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The Role of Participation in Development in Enhancing Local People Empowerment: The case of Bishoftu City Administration (BCA), Oromia

Bahiru Detti Heyi

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**Box 1: Key points of this chapter**

- Participation in development relatively enhanced personal empowerment among local people.
- Participation in setting needs priorities and planning phases of the development process influences personal empowerment.
- Participation in development generated “power within,” “power to,” “power with” and “power over” forms of power among local people.
- Empowerment through participation was hindered by the extent of participation, a top-down approach of participation, elite domination, institutional factors, and corruption.

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**Box 2: After reading this chapter, you will be able to**

- Understand local people participation and empowerment in Oromia/Ethiopia
- Articulate indicators of different forms of empowerment
- Explain the effect on participation in development on local people empowerment
- Grasp the gap between participation and empowerment rhetoric and practice
- Realize policy implications of empowerment through participation
- Comprehend the magnitudes of people empowerment through participation

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**Box 3: Abbreviations**

ANOVA = Analysis of variance
BCA = Bishoftu City Administration
CPE = Community Participation Expert
FGD = Focus Group Discussion
HH = Household
ONRS = Oromia National Regional State
1. Introduction

The role of participatory development in empowering people at the grass roots level has attracted the attention of development scholars, governments, and nongovernment organizations. Participation and empowerment have gained an extensive use in the policies, plans, and reports of development projects. Participatory development brings the people to the center of development and pays attention to empowerment that focused on local people, local context, and local forms of power and change (Freire, 1970). Though participation plays a crucial role in empowering local people, empowerment through participation in development has been impeded by lack of genuine participation (Cooke and Kothari, 2001; Kesby, 2005); elites domination of decision-making process (Ali Shah and Baporikar, 2012; Chambers, 1997); and lack of commitment by the state to create a space for communities (Cooke and Kothari 2001; Kesby 2005). Therefore, this study tries to contribute to the endeavors to bridge the gap in analyzing the linkages between participatory development processes and empowerment.

Participation is an ideologically contested concept that has produced a range of competing meanings and applications (Pelling, 1998). The concepts of participation differed over the goals, processes, agents, effects, and value of participation (Crocker, 2003). For the purpose of this study participation is conceptualized as per the following definition. Hentschel & Lanjouw (1996: xi) pursue the transformational approach to define participation as “a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them.” Empowerment is a very complex concept, which is not easily defined (Craig and Mayo, 1995; Rowlands, 1997). The complexity of the concept of empowerment arises from its root word “power,” giving rise to different interpretations and
contrasting views on the centrality of power for the development process. Despite competing views of empowerment among scholars, empowerment in this chapter is seen as a consequence of people participation in development projects and refers to improvement in social relations, personal conditions, and heightened awareness regarding political issues.

2. Theoretical Framework

The analysis of “empowerment is most effective when it draws on the full range of concepts and meanings of power...” (Pettit, 2012:5). Thus, Rowlands (1997) empowerment framework was used to evaluate the effect of participation on empowerment. Rowlands (1997) identified four types of power relations: power over, power to, power with, and power within.

Empowerment based on a view of power as “power over” emphasizes the need for participation in existing economic and political structures but does not involve changes to those structures (Luttrell et al., 2009). Conceptualization of empowerment based on “power over” suggests that empowerment is more than participation in decision-making; it must also include the processes that lead people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions (Rowlands, 1997).

“Power to” refers to the unique potential of every person to shape, direct, and control his or her life in the world, and is also referred to as an individual’s generative or productive power (Chambers, 2005; Nelson & Wright, 1995). Empowerment based on “power to” refers to a power that includes the ability to make decisions, have authority, and find solutions to problems, and which can be creative and enabling. “Power with” is a collective form of power wherein people feel empowered by organizing and uniting around a common purpose or understanding. It involves a sense of the whole greater than the sum of individuals (Rowlands, 1995). “Power within” involves spiritual strength based on self-acceptance, self-respect, self-esteem, self-awareness, consciousness raising, self-confidence, and assertiveness. “Power within” is the capacity to imagine and have hope; it affirms the common human search for dignity and fulfillment (Veneklasen & Miller, 2002).

3. Legal and Policy Frameworks

Proper government policies and legal provisions facilitate effective participation that favors the local situation and creates favorable ground for local people
empowerment. Hence, related government policies such as the Constitution of Oromia National Regional State (ONRS) and the Oromia Urban Local Government Proclamation were assessed.

3.1. Revised Constitution of (ONRS), Proclamation No. 46/2001

The ONRS Constitution stipulated a general provision about the rights of the people of the region to participate in development. The constitution granted the public the right to participate in developing and monitoring the environment, to improve their living standards, and to enhance and sustain development (article 43 [1]). These facts imply that the constitution recognized that participation is a means for the local people to manage their affairs. In other words, the Constitution recognized participation as a means of local people empowerment.

