

Determining the influences of participation in community activities on socioeconomic well-being in Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Participation in community activities has increasingly been recognised as an important mechanism for improving socioeconomic well-being, particularly in developing regions where formal institutional support is limited. This study examines the influence of participation in community activities on socioeconomic well-being among residents of Adamawa State, Nigeria. Grounded in the structural-functionalist perspective of Émile Durkheim, the study conceptualises participation as a social process that strengthens solidarity, cooperation, and access to collective resources. A quantitative cross-sectional research design was employed, and data were collected from 376 residents of Yola North and Yola South Local Government Areas using a structured questionnaire. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). The findings reveal that both participation in community activities and socioeconomic well-being are generally low among residents of Adamawa State. However, the results demonstrate that participation in community activities has a significant positive influence on socioeconomic well-being ($\beta = .20$, $p = .001$). This suggests that increased engagement in community groups, cooperative societies, and local associations enhances access to social support, resources, and opportunities that contribute to improved livelihoods. The study concludes that strengthening community participation can serve as a viable strategy for improving socioeconomic outcomes in disadvantaged regions. It therefore recommends policies that encourage inclusive community engagement and support grassroots development initiatives.

Keywords: Citizen participation, collective action, social solidarity, socioeconomic, well-being

Introduction

Participation in community activities is linked to socioeconomic well-being. For example, participation in community activities has been shown to influence socioeconomic well-being (Giovanis, 2021). The socioeconomic well-being of residents in Adamawa State is significantly influenced by their involvement in community activities and commitment.

Recent studies have demonstrated that cooperative societies in Adamawa State significantly enhance members' socioeconomic well-being, encompassing various aspects such as income, education, and health status (Hassan & Garandi, 2018). Additionally, socioeconomic factors can influence community engagement and participation, emphasising the need for targeted strategies to encourage involvement in cooperative activities (Walker et al., 2024). This highlights the interconnected relationship between participation in community activities and socioeconomic well-being. Accordingly, an increase in community activity participation correlates with an improvement in socioeconomic well-being, and vice versa.

Adamawa state is a suitable location for this study because, it faces low levels of development, widespread poverty, limited access to basic services, persistent insurgency and insecurity that have disrupted livelihoods and weakened social institutions, making community engagement and social solidarity critical for resilience and improved socioeconomic outcomes (Emmanuel et al., 2024).

Participation in community activities such as local cooperative societies in Adamawa State fosters a sense of belonging and mutual support among members, promotes social cohesion, and improves access to resources and opportunities, ultimately leading to improved socioeconomic outcomes (Danjuma, 2020). It has also been demonstrated to enhance members' well-being through the provision of loans, training, and other resources that promote economic stability (Nwankwo et al., 2019; Hassan & Garandi, 2018). This, in turn, boosts participants' socioeconomic well-being and strengthens the overall financial resilience of the community. Therefore, the present study focuses on the influences of participation in community activities on socioeconomic well-being in Adamawa State, Nigeria.

The prevalence of socioeconomic challenges in northeastern Nigeria, particularly in Adamawa State, cannot be overemphasized. This situation is exacerbated by the intersection of several factors, including socioeconomic status and limited participation in community activities. Specifically, there appears to be inadequate community engagement in development initiatives (Oyewo, 2024). Evidence suggests that communities in northeastern Nigeria, where Adamawa State is located, often experience low levels of participation in community development discourse and practices (Oyewo, 2024).

One possible explanation for this situation is the prolonged insurgency that has affected the region for more than a decade. The insurgency has resulted in the loss of thousands of lives and the displacement of millions of people, thereby destabilizing communities and weakening local institutions (Osewa, 2019). This situation has undermined residents' sense of belonging and collective responsibility, which are critical for fostering community participation and improving socioeconomic well-being.

