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Abstract

Purpose: This study appraised the impact of the involvement of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in community development in three selected Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Oyo State, Nigeria. It also compared the corps members' assessment of the impact of the NYSC community development services to that of the community members; and evaluated the level of involvement of the community in the planning and implementation of community development services of the NYSC.

Methodology: This study was a cross-sectional survey and utilised both qualitative and quantitative methods to gather its primary data. The selected study area included Ogbomoso North, Ido and Akinyele Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Oyo State, Nigeria. A total of 450 community members, 15 community leaders, and 150 serving NYSC corps members were interviewed through questionnaires and key informant interviews. Data analysis was done using IBM/SPSS software, version 25.0.

Findings: Data obtained showed that 74.8% of the community members agreed that the development of their respective LGAs have been enhanced by the activities of the various NYSC Community Development Service (CDS) groups; 80% agreed that they could give clear instances where NYSC

have contributed to community development in their various LGAs. The most impactful community development activity of the NYSC was Education (79.7%), whilst Environment [Clean water and sanitation] (73.4%) and Healthcare (68.5%) were the second and third, respectively. There was a very weak negative correlation between the community development service preference of the community members and that of the NYSC corps members ($r = -.074$, $p > .05$). In terms of community participation, 60.8% of the community members agreed that the NYSC involves the community in the planning of their community development activities, and 61.6% agreed that the NYSC involves the community in the implementation. The discovered challenges confronting the operation of the NYSC CDS as a tool for community development are inadequate finance; corps members' prioritisation of infrastructure projects over service-based projects; and corps members lack of motivation or enthusiasm in CDS activities.

Recommendations: The NYSC through its CDS activities has positive impacts in the development of the communities in Oyo state, Nigeria. The NYSC community development services should therefore be sustained nationwide by the Nigerian government.

Keywords: *Community Development, Nigeria, National Youth Service Corps.*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The 2021 World Economic Situation and Prospects (WESP) classifies all countries of the world into one of three broad categories: Developed economies, Economies in transition and Developing economies. Nigeria has been classified as a Developing economy (The United Nations, 2022). Although there are three spheres of government in Nigeria: Federal, State, and Local government; and having 36 States and a Federal Capital Territory, and 774 Local Government Areas (Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 1999), Nigeria despite being one of the largest economies in Africa, have been unable to attain full economic development after gaining independence from Great Britain in 1960. Majority of its local government areas are still classified as rural whilst others are urban. In order to attain national development, several approaches have been recommended by scholars. Community Development approach is one of such approaches at the heart of the strive of all rural local government areas specifically and the Nigerian nation generally, to become a developed economy.

The concept of Community Development transcends many definitions. The United Nations defines Community Development as "a process where community participants, settlers, or citizens come together to take shared or communal action and make or generate solutions to collective challenges or difficulties (UNTERM, 2022). Kenny (2007) described Community Development as a holistic approach grounded in principles of empowerment, human rights, inclusion, social justice, self-determination and collective action. Community Development has also been viewed as a process for the marginalized and excluded to gain self-confidence in joining others and to contribute in activities to change their situation and tackle the issues that face their community (CPA, 2000). Amal, Natsir and Suswati (2019) described Community Development as the means of making development possible at the level of a community whereby the dwellers themselves "get into the skin" of the development. Community Development has also been described as a process of community activities planned and organized in order to increase the standard of living in a social, cultural and spiritual setting through creativities and active participation of the individuals in the community with minimum help from outside (Ismail, 1999).

In all the above definitions, the underlying common theme is the active participations of individuals in the provision of solutions to identified gaps and problems within an area or community. Although not specifically mentioned in these definitions, some important gaps and problems relevant to attaining economic development of a nation which will subsequently form the fulcrum of this research are Healthcare, Education, Infrastructure development (such as road construction, borehole drilling, etc.), Culture and tradition, Security /Law and order maintenance, Environment (Clean water, sanitation.), Transportation and road safety, Food and agriculture, Emergency and disaster management, Charity and volunteer services, and Sports and recreation.

A remarkable but often overlooked approach to Community Development in Nigeria is the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC). Established almost fifty years ago, originally as a contraption to facilitating national reconciliation, reintegration and unity shortly after the civil war from 1967 to 1970, its scope has over the years increased to other areas very relevant in

national development (Obadare, 2005; Arigbo, Onuekwusi and Adeogun, 2019). The National Youth Service Scheme (NYSC) was created in 1973 by the Nigerian government headed by General Yakubu Gowon as an organization set up to involve the country's graduates (universities and later polytechnics) in the development of the country by engaging the youths/ graduates in a one-year mandatory selfless services to their country (Olowookere, Ayangbekun, and Oluwasola, 2019). Interestingly, the NYSC has as one of its four cardinal programme phases, a Community Development Service (Abdullahi et al., 2016; NYSC Official website, 2022). The CDS is aimed at harnessing the skills, creativity and innovation of corps members, to be used in the development of communities which they are posted to. Corps members are expected to identify the needs of their host communities and mobilize members of their host communities to embark on developmental projects. Through this programme, many corps members have in the past been able to provide healthcare, education, infrastructure development (such as road construction, borehole drilling, etc.), transportation and road safety, food and agriculture, and many other services relevant in community development (Lamidi, 2017; National Youth Service Corps Handbook, 2014).

Notwithstanding, over the years, there have been calls from different quarters for the review, amendment or even scrapping of the NYSC scheme (Obadare, 2005; Oluwalogbon, 2019). This is despite a number of studies that have shown numerous gains and positive roles the NYSC scheme have played in line with its objectives, and in the area of community development (Arigbo et al., 2019; Lamidi, 2017). This is probably because over the years, sufficient studies have not effectively highlighted the direct roles the NYSC concept, for instance the CDS groups, have had in community development.

This study therefore sought to appraise the involvement of the NYSC in community development, using selected Local Government Areas in Oyo State, Nigeria.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Population of Study

This study was a cross-sectional study. Data was collected using mixed methods. The Qualitative approach included Key-Informant Interviews of NYSC officials in Ido, Ogbomoso North and Akinyele LGAs of Oyo State, Nigeria; whilst the Quantitative approach involved the administration of questionnaires to 150 NYSC corps members currently serving in the selected LGAs; 30 community leaders and 450 randomly selected community members.

Research Instruments and Administration

For the Key-Informant Interviews, Key-Informant Interview Guide is as shown in Appendix A. The Key Informant Interview Consent form is shown in Appendix B.

For the interviews for the community members and currently serving NYSC members in the selected LGAs, the Questionnaires are attached as Appendices C, D, E, F and G. All the questionnaires except those to be filled by the corps members (Appendix G) had their English version translated to Yoruba language and then the same questionnaires were replicated for the two other LGAs.

Approval for the Study

Approval for the research was gotten from the National Open University of Nigeria. Permission to collect the data for the research was also gotten from the NYSC Oyo state Coordinator.

3.0 FINDINGS

The data was for both the quantitative and qualitative interviews were gathered within the period of September – November, 2022 from the three local government areas of Ogbomosho North, Akinyele and Ido, in Oyo state, Nigeria.

