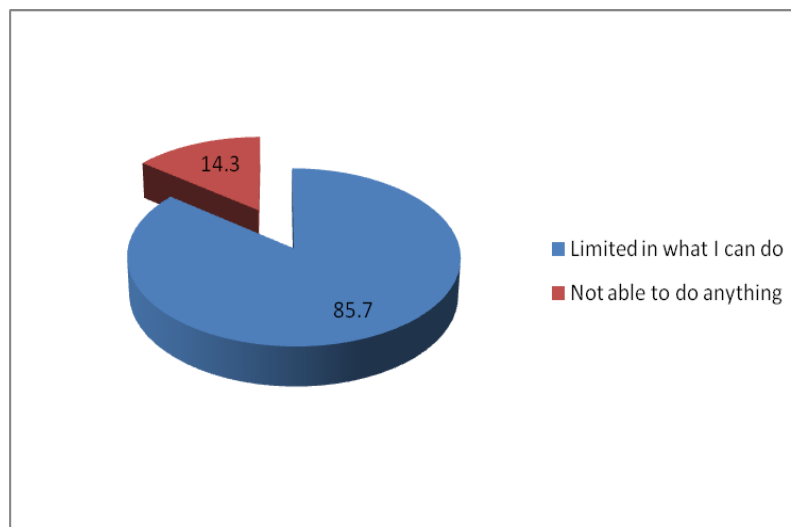
**Figure 5: Adopted Participation Method's in the examined Government Fully Funded Development Program**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

The interview with respondents on how influential the adopted methods were in enabling program them to effectively participate in the program revealed that these methods did not at all enable participants to fully participate in the program. This view was attested by hundred percent (100%) of the respondents. A further analysis on how the methods used in the program had influenced their involvement in the program revealed that participants were indeed not satisfied with the adopted methods. In fact, eight five-point seven percent (85.7%) of the respondents stated that they were limited in what they could do while fourteen-point three percent (14.3%) revealed that they were not in position to do anything besides observing the implementation of the program in their schools. One of the interviewed stated:

*‘In circumstances of this nature, we cannot do much. When things come this way, our hands are tied and so we either do the little that we can or simply observe to approve what has been done. But it is challenging because at the end of the day, we are the people to account for what was done’*

These findings concur with findings of Lilja (2017) and Maraga et al. (2011) who stressed that participation through processes in which communities/citizens are invited by the state and therefore created and defined by the state offer limited opportunity for communities/citizens to fully participate in community issues as opposed to processes created and defined by citizen. This implies that, in the case of the examined EP4R program, the methods employed by the government only served to provide space that never allowed full participation of program beneficiaries. Figure 6 presents the results of this analysis.



**Figure 6: Influence of the adopted participation methods on Participation of Community Members in the examined Government Fully Funded Program**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

### **Adopted Community Participation Methods in Donor Fully Funded Development Programs and their influence on Effective Community Participation**

Donor fully funded development program represented a program whose activities were funded by donors and therefore had no any other form of funding. As part of the program categories that were studied, this study examined the participation methods that were being employed in the program and how those methods influence the level of effective community participation in the examined program.

In the case of this study, the Tree Improvement and Research Program implemented by the Forest Development Trust an independent Tanzanian institution and funded by Gatsby Africa in Iringa region was examined. Results from the analysis revealed that participation methods that were being adopted in

this program included partnership with implementers, negotiation and decision making (delegated power) as well as citizen control in some program activities.

