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## SMALL CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN MANAGING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS: AN EVALUATION OF PROJECTS IN THE CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF MOSHI, KILIMANJARO REGION, TANZANIA

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### ABSTRACT

*This study aimed at evaluating Small Christian Community (SCC) participation in managing development projects of the Catholic Diocese of Moshi. Concurrent triangulation design was employed. Simple random technique was applied to draw a representative sample from 165 SCCs where 370 respondents were picked randomly. Questionnaire, key informant interviews guide were tools used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative data were analysed using binary logistic regression while qualitative data were analysed using content analysis. The findings revealed that community participation in designing, contributions in kind and decision making are likely to highly influence the growth of development projects. The findings also revealed that SCCs have no ownership of the projects as they believe the projects are for the Church and not for the community. It was also revealed that SCCs have gained education and health facilities and new farming methods from free seminars and workshops conducted by Church projects. The findings further indicate that majority of SCC members participate in development projects. It is concluded that SCCs have gained a positive change from Church projects as they provide education, health facilities and self-employment. This study recommends the Catholic Diocese of Moshi (CDM) to mobilize and encourage all SCCs to participate in development activities without focusing on personal benefits from the projects. It is further recommended that SCCs should own Church projects so as to sustain them and benefit more from the services rendered. The study findings may be influential in guiding the Catholic Church on the importance of SCCs and development projects.*

**Key Words:** Small Christian, Community, Participation, Church, Management, Projects

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Globally, the Catholic Church is an actor and stakeholder in fostering socio-economic development activities. Project activities involving local communities are of a global concern, particularly in developing countries such as Tanzania. The Church, through its Small Christian Communities (SCCs), plays a crucial role in community expansion (Nthiga & Moi, 2021). Small Christian Communities (SCCs) are groups of Christians who, at the grassroots or similar settings, converge for prayers or discussions on human and Church development projects with common commitment and participation (Kang and Na, 2020; Njinu & Majawa, 2021).

In Sub-Saharan Africa, the Church and private businesses are pivotal contributors to socio-economic development (Hassan, 2021). In fact, many of them have provided illustrious community services, exercised political influence, and gained considerable public profile (Mulusa & Asienga, 2021). A study by Chigozie (2017) revealed that a sudden end to Church-funded projects in Africa, has left many unfinished projects, unmet expectations, and unfulfilled ambitions for the beneficiaries, on whom their livelihood and ascent to a greater degree of security in terms of food, education, and health depended. In consequence, there had been difficulties in managing these initiatives, their dissolution, or, at the most, a reduction in the number of beneficiaries. Diverse stakeholders and project beneficiaries experience difficulties with Church development project initiatives and lament the lack of sustainability structures that can help them overcome such unexpected yet compelling and demanding difficulties (Chigozie, 2017).

In Tanzania, the Catholic Church has collaborated with the Tanzania government for decades to provide diverse socio-economic services (Fouéré, 2014), and its social orientation in communities has focused on engaging people in society for them to contribute meaningfully to the common good (Hunnes, 2022). Various methods of community engagement in the project have ranged from exchanging information, planning, decision-making, control, to implementation (Aga *et al.* 2018). The focus has largely been on community participation as a process that begins with gathering inputs and concludes with decision-making processes (Tabsoba & Ayarkwa, 2021).

Different scholars varyingly define 'community'. Mbevi (2016) defines a community as a collection of people with a shared background or set of interests. Similarly, Kemei (2014) defines a community as any size of social organisations whose members reside in a certain area, participate in the same type of governance, and typically have a similar culture and history. Moreover, Muusya (2019) defines community participation as people's involvement in the selection of the projects they find most appealing to them, to plan, execute, monitor and assess in addition to ensuring their sustainability. Furthermore, Karioh (2019) defines community participation as a process that allows beneficiaries and the public to engage in and influence project execution. In this study, a community is a group of people who live in a specific region with shared basic values.