Presented below are the results from the Questionnaires administered to the Community members, the Community leaders, the serving NYSC members; and the Key Informant Interviews of the Local Government Inspectors from the three selected Local Government Areas of Ogbomosho North, Ido and Akinyele of Oyo state, Nigeria

Quantitative Data Analysis- Results from Questionnaires

Table 1: Demographic Information of Community Members from the 3 Selected LGAs

Demography	Freq.	%
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	207	46.5
Female	237	53.3
Missing System	6	-
Total	450	100.0
<i>Status</i>		
Indigent	215	49.0
Resident	186	42.4
Transit	38	8.7
Missing System	11	-
Total	450	100.0
<i>Stay in the community</i>		
Less than 1 year	79	18.5
1-10 years	157	36.7
More than 10 years	192	44.9
Missing System	22	-
Total	450	100.0
<i>Religion</i>		
Christianity	255	59.6
Islam	149	34.8
Others	24	5.6
Missing System	21	-
Total	450	100.0

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

Table 1 above shows the demographic information of all the community members from the three selected LGAs. A total of 450 community members were administered the questionnaires (150 members per LGA). Of the community members administered questionnaires, 46.5% of the respondents were male while 53.3% of the respondents were female. The distribution of the respondents based on their community status are: 49.0% were indigent, 42.2% were resident while 8.7% were in transit. The distribution based on the numbers of years spent by the individuals in the community are: 18.5% had lived less than 1 year, 36.7% has lived between 1-10 years, while 44.9% has lived more than 10 years in the community. Based on their religion, 59.4% were Christians, 34.7% were Muslims, and 5.6% practised other religions.

Table 2a: Descriptive Statistic of the Community Members Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean	St. Dev
1	I have heard of and know about NYSC	287 (64.1%)	146 (32.6%)	6 (1.3%)	1 (0.2%)	8 (1.8%)	4.56	.707
2	The LGA is a developed area	137 (30.7%)	247 (55.4%)	33 (7.4%)	16 (3.6%)	13 (2.9%)	4.07	.885
3	The development of the LGAs communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC groups	118 (26.5%)	215 (48.3%)	68 (15.3%)	31 (7.0%)	13 (2.9%)	3.88	.973
4	I can give clear instances where NYSC have contributed to community development in the LGA	100 (22.4%)	217 (48.5%)	78 (17.4%)	30 (6.7%)	21 (4.7%)	3.83	1.64
5	NYSC should be stopped in the LGA	38 (8.6%)	52 (11.7%)	114 (25.7%)	49 (11.1%)	190 (42.9%)	2.32	1.35

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

Table 2a above shows the response of the community members of the three selected LGAs. Majority (96.7%) agreed that they have heard of and know about NYSC ($x = 4.56$); majority (86.1%) agreed that the LGAs is a developed area ($x = 4.07$); majority (74.8%) agreed that the development of the LGAs communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC groups ($x = 3.38$); majority (70.9%) agreed that they can give clear instances where NYSC have contributed to community development in the LGAs ($x = 3.38$); and majority (54%) disagreed that NYSC should be stopped in the LGAs ($x = 2.32$).

Table 2b: Descriptive Statistic of the Community Members Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

6	NYSC has contributed in the development of education in the LGA	170 (38.4%)	183 (41.3%)	61 (13.8%)	18 (4.0%)	11 (2.5%)	4.09	.949
7	NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in the LGA	103 (22.9%)	199 (44.5%)	90 (20.1%)	37 (8.3%)	18 (4.0%)	3.74	1.03
8	NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in the LGA	108 (24.1%)	197 (43.9%)	87 (19.4%)	34 (7.6%)	23 (5.1%)	3.74	1.06
9	NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in the LGA	121 (27.0%)	186 (41.5%)	79 (17.6%)	38 (8.5%)	24 (5.4%)	3.76	1.10
10	NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order, and security in the LGA	93 (20.8%)	189 (42.3%)	100 (22.4%)	41 (9.2%)	24 (5.4%)	3.63	1.07
11	NYSC has contributed in development of the environment including clean water and sanitation in the LGA	135 (30.1%)	195 (43.3%)	75 (16.7%)	26 (5.8%)	18 (4.0%)	3.89	1.02
12	NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in the LGA	99 (22.1%)	197 (44.0%)	89 (19.9%)	41 (9.2%)	22 (4.9%)	3.69	1.06
13	NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in the LGA	107 (23.9%)	150 (33.6%)	101 (22.6%)	56 (12.5%)	32 (7.2%)	3.66	2.66
14	NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in the LGA	98 (21.9%)	150 (33.5%)	110 (24.6%)	60 (13.4%)	30 (6.7%)	3.50	1.16
15	NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in the LGA	114 (25.6%)	166 (37.2%)	86 (19.3%)	50 (11.2%)	30 (6.7%)	3.63	1.17

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

Table 2c: Descriptive Statistic of the Community Members Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

16	NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development in the LGA (such as roads, borehole, etc)	112 (25.1%)	170 (38.1%)	91 (20.4%)	36 (8.1%)	37 (8.3%)	3.63	1.18
17	I have benefited from the NYSC activities in my community in one way or the other	130 (29.3%)	169 (38.1%)	71 (16.0%)	47 (10.6%)	27 (6.1%)	3.73	1.16
18	The NYSC involves the community members in the planning of their community development activities	112 (25.1%)	159 (35.7%)	112 (25.1%)	38 (8.5%)	25 (5.6%)	3.66	1.11
19	The NYSC involves the community members in the implementation of their community development activities	112 (25.2%)	162 (36.4%)	105 (23.6%)	39 (8.8%)	27 (6.1%)	3.65	1.27
20	We the members of LGA are receptive and friendly to NYSC	190 (42.6%)	161 (36.1%)	53 (11.9%)	18 (4.0%)	24 (5.4%)	4.06	1.09
Weighted Average = 3.736; Mean = 2.50								

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

From Tables 2b and 2c above, majority (79.7%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of education in the LGAs ($x= 4.09$); majority (67.4%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in the LGAs ($x=3.74$); majority (68%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in the LGAs ($x= 3.74$); majority (68.5%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in the LGAs ($x= 3.26$); majority (63.1%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order and security in the LGAs ($x= 3.36$); majority (73.4%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of the environment including clean water and sanitation in the LGAs ($x= 3.89$); majority (66.1%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in the LGAs ($x= 3.69$); majority (57.5%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in the LGAs ($x= 3.66$); majority (55.4%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in the LGAs ($x= 3.50$); majority (62.8%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in the LGAs ($x= 3.63$); majority (63.2%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development (such as roads, borehole, etc) in the LGAs ($x= 3.63$); majority (67.4%) agreed that they have benefited from the NYSC activities in the community in one way or the other ($x= 3.73$); majority (60.8%) agreed that NYSC involves the community members in the planning of their community development activities ($x= 3.66$); majority (61.6%) agreed

that the NYSC involves the community members in the implementation of their community development activities ($x= 3.65$); majority (78.7%) agreed that the members of LGAs are receptive and friendly to NYSC ($x= 4.06$). In conclusion, with the weighted average mean of 3.736, it can be deduced that the NYSC community development activities were assessed positively by the community members.

Table 3a: Descriptive Statistic of the Community Leaders’ Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	x	St. Dev
1	I have heard of and know about NYSC	3 (20.0%)	12 (80.0%)	-	-	-	4.20	.414
2	LGA is a developed area	9 (60.0%)	6 (40.0%)	-	-	-	4.60	.507
3	The development of the LGA communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC groups	6 (40%)	9 (60.0%)	-	-	-	4.40	.507
4	I can give clear instances where NYSC have contributed to community development in the LGA	6 (40.0%)	6 (40.0%)	3 (20.0%)	-	-	4.00	1.13
5	NYSC should be stopped in the LGA			3 (20.0%)	-	12 (80.0%)	2.60	1.24

Source: *Fieldwork October, 2022*

Table 3a shows the response of the community leaders of the three selected LGAs. Majority (100%) agreed that they have heard of and know about NYSC ($x= 4.56$); majority (100%) agreed that the LGAs is a developed area ($x= 4.07$); majority (100%) agreed that the development of the LGAs communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC groups ($x= 3.38$); majority (80%) agreed that they can give clear instances where NYSC have contributed to community development in the LGAs ($x= 3.38$); and majority (80%) disagreed that NYSC should be stopped in the LGAs ($x= 2.32$).