The ONRS Revised Constitution stipulated that “all the people of the Region have the right to participate in Regional development, and, in particular, to be consulted in respect to policies and projects affecting their community” (article 43 [2]). It endorsed participation at different levels. Public participation in grass roots or local development, which is the concern of this study, refers to the right of the public to participation at the development policy level and at the project level, which directly influences their life. However, this provision considered consultation as a form of participation, which is the lowest level of participation. Hence, the provision creates a loophole that allows power holders to manipulate the voice of the public. In fact, manipulation of public voice took place on the ground.

The constitution further stipulated that “the aim of development policies and programs shall be to enhance the capacity of residents of the Region for development and meet their basic needs” (article 43 [3]). The provision of this article advocates that public policies should create the condition that enhances empowerment. The provision emphasizes the role of public policies in fostering participation in development that boosts the empowerment of local people. The implication is that the constitution recognized participation as a means of local people empowerment that in turn prepares them for further participation in governance. Participation in governance further implicated people’s participation in decision-making.

3.2. Oromia Urban Local Government, Proclamation No. 65/2003

According to the preamble of this Proclamation, one rationale for enacting the Proclamation was “to streamline the operation and organization of urban local governments on the basis of good governance and democratic principles so as to
enable them create huge development capacity for the development of the Region and improvement of the living standard of the residents” (ONRS, 2003:1).

A close look at this rationale suggests that the Proclamation is intended to create a conducive urban local government structure, which facilitates participation. Moreover, this provision implies that the urban local government structure is a crucial institutional context for the empowerment of local people through participation. However, the results of document analysis and FGDs in fact suggest that the structure of the city government on the ground was not conducive to participation. This suggests that there is a gap in policy formulation and policy implementation regarding popular participation in development. Consequently, local people empowerment through participation has been hampered by the gap between policy formulation and implementation. Proclamation No. 65/2003 enacted general provisions that directly related to participation as follows: “Residents, mass organizations and the private sector shall discuss, debate and express their views on the city annual work program, budget proposals, project ideas, performance as well as financial and audit reports” (article 32 [1]). This provision calls for public participation in all activities of government at all stages. A glance at the provision of this sub article suggests that the public has the exclusive right to participate at each stage of local development processes, from the initiation of local development project ideas to performance evaluation. However, the results of FGDs and Key Informant Interviews (KII) revealed that the public in Oromia does not in fact participate in performance evaluation. This finding implies that there is gap in implementing the provision, preventing it from fostering the public participation that enhances local popular empowerment.

4. Methodology

For the purpose of this study, a pragmatic research philosophy was adopted for guiding the overall process of the study over interpretive and positivist research paradigms. Pragmatism allows for flexibility in the research process (Morgan, 2007) and enables flexibility in investigate methods (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2005). Along with the selected research philosophy, a mixed methods research approach was adopted for this chapter. Mixed methods allows for the combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts, and language into a single study (Greene, 2006; Johnson and Onuegbufzie, 2004; Johnson et al., 2007). In line with the research approach followed, a parallel triangulation design (Creswell & Clark, 2007) was adopted, with equal attention to both QUAN and QUAL phases.
Both primary and secondary data sources were employed to generate data that help to address the objectives of the study. Primary data were generated through interviews, Focus Group Discussion (FGD), and a questionnaire. The questionnaire incorporated characteristics of the respondents, items regarding the practice of participation in phases of development, and empowerment in different forms. The main relevant characteristics of respondents, such as socioeconomic factors and demographic characteristics (sex, age, family size, educational status, occupational status, and employment categories and income) were incorporated in the questionnaire. The majority of the respondents were males (62.7 percent). Respondents’ age distribution indicated that the majority of the respondents were younger people (64.8 percent). The distribution of family size indicated that more than half of the respondents (57.7 percent) had a family size of two and below. The occupational distribution of the respondents revealed that the highest proportion was skilled and unskilled labor (32.3 percent) followed by managerial, professional, and supervisory occupation groups (27.5 percent). The distribution of employment type revealed that higher proportions of the respondents are self-employed (31.1 percent) and civil servants (30.4 percent). The distribution of education levels indicated that a high proportion of the respondents had attained secondary school education (27.8 percent). The distribution of monthly income of the respondents indicated a relatively high rate of those earning less than 1000 Birr per month (26 percent).

The items devised to measure each form of empowerment were drawn from literature and incorporated in the questionnaire. Detailed consultation of various literatures on empowerment was conducted to identify indicators of empowerments. The items about the process of participation were binary. However, to prepare the data for parametric analysis (regression analysis in the case of this study), dummies were developed for each item regarding the phases of participation process. Personal, social, and political empowerments were measured by ten, seven, and eight items respectively. These items were structured around a Likert scale response form in the questionnaire. The value of each response for these items in the questionnaire is as follows: 1 = strongly agree; 2 = agree; 3 = undecided; 4 = disagree; 5 = strongly disagree.