Despite the importance of participation in development processes, there is a dearth of targeted research examining the influence of participation on socioeconomic well-being in Adamawa State. Existing studies have largely focused on participation in self-help initiatives and NGO-driven development projects, particularly within the agricultural sector (Jerry et al., 2018; Augustin et al., 2025). Therefore, this study examines the influence of participation in community activities in which beneficiaries actively contribute to the direction and implementation of development initiatives.

Theoretical background

Émile Durkheim's structural functionalism is highly relevant for studying participation in community activities and socioeconomic well-being because, from a functionalist standpoint (Durkheim, 1893), participation in community activities demonstrates how social roles, norms, and interactions contribute to societal stability and cohesion. Hence, the study contributes to Structural-Functionalism Theory (Durkheim, 1893) by demonstrating that, despite Adamawa State's complexity, social roles and interactions contribute to community stability and solidarity.

According to Durkheim, when people share common values, norms, and responsibilities, they are more likely to engage in communal activities, support one another, and cooperate toward shared goals. This theory views society as a structure composed of interconnected parts that are intended to satisfy the biological and social needs of its members. Durkheim drew parallels between society and the human body, asserting that just as the various organs in a human body must work together to keep the body alive, the different components of society also need to cooperate to maintain social stability. These parts, which Durkheim termed social institutions or patterns of beliefs and behaviours aimed at fulfilling social needs, include government, education, family, healthcare, religion, and the economy. Although this theory may lack depth, it is guided by key concepts.

Durkheim believes that a society is a complex system of interconnected and interdependent parts working together to sustain stability (Durkheim, 1893), and that society is united by shared values, languages, and symbols. He argued that while individuals constitute society, sociologists must examine social facts to understand it.

Durkheim further describes social facts as the laws, morals, values, religious beliefs, customs, fashions, rituals, and all cultural rules that regulate social life (Durkheim, 1893), for instance, in Adamawa state communal labour and cooperative work for agricultural or social tasks are carried out, especially in places mostly affected by the insurgency (Yakeen, 2024). Each of these social facts plays one or more roles within society. For instance, laws in a society may serve various purposes such as shielding the community from violence, punishing offenders, or safeguarding public health.

Additionally, the concept of collective conscience refers to the shared beliefs, values, and moral attitudes that exist within a society and provide the moral foundation for social solidarity. According to Émile Durkheim, the stronger the collective conscience, the more cohesive a society becomes. He argued that collective conscience plays a particularly important role in traditional societies, where shared values and beliefs are deeply ingrained and serve to unite members of the community. In the context of Adamawa State, these shared beliefs and norms may encourage trust, mutual support, and cooperation among community members, thereby facilitating collective economic and social activities such as participation in cooperative societies and other community initiatives that contribute to socioeconomic well-being.

For Social Solidarity, Durkheim identified two types of solidarity that explain how societies maintain cohesion: the first, Mechanical solidarity (found in Traditional societies), exists in small, homogeneous societies where people are bonded by similarity, such as shared beliefs, values, and occupation. Individual differences are minimal, law is repressive, and punishments are harsh to protect collective norms. The second type is Organic solidarity (found in Modern societies), which occurs in complex, industrial societies. In this concept, people are bonded by differences and interdependence. Division of labour is more specialised, and each person relies on others; the law is restitutive, focusing on restoring social order rather than punishing.

Among the key concepts in this theoretical framework, social solidarity has been chosen to further explain how participation in community activities influences socioeconomic well-being. Social solidarity refers to the sense of unity, belonging, and mutual interdependence that connects members of a community. For instance, in Adamawa state, there are numerous agricultural cooperatives, where members collaborate on farming, trading, skills acquisition and resource sharing, strengthening economic cooperation and mutual support within communities (Tribuneonline, 2025). These cooperative activities contribute to poverty reduction, job creation, and social cohesion by fostering shared responsibility for collective economic goals. Durkheim argued that the stability and functioning of any society rely on the level of cohesion among its members. In this context, participating in community activities strengthens social bonds, builds trust, and promotes cooperation among individuals. Through shared involvement in communal activities such as volunteering, local associations, and cooperative initiatives, individuals develop a collective sense of responsibility and interdependence that enhances social cohesion.