Table 3b: Descriptive Statistic of the Community Leaders’ Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

6	NYSC has contributed in development of education in the LGA	9 (60.0%)	6 (40.0%)	-	-	-	4.60	.507
7	NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in the LGA	6 (40.0%)	9 (60.0%)	-	-	-	4.40	.507
8	NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in the LGA	6 (40.0%)	9 (60.0%)	-	-	-	4.40	.507
9	NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in the LGA	9 (60.0%)	6 (40.0%)	-	-	-	4.60	.507
10	NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order and security in the LGA	6 (40.0%)	9 (60.0%)	-	-	-	4.40	.507
11	NYSC has contributed in development of the environment including clean water and sanitation in the LGA	6 (40.0%)	9 (60.0%)	-	-	-	4.40	.507
12	NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in the LGA	15 (100.0%)	-	-	-	-	4.00	.000
13	NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in the LGA	-	12 (80.0%)	3 (20.0%)	-	-	3.80	.414
14	NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in the LGA	6 (40.0%)	9 (60.0%)	-	-	-	4.40	.507
15	NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in the LGA	15 (100.0%)	-	-	-	-	4.00	.000
16	NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development in the LGA (such as roads, borehole, etc.)	3 (20.0%)	12 (80.0%)	-	-	-	4.20	.414

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

Table 3c: Descriptive Statistic of the Community Leaders’ Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

17	I have benefited from the NYSC activities in my community in one way or the other	-	15 (100.0%)	-	-	-	4.00	.000
18	The NYSC involves the community members in the planning of their community development activities	6 (40.0%)	9 (60.0%)	-	-	-	4.40	.507
19	The NYSC involves the community members in the implementation of their community development activities	3 (20.0%)	12 (80.0%)	-	-	-	4.20	.414
20	We the members of LGA are receptive and friendly to NYSC	6 (40.0%)	9 (60.0%)	-	-	-	4.40	.507
Weighted Average Mean= 3.98; Standard Mean = 2.50								

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

From Tables 3b and 3c above, majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of education in the LGAs ($x= 4.09$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in the LGAs ($x=3.74$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in the LGAs ($x= 3.74$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in the LGAs ($x= 3.26$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order and security in the LGAs ($x= 3.36$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of the environment including clean water and sanitation in the LGAs ($x= 3.89$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in the LGAs ($x= 3.69$); majority (80%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in the LGAs ($x= 3.66$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in the LGAs ($x= 3.50$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in the LGAs ($x= 3.63$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development (such as roads, borehole, etc) in the LGAs ($x= 3.63$); majority (100%) agreed that they have benefited from the NYSC activities in the community in one way or the other ($x= 3.73$); majority (100%) agreed that NYSC involves the community members in the planning of their community development activities ($x= 3.66$); majority (100%) agreed that the NYSC involves the community members in the implementation of their community development activities ($x= 3.65$); majority (100%) agreed that the members of LGAs are receptive and friendly to NYSC ($x= 4.06$). In conclusion, with the weighted average mean of 3.98 and a standard mean of 2.50, it can be deduced that NYSC community development activities were assessed positively by the community leaders. However, the results of the community leaders’ evaluation will only be presented, but they will not be added to the overall results of the

community members. This is because during the data gathering process, it was observed that the community leaders had tendencies to show bias towards positive appraisal of the NYSC as an institution. Being a quantitative data gathering process, the reasons for this positive bias was not probed.

Table 4: Demographic Information of NYSC Members from the 3 Selected LGAs

Demography	Freq.	%
Gender		
Male	51	34.7
Female	96	65.3
Missing System	3	-
Total	150	100.0
Age		
Below 20	3	2.0
20-25	72	48.6
26-30	73	49.3
Missing System	2	-
Total	150	100.0
Academic Discipline		
Science	40	27.4
Social Science	25	17.1
Arts and Humanities	15	10.3
Education	20	13.7
Management Sciences	18	12.3
Engineering	4	2.7
MBBS	1	0.7
Pharmacy	1	0.7
Medical Sciences	7	4.8
Others	15	10.3
Missing System	4	-
Total	150	100.0

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

Table 4 shows that 34.7% of the NYSC members interviewed were male while 65.3% of the respondents were female. The distribution of the respondents based on their age are as follows: 2.0% were below 20 years; 48.6% were between the ages of 20-25years; while 49.3% were between 26-30 years. The breakdown of their academic discipline is: 27.4% were from Sciences; 17.1% were from Social sciences; 10.3% were from Arts and humanities; 13.7% were from Education; 12.3% were from Management sciences; 2.7% were from Engineering; 0.7% were from Medicine and surgery; 0.7% were from Pharmacy; 4.8% were from Medical sciences; and 10.3% were from other disciplines.

Table 5a: Descriptive Statistic of the NYSC Members Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

S/N	Items	SA	A	U	D	SD	x	St. Dev
1	The NYSC is an important tool for community development	81 (54.0%)	58 (38.7%)	5 (3.3%)	2 (1.3%)	3 (2.0%)	4.39	.873
2	The LGA is a developed area	28 (18.9%)	65 (43.9%)	22 (14.9%)	21 (14.2%)	11 (7.4%)	3.50	1.20
3	The development of the LGA communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC groups	38 (25.3%)	71 (47.3%)	35 (23.3%)	6 (4.0%)	-	3.94	.804
4	I can give clear instances where NYSC have contributed to community development in the LGA	40 (26.7%)	62 (41.3%)	31 (20.7%)	9 (6.0%)	7 (4.7%)	3.77	1.09
5	NYSC CDS group should be stopped or scrapped in the LGA	11 (7.4%)	10 (6.7%)	18 (12.1%)	41 (27.5%)	66 (44.3%)	1.99	1.26

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

Tables 5a above shows the response of the NYSC members interviewed from the three selected LGAs. Majority (92.7%) agreed that NYSC is an important tool for community development ($x = 4.39$); majority (62.8%) agreed that the selected LGAs are developed areas ($x = 3.50$); majority (72.6%) agreed that the development of the LGAs communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC groups ($x = 3.94$); majority (68%) agreed that they can give clear instances where NYSC have contributed to community development in the LGAs ($x = 3.77$); majority (71.8%) disagreed that NYSC CDS group should be stopped or scrapped in the LGAs ($x = 1.99$);

Table 5b: Descriptive Statistic of the NYSC Members Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

6	NYSC CDS groups have contributed in development of education in the LGA	49 (32.7%)	77 (51.3%)	14 (9.3%)	6 (4.0%)	2 (1.3%)	4.06	.956
7	NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in the LGA	44 (29.3%)	64 (42.7%)	25 (16.7%)	11 (7.3%)	5 (3.3%)	3.85	1.07
8	NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in the LGA	30 (20.1%)	61 (40.9%)	40 (26.8%)	12 (8.1%)	6 (4.0%)	3.65	1.01
9	NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in the LGA	41 (27.3%)	61 (40.7%)	31 (20.7%)	11 (7.3%)	4 (2.7%)	4.08	3.44
10	NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order and security in the LGA	27 (18.0%)	70 (46.7%)	36 (24.0%)	11 (7.3%)	5 (3.3%)	3.66	1.00
11	NYSC has contributed in development of the environment, including clean water and sanitation in the LGA	51 (34.0%)	53 (35.3%)	32 (21.3%)	6 (4.0%)	6 (4.0%)	3.87	1.13
12	NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in the LGA	30 (20.0%)	60 (40.0%)	33 (22.0%)	12 (8.0%)	14 (9.3%)	3.51	1.20
13	NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in the LGA	21 (14.0%)	43 (28.7%)	45 (30.0%)	23 (15.3%)	18 (12.0%)	3.17	1.20
14	NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in the LGA	24 (16.1%)	50 (33.6%)	41 (27.5%)	17 (11.4%)	17 (11.4%)	3.31	1.20
15	NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in the LGA	65 (43.6%)	65 (43.6%)	8 (5.4%)	6 (4.0%)	5 (3.4%)	4.20	.958