For the case of partnership, fifty-eight point eight (58.8%) of the respondents revealed that this was the most applied method in the program because much of what they were doing was to work together with the program implementers to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills for tree farming. One of the respondents stressed that:

*'For sure, we are working together with the program implementers because it is for our own good. We are in need of this knowledge so that we can get out of poverty. So, we cooperate every time we are called upon'*

Regarding negotiation and decision making, thirty-three-point four percent (33.4%) of the respondents revealed that indeed, this method was equally being employed because after getting the knowledge from the implementers, participants were able to decide on their tree farming activities but with minimal supervision from the program implementers. The implementers monitor how they are progressing and incentives are provided based on progress made. One of the interviewed study respondents in this program pointed out that:

*'After we have been trained, we are then left on our own to decide most of the activities on our tree farms. However, we are given guidelines that we must follow and so the extension officer from FDT normally comes to check. When you have followed the guidelines very well, at the time of incentive provision, you get something good.'*

As pointed out earlier, allowing program beneficiaries to negotiate and make decisions with minimal supervision in the context of this study amounted to total delegated power as stated by Arnstein (1969). Hence, it can be seen that, even in this donor funded development program, delegated powers method was one of the methods that had been employed to encourage intended program beneficiaries to participate in the program.

The implication of using partnership and delegation methods in the examined donor fully funded implied that program beneficiaries were offered the opportunity to participate and make decisions that influenced the implementation of program. These findings concur with findings of Lyons et al. (2001) who pointed out that participatory partnership plays a great role in ensuring program sustainability as well as Mak *et. al.*, (2017) who in their study in rural area of Tai O in Hong Kong China found that delegation if employed well ensures that participants' views are taken into consideration in decision making arena and they are empowered to make decisions about development.

Another method that was revealed by the study respondents as being employed but not to a large extent in the program was the citizen control method. In this method as pointed out by Arnstein (1969) and seconded by other authors such as Kitula et al (2005) and Berman (2017), program beneficiaries reach a point when they fully control their activities with no or very limited influence from outsiders. In the case of this program, 7.8% of the participants indicated that they had reached this level where they were in complete control of their tree farming activities.

This group of tree farmers included farmers whose tree farms had progressed well and as a result they had been allowed by the program implementers to proceed on their own but advised to contact the program implementers in the event of any challenges faced. For instance, one of the interviewed pointed out that:

*'For now, I am on my own because my farm was doing well. My fellow tree farmers come here to learn and I try to teach them'*

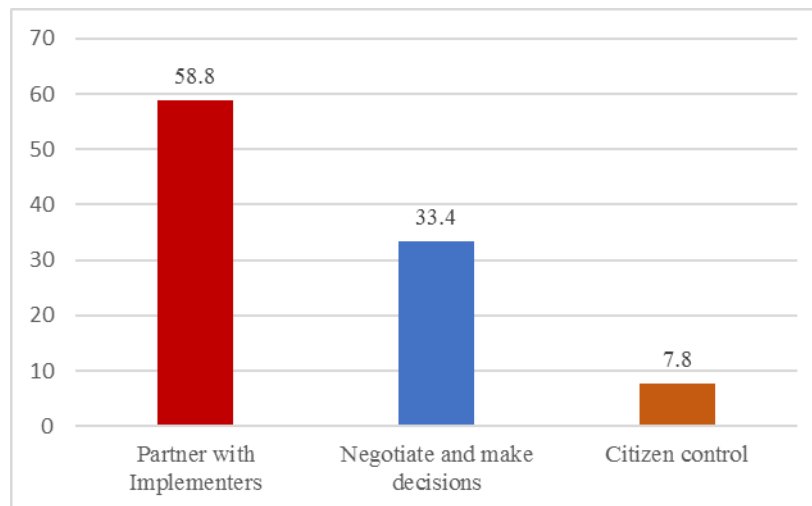
These three methods were equally seconded by members during Focus Group Discussions and key informants. According to members in the Focus Groups, the process of participating in this program

began through partnership whereby anybody interested in the program was allowed to join the program and work closely with the program implementers.