Furthermore, increased participation in community activities bolsters the development of social capital, which offers individuals access to shared resources, information, and support networks that enhance socioeconomic well-being. Durkheim's concept of solidarity suggests that individual welfare is inherently connected to collective welfare; therefore, communities with strong social ties are more likely to experience economic resilience, reduced social isolation, and greater collective prosperity.

From a Durkheimian perspective, social solidarity is the primary concept explaining how community participation relates to socioeconomic well-being. By fostering cooperation, mutual trust, and a shared sense of purpose, community involvement maintains social order and promotes individual growth, thereby supporting overall societal stability and development.

Literature review

Participation in community activities is the process by which the individuals within the community assume responsibility for their own welfare and develop a capacity to contribute to themselves and the community (Mwiru, 2015). This is also an active process whereby the beneficiaries of the development influence its direction and execution (Walter & Juma, 2025, Marsden, 1987). In the international development discourse community participation is commonly referred to as the involvement of local people in the decision-making process and evaluation of development projects (Marsland, 2006). Citizen's participation is needed in order to improve the socioeconomic and cultural conditions of the community (OECD, 2024). Overall, these definitions share a common emphasis on community participation as an active and empowering process through which individuals assume responsibility, influence decision-making, exercise local ownership, and collectively contribute to improved socioeconomic well-being.

Many developing countries, including Nigeria, have yet to embrace the idea of citizen participation in community activities due to a top-down approach to development (Fakere & Ayoola, 2018). Hickey and King (2016) affirmed this, stating that in many sub-Saharan African countries, the ongoing practice of a political system based on personal loyalty rather than institutional rules has constrained development progress. Citizens' participation in community activities as a democratic process of development is hampered by the system of government (Fakere & Ayoola, 2018). At this stage of non-participation, socioeconomic well-being is unlikely to be achieved, as citizens are confined to a passive role, expected to adhere to the decisions of

those in authority rather than contribute meaningfully to the decision-making process. By contrast, non-participatory development models are largely top-down and often result in weaker local ownership and less sustainable socioeconomic outcomes than participatory approaches

Research has recognized the significance of community participation in promoting well-being. Citizens' involvement is widely regarded as a form of community empowerment that contributes to improved socioeconomic conditions (Mwiru, 2015). Participation enables community members to contribute ideas, share resources, and collaborate in decision-making processes that influence local development. Similarly, Norman (2000) emphasizes that communities that actively engage their citizens in development initiatives tend to achieve more sustainable and inclusive socioeconomic outcomes. While Mwiru (2015) highlights participation as a mechanism for empowerment, Norman (2000) focuses on its role in fostering collaborative efforts that enhance community development. Together, these perspectives suggest that citizen participation strengthens community capacity and contributes to improved socioeconomic well-being. Consequently, citizens' participation in community activities is considered essential for community success in improving overall socioeconomic well-being. Supporting this view, Karki (2024) found that active community participation is associated with higher income opportunities and a greater likelihood of being non-poor, as members gain access to economic opportunities, training, and collective action that enhance livelihoods

The lack of citizens' participation in community projects has been linked to stagnation in community development, which in turn hampers improvements in socioeconomic well-being in Nigeria (Ojo & Oko, 2021). The historical account explaining why people do not participate as much in community projects is that the pre-colonial period was inclusive of the people; during that time, community members were known to actively engage in solving communal issues collectively. Activities such as building the kings' palaces, repairing bridges, roads, and markets, and providing security were carried out communally. During this period, it was observed that community members did not abandon community projects because their participation and cooperation were driven by a sense of success. Citizens' participation in the design and implementation of transformational programmes is currently lacking, with some attributing this to culture; others believe that the interest of community members in engaging with community issues has been weakened by colonial administration and the modern systems of government (Akanle, 2013). Consequently, the development of modern communities is perceived as solely the responsibility of the government, with little citizen involvement. As a result, projects initiated by the government without citizen participation have been abandoned or left incomplete. This lack of involvement has fostered an environment conducive to corruption and self-interest, depriving communities of the vital infrastructure and social amenities needed to support the well-being of their members (Ojo & Oko, 2021).