A concurrent/parallel mixed method sampling strategy was utilized to draw sample respondents. These sampling procedures occurred independently. A snowball sampling technique was used to select participants for FGDs and key informants. A judgmental sampling technique was used to draw samples for interviews. A multi-stage sampling technique was employed to draw questionnaire respondents. The sample size for questionnaire respondents was drawn using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970). Accordingly, using 85 percent
response rate a sample of 436 HHs were selected. This sample size was drawn from each ganda through proportional allocation. Hence, 173, 124, and 139 respondents were selected from sample gandas 01, 05, and 09 in that order. Although 436 questionnaires were distributed to respondents, only 418 complete questionnaires were returned. Thus, the analysis was conducted on returned questionnaires. Thematic analysis was applied to analyze qualitative data. Item analysis and multiple linear regression were used to analyze quantitative data. A multiple linear regression model applied to determine the effect of participation in development on empowerments was developed as follows:

$$\hat{Y} = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \beta_6X_6 + \epsilon$$

Where: $Y$ = Outcome variable (empowerment)
$\beta_0$ = Constant terms
$\epsilon$ = Error term
$\beta_1 - \beta_6$ = Regression coefficients
$X_1$ = Participation in needs identification
$X_2$ = Participation in setting priority of needs
$X_3$ = Participation in planning
$X_4$ = Participation in the implementation
$X_5$ = Participation in monitoring
$X_6$ = Participation in performance evaluation

To prepare the data for multiple regression analysis, a cumulative empowerment index (CEI) for three types of empowerment was developed adding the obtained scores of ten, seven, and eight empowerment indicators for personal, social, and political empowerments respectively. Dummies were developed for categorical predictors to run multiple regressions.

5. Findings of the Study

This part of the study examined the role of participation in personal, social, political, and economic empowerment. The effect of participation on local popular empowerment was determined based on quantitative and qualitative data. However, economic empowerment was assessed based on only qualitative data. In order to determine the role of participation in empowering local people using multiple regression analysis, first the assumptions of multiple regressions were checked. As per the result of preliminary analysis all the assumptions of multiple regression analysis were satisfied.
The output of preliminary multiple regression analysis, ANOVA Table, was used to test the statistical significance of the model. The result of the analysis revealed that the model is statistically significant in explaining personal empowerment ($F [6, 353] = 4.12, p = 0.00$) and social empowerment ($F [6, 353] = 2.10, p = 0.05$) through participation in local development.

However, the model is not statistically significant in explaining political empowerment ($F [6, 353] = 1.20, p = 0.31$). This finding implies that participation did result in the political empowerment of local people in BCA. Therefore, the null hypothesis $\beta = 0$ (For all the independent variables Coefficient of determination is zero) was rejected, while the alternative hypothesis $\beta \neq 0$ (For all the independent variables Coefficient of determination is different from zero) was accepted in the case of personal and social empowerment. This means that at least one predictor has an influence on the outcome variable and determined variations in the dependent variable.

5.1. Personal Empowerment through Participation

Personal empowerment is the foundation of the empowerment process. That means the transformation of the individual or the group and the circumstances encourage or inhibit the process of empowerment. Personal empowerment through participation was assessed by determining skill acquired and psychological improvements as the result of participation. The result of multiple regression analysis about the combined effect of all predictors and the influence of individual predictor variables on the dependent variable are depicted in table 1.

The results in table 1 revealed that all the independent variables included in the model explained approximately 7 percent ($R^2 = 0.07 \times 100\%$) of the variance in dependent variable (personal empowerment through participation). Among the predictor variables, participation in setting the priority of needs ($\beta = -.24, p = 0.00$) and planning ($\beta = .17, p = 0.03$) were found to have an influence on personal empowerment in BCA. Thus, the model of multiple regression analysis is found to be:

$$\hat{Y} = 25.53 - 3.28X_2 + 2.33X_3$$

The finding indicated a negative relationship between participation in setting the priority of needs and personal empowerment. In other words, when participation in setting priority of needs increase by one standard deviation, personal empowerment decrease by .24 standard deviation. The results of FGDs pointed out that the negative relationship between the variables was
Table 1: Multiple regression estimates of personal empowerment through participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized coefficients</th>
<th>95% confidence interval for B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in needs identification</td>
<td>-.59</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in setting priority of needs</td>
<td>-3.28</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>-.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in planning</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in the implementation</td>
<td>-1.38</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>-.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in monitoring</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation performance evaluation</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>25.53</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015
the result of low-level public participation in decisions regarding priority setting. There was a positive relationship between participation in the planning and personal empowerment. Accordingly, when participation in planning increased by one standard deviation, personal empowerment increased by .17 standard deviation.

Item Analysis of Personal Empowerment through Participation
Item analysis of indicators of personal empowerment was conducted to determine the effect of participation on individual indicators of personal empowerment. Then, the mean of individual indicators were compared against the overall mean of personal empowerment in order to determine the degree to which participation influences individual indicators. The results of the analysis are illustrated in table 2.