However, as time goes on and such individual is able to manage his or her tree farm, then he or she can begin to be in full control of his or her tree farm. Similarly, according to the Program Coordinator and Forest Field Facilitator as key informants, the program was largely an empowerment program whereby participants were expected to demonstrate improvement in managing their tree plantation farms through acquired knowledge and skills so that they could at a later stage stand on their own. As such, working closely in the initial stages was said to be very important before program beneficiaries were allowed to work on their own. The Program Coordinator pointed out that:

*‘Our goal is to see that people who participate in this program see sense in it, become independent and successful tree farmers. We therefore strongly encourage that in the beginning, we work closely with the farmers and when we see that a farmer has made good progress, we begin giving him or her room to stand alone. In this situation, we make such a farmer a demonstrator to others using his or her tree plantation farm.’*

Results of this program demonstrated that, effective participation of intended program beneficiaries was never to be guaranteed through a single participation method. Rather a combination of three methods was necessary. Generally, the implication of the revealed methods was that the methods offered opportunity for program beneficiaries to participate in the program and therefore in position of enhancing program sustainability. Findings of this analysis are as presented in Figure 7.



**Figure 7: Adopted Participation Method's in the examined Donor Fully Funded Development Program**

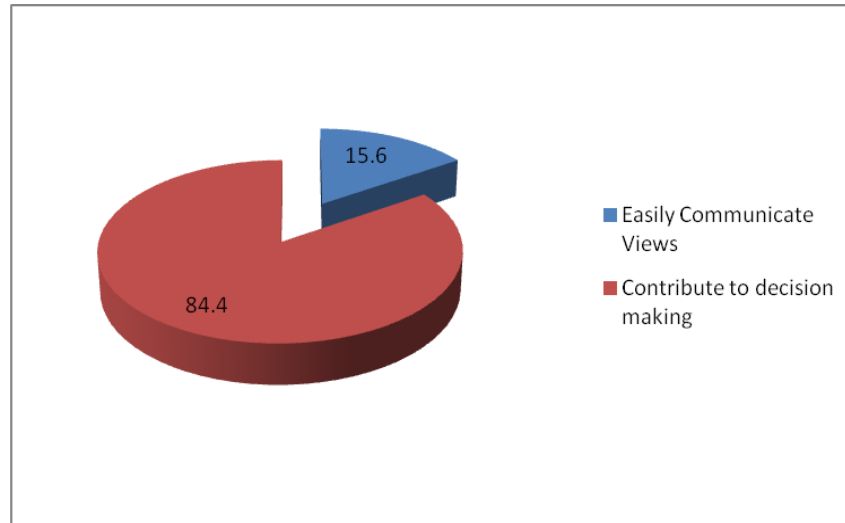
Source: Field Survey, 2020

The analysis on whether the employed methods in the donor fully funded program were enabling the intended participants to effectively participate in the program showed that 100% of the study respondents asserted to the fact that indeed the methods enabled them to effectively participate in the program. In terms of effective participation, 84.4% indicated that through these methods, they were able to contribute to decision making while 15.6% indicate that they could easily communicate their views. One of the interviewed study respondents stated that:

*‘We work very closely with staff from FDT and so personally I easily communicate whatever I find necessary and also contribute in making decisions. For instance, I was involved in deciding on which*

*tree seedlings we should use because we had about three seedling types and we had to decide which ones should be made available to us by FDT'*

A similar position was presented by members in the Focus Group Discussions in their support of the fact that through the adopted methods in the program, members easily communicated their views and were able to make substantial contributions to decision making. Figure 8 shows the findings on this analysis.



**Figure 8: Influence of the adopted participation methods on Participation of Community Members in the examined Donor Fully Funded Program**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Overall, the findings from the examined donor funded development program demonstrated that the adopted methods had three key benefits in relation to the views of Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) as cited in Preston *et. al.*, (2009).

*First*, from the instrumental approach, Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) point out that the adopted method or approach for community participation should ensure that wellbeing is conceived as an end result, rather than as a process. In this regard, the participation process could be led by professionals but the most important thing should be that key components of the interventions or program are predetermined according to local or national priorities.

In the context of the examined program, by employing the three highest methods of participation which sought to ensure that the intended program beneficiaries fully participated in the program activities as stipulated by Arnstein (1969) demonstrated that the program aimed at putting the wellbeing of the intended program beneficiaries at the front.

In addition, much as the program was led by professionals from FDT, the predetermining of some important components of the program such as deciding on the type of tree seedlings among others, were done according to local interests.