In Adamawa State, citizens' participation in socioeconomic and community activities has been constrained by several structural and sociocultural factors. According to Wazakari and Yakubu (2024), women in Adamawa State, Nigeria, have historically been excluded from governance and community decision-making processes due to the region's traditional and male-dominated social structure. As a result, women's involvement in social, economic, political, and electoral activities remains limited (Ntasiri et al., 2024). This exclusion has broader implications for community development, as reduced participation by women can limit the diversity of ideas, labour contributions, and collaborative efforts necessary for improving community socioeconomic well-being. Furthermore, the declaration of a state of emergency in May 2013 following the activities of Boko Haram displaced approximately 136,000 people and disrupted community

structures and livelihoods. Such displacement and insecurity weaken social networks and reduce opportunities for community engagement, thereby further constraining participation and its potential contribution to socioeconomic well-being.

Methodology

Study approach and design

The study employed a quantitative research approach, which allows generalization of findings from the sample to the larger population (Neuman, 2006; Creswell, 2003). A cross-sectional and correlational design was adopted. The cross-sectional design enabled data collection at a single point in time, while the correlational design allowed the examination of relationships between variables and differences between groups (Neuman, 2006; Creswell, 2003). This combination is particularly suitable for the present study, as it facilitates analysis of how citizens' participation in community activities relates to socioeconomic well-being, addressing the study's research questions efficiently while saving time and resources.

Location

The study was conducted in Adamawa State, Nigeria. Adamawa State is situated in the northeastern geopolitical zone, which comprises six states: Adamawa, Bauchi, Borno, Gombe, Taraba, and Yobe. Northeast Nigeria is a suitable location for the present study because the region is known for recording a low level of socioeconomic well-being in Nigeria compared to other geopolitical zones (National Bureau of Statistics, 2012; Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2017; World Bank, 2017; Saidu, 2022) and often experiences low participation in community development discourse and practices (Oyewo, 2024). Out of the six states that make up the northeastern part of Nigeria, Adamawa State was randomly selected as the study location. The study locations were selected randomly by writing all possible locations on paper, placing them in a bowl, and drawing two locations by chance. After randomly selecting Adamawa state, the same procedure was followed to get the two Local governments where data was collected for the study. However, these selected local governments are also believed to possess characteristics of interest (citizens of different classes, educational background, religion, and age).

Operationalisation and measurement of variables

a) Socioeconomic well-being

This is defined as a composite measure that reflects an individual's or community's status based on quantifiable indicators, such as income level, education attainment, employment status, access to healthcare, housing quality, and social inclusion.

The researcher measured socioeconomic well-being with five (5) items adapted from Montano (2021). The researcher presented questions about individual socioeconomic well-being (occupation, satisfaction with life, satisfaction with health) to the respondents. While items 4 and 5 were coded on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = completely unsatisfied, 2 = unsatisfied, 3 = somewhat unsatisfied, 4 = neutral, 5 = somewhat satisfied, 6 = satisfied, 7 = completely satisfied), the

researcher coded the first 3 items on a 7-point scale that suits each of the questions. Examples of the items are:

- i. Which of the listed job categories match your current occupation?
- ii. How satisfied are you at present with your life, all things considered?
- iii. How satisfied are you with your health?

b) Participation

Participation in community activities is the social, economic, or cultural engagement of people in processes, decisions, or implementation of policies that affect their lives or the community.