As indicated in table 2, the overall mean score of item analysis of indicators of personal empowerment through participation was 2.34. The comparison of individual means and the overall mean score of item analysis indicated that participation influences indicators of personal empowerment to various degrees. The means of strategic accumulation of practical experiences (M = 2.03); skills improvement (M = 2.19); development of self-esteem (M = 2.20); and enhancement of self-reliance to improve one’s life (M = 2.27) were lower than the overall mean. These findings imply that participation influences these indicators to relatively lesser degrees. However, participation still influences personal empowerment along these indicators. This can be observed from the frequency distribution of item analysis of these indicators. A glance at table 2 reveals that participation relatively enhanced the personal confidence that I could do things (M = 2.55); capacity to control over personal decision (M = 2.43); freedom of choice (M = 2.44); creativity that improves one’s life (M = 2.39); improvement of ability to analyze own situation and solve problems (M = 2.50); and creating the belief that my actions can have effects (M = 2.35) indicators of personal empowerment.

The results of Key Informant Interviews conducted with ganda managers and FGD at Ganda 05 also revealed personal empowerment along predictors other than those hypothesized in the quantitative strand. Accordingly, participation enhanced the personal empowerment of local people through providing the chance to share problems and get support. The above results further suggest that participation also creates wider opportunities for interaction. The individual has the chance to develop particular skills, both practical (such as literacy) and social (participation in meetings and discussions).

Using Rowlands (1997) framework, the above finding implies that participation generated “power within” and “power to” forms of power among
Table 2: Item analysis for personal empowerment through participation (N= 418, M = 2.34)
SA: strongly Agree; A: Agree; UD: Undecided; DA: Disagree; SDA: Strongly disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SA (%)</th>
<th>A (%)</th>
<th>UD (%)</th>
<th>DA (%)</th>
<th>SDA (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Boosting strategic accumulation of practical experiences</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>29.9</td>
<td>48.6</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement in personal confidence that I could do things</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills improvement</td>
<td>2.19</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>51.4</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improvement of ability to analyze own situation and solve problems</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>53.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating the belief that your actions can have effects</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>5.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing capacity to control over personal decisions that affect one’s everyday life</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>14.6</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing the development of self-esteem</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>50.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing the development of feeling of freedom of choice</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing self-reliance to improve one’s life</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing creativity that improves one’s life</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.09</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015
the public. To recall, power within refers to the development of self-efficacy, freedom of choice, the belief that one’s action can have effect. “Power to” refers to the development of a capacity to control personal decisions, creativity that improves one’s life, and ability to analyze personal situations.

The above forms of empowerment developed through participation focus on the process to understand and conceptualize power. These powers are generative; the power people have of stimulating activity in others and raising their morale. More than participation in decision-making, personal empowerment through participation will have positive impact on people to perceive themselves as able and entitled to make decisions. Thus, participation in the case of our study gave scope to the full range of human abilities and potential (Rowlands, 1997). Although participation in decision-making was low, personal empowerment was developed as a result of participation. Because, “power within” needs experiential recognition and analysis of issues to do with one’s own subordination and how it is maintained. Such power cannot be given; it has to be self-generative (Kabeer, 1999a).

5.2. Social Empowerment through Participation

People’s collective action on common matters creates opportunities that cultivate social empowerment. Collective action engenders favorable conditions that enhance social relationships among the members of the public. It crafts a forum through which residents share their social values with each other. The interaction escalates the bond between members of the public. Based on these facts, we assessed social empowerment through participation. The results of multiple regression analysis performed to determine the effect of participation on social empowerment are portrayed in table 3.

A close look at table 3 suggests that all the independent variables included in the model explained approximately 3 percent (0.03 x 100%) of the variance in dependent variable (social empowerment). Of the six variables included in the model only participation in planning (β = .19, p = 0.02) significantly predicted social empowerment. Thus, the model of multiple regression analysis is found to be:

\[
\hat{Y} = 16.45 + 1.92X_3
\]

The result here indicates a positive relationship between participation in planning and social empowerment. In other words, when participation in planning increased by one standard deviation, social empowerment increased by .19 standard deviation. The examination of the above findings clearly indicated
### Table 3: Multiple regression estimates of social empowerment through participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized coefficients</th>
<th>95% Confidence interval for B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in needs identification</td>
<td>-.99</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>-.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in setting priority of needs</td>
<td>-.85</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in planning</td>
<td>1.92</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in implementation</td>
<td>-1.24</td>
<td>.78</td>
<td>-.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in monitoring</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participate in performance evaluation</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>16.45</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015
a very low level of social empowerment through participation in BCA. The result of FGD conducted in Ganda 09 attached this low degree of social empowerment to institutional problems. According to this result, the main challenge of social empowerment was the cooption of public participation by the formal top-down approach of the City Government structures, mainly involving loyal party members. The above results stress that the involuntary organizing of the public to one to five government structure fostered fear of each other among the public. This resulted in lack of trust among the public, which in turn hindered social empowerment through participation. Moreover, the result revealed that government officials’ lack of interest in working with the public also exacerbated the lack of closeness among the public. These findings imply that there was no conducive institutional environment to facilitate empowerment through public participation. That means the government facilitates public participation through structures that are not suitable for enhancing social empowerment through participation.