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

Table 5c: Descriptive Statistic of the NYSC Members Assessment of the Activities of the NYSC in Their Community (All 3 Selected LGAs Combined)

16	NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development in the LGA (such as roads, borehole, etc.)	30 (20.1%)	46 (30.9%)	43 (28.9%)	18 (12.1%)	12 (8.1%)	3.42	1.17
17	NYSC has contributed to the human development in the LGA, in one or the other	55 (36.7%)	63 (42.0%)	22 (14.7%)	4 (2.7%)	6 (4.0%)	4.04	.992
18	The NYSC involves the community members in the planning of their community development activities	43 (28.7%)	66 (44.0%)	28 (18.7%)	8 (5.3%)	5 (3.3%)	3.89	.990
19	The NYSC involves the community members in the implementation of their community development activities	46 (30.9%)	63 (42.3%)	27 (18.1%)	7 (4.7%)	4 (2.7%)	3.89	1.06
20	The LGAs are receptive and friendly to NYSC	73 (48.7%)	48 (32.0%)	9 (6.0%)	5 (3.3%)	14 (9.3%)	4.05	1.27
Weighted Average = 3.712; Mean = 2.50								

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

From Tables 5b and 5c, majority (84%) agreed that NYSC CDS group has contributed in development of education in the LGAs ($x= 4.06$); majority (72%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in the LGAs ($x=3.85$); majority (61%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in the LGAs ($x= 3.65$); majority (68%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in the LGAs ($x= 4.08$); majority (64.7%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order and security in the LGAs ($x= 3.66$); majority (69.3%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of the environment including clean water and sanitation in the LGAs ($x= 3.87$); majority (60%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in the LGAs ($x= 3.51$); majority (42.7%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in the LGAs ($x= 3.17$); majority (49.7%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in

the LGAs ($x= 3.31$); majority (87.2%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in the LGAs ($x= 4.20$); majority (51%) agreed that NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development (such as roads, borehole, etc.) in the LGAs ($x= 3.42$); majority (78.7%) agreed that they have benefited from the NYSC activities in the community in one way or the other ($x= 4.04$); majority (72.7%) agreed that NYSC involves the community members in the planning of their community development activities ($x= 3.89$); majority (73.2%) agreed that the NYSC involves the community members in the implementation of their community development activities ($x= 3.89$); majority (80.7%) agreed that the members of the LGAs are receptive and friendly to NYSC ($x= 4.05$).

Table 6: Grading of Community Members Evaluation of the Different NYSC Community Development Services

Items	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	
NYSC has contributed in development of education in LGAs	450	4.09	.949	79.7%	1 st Most Perceived Impact
NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in LGA	450	3.74	1.03	67.4%	5 th
NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in LGA	450	3.74	1.06	68.0%	4 th
NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in LGA	450	3.76	1.10	68.5%	3 rd
NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order and security in LGA	450	3.63	1.07	63.1%	8 th
NYSC has contributed in development of the environment including clean water and sanitation in LGA	450	3.89	1.02	73.4%	2 nd
NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in LGA	450	3.69	1.06	66.1%	6 th
NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in LGA	450	3.66	2.66	57.5%	10 th
NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in the LGA	450	3.50	1.16	55.4%	11 th Least Perceived Impact
NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in LGA	450	3.63	1.17	62.8%	9 th
NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development in LGA (such as roads, borehole, etc)	450	3.63	1.18	63.2%	7 th

Source: Fieldwork October, 2022

Table 6 above shows the grading of how the community members perceived the impact of the different community development services rendered by the NYSC. The table shows that Education services rendered by the NYSC has the most perceived impact (79.7%; \bar{x} = 4.09) on the community, while the Emergency and disaster management (55.4%; \bar{x} = 3.50) has the least perceived impact on the community. Environment (Clean water and sanitation) and Healthcare are the second and third most impactful services rendered by the NYSC (73.4% and 68.5% respectively).

Table 7: Showing the Grading of NYSC Members Evaluation of the Different NYSC Community Development Services

Items	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage	
NYSC has contributed in development of education in the LGA	150	4.06	.956	84%	2 nd
NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in the LGA	150	3.85	1.07	72%	3 rd
NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in the LGA	150	3.65	1.01	61%	7 th
NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in the LGA	150	4.08	3.44	68%	5 th
NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order and security in the LGA	150	3.66	1.00	64.7%	6 th
NYSC has contributed in development of the environment including clean water and sanitation in the LGA	150	3.87	1.13	69.3%	4 th
NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in the LGA	150	3.51	1.20	60%	8 th
NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in the LGA	150	3.17	1.20	42.7%	11 th Least Perceived Impact
NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in the LGA	150	3.31	1.20	49.7%	10 th
NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in the LGA	150	4.20	.958	87.2%	1 st Most Perceived Impact
NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development in the LGA (such as roads, borehole, etc.)	150	3.42	1.17	51%	9 th

Source: *Fieldwork October, 2022*

Table 7 above shows the grading of how the NYSC members perceived the impact of the different community development services rendered by their CDS groups to the community /

LGA. The table shows that the NYSC members felt that Charity and voluntary services (87.2%; $x=4.20$) rendered by the NYSC has the most perceived impact on the community, while the Food and agricultural services has the least impact on the community. (42.7%; $x= 3.17$). Education, and Sports and recreation services are the second and third most impactful services rendered by the NYSC (84%; $x=4.06$ and 72% $x=3.85$ respectively).

Table 8: Frequency Table Showing Comparison between the Community Members and the NYSC Members Evaluation of the Different NYSC Community Development Services Rendered To the Community

Items	Community members (Agreement response)	NYSC members (Agreement response)
NYSC has contributed in the development of education in the LGA	79.7%	84%
NYSC has contributed in development of sports and recreation in the LGA	67.4%	72%
NYSC has contributed in development of culture and tradition in the LGA	68.0%	61%
NYSC has contributed in development of healthcare in the LGA	68.5%	68%
NYSC has contributed in maintenance of law and order and security in the LGA	63.1%	64.7%
NYSC has contributed in development of the environment including clean water and sanitation in the LGA	73.4%	69.3%
NYSC has contributed in development of transportation and road safety in the LGA	66.1%	60%
NYSC has contributed in development and provision of food and agriculture in the LGA	57.5%	42.7%
NYSC has contributed in emergency and disaster management in the LGA	55.4%	49.7%
NYSC has contributed in charity and voluntary services in the LGA	62.8%	87.2%
NYSC has contributed in infrastructural development in the LGA (such as roads, borehole, etc.)	63.2%	51%

Source: *Fieldwork October, 2022*

Table 8 and the Figure 1 shows the comparison between the community members and the NYSC members perception of the different NYSC community development services rendered to the community. From the bar chart, it can be seen that the major community development services comparatively rated highly by both the community members and the NYSC members are Education, Environment (clean water and sanitation) and Healthcare. However, it is observed one sector with significant difference in perception was in the provision of charity and voluntary

services- the NYSC members rated it as the most impactful, whilst the community members rated it as the 9th most impactful community development activity. Finally, community development services such as Food and Agriculture and Emergency and disaster management were the two least rated by both the community and NYSC members.