The study measured participation with eight (8) items adapted from Van Brakel et al. (2006b). The researcher asked the respondent about their involvement in community activities that pertain to their well-being. The items were coded on a 7-point Likert scale. (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat disagree, 4 = neutral, 5 = somewhat agree, 6 = agree, 7 = strongly agree). Examples of the items are:

- i. I do take as much part in casual recreational/social activities as my peers do in community meetings.
- ii. I am as active as my peers are in religious/community affairs.
- iii. I have the same respect in the community as my peers.
- iv. My opinion counts in discussions that concern the well-being of my community.

The researcher measured the main study constructs, which are socioeconomic well-being, and participation in community activities on a seven (7) point Likert scale with varying numbers of items. While Participation in community activities was initially developed on a 5-point Likert scale, socioeconomic well-being was developed on a 10-point Likert scale. However, the study employed 7-point Likert scales to reduce the likelihood of obtaining common responses from the respondents. Interestingly, a 7-point Likert scale increases variance in a dataset (Chinedu et al., 2021) and gives more accurate measures of respondents' true evaluation (Finstad, 2010). The socioeconomic well-being measure was reduced from a 10-point to a 7-point Likert scale because the original 10-point scale can overwhelm respondents, especially in populations such as Adamawa State, Nigeria, with low literacy levels. As a result of that, a 7-point scale was adopted because it provides optimal response discrimination while minimizing cognitive burden. Unlike 10-point scale, which may encourage clustering around ambiguous middle values, the 7-point format offers a clearly defined midpoint and symmetrical response structure, thereby reducing excessive central tendency bias and enhancing measurement reliability.

Population, sampling and data collection

The study population was the entire population of Adamawa State, Nigeria. According to the National Bureau of Statistics (2016), the state's estimated population is 4.25 million. While Yola North has a population of 307,900, Yola South has 302,500 people. Based on this population, the researcher utilised a systematic process called sampling to gather the views of a section.

The sampling technique used in the study was a proportionate stratified sampling method. This is simply a combination of two sampling approaches (proportional and stratified). Proportional sampling is a sampling approach that enables a researcher to select an equal proportion of his/her study subjects in conformity with the population of each subgroup. On the

other hand, stratified sampling is a technique that requires a researcher to divide his/her study subjects into subgroups called strata based on a common characteristic (e.g., gender, educational level, residential location, or race) among them, and once the population is divided into strata, each stratum is randomly sampled using another probability sampling method (Kumar, 2011). A proportionate stratified sampling technique is a sampling approach in which the sample size for each stratum is directly proportional to the entire population of that stratum, implying that each stratum sample has the same sampling fraction. The proportionate stratified sampling technique is apt for this study because it ensures that the sample accurately reflects the population's diversity and proportions, thereby making the findings more generalizable.

The study sample size was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sample size calculation formula $S = \frac{X^2 NP}{(1-P)d^2(N-1) + X^2P(1-P)}$. Based on this formula and proportion sampling of the two (2) local governments, the study should have involved 385 residents of Yola South and Yola North LGAs, Adamawa State, Nigeria. To get the total number of the population that should be involved in the study based on proportional sampling of the two local governments; the total population of Yola North 307,900 was added together with that of Yola South 302,500 to get the total population of 610,400. To get the total of residents that should be involved in each local government, the population of each local government was divided by the total population of the two local governments:

- i. Yola North $307,900/610,400= 194$
- ii. Yola South $302,500/610,400=191$

However, researchers usually add 10% to the sample size to compensate for individuals who could not answer all the questions in the questionnaire (Singh & Masuku, 2013). Therefore, 10% of 385 will be 38, making 423 the total number of questionnaires used for the study.

The researcher and the survey assistants visited the districts on different days during community gatherings. At the scene, the surveyors collected data from residents in alternating rows (e.g., collecting data from row 1, skipping residents in row 2, and so on). Afterwards, 376 valid responses, representing about 89% of the sample size, were received. It should be noted that collecting data during community gatherings may introduce sampling bias, since attendees may differ systematically from non-attendees in ways that affect their participation and socioeconomic outcomes.