Furthermore, an institutional assessment indicated that the absence of people’s own organization through which they could participate was also a major reason of lower degrees of social empowerment. Rather than facilitating the creation of popular organizations that foster favorable ground for social empowerment, the government forced the public to participate along the government’s structures. This in turn hampered social empowerment through participation.

**Item Analysis of Social Empowerment through Participation**

The result of multiple regression analysis indicated social empowerment through participation. Thus, it is imperative to determine the degree of social empowerment along the hypothesized indicators. The degree to which participation influences each indicator was determined through comparing the mean of individual items against the overall mean of social empowerment. The result of the analysis is illustrated in table 4.

A close look at table 4 indicates that participation influenced the formation of internal mechanisms for popular cohesion (M = 1.98); level of trust among the people (M = 2.03); group work or interaction among work groups (M = 2.17); and feeling of togetherness or closeness among people (M = 2.13) relatively to lesser degrees. Participation influenced relationship and cooperation among the people (M = 2.31); the sense of helping each other among the people (M = 2.34); and social links among the people (M = 2.33) to a relatively higher degree.

Despite low level of social empowerment indicated by the result of quantitative analysis, the results of FGDs elucidated some emerging aspects of
Table 4: Item analysis for Social empowerment through participation (N= 418, M = 2.18).
SA: Strongly agree; A: Agree; UD: Undecided; DA Disagree; SDA Strongly disagree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SA (%)</th>
<th>A (%)</th>
<th>UD (%)</th>
<th>DA (%)</th>
<th>SDA (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing formation of internal mechanisms for cohesion of the people</td>
<td>1.98</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing good relationship and cooperation among the people</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>55.5</td>
<td>13.9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the level of trust among the people</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>52.2</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing the sense of helping each other among the people</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>1.12</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>54.1</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>8.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing group work or interaction among work groups in the City</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>21.3</td>
<td>54.8</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing social links among the people</td>
<td>2.33</td>
<td>1.04</td>
<td>16.3</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>13.6</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhancing the feeling of togetherness or closeness among people</td>
<td>2.13</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>51.7</td>
<td>12.0</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015
social empowerment through participation. Participation improved conflict resolution capacity or the tendency to solve conflict between members of the public by recourse to the mediation of elders. The conflict resolution was done through Jarsuma (conciliation). This implies that participation enhanced the optimal utilization of local resources (local knowledge of the elders). Using Rowlands (1997) empowerment framework, this refers to “power with,” the capacity to solve its own problem by the public.

5.3. Political Empowerment through Participation

Participation in development can result in public awareness about the public policy process. It also improves the relationship between government and the public. It can achieve these results through improving the capacity of the public to demand their rights, to negotiate with government, and to influence public policy process. Based on these general facts, the effects of participation on local people’s political empowerment were assessed in BCA. To this end both quantitative and qualitative data were corroborated. However, the result of multiple regression analysis revealed that participation had no statistically significant influence on political empowerment. The result of the analysis is presented in table 5.

The result of analysis in table 5 revealed that there is no statistically significant relationship between all predictors and political empowerment. This finding implies that participation did not bring about political empowerment in BCA. Since none of the predictors had an effect on political empowerment, item analysis was not conducted. However, the result of quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis diverge regarding the influence of participation on political empowerment. Thus, this question needs further investigation.

Despite the above result of quantitative data analysis, which indicated the absence of political empowerment through participation, the results of FGDs in Ganda 05 and 09 highlighted the development of some aspects of political empowerment. These include: improvement in access to government services, improvement of public capacity for demanding that the government fill the gap in public service delivery, and an attempt to petition public officials and make them accountable for failure to discharge his/her responsibilities. There was also an improvement in recognizing the right to better public service and asking for its provision. This result suggests a divergence between qualitative and quantitative results.

Despite some aspects of political empowerment exhibited, participation did not create opportunities to influence decisions in the public policy process. Per the results of FGDs and interviews with Key Informants from the public,
Table 5: Multiple regression estimates of political empowerment through participation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized coefficients</th>
<th>95.0% confidence interval for B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>SE</td>
<td>Beta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in need identification</td>
<td>-.71</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in priority setting</td>
<td>-.68</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in planning</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in implementation</td>
<td>-.91</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in monitoring</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in evaluation</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>19.56</td>
<td>.56</td>
<td>34.66</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Field survey, 2015
different factors hindered political empowerment through participation in BCA. The factors include: (1) the approach of participation; (2) the involuntary aspect of participation; (3) the low extent of participation in decision-making; and (4) institutional contexts.

The above results indicate that channelling public participation through top-down governmental bureaucratic structures stands in the way of empowerment through participation. According to the above results, the involuntary participation also made the public develop a negative attitude toward the city government. The results further indicated that the public attitude toward the structure of the city government was also a major factor hindering the public-government relationship.