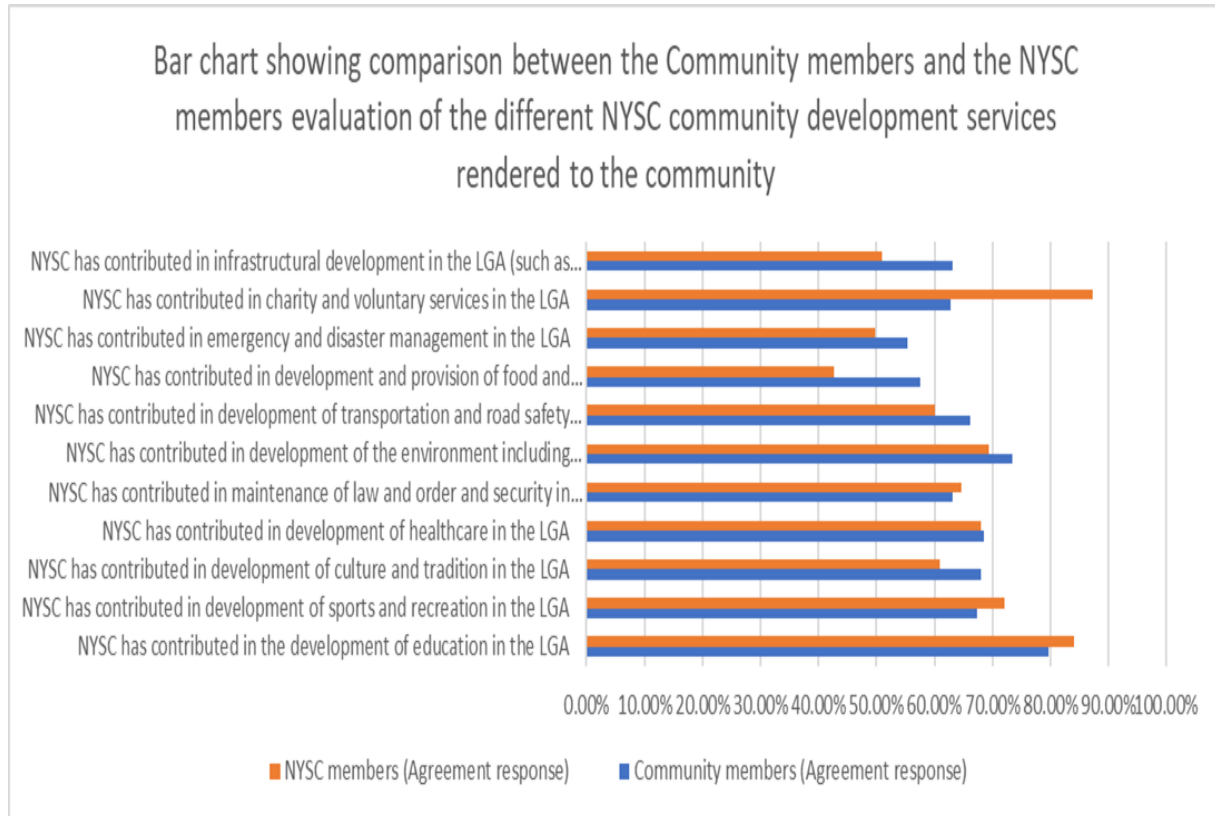


Figure 1: Bar Chart Showing Comparison between the Community Members and the NYSC Members Evaluation of the Different NYSC Community Development Services Rendered to the Community

Source: Microsoft Excel Analysis of Fieldwork October, 2022

Qualitative Data analysis- Results from Key Informant Interviews

A. Key points (themes) extracted from the KII with the NYSC Local Government Inspector for Ogbomosho North LGA

- i. **Date, Time, Duration and Venue:** The KII with the NYSC Local Government Inspector for Ogbomosho North LGA was carried out on 6th October, 2022. It started at about 8.35am, and the entire duration of the interview was 20 minutes. The venue of the KII was at Soun town hall, Oja Igbo, Ogbomosho North LGA, Oyo state, Nigeria.
- ii. **CDS as a cardinal program of the NYSC:** "...CDS is one of the four cardinal programs of the NYSC and ... a corps member must participate in the CDS before he or she could be given the certificate of national service..."

- iii. **The NYSC CDS groups and operations:** "...The CDS grouping is it the same for all the states and local government areas in Nigeria. There are about 16 CDS groups; and the Local Government Inspector must ensure that that groups are in operation at the LGA..."
- "...The Local Government Inspector monitors the community development projects, requires the corps members to write monthly report on the project progress. The LGI also submits such reports to the NYSC CDS department in NYSC headquarters, Ibadan.
- Monitoring and evaluation are integral and carried out during the NYSC CDS activities..."
- "...NYSC corps members are discouraged from using their money for personal projects."
- iv. **Community participation in NYSC CDS activities:** "...The community members participate in the NYSC CDS projects. The Local Government headquarters have departments that is called the community development and social service department. The NYSC CDS at the LGA operates under them. Whenever the corps member identifies a project, the Community Development Inspector of the LGA is notified. The Community Development Inspector carries the project to the Chairman for collaboration."
- v. **Ogbomosho North LGA receptibility of NYSC:** "We can say Ogbomosho North LGA is receptive because if they are not receptive, we can't be using their hall today. They are receptive, but sometimes you know if you want to do something and you don't have that financial capacity to do it..."
- vi. **Challenges of NYSC CDS Implementation:**
- a. **Finances:** "...Of recent, because of the lean purse of the government, there have been excuses from the authorities that they cannot sponsor community development projects. ...The major problem we are having is because of the situation of the country, economic reasons..."
- b. **NYSC corps members perception:** "...Most corps members believe that service-based projects like adult education, computer literacy trainings for students are not projects that can be given good recognition by the NYSC..., once it is not a capital-based project or structure such as drilled boreholes, culvert construction, building of classrooms or library for schools..."
- vii. **Recommendations for improving the NYSC CDS:**
- a. **Strengthening existing programs:** "I can't encourage that they scrap the NYSC... But what I want to encourage is to review economy... NYSC has also initiated this SAED like six years ago, skills acquisition and entrepreneurship development whereby corps members can go and learn trade..."
- b. **Review of the NYSC scheme:** "Let them review the NYSC; introduce new ideas, concepts, new policies that would actually make NYSC good."
- c. **NYSC as a revenue generator:** "If possible, I would also encourage that NYSC can be a revenue generator, we have a lot of land whereby we can do things for ourselves. Like in the orientation camp now, instead of buying our food stuffs that we cook for our corps members during orientation..., we can have farms...; we can also sell to the public, sell to the government to make money for the NYSC."