Reliability and normality tests

The Cronbach's alpha for the study's main variables ranged from .90 to .91. According to Hair et al. (2010), an alpha value of .70 is sufficient for research purposes. Based on the above, the study instruments are reliable. Regarding the distribution of the dataset, descriptive findings from exploratory data analysis (EDA) were used to assess the Univariate normality of the data distribution. Data that are approximately normally distributed should have skewness and kurtosis values within ± 2.0 cutoff points (Khan, 2015; George & Mallery, 2010). Therefore, the skewness and kurtosis of the study variables fall within acceptable limits, as demonstrated in Table 1. Consequently, the criteria for multivariate normality have been met. With mean scores ranging from 3.662 to 3.791.

Table 1. Reliability coefficients and EDA descriptive values

Variable s	Cronbach alpha	Skewness	SE	Kurtosis	SE	Mean	SD
SECWB	0.914	-.364	.126	-.424	.251	3.791	1.152
PTCPTN	0.902	-.261	.126	-.823	.251	3.662	1.176

Note: SE= Standard error; SD= Standard deviation

Data analysis

The study used the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics were employed in the data analysis. Structural equation modelling (SEM) was also employed to determine the influences of participation on socioeconomic well-being among residents of Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study utilised frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation to describe the sample's background. Additionally, the study employed frequency and percentage to assess the levels of participation in community activities and socioeconomic well-being among residents of Adamawa State.

Results and discussions

Respondents characteristics

The respondent's background information has been summarised in Table 2. The data showed that just over half of the respondents are male (50.3%), while 49.7% are female. The data revealed that the largest proportion of Adamawa residents who participated in the study was between 29 and 39 years old, making up 36.4% of the sample (376). This was followed by the 40-to-50-year age group, accounting for 28.7%, and the 18-to-28-year age group, comprising 19.7%. The smallest age group was 51 to 60 years, representing 15.2%.

These demographic characteristics may influence participation in community activities and socioeconomic well-being, as younger and middle-aged adults are often more active in social and economic initiatives, while gender dynamics may affect access to resources, decision-making, and economic opportunities within the community. Also, the dominance of the 29–39 age group likely reflects the state's demographic structure, as young-to-middle adults are generally more active, economically productive, and engaged in community activities, making them more likely to participate in research.

Furthermore, 70.5% of the respondents achieved a tertiary education level. Around 18.6% had completed secondary education, while 3.5% had attained primary education, and 7.4% had never attended school. This indicates that over 90% of the respondents are literate, which means they can read and write.

Regarding marital status, respondents were 52.4% married, 43.6% single, and 4% others, which include separated individuals, divorcees, widows/widowers, and those who do not marry for religious reasons. The marital status of the respondents shows that slightly more than half of them were married.

The estimated monthly income of the respondents was calculated in Nigerian currency, which is the Naira (#). The respondents' monthly income was grouped into five categories: less than or equal to the minimum wage, which is #70,000; slightly above the minimum wage, ranging from #70,100 to #140,100; then from #140,200 to #210,200; followed by #210,300 to #280,300; and finally, more than #280,300. Over 75% of the respondents earned a monthly income of ≤#70,000. About 15.7% of the respondents earned between #70,100 and #140,100 each month. Surprisingly, only 2.1% earned #280,300 or more monthly, indicating that few residents of Adamawa State achieve this level. Even more unexpectedly, just 1.1% of respondents received between #210,300 and #280,300 as their monthly income. The mean income was #62,577 with a standard deviation of #66,012, showing that many Adamawa State residents earn less than the national minimum wage of #70,000 per month. It should be noted that the maximum reported income (₦521,000) is substantially higher than the mean; however, fewer than 2% of respondents earn at this level. These extreme values likely reflect outliers, such as business owners or individuals with multiple income sources, and contribute to the high standard deviation. Overall, the data indicate wide income disparities and generally low socioeconomic status among residents of Adamawa State.