The results of interviews with key informants from the public and FGDs highlighted that decision-making regarding participatory development was controlled by government officials and experts without any real involvement from the public. As a result, little political empowerment of local people through participation was exhibited in BCA. Using Rowlands (1997) empowerment framework, the city government exercised “power over” in its negative definition, if one thinks of power as a “zero sum” (Chambers, 2007). This implies that the government exercises “power over,” the “ability to exert control and influence over others” (Friedmann, 1992) in facilitating participation in development, inevitably resulting in the loss of power by the public. As attested by the evidence from FGDs and Key informant interviews, this leads to the marginalization of the public from influencing the public policy making process. As a result, participation failed to create public access to political structures and formal decision-making processes in the economic, social, and political spheres.

Using “power over” in its positive sense (outside zero-sum commodity) (Chambers, 2007), the above problems restrict the power of the public over political decision-making. That means it failed to bring people who are outside the policy decision-making process into it. The institutional contexts failed to enable the public to maximize empowerment opportunities available to them through participation without constraints.

The results of key informant interviews with CPEs stressed that the absence of communities’ own development project was also a major factor holding back political empowerment. The above results pointed out that the public was not allowed to develop their own projects that would help them to develop the capacity to exercise political issues. They were forced to participate in government projects, which were top down in nature. This approach was not empowering by its nature. Using Rowlands (1997) empowerment framework, the lack of the public’s own project prohibited people from developing the “power to” influence the public policy process. These findings imply that the
failure to enhance political empowerment impedes the public’s opportunities to develop political capacity to influence government activities.

The results of FGDs and interviews with key informant from the public indicated that lack of access to government information hampered transparency, which in turn reduced the potential to empower the public politically. The above results further suggest that low levels of participation impeded political empowerment that could be acquired through evaluating the systems, interpreting the results of evaluation, and improving management. As a result, using Rowlands (1997) empowerment framework, the public lost “power to” influence government activities.

As stated elsewhere in this paper, the extent of participation in different phase of local development was very low. In many cases the public officials made decisions regarding participatory development and communicated them to the public through channels that did not allow much debate. As the result, the public did not get the chance to influence decision-making in a way that would help to develop the capacity to exercise political issues. This condition hampered the opportunity of the public to develop the power to influence the political process. Thus, elite dominance of decisions regarding participatory development hampered political empowerment through participation.

The structural arrangement of the city became the main actor rather than a facilitator of participation. Moreover, the base for determining the government structure was not created in a manner that enhances empowerment. For example shane (an organization encompassing one to five residents) were organized in ways that prohibited interaction among the large portion of the public, preventing the latter from acquiring empowering experience. Using Rowlands (1997) empowerment framework, the opportunity to develop capacity (“power to”) to negotiate with the government was not developed.

The results of FGDs and interviews conducted with government officials and experts indicated divergent views among government officials and the public regarding political empowerment through participation. Public officials and experts argued that political empowerment was enhanced as the result of participation, whereas the public argued on the contrary that political empowerment was at its lowest stage. The public further argued that political empowerment was set back due to public officials’ and experts’ domination of decision-making regarding participatory development. This fact implies that public officials considered empowerment as something to be provided by the government. However, by its nature empowerment is bottom up. Using Rowlands (1997) empowerment framework, this finding suggested that the city government exercised “power over” in its negative sense, that is, by controlling and influencing the public.
The results of FGDs indicated that lack of accountability by public officials and lack of trust in them by the public hindered political empowerment through participation. Public officials were not made accountable for their failure to discharge their responsibility to enhance participation. They were only accountable for the failure to enforce the government’s political philosophy. Although the public complained about the failure of officials to listen to their demands, and that they abused government money, the government did not take any corrective measures.

The result of FGDs revealed that the public had no trust in government officials, since they were not elected by them. They were assigned by the government from other places unknown to the public. Hence the public hesitated to believe that these officials serve their interests. This adversely affected interaction between the local government and the public, one form of political empowerment.

5.4. Economic Empowerment through Participation

Determining actual economic gain as the result of participatory development was a difficult task. Thus, the role of participation in the economic empowerment of local people can be considered in terms of the actual economic gain or the opportunity to generate economic resources. For the purposes of this study, economic empowerment of local people through participation was assessed by determining the opportunities created as a result of participatory development. I employed qualitative data to assess potential economic empowerment created as the result of participation. Accordingly, the analysis and interpretation were based on the data generated through interviews, Key Informant Interviews, and FGDs.

The results of interview with Government officials and FGDs pointed out that the improvements of crucial urban services, road networks and electric service, as the result of participation paved the way for economic empowerment of the public in various forms. Thus, the effect of participation in empowering local people was considered along three dimensions, namely, its role in creating business activities, increasing the value of existing assets, and creating employment opportunities.