B. Key points extracted from the KII with NYSC Local Government Inspector of Ido LGA.

- i. **Date, Time, Duration and Venue:** The KII with the NYSC Local Government Inspector for Ido LGA was carried out on 13th October, 2022. It started at about 12:55pm, and the entire duration of the interview was 17 minutes. The venue of the KII was at CDS venue, Ologuneru, Ido LGA, Oyo state, Nigeria.
- ii. **The NYSC CDS groups and operations:** “We have normal 16 CDS groups but because of the nature of the local governments we only engage in... seven...”
- iii. **Major impact of the NYSC CDS in the community:** “...The significant impact that we have is majorly on education.”
“...We normally do sensitization on their health... the health CDS too also has a major impact.”
“NYSC is the only scheme that can touch life to the grassroots. Say anywhere you get to in the 774 local governments of this nation and you don't see a corps member then it's not a habitable place.”
- iv. **Community participation in NYSC CDS activities:** “..The corps members also have the community members or the other stakeholders participate before they initiate programs...”
“Majorly, the ideas come from the corps members. It's their idea, it comes from them and they now launch it out at the community... because it's a community development program, the community are the drivers.”
“...It is not allowed that corps members have to task themselves or raise the fund personally; No, no, no! They mobilize the resources from the community...”
- v. **Ido LGA receptibility of NYSC:** “Ido local government community is not a hostile community.”
- vi. **Challenges of NYSC CDS Implementation:**
 - a. **Finances:** “Finance. That's the major challenge.”
 - b. **NYSC corps members lack of enthusiasm:** “...the corps members are no longer enthusiastic... in going out for community development activities.”
- vii. **Recommendations for improving the NYSC CDS:**
 - a. **Improving corps members morale for CDS activities:** “...My recommendation is still for us, the carrier of this scheme, to still keep encouraging the corps members to live their footprints in the sand of time while serving, by embarking on laudable CDS projects. Either as a group or as individual.”
 - b. **Government continuous sustenance of the NYSC:** “To the government, I will just want to appreciate the government for not listening to the cries of some people for... scrapping of NYSC.”
“NYSC CDS is integral and it must be sustained... We must do everything... government, the scheme and we the drivers of the scheme and the community... and the corps members, we must do everything to sustain this.”

C. Key points extracted from the KII with NYSC Local Government Inspector of Akinyele LGA

i. Date, Time, Duration and Venue: The KII with the NYSC Local Government Inspector for Akinyele LGA was carried out on 24th of October, 2022. It started at about 10.15am, and the entire duration of the interview was about 20 minutes. The venue of the KII was at Akinyele LGA headquarters, Moniya, Oyo state, Nigeria.

ii. CDS as a cardinal program of the NYSC: “In NYSC bye laws, all the corps members are expected to belong to at least one CDS- Community Development Service.”

“CDS..., it's part of the four cardinal point of the NYSC. If you don't pass through CDS, there's no how you can get the CNS- your certificate of national service at the end of the... NYSC...”

iii. Some roles of the NYSC Local Government Inspector: “The purpose of the LGI or any assistant LGI is to monitor and to mentor... the corps members.... The corps members bring their CDS report to the LGI on anything they wanted to do as far as CDS is concerned... As an LGI, you have to be there... even sometimes... when they are going on outreach...”

“...the LGI would be the one to allocate a CDS group to the corps members... We look at the corps member’s course of study before allocating...”

iv. The NYSC CDS groups and operations: “In NYSC..., we have a personal project and general projects...”

“...In a personal CDS project..., a corps member will move around the community and will look for the need of that community in that area...”

“...it is against the NYSC rule for the corps member to use his own personal money to execute a project...”

v. Community participation in NYSC CDS activities: “...The corps member will identify and discuss with the community; the community will tell the corps member what is the need of the community... it is now the community that will be the one to relate the name of the son and daughter that are doing well in that community to the corps member. In that area, they would be the one to sponsor it because... it is the community that will be the one to sponsor...”

“The corps member cannot be in that community for eternity..., just spending 11 months there... it's the community that will continue the maintenance of the legacy given to them. So that's why you need to carry the community along...”

vi. Akinyele LGA receptibility of NYSC: “Akinyele is... as far as I'm concerned, their hospitality is extraordinary..., they are not hostile.”

vii. Challenges of NYSC CDS Implementation:

a. Finances: “The number one challenge is finance; without money, we can't start a project...”

Discussion

I. The Communities' Assessment of the Different Community Development Services Rendered By the NYSC CDS Groups in Selected Local Government Areas in Oyo State, Nigeria

This study was able to assess the perception of the community on the different community development services rendered by the NYSC. The selection of the local government areas was done by senatorial zones, and the communities were sampled to reflect quota; therefore, the responses gotten can be inferred to represent the entire state. The community members, the community leaders and the serving NYSC members were interviewed as separate groups. The questionnaire was structured to have questions that aimed to have a summarized assessment (questions 3, 4 and 17) and individual assessments for various aspects of community development (questions 6 to 16).

The results from the community members, as seen in Tables 2a, 2b and 2c, revealed that 74.8% of the community members agreed that the development of their local government area has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC. This is comparable to the community leaders' assessment whereby 100% of them agreed that the development of the LGAs communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC (Tables 3a, 3b and 3c); and the NYSC members assessment whereby 72.6% of them agreed that the development of the LGAs communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC (Tables 5a, 5b and 5c).

In terms of their ability to substantiate by being able to give clear instances where NYSC have contributed to community development in their LGAs, 70.9% of the community members agreed they could give clear instances comparable to 80% of the community leaders (Tables 3a, 3b and 3c) and 68.0% of the NYSC members (Table 5a, 5b and 5c).

For the overall assessment of their personal encounters with NYSC's developmental activities in their LGAs, 67.4% of the community members agreed that they had benefitted in one way or the other from the NYSC activities in their LGA (Tables 2a, 2b and 2c); and 100% of the community leaders agreed that they had benefitted in one way or the other from the NYSC activities in their LGA (Tables 3a, 3b and 3c).

For specific assessments for various aspects of community development questions, it was observed that in all the different community development aspects (Education, Healthcare, Infrastructure, etc.) questions posed to the community members, over 50% agreed in the positive direction in each of all of the specific aspects of community development. This was not at variance to the responses of the community leaders.

It can be therefore summarized that the communities' assessment of the different community development services rendered by the NYSC is that the NYSC has a great positive impact in community development in Oyo state, Nigeria.

This adds to the recorded impacts of NYSC as seen from the studies of Uzoho (2021) where he stated that the NYSC has recorded tremendous impacts in national integration amongst others; and the study by Lamidi (2017) where the key components of the NYSC CDS programmes all recorded above 60% impact rates. This study is however not in agreement with the study of

Raimi and Alao (2011), where they concluded that the NYSC had failed in many aspects in accelerating the socioeconomic development of Nigeria.

II. The Perception of the Serving NYSC Corps Members towards the Community Development Services They Participate in, Through Their CDS Groups

The perception of the NYSC serving members towards the community development services they participate in this study was viewed from three angles: how they appraise their activities, how their appraisal correlates with the appraisal of the community members, and how the LGI appraises the NYSC members.

From the first angle, Tables 5a, 5b and 5c show how the corps members appraise their community development activities towards their respective local government areas. Aside 92.7% of the corps members agreeing that the NYSC is an important tool for community development, 72.6% agreed that the development of the LGA communities has been enhanced by the activities of NYSC groups, 78.7% agreed that the NYSC has contributed to the human development in the LGA, in one or the other, and 71.8% opposed to the idea of scrapping or stopping the NYSC in their various LGAs. In other specific aspects of community development (Education, healthcare, maintenance of law and order, infrastructural development, etc.), majority (more than 50%) of the corps members agreed to having positive impacts in all the specific aspects of community development assessed (shown in Tables 5a, 5b and 5c). This collaborates with the study by Fareo (2020), where he reported an overall positive attitude of the NYSC members towards community development services in Adamawa state, Nigeria.; and the study by Lamidi (2017) where various components of the NYSC CDS programmes were analysed and ranked.

From the second angle, comparison of how the NYSC members appraise the community developments activities of the NYSC against how the community members appraise them has been made. Table 8 showed that the majority of the NYSC corps members and the community members both similar overall positive impact assessments of the NYSC community development activities.