Table 2. Respondent demography

Variables	n	%	Max	Min	Mean	SD
Gender						
Male	189	50.3				
Female	187	49.7				
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Age (in years)			60	18	37.18	10.49
18 to 28	74	19.7				
29 to 39	137	36.4				
40 to 50	108	28.7				
51 to 60	57	15.2				
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Educational level						
Never attend school	28	7.4				
Primary school	13	3.5				
Secondary school	70	18.6				
Tertiary institution	265	70.5				
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Marital status						
Single	164	43.6				
Married	197	52.4				
Others	15	4				
<hr/>						
Monthly income			521,000	8,000	62,577	66,012
<Minimum wage (#70,000)	283	75.3				
70,100 to 140,100	59	15.7				
140,200 to 210,200	22	5.8				
210,300 to 280,300	4	1.1				
More than 280,300	8	2.1				

Note: # = Naira (Nigerian local currency)

Assessment of the levels of socioeconomic well-being and participation in community activities of Adamawa state residents

As shown in Table 3, nearly 56% of the sample exhibited low socioeconomic well-being. This indicates that more than half of the residents of Adamawa State experienced low socioeconomic well-being. This result aligns with existing findings on the socioeconomic well-being of residents of Adamawa State. For instance, Saidu (2022) found low socioeconomic well-being in Adamawa State, consistent with previous studies that have employed similar scoring ranges for categorising participation (Norman, 2000). Overall, slightly more than half of the respondents exhibited lower levels of socioeconomic well-being, whereas a substantial proportion demonstrated higher engagement.

As shown in Table 3, nearly 56% of the sample exhibited low socioeconomic well-being, indicating that more than half of the residents of Adamawa State experience limited socioeconomic advantages. In practical terms, this suggests that many residents may struggle to meet basic needs, access education and healthcare, or participate fully in economic and community activities. This finding is consistent with previous studies; for example, Saidu (2022) also reported low levels of socioeconomic well-being among residents of Adamawa State.

Table 3. Levels of socioeconomic well-being (n=376)

Level	Score range	N	%
Low	1 – 4	209	55.6
High	4.1 – 7	167	44.4
Total		376	100

The levels of participation, as shown in Table 4, reveal that more than half (59%) of the samples exhibited low participation, while 41% showed high participation. This indicates that participation in community activities among residents of Adamawa State, Nigeria, is generally low. This finding is supported by Jerry et al. (2018).

Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents' scores on participation in community activities of the 376 respondents, 222 (59%) scored in the low category (1–4), while 154 (41%) scored in the high category (4.1–7). The cut-off points were based on the midpoint of the measurement scale, consistent with approaches used in prior studies to categorise participation levels (e.g., Norman, 2000). This indicates that a majority of residents exhibit lower levels of participation, suggesting limited engagement in community activities, which may affect their access to resources and opportunities that enhance socioeconomic well-being.

It is noted that, more than half of the respondents (59%) exhibited low participation in community activities, while 41% demonstrated high participation. This suggests that overall engagement in community activities among residents of Adamawa State, Nigeria, is generally low. Low participation may be influenced by factors such as traditional gender roles, limited awareness of community initiatives, economic constraints, and disruptions caused by security challenges in the region (Jerry et al., 2018; Wazakari & Yakubu, 2024). In practical terms, low participation implies that many residents may not be actively involved in cooperative societies, local decision-making, or collective efforts that provide access to resources, training, and economic opportunities. These findings are consistent with previous studies reporting limited community engagement in similar contexts.