*Second*, from the community empowerment approach/method, Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) points out that the adopted method or approach for community participation should try to empower and support communities, individuals and groups to take greater control over issues that affect their wellbeing. This includes personal development and social actions among others.

In the examined donor fully funded development program, the three adopted participation methods as stipulated by Arnstein (1969) advocate for high level of involvement by community members

in the program or development activities as a way of empowering them. This implies that, the adopted methods in the examined program were those that could empower participants to take greater control of managing their tree farming activities after acquiring support and training from the program.

Third, from the developmental approach/method, Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) point out that the adopted method or approach for community participation should ensure that development is conceived as an interactive, evolutionary process where local stakeholders in partnership with professionals have a role to play in decision making and in achieving the outcomes, they consider important.

In the context of the examined donor fully funded development program, the adopted methods of partnership, delegated power and citizen control give the local person an opportunity to work closely with professionals in making decisions and achieving those outcomes that both the locals and professionals consider to be important.

### **Adopted Community Participation Methods in Joint Funded Development Programs and their influence on Effective Community Participation**

This was the fourth type of program in which the adopted community participation methods and their influence on effective community participation were examined. By interpretation, a joint funded development program meant a program whose funding was on partnership funding mechanism either between Governments, NGO's or institutions.

In the context of this study, the Private Forestry Programme (PFP) that was jointly funded by the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania and the Government of Finland was examined. Results of the analysis on the adopted community participation methods showed that three methods for encouraging community participation were adopted. These included partnership, negotiation and decision making (delegated powers) as well as citizen.

For partnership, 52.3% of the study respondents revealed that this was one of the methods that had been used to encourage participation in the program. To the respondents, the notion of partnership was equated to working with the program implementers in making decisions and thereafter being supported by program implementers to implement such decisions. In view of this understanding, one of the program participants stated that:

*'In this program we work together and whenever there is a decision to be made, a staff from PFP comes and we spend time discussing the matter until we agree. This is very good because some people can only believe when they see and speak to the program implementers themselves'*

With regards to negotiating and making decisions, also considered as delegated power in the context of this study, 38.3 % of the study respondents pointed out that this was another method that was employed in the study. According to the interviewed respondents, the implementation of a number of activities only came after negotiations had been carried out and agreement reached before a decision was made and implemented. One of the interviewed program participants stated that:

*'At one time we needed to decide on how to assist our colleagues access land so that they could qualify to join the program. We discussed this matter with guidance from PFP staff and we discovered that some of our colleagues who did not have the required land size of 2 acres could secure land at a price of TZS 200,000/= per acre from those with more land and in return, those given the land would repay slowly to the land owners. Similarly, we also agreed on the type of tree seedlings to be given to us by PFP among many other things. So, there is always a lot of negotiation and decision making going on in this program.'*

Like in the case of the examined donor fully funded program, partnership as well as negotiation and decision making were found to be the most adopted methods in the examined joint funded program.



These findings agree with findings of Mitchell and Parkins (2005), who pointed out that participatory partnership plays a great role in ensuring program sustainability. Similarly, Mak *et. al.*, (2017) in their study in rural area of Tai O in Hong Kong China found that delegation, if employed well, ensures that participants' views are taken into consideration in decision making arena and they are empowered to make decisions about development.

The third adopted method of participation in the examined joint funded development program was the citizen control method. In this method, eight-point eight percent (8.8%) of the interviewed respondents indicated that the method was being used. However, after PFP had supported the tree farmer to successfully establish his or her tree farm plantation, PFP would then withdraw and leave the farmer under the minimal supervision of an established community forest association. Through this association, the farmer would then continue to get advice but decision making was entirely left to the farmer. One of the interviewed respondents stated:

*'What PFP does is to give us a push in terms of training, incentive provision and later, you are left on your own. If you have any problem, then you sort it out through your community forest association'*