The results of interview with key informant CPEs and FGDs disclosed that participation resulted in actual and potential business activities. These business activities include: the opening of new shops, cafeterias, greenhouses, clinics, kindergarten, primary schools, butchery, and petty trades like pot coffee and selling *budena* (traditional food prepared from some sort of cereals), bread, and *akayi* (fried cereals, especially barely).
This situation has double edged benefits. In one hand, participation here improved the life of those engaged in business activities; on the other hand it created a market for those living through renting houses. Using Alsop et al.’s (2006) empowerment framework, the widening of economic activities enables the public to develop “agency,” the capacity to make purposive choice. Using Rowland’s (1997) empowerment framework, participation developed “power to” among the public, the capacity to improve living conditions and “power over,” which is the power over the means of livelihood.

The results of FGDs and interviews with ganda managers and CPEs pointed out that the improvements in road conditions through participation, in turn, improved transportation services, thereby contributing to residents’ potential economic empowerment. For example, cobble stone roads constructed through participation in Ganda 05 from Libenedingle to Millennium Schools may be mentioned. The results of FGD in Ganda 05 revealed that prior to the construction of cobble stone in this area, horse carts were the means of transportation on this road. As a result, there was serious transportation problem in the absence of carts. The construction of cobble stone transformed the means of transportation from cart to bajaj. This condition played two important roles: (1) the transformation of means of transportation from a traditional to modern one; and (2) reducing the distance of the road from 500 meters to 100 meters. Using Alsop et al (2006) empowerment framework, improvement in the transportation service enhanced opportunity structure, paving the way for the development of “agency.” Furthermore, it saved time that could be invested on the performance of other living activities performance.

Petty economic activities like mini shops, pot coffee, and selling budena flourished as the result of road renewal through participation. Per the result of FGD at Ganda 05, the flourishing of these petty business activities at Berhan Mender and Sefere Misale in Ganda 05 were the best example of such activities flourishing as the result of cobble stone construction in the area.

The above findings imply that the flourishing of new shops and cafeteria services, in addition to improving the economic wellbeing of those engaged in these activities, also helped to improve the provision of service for the residents. It also created simple access to services for the public in their vicinity. Similarly, the opening of clinics on the one hand enhanced the economic empowerment of the service providers; on the other hand it improved social service and access to services in the city. As the result, it contributed to the production of a healthy work force. Using Rowland’s
(1997) empowerment framework, this finding implies that participation created “power over” economic resources. Using the Alsop et al. (2006) empowerment framework, it created agency, via a potential work force that contributed to further economic development of the nation in general and the city in particular.

The results of FGDs and interviews with CPEs show that improvements in the road network contributed to the development of greeneries along the roads. The development of green areas in turn played great roles in improving the environmental conditions and beautification of the city. The improvement of environmental conditions, in turn, contributed to economic empowerment through creating a healthy work force. The FDGs and interview results further pointed out that the development of green areas along the newly opened roads enhanced economic empowerment for young people in the city through creating employment opportunities. Using the Alsop et al. (2006) empowerment framework, this finding implies that participation created an opportunity structure, which facilitated the development “agency.”

The result of interviews with CPEs and FGDs conducted at Babogaya and Ganda 01 indicated that participation created both temporary and relatively permanent employment opportunities in cobble stone and other road constructions. Using Rowland’s (1997) the creation of employment suggested the development of “power to,” the capacity to improve living conditions. Based on the Alsop et al. (2006) empowerment framework, job opportunities enhance the development of “agency,” the ability to make purposeful choices in one’s life.

The results of FGDs and interviews with key informant from the public revealed that participation increased the value of assets through improving the quality and quantity of roads and security in the area. The security of the area was improved as the result of streetlight provision through participation. Participation increased the value of assets through increasing land values and raising demand for housing and rent prices. Moreover, the above data indicated that the increase in value of assets was indebted to improvement in environmental conditions, which played a great role in making the area attractive and livable. The results of an interview with the CPE of Ganda 09 highlighted Village 15 of Ganda 09 as a prominent example, where increases in house rent came about as a result of participation. Using Rowland’s (1997) empowerment framework, these findings imply the development of “power to,” the capacity to generate assets. Using the Alsop et al. (2006) empowerment framework, the above findings suggest that participation created “agency,” the resource for making purposeful choices to improve living conditions.
5.5. Corruption: An Impediment to Economic Empowerment

Corruption emerged as a serious challenge to economic empowerment through participation in BCA. The results of FGDs attested that multifaceted corruption practices hampered empowerment through participation. The above results further pointed out that corruption practices impeded participation from creating employment opportunities for poor people (especially youth) and access to economic resources.

The results of FGD conducted at Ganda 05 exclusively indicated that the residents were not benefiting from employment opportunities created by participatory development activities. The above results revealed that government officials bring their relatives from other areas to capitalize on the opportunities created by participatory projects. As a result, the residents of the city were excluded from the job opportunities created by participatory development projects. The FGD’s results conducted at different places further revealed that the residents are employed only and only if they have a relative in the city administration. Respondents stressed that this unfair employment practice is deeply rooted in the city. The FGD results further indicated that this problem is exacerbated from time to time as previous officials give behavioral lessons to incoming experts and officials. This finding implies that corruption is a systematic practice in relation to participatory development.