Table 4. Levels of participation (n=376)

Level	Score range	N	%
Low	1 – 4	222	59
High	4.1 – 7	154	41
Total		376	100

To determine the influences of participation in community activities on socioeconomic well-being in Adamawa State, Nigeria

As shown in Table 5, the influence of participation in community activities on socioeconomic well-being was examined. Participation in community activities ($\beta = .20, p = .001$) has a significant positive impact on socioeconomic well-being. Consequently, participation in community activities significantly affects socioeconomic well-being among residents of Adamawa State, Nigeria.

The findings also correspond with those of Shetunyenga (2024), who found that participation in community activities significantly impacts socioeconomic well-being in Namibia. Through engagement, the community is empowered, and its members are given a voice in their future development, resulting in higher levels of socioeconomic well-being (Shetunyenga, 2024; Abdul Razak et al., 2025; Nazuri, et al., 2025). This outcome also supports Judith and Bassey's (2018) study in Cross River State, Nigeria, which showed that residents' participation in the community notably influences their socioeconomic well-being and improves their literacy.

Admittedly, when the community is allowed to participate, it benefits by enhancing their socioeconomic well-being. Participation in community activities is one form of a local deliberation approach and a collective process where a local community can take control of its own future, a practice proven to improve socioeconomic conditions. This also indicates that, in development efforts, the involvement of those who will benefit from the development must not be overlooked. Participation in community activities, which relates to the bottom-up approach to development, encourages the community that will benefit from such projects to take part. When a development approach ignores residents, the project is likely to fail (Kaiser, 2020). Therefore, the current evidence points to the participatory development method as an effective path to success.

One key pathway through which participation in community activities enhances socioeconomic well-being among residents of Adamawa State, Nigeria, is the development and use of social capital. Membership in local groups and networks allows rural households to access vital resources such as information, credit, labour, and emotional support Oyesola et al. (2023).

Given this, the study supports existing theory and the proposed model. From a functionalist perspective, as advanced by Émile Durkheim, participation in community activities illustrates how social roles, norms, and interactions contribute to social stability and cohesion (Durkheim, 1893). Accordingly, the findings extend structural functionalism by demonstrating that, despite the social and economic complexities in Adamawa State, active participation in community activities fosters social integration, collective responsibility, and community stability. This highlights the importance of community engagement in sustaining the functioning and development of society.

Table 5. Summarised influences of participation on socioeconomic well-being

Variable	B	SE	Beta	CR	P
Participation → Socioeconomic Well-being	.232	.072	.196	3.229	.001

Note: B = Unstandardized beta; SE = Standard error; CR = Critical ratio; P = Probability value; ***= $P < .001$

Conclusion

The study results indicate that involvement in community activities is vital for socioeconomic well-being in Adamawa State, Nigeria, with increased participation leading to improved socioeconomic conditions, the authors concluded that the accumulation of social capital or group participation is a strategy to overcome or cope with poverty.

Also, the contrast between relatively low participation levels and the strong positive impact of participation indicates that expanding community engagement could substantially improve socioeconomic outcomes. This finding implies that policymakers and community leaders in Adamawa State should prioritize strategies that encourage broader participation in community activities, particularly through cooperative societies, by promoting awareness, strengthening local institutions, and reducing barriers to involvement. This supports the idea that participation acts as a coping mechanism and a livelihood-enhancing strategy, enabling individuals and families to utilise social relationships to strengthen their economic and emotional resilience.

The study recommends that future research consider several points. Firstly, additional investigations should employ mixed methods to gain deeper insights into how Participation influences Socioeconomic Well-being. Furthermore, while the study found that participation in community activities remains a significant factor in Socioeconomic Well-being, its impact, whether positive or negative, may depend on other variables; therefore, it is advisable to examine factors such as participants' gender, education, or income level. Additionally, future studies should review a broad range of existing literature to gather comprehensive information on both theoretical and practical aspects of the phenomenon. The study also suggests that, instead of solely relying on objective measures of Socioeconomic Well-being, such as education, occupation, and income, the subjective perception of one's social status, how individuals view their position relative to society, should also be taken into account for a better understanding of these concepts.

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