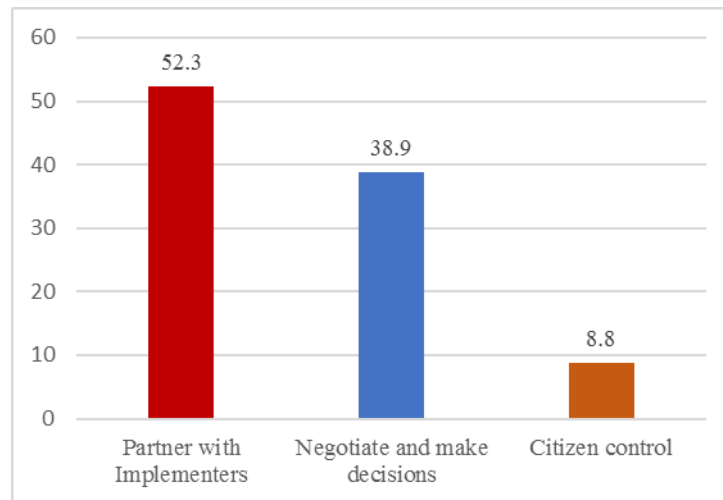
These findings were equally supported by the views of the Program Director who stressed that the nature of the program was to instil interest in people to cultivate trees as a source of income and not to simply planting trees without any motive behind it. As such, methods encouraging high level of participation and learning from one another were preferred. The Director as a key informant stated:

*'In this program we strongly encourage working in partnership, negotiating to make viable decisions and we would like to see that after a farmer has been part of our program, such a farmer is empowered to manage his or her tree farm in the long run. So, those farmers who join us and later we find that they are not managing their farms according to the guidelines because of lack of seriousness, we at times drop them from the program. Farmers join on a free will as long as you have 2 acres of land. But all in all, we are very committed in working closer with our farmers and most of them are doing very well.'*

The discussion from the Focus Groups also attested to these findings by revealing that, PFP as program implementers, had made sure that people find it comfortable to be part of the program. According to the views of the Focus Group Discussion members, staff from PFP were said to be friendly, supportive and reachable for assistance. In addition, they also revealed that the manner in which decisions were made was very involving with all participants given the opportunity to contribute to the decision-making process. One of the FGD members stated that:

*'We are thankful to the way we are involved in this program because everything is discussed and agreed upon among us. When we have a problem, we communicate to PFP and they come to advise us. At times, they even come to check on us without inviting them and this makes us feel proud of being in this program.'*

Basically, from the findings on the examined joint funded development program, the adopted methods appeared to be partnership, delegated powers where farmers took charge of some of the activities on their own with minimal supervision and citizen control where farmers took full control of their tree cultivation activities. Findings of this analysis are as presented in Figure 9.



**Figure 9: Adopted Participation Method's in the examined Joint Funded Development Program**  
Source: Field Survey, 2020

The analysis on whether the employed methods in the joint funded development program were enabling the intended participants to effectively participate in the program showed that ninety-six-point five percent (96.5%) of the respondents were in agreement to the fact that the adopted methods enabled them to effectively participate in the program while three-point five percent (3.5%) indicated that the methods somehow enabled them to participate in the program.

However, as revealed the three-point five percent (3.5%) of the study respondents who had actually stated that the methods used in the program only somehow enabled them to participate in the program included a group of participants who had failed to follow and meet the set guidelines for tree planting that had been put in place by PFP. This group of participants were already facing the possibility of being dropped out of the program if no improvement was made on their part.

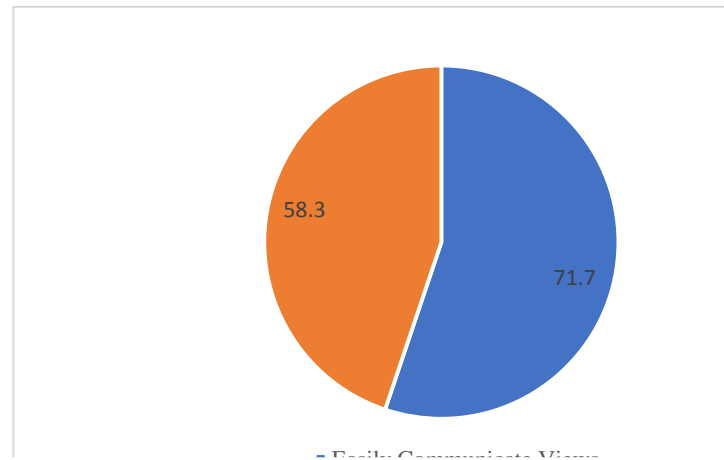
On the contrary, respondents who had indicated that the adopted methods had actually enabled them to effectively participant in the program revealed that through these methods they could easily communicate their views and also contribute to decision making. Proportional-wise, seventy-one-point seven percent (71.7%) attested of being able to easily communicate their views as a result of the adopted methods while fifty-eight-point three percent (58.3%) revealed that they could contribute to decision making. One of the interviewed respondents stressed that:

*'The manner in which the program is being implemented has been so helpful to most of us. We have learnt so much and can now confidently stand in public and share this knowledge and experience.'*

This perception was equally shared by members in the Focus Group Discussions who also revealed that, most people who joined the program only had indigenous knowledge on tree planning and many did not know that even trees could be cultivated like any other crop and used as a source of income. A member during the Focus Group Discussion stated that:

*'For sure most of us here never thought that we could cultivate trees as we cultivate maize for sale. It is this program that has opened our eyes; we are able to freely educate others'*

These findings therefore show that in the examined joint funded development program, three methods i.e., partnership, delegated powers and citizen control were employed to encourage the participation of the intended program beneficiaries. These methods, according to the majority of the interviewed respondents were indeed influential in enabling them participate in the program. Findings on how the adopted methods enabled participants to engage in the program are as presented in Figure 10.



**Figure 10: Influence of the adopted participation methods on Participation of Community Members in the examined Joint Funded Program**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

Overall results of the examined joint funded development program showed that the adopted methods in the program were those methods that encouraged high level of participation in the program as stipulated by Arnstein (1969). These results in one way or the other concurred with the views of Khwaja, (2004) as well as Akumu and Onono (2017) who stated that it was important for the adopted community participation in any development program or project to allow beneficiaries to influence the direction and execution of program activities rather than merely receiving a share of the program.

In the context of the examined joint funded program, the adopted high level participation methods according to Arnstein (1969) sought to allow the targeted beneficiaries to influence the direction and execution of program activities rather than merely receiving a share of the program. In addition, as earlier noticed under the donor fully funded program, results from the examined joint funded program also embraced the three key benefits in relation to the views of Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) as cited in Preston *et. al.*, (2009).

*First*, from the instrumental approach in which Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) pointed out that the adopted method or approach for community participation should ensure that wellbeing is conceived as an end result, rather as a process. In this regard, the participation process could be led by professionals but the most important thing should be that key components of the interventions or program are predetermined according to local or national priorities.

In the context of the examined joint funded program, by employing the three highest methods of participation which sought to ensure that the intended program beneficiaries fully participated in the program activities as stipulated by Arnstein (1969), the program aimed at putting the wellbeing of the intended program beneficiaries at the fore front. In addition, much as the program was led by professionals from PFP, the predetermining of some important components of the program such as deciding on the type of tree seedlings among others were done according to local interests.

*Second*, from the community empowerment approach/method in which Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) pointed out that the adopted method or approach for community participation should try to empower and support communities, individuals and groups to take greater control over issues that affect their wellbeing. This includes personal development and social actions among others.

In the examined joint funded development program, the three adopted participation methods as stipulated by Arnstein (1969) advocate for high level of involvement by community members in program

or development activities as a way of empowering them. This implies that, the adopted methods in the examined program were those that could empower participants to take greater control of managing their tree farming activities after acquiring support and training from the program.

*Third*, from the developmental approach/method, Taylor *et. al.*, (2008) pointed out that the adopted method or approach for community participation should ensure that development is conceived as an interactive and evolutionary process where local people in partnership with professionals have a role to play in decision making and in achieving the outcomes. In the context of the examined joint fully funded development program, the adopted methods of partnership, delegated power and citizen control give the local person an opportunity to work closely with professionals in making decisions and achieving those outcomes that both the locals and professionals consider to be important.