The results of FGDs showed that as a result of corruption, participation has failed to play its role in reducing poverty through the elimination of unemployment and creating access to economic resources. According to the above results, contributing factors included a lack of fair employment opportunities and failure to provide equitable and quality infrastructure. Hence, the corrupt practices related to participatory development hamper the spillover effects of participatory development on the achievement of other policy goals. Among these, the major one is the role of participation in development in alleviating poverty through economic empowerment. Thus, using Rowlands (1997) empowerment framework, corruption has hindered the abilities of participation to develop “power to” and “power over” resources.

The results of FGDs and interviews with key informants from the public suggest that only those who have close relationships with officials and experts have access to the benefits of participatory development. The above results further stressed that this was intentionally done to grasp the benefit derived from participatory development activities. These finding imply that there was an absence of fair distribution of benefits of development among the public in BCA. This systematic alienation of the local people from access to
benefits of participatory development has hampered economic empowerment through participation.

As indicated by the results of the FDGs, major forms of corruption prevailing in relation to participatory development include: giving cobble stone construction and red ash paving contracts to relatives; and organizing pseudo MSEs and winning auctions by government officials and experts. As an example, the FDGs highlighted the assignment of inappropriate persons to responsible positions in managing the cobble stone project. The FGD results and interview with key informants from the public revealed that government official and experts played a dual role in corruption activities. On the one hand, they committed corruption themselves; on the other hand, they created favorable grounds for others to commit corruption. The result of the FGD conducted at Ganda 05 elaborated the corruption practices as follows: “The previous officials give lessons on the corruption to the successor and aggravated corrupt behavior in the society.” This highlights the fact that corruption has become a systematic problem in BCA. Moreover, it contributes to the sustenance of corruption over time in the process of participatory development. This finding implies that government officials and experts have utilized official power for their personal interests.

It was learned from the assessment of documents that the absence of a legal framework that would guide local development benefit sharing has also created a favorable ground for corruption practices related to participation. This implies that the gap in legal and policy framework is also one of the factors contributing to the proliferation of corruption related to participatory development.

6. Conclusions

The general objective of this chapter was to explore the effect of participation in local development on empowerment. Participation and empowerment are considered as buzz words among different scholars and practitioners. Whether participation and empowerment are means or ends is the subject of an ongoing debate. Hence, this chapter tested whether participation is rhetoric or practice and sought to address the debate on participation and empowerment as end or means. This chapter concluded that participation and empowerment are, in fact, practice. Moreover, this chapter highlighted that participation is a means for empowerment. If properly handled, participation in the development process plays a fundamental role in enabling local people to manage their affairs. However, participation in local development contributed less to enable
ordinary people to take charge of their lives, to make communities more responsible for their development, and to make governments listen to their people in BCA. Participation relatively enhances the personal empowerment of local people. However, participation did not significantly enhance local people’s political empowerment. Thus, participation generates “power within,” “power to,” “power with,” and “power over” forms of power among local people. Participation in different phases of development did not equally contribute to local popular empowerment. Participation in setting the priority of needs and planning phases of development played a great role in empowering local people. Context and the extent of participation highly constrain the role of participation in empowering local people. The approach of participation (whether top-down or bottom-up), elite domination, institutional factors, some aspects of participation, and corruption highly hampered empowerment through participation in development. The chapter was limited in developing and testing hypothesis regarding the effect of participation in each phase development on local people empowerment, instead dealing with a general hypothesis related to the effect of participation on empowerment.

7. Theoretical, Methodological, and Policy Implications

The findings of the chapter enhance the development of participation and empowerment theory. The findings of this study advance our understanding of the participatory approach to development in several ways. The chapter contributes to the ongoing debate regarding the empowering effect of participation by investigating their relationship at grassroots level. It contributes to bridging the gap between participation and empowerment rhetoric and practice. It also contributes to knowledge about participation and empowerment through showing how these buzz/catch-all words can be operationalized and studied in particular situations and settings. The findings contribute to the debate on whether participation is a means or an end by arguing that participation can be both instrumental and transformational. The chapter does so through relating the instrumental value of participation (as a means to enhance local development) to its transformative value (empowerment through participation in development). It contributes to the advancement of the literature of empowerment through indicating how theory and concept are integrated. To this end, the author attempted to integrate the concept of empowerment with appropriate theory in order to explain the actual situation on the ground.

The chapter has various methodological contributions to the discipline of public administration. It contributes to the advancement of public
administration research through the application of mixed methods on the catch-all concepts of participation and empowerment. Hence, it emphasized the appropriateness of mixed methods in dealing with fluid public problems, helping to shift the bias of public administration research toward the qualitative approach.

The chapter has different policy contributions, enhancing the development of public capacity to influence policy process. Participatory development enhances the development of policy capacity through empowering the public to negotiate with institutions and bureaucracies, allowing the public to influence public policy and providing a check on the power of government. Furthermore, the results of this paper contribute to community capacity building. Participation in development builds community capacity through empowering the local people economically, socially, and psychologically. Empowerment increases the capacity of local people to initiate actions of their own or to negotiate with powerful actors.

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References