From the third angle that investigated how the LGIs assessed the NYSC corps members perception of the community development services they render; the key informant interviews revealed some salient points. Firstly, some corps members perception of the NYSC CDS was that for a community development service to be impactful, it must not just be a service but must be an infrastructure project. According to the Ogbomosho North LGI, “...*Most corps members believe that service-based projects like adult education, computer literacy trainings for students are not projects that can be given good recognition by the NYSC..., once it is not a capital-based project or structure such as drilled boreholes, culvert construction, building of classrooms or library for schools...*” Secondly, most NYSC corps members only see community development service group participation as just a mandatory activity to be mandatorily carried out for the award of the certificate of completion. According to the Akinyele LGI, “...*it has been inculcated in them that there's something they call CDS and you need to attend because it's part of the four cardinal points of the NYSC. If you don't pass through CDS, there's no how you can get the CNS- your certificate of national service at the end of the day so it's a part and parcel of the NYSC laid down rule. That's what they need to pass through...*”

because we have what they call a CDS card, you need to sign... it's like an attendance so you need to mark your attendance as an evidence that you're coming for CDS, and also CDS is one of the means of doing inspection to know that the corps member is on ground; because you coming to CDS every Thursday is one of the reasons whereby we know that you are truly on ground.” The Ido LGI revealed there is a seeming loss in enthusiasm towards CDS activities. She narrated thus, *“...the corps members are no longer... enthusiastic, in going out for community development...”* This loss of motivation on the part of the corps members was similarly identified by Lamidi et al (2018) as one of the challenges confronting the NYSC in the delivery of community development services in Southwestern Nigeria.

III. The Grading of the Community Development Services According To Perceived Impacts of Various Community Development Aspects in the Selected Lgas in Oyo State, Nigeria

This study did not just stop at appraising the overall perception of the community members, leaders and serving corps members on the overall impact the NYSC has had in community development in the LGAs sampled, it went further in assessing their perceptions in various aspects of community development. In all, eleven specific aspects of community development were appraised. The aspects assessed were Education; Sports and recreation; Culture and tradition development; Healthcare; Maintenance of law and order and security; Environment (Clean water and sanitation); Transportation and road safety; Food and Agriculture; Emergency and Disaster management; Charity and voluntary services; and Infrastructural development (roads, boreholes, etc.). The results revealed that to the community members, the most impactful community development activity of the NYSC was in Education (See Table 6), whilst Environment (Clean water and sanitation) and Healthcare were the second and third most perceived impactful community development of the NYSC, respectively. The NYSC LGI for Ido LGA was equally specific when she said, *“Well, the significant impact that we have is majorly on education. Most of the time, we go on enlightenment campaign to schools...”* In the result from a similar study by Lamidi (2017), Education was likewise found to be the most key component of the NYSC CDS programmes in southwestern Nigeria. The reason for Education being the most impactful could be because human development projects required lesser funding than infrastructural projects, being that the corps members were already graduates with various academic qualifications and trainings. This was similarly echoed amongst other things in a study by Arigbo et al (2019) conducted in Abia state, Nigeria. The least impactful aspect of NYSC community development services, from this study is Emergency and disaster management. This most likely is because Emergency and disaster management is a specialized service that require professional training and equipment. It could also be because emergencies and disasters are not everyday occurrences, which makes services rendered along that line to be rated lower than other everyday services such as education, healthcare and sanitation. Further studies will be required to actually elucidate why this is so.

IV. Community Participation in the Community Development Services of the NYSC in the Selected LGAs of Oyo State, Nigeria

Questions to assess the level of community participation in the planning and implementation of the NYSC community development services constituted part of the interview questions to the

community members, the community leaders, the NYSC corps members and the LGIs. 60.8% of the community members agreed that the NYSC involved them in the planning of the community development projects; and in implementation, 61.6% of them agreed to be involved (Tables 2a, 2b and 2c). For the community leaders, 100% of them agreed to being involved in both the planning and implementation processes, respectively (Tables 3a, 3b and 3c). 72.7% of the NYSC members agreed to involve the community in the planning of their community development services; whilst 73.2% agreed to involving the community in implementation (Tables 5a, 5b and 5c). The Ogbomosho North LGI in his interview described the administrative paths followed in the involvement of the community- *“...The community members participate in the NYSC CDS projects. The Local Government headquarters have departments that is called the community development and social service department. The NYSC CDS at the LGA operates under them. Whenever the corps member identifies a project, the Community Development Inspector of the LGA is notified. The Community Development Inspector carries the project to the Chairman for collaboration...”* whilst the Akinyele LGI similarly elaborated, *“The corps member will identify and discuss with the community; the community will tell the corps member what is the need of the community... it is now the community that will be the one to relate the name of the son and daughter that are doing well in that community to the corps member. In that area, they would be the one to sponsor it because... it is the community that will be the one to sponsor...”* The Ido LGI said, *“The corps members also have the community members or the other stakeholders participate before they initiate programs...”* *“Majorly, the ideas come from the corps members. It's their idea, it comes from them and they now launch it out at the community... because it's a community development program, the community are the drivers.”* *“...It is not allowed that corps members have to task themselves or raise the fund personally; No, no, no! They mobilize the resources from the community...”*

This implies that overall, the community members are involved in the planning and implementation of the NYSC community development activities. This is relatively in tandem with findings from the studies of Arigbo et al (2019) where it was observed that the community members were sometimes involved in the NYSC CDS activities in Abia state, Nigeria, although not always. The importance of participation of the community members in the planning, implementation and sustenance of community development projects have been highlighted as one of the principles of community development (Wates, 2014; Watson-Thompson, Fawcett and Schultz, 2008; Asnarulkhadi and Aref, 2009). Gladly, this importance is recognized by the NYSC, as echoed by the LGI for Akinyele LGA- *“The corps member cannot be in that community for eternity..., just spending 11 months there... it's the community that will continue the maintenance of the legacy given to them. So that's why you need to carry the community along...”* We hope that this important principle be strengthened and maintained.

V. Comparison of the NYSC Members Evaluation of Community Development Services to That of the Community Members

Since corps members are the principal agents NYSC uses in carrying out its community development mandate, it is only rational to compare their perceptions against the perceptions of the receivers of the numerous community development activities carried out. It is not unexpected that an agent can assume highly of a service whilst the beneficiary can judge lowly

of the service. In gauging this possibility, we examined the results from the quantitative interviews of the community members and compared it to that of the NYSC members. When individually assessed, as seen in the bar chart in Figure 4.1.9, for most of the community development aspects, the responses of the corps members and those of the community members were not too different. The closest was for healthcare (68% and 68.5%); and the most disperse response was for charity and voluntary services (62.8% and 87.2%). The essence of this comparison was to enable the NYSC calibrate their CDS activities; sustaining those aspects that they rank closely in evaluation to the community members, whilst amending their tactics where necessary in those aspects that they are at variance with the community members evaluation.