### **Case Comparison and Discussion on Adopted Methods and their Influence on Effective Community Participation in the Examined Development Programs**

#### ***Case Comparison and Discussion on Adopted Methods***

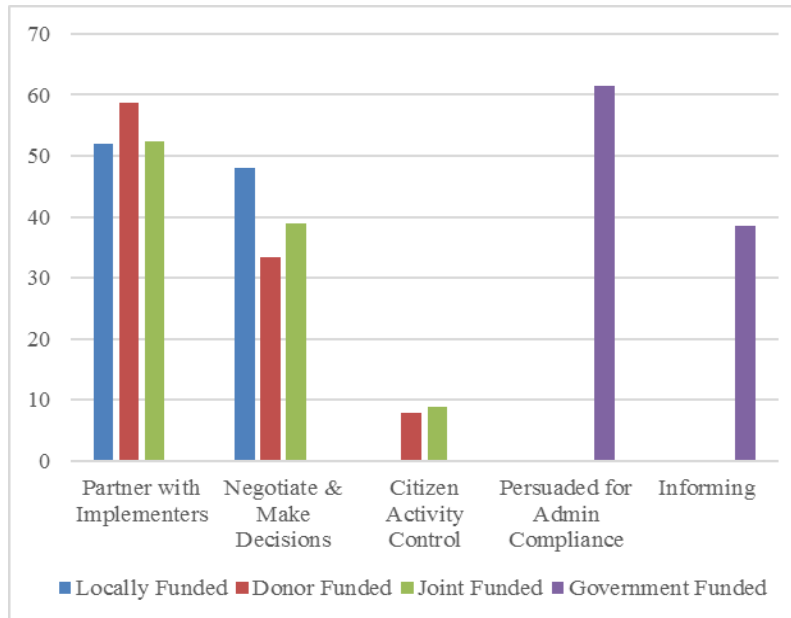
The findings from the four examined development programs showed that various methods had been adopted and ranged from therapy method of participation that was highly revealed in the government fully funded program to the citizen control method that was found in both the donor fully funded development program and the joint funded development program. The adoption of these methods in the four various examined development programs met the expected intensity of participation by the intended program beneficiary equally varied from program to program depending on the adopted method. According to Everest-Phillips (2016), depending on the method of participation employed, people's intensity or extent of participation is determined and to this effect, UNDP (2013) and Chifamba. (2013): stress that people need to fully engage in activities that reform their lives.

This view is further echoed by Evan *et al.* (2019) who narrated that active participation which is open and allows community members to actively take part in development initiatives is actually essential for the sustainability of the program. Results of this study showed that, in the case of the examined locally fully funded development program, partnership and delegated power were the core methods of participation adopted by the program because implementation was on voluntary basis. Nevertheless, the adopted methods as suggested by Arnstein (1969) tend to encourage a higher level of participation of the intended program beneficiaries in program activities.

In the case of the examined government fully funded development program, therapy and informing were the employed methods of participation. These methods according to Arnstein (1969), are non-participatory in nature and their real objective as pointed out by Berman (2017) is not to enable people to fully participate in undertakings that have influence in their lives but rather to enable power holders to use the concept of participation to achieve the already predetermined goals. Indeed, as per views of the respondents from this program, dissatisfaction was highly registered in the manner in which they were involved in the program which implied that the adopted methods were not effective enough in enabling the intended program beneficiaries to fully participate in the program.

On the other hand, both the examined donor and joint funded development programs employed methods ranging from partnership to citizen control. Again, these methods as suggested by Arnstein (1969) provide more opportunities for the participation of the intended program beneficiaries in the program. The methods were highly appreciated by the interviewed respondents from each of the program which implied that the program participants found the methods to be effective in enabling them fully participate in the programs.

Generally, these results showed that, adopting a single method of participation may not necessarily be sufficient to encourage effective community participation in the program. Rather a combination of methods is necessary as noted from the locally fully funded, donor fully funded and joint funded development programs. Figure 11 shows a comparative representation for the adopted methods of community participation from the four examined programs.

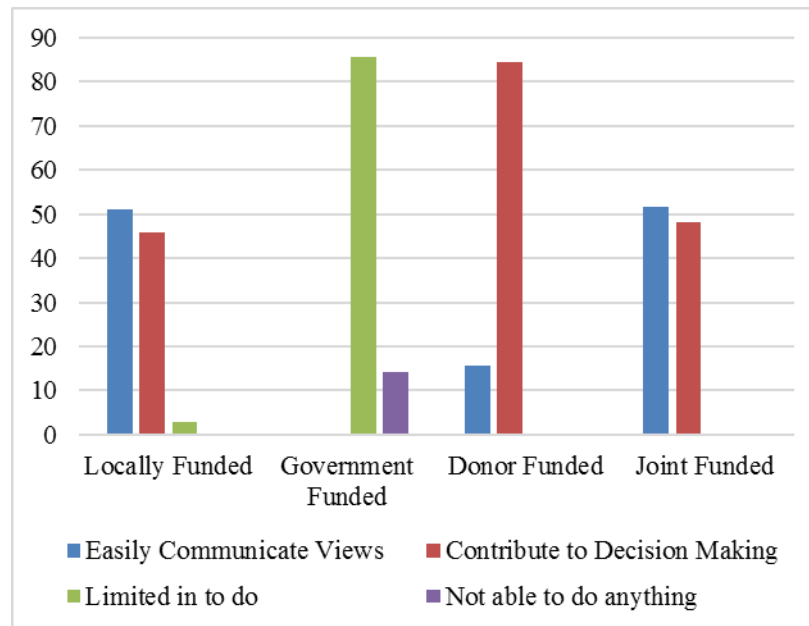


**Figure 11: Comparative representation for the adopted methods of community participation from the four examined programs**  
Source: Field Survey, 2020

### Case Comparison and Discussion on the Influence of Adopted Methods on Effective Community Participation

In terms of influence of the adopted methods on effective community participation, results showed that development programs that employed methods that were interactive, supportive and empowering such as partnership with implementers, negotiation and citizen control had more positive influence on the participation of program beneficiaries. For instance, these methods were pointed out to have made it easy for program beneficiaries to communicate their views and also contribute to decision making as opposed to methods that were not interactive, supportive and empowering.

As such, the examined government funded program that was found using such methods recorded low influence as program beneficiaries indicated that the methods limited them in what to do and some were not able to do anything. Figure 12 presents a comparative representation of the extent of influence from the adopted methods in the four examined development programs.



**Figure 12: Comparative representation of the extent of influence from the adopted methods in the four examined development programs.**

Source: Field Survey, 2020

### Conclusion

This study sought to empirically examine how different community participatory methods could influence effective community participation in development programs. Findings of the study show that people are more willing to participate in development programs but this can only be possible if the methods used do offer opportunities for empowerment and supportive. This implies that policy makers, program implementers and community development practitioners must shift from spoon feeding methods to more community integrated participatory methods that encourage community members to effectively participate in development programs within their communities.

### Recommendations

Based on the study findings, this study recommends two areas that strongly need to be addressed in order to enhance effective community participation in development programs.

*First*, the need for strengthened partnership arrangements for program implementation at the community level. The findings of this study show that partnership was revealed as an important factor in implementing development programs at the community level. This factor was found to be only embraced in three of the examined programs i.e., locally fully funded program, donor funded program and the joint funded program while it was weak in the examined government fully funded program. Hence, drawing from such results, this study finds that strengthening partnership arrangements for program implementation could largely enhance effective community participation in development programs at the community level.

*Second*, avoid use of inappropriate participatory methods that do not empower community members to effectively participate in development programs. From the study findings, community members' outcry was on the use of inappropriate participatory methods which to them were not empowering, supportive and interactive. This situation was largely manifested in the examined government fully funded program. As such, this study strongly advocates for use of participatory methods



which are empowering, supporting and interactive so that many community members find it essential to join development programs.

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### **Declaration of Conflicting Interest**

There is no conflicting of interest for this manuscript.

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