VI. Challenges Confronting the Operation of the NYSC Community Development Service as a Tool for Community Development, Using the Findings from Selected LGAs in Oyo State, Nigeria

Reports from the Key informant Interviews highlighted the challenges confronting the effective operation of the NYSC CDS programmes. The most recurring challenge was Finance / Funding. *“...Of recent, because of the lean purse of the government, there have been excuses from the authorities that they cannot sponsor community development projects. ...The major problem we are having is because of the situation of the country, economic reasons...”* was the response of the LGI for Ogbomosho North LGA when asked what his biggest challenge was. The Ido LGI response to the same question was brief and straightforward. *“Finance! That's the major challenge,”* whilst the Akinyele LGI also echoed the same when asked. *“The number one challenge is finance; without money, we can't start a project...”* he said. This issue of finance as a major challenge to NYSC community development services has been also highlighted in previous studies such as that of Lamidi et al (2018) and Fareo (2020); although in the latter, not just lack of finance but poor management of finance was highlighted as one of the factors inhibiting the effective execution of community development services by the NYSC corps members. Another identified challenge was NYSC corps members prioritisation of infrastructure projects over service-based projects. This was pointed by the Ogbomosho North LGI when he said, *“Most corps members believe that service-based projects like adult education, computer literacy trainings for students are not projects that can be given good recognition by the NYSC..., once it is not a capital-based project or structure such as drilled boreholes, culvert construction, building of classrooms or library for schools...”* This is despite the fact that corps members normally carry out more human development projects than infrastructural projects (Arigbo et al., 2019). Similar to this challenge is the problem of corps members lack of motivation or enthusiasm in CDS activities. This was announced by the LGI for Ido LGA when she said, *“...the corps members are no longer enthusiastic... in going out for community development activities.”* This lack of motivation on the part of corps members in community development services has been similarly highlighted in previous studies (Fareo, 2020; Lamidi, Benson and Adisa, 2018; Abdullahi et al, 2016).

4.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study appraised the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) involvement in community development in selected Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Oyo state, Nigeria. This was

achieved through the administration of questionnaires to 450 randomly selected community members from the three selected LGAs, 15 community leaders and 150 currently serving NYSC corps members; and Key-Informant Interviews of the NYSC Local Government Inspectors in Ido, Ogbomosho North and Akinyele LGAs.

The findings emanating from the study revealed that 74.8% of the community members interviewed agreed that the development of their respective local government communities have been enhanced by the activities of the various NYSC CDS groups; and 80% of the community members agreed that they could give clear instances where NYSC have contributed to community development in their various LGAs. For the other individual aspects of community development evaluated, over 50% agreed in the positive direction for each aspect. For the community leaders, 100% agreed that the NYSC had positive impacts in development of their communities in each of the aspects of development, except in the aspect of provision of agriculture and food where only 80% of the community leaders agreed. The community development aspects assessed were Education; Sports and recreation; Culture and tradition development; Healthcare; Maintenance of law and order and security; Environment (Clean water and sanitation); Transportation and road safety; Food and Agriculture; Emergency and Disaster management; Charity and voluntary services; and Infrastructural development (roads, boreholes, etc.). The results further revealed that, to the community members, the most impactful community development activity of the NYSC was in Education (79.7%), whilst Environment [Clean water and sanitation] (73.4%) and Healthcare (68.5%) were the second and third most perceived impactful community development services of the NYSC, respectively. This was supported by the interview recordings with the Ido LGI. The least impactful aspect of NYSC community development services, from this study is Emergency and disaster management (55.4%).

For the comparison between the community members and the NYSC members' responses on the different NYSC community development services rendered to the community, in most of the community development aspects inquired, the responses were not too different. The closest was for healthcare (68% and 68.5%); and the most disperse response was for charity and voluntary services (62.8% and 87.2%).

In the aspect of planning and implementation of the NYSC CDS activities in Oyo state, Nigeria, 60.8% of the community members agreed that the NYSC involves the community in the planning of their community development activities, and 61.6% agreed that the NYSC involves the community in the implementation of their community development activities. This was corroborated by the community leaders whereby 100% agreed that the NYSC involved the community in the planning of community development activities, and 100% equally agreed that the NYSC involved the community in implementation. The response from the NYSC members also validated this. 72.7% of them agreed that they involve the community members in the planning of their community development services, and 73.2% of them agreed that they involve the community in the implementation of their community development activities. Findings from the Key informant interviews also reiterated same. All the LGIs alluded to the fact that indeed NYSC carries the community along in both the planning and implementation of the various community development projects.

This study was also able to uncover some challenges confronting the operation of the NYSC community development service as a tool for community development in Oyo state, Nigeria. Reports from the Key informant Interviews highlighted three challenges confronting the effective operation of the NYSC CDS programmes. The identified challenges were inadequate finance; corps members' prioritisation of infrastructure projects over service-based projects; and corps members lack of motivation or enthusiasm in CDS activities.

Conclusion

This study appraising the involvement of the NYSC in community development in Oyo state, Nigeria has been able to discover that the NYSC through its CDS activities has been perceived by majority of the community members and leaders to have had positive impacts in the development of their communities. Education, Environment (clean water and sanitation) and healthcare are three aspects of the NYSC community development services adjudged by the community members to be the most impactful; whilst emergency and disaster management was viewed as the least impactful. This study also validated the inculcation of the principle of community members' participation in the planning and implementation of the NYSC driven community development projects in the selected communities. Finally, this study was able to identify inadequate finance; corps members' prioritisation of infrastructure projects over service-based projects; and corps members lack of motivation or enthusiasm in CDS activities as three major challenges presently confronting the NYSC community development service implementation in Oyo state, Nigeria.

Recommendations

Resulting from this study, appraising the involvement of the NYSC in community development in selected Local Government Areas, Oyo state, Nigeria, the following recommendations were suggested:

1. **Sustenance of the NYSC and the NYSC CDS.** Despite calls from some quarters for the abolishment or scrapping of the NYSC, this study has shown from the majority positive appraisal from the community members and leaders that the NYSC has positive impacts in community development in Oyo state. The Federal Government is therefore advised to continue to maintain the NYSC, as community development is one of its impactful purposes.
2. **Review the NYSC CDS strategy.** This study has revealed the impact perception grading of the different community development aspects from the most impactful to the least; and that the evaluations of the corps members do not correlate with those of the community members. It will therefore be necessary that the NYSC Management reviews their CDS strategy to leverage on those community development aspects with the most impact whilst increasing efforts to improve those aspects with the least impacts. New concepts and ideas to adapt to the discovered reality should be developed.
3. **Increase Funding.** Inadequate finance has been highlighted as one of the challenges confronting the NYSC CDS programmes. Government is therefore pleaded upon to increase its funding to the NYSC to enable it improve its CDS function, since this study has revealed the importance of the community development activities of the scheme.

4. NYSC as a potential revenue generating institution. One of the qualitative interviews suggested the possibility of the Federal Government empowering the NYSC to search for ways to generate some revenue to augment its inadequate budget (such as establishment of NYSC farms, etc.). This could be through legislation to amend some sections of the NYSC Act. The corps members that constitute the driving force of the scheme are graduates from different professional disciplines, thus a diverse pool of human resources is readily available to the institution.
5. Training and mentoring of the NYSC corps members. One of the discoveries of this study is that the way the community members view the impacts of the NYSC CDS projects is different from the way the serving corps members view them. Also, the qualitative interviews exposed the two challenges of corps members' prioritisation of infrastructure projects over service-based projects; and corps members lack of motivation or enthusiasm in CDS activities. As a result of these, the NYSC Management is advised to lay emphasis on training and mentoring of all corps members involved in CDS projects; and to innovate strategies to correct the corps members' perception and improve their morale and zeal towards CDS activities.

Suggestions for Future Studies

First off, this study only appraised the NYSC community development services in just one state of Nigeria. Nigeria has 36 states and a Federal Capital Territory. It is therefore recommended that future studies should be carried out in other states or regions of the country, to appraise and compare findings from other states or region. This will help make a more authoritative statement on appraisal of NYSC CDS in Nigeria. Secondly, unlike the large size of community members interviewed (450), the size of community leaders interviewed was small (15). A larger sample size for community leaders will be more statistically useful for future studies.

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