Small Christian Communities (SCCs)' participation in managing Catholic Diocese of Moshi (CDM) projects helps describe how SCCs of the targeted area participate in development activities aimed to improve socio-economic well-being of the members (Nwekeaku & Christopher, 2021). Participation serves as a foundation for streamlining project success, hence leading to the much-needed economic transformation in the area and country (Baporikar, 2019; Kang and Na, 2020). Thus, the Catholic Church has focused on engaging SCCs in Church income generating projects in addition to training participants on self-reliant projects to boost their income (Mbui, 2018).

Effective participation of SCCs in income generating projects helps to identify the best way to meet community needs (Karioh, 2019). The Catholic Church-run income generating projects are not meant for maximising personal returns as the profit obtained is directed towards social activities. This approach has been adopted not only by the Catholic Church on a global scale, but

also by specific governments in empowering the underprivileged. Long-term realisable benefits of these projects include employment creation, improvement in community relations, empowerment, education and health facilities (Chigozie, 2017; Mogomotsi, 2020). According to Otieno (2021), participation strengthens the marginalized by encouraging self-awareness and confidence in the poor, encouraging them to analyse their issues and come up with innovative answers, and helping to break away from the mentality of dependence.

Community members' initiatives tend to improve socio-economic inclusiveness for the socially and economically underprivileged (Padley, 2013). According to Mbevi (2016), community participation in their own projects results into improved efficiency, yielding of better initiatives, better results, more accountability and transparency, improved service delivery, and promoted funder consistency. Both the Catholic Church and the World Bank emphasise on strong community participation in project planning and execution as a panacea to project success (Awortwi 2013; Muniu *et al.*, 2018; Massawe and Chumbula, 2018). Evidence deduced through various studies such as Ekong (2013), and Bispo and Júnior (2021) show that some Church projects failed to attain the desired objectives. Low participation translates into low engagement, which, according to Bakari (2018), leads to the failure of some of the projects.

In the Tanzanian context, Mahimbali (2022) argued that the basic fault in the Church business planning lacks support from the grassroots as the community members are not involved in the development activities initiated by the Church. He argued that this may lead to failure of most Church businesses. The local community, over many years, did not have ownership of the businesses. The businesses were started and managed by foreign missionaries. This brought about dependency syndrome on missionaries for donations and leadership (Shepherd, Wadugodapitiya & Evans, 2011). The bishops of Tanzania (TEC) and AMECEA decided to declare that small Christian communities are the priority on development projects.

Catholic bishops in East Africa have chosen to declare SCCs as the pastoral and development priority as the best way to build local Churches to be truly self-ministers (self-governing), self-propagation (self-dissemination) and self-sustaining (self-reparation and self-sustaining). This means that the whole life of the Church in Tanzania is built on the basis of small Christian communities. The main capital or sources of the Small Christian Communities are Christian families (Mahimbali, 2022; Chigozie, Munene & Gakuo, 2017).

Globally, SCCs improve public perception, gain an individual or organization special esteem from their peers, lessen pollution, generate employment possibilities, and meet social needs (Chigozie, Munene, and Gakuo, 2017). The global community supports developing countries' efforts to incorporate people in development through the worldwide phenomenon of community participation. Local communities must be included in a participatory process in order to be supported by the World Bank, the United Nations, and other donors (Leadbeater, 2013).

According to Mansuri and Rao (2011) church funded projects are typically implemented in a unit referred to as a 'community'. Most of church schools, hospitals and income generating projects of the CDM were established by donor agencies for instance Action Group of East Africa (AKO-Aktionskreis Ostafrika) from German. However, little is discussed in the literature on the SCC participation in managing development projects of the CDM. Earlier researchers, specifically on SCCs participation in the management of the CDM projects have not covered the extent to which SCC are involved in managing church projects. This study aimed to fill the gap left yawning by earlier researchers, specifically on SCCs participation in the management of the CDM projects. Specifically, it evaluates the SCCs' participation in the Catholic Church's management of development projects in Moshi. The specific objectives of the paper were i) to evaluate the

participation of SCCs in managing CDM development projects, and ii) to determine the benefits brought about in the community because of their participation in the design and management of development CDM projects.

Causes of some of the Church projects' failure may be attributable to lack of community participation associated with dominated by the top-down projects from Bishops, Priests and donors (Bakari, 2018). This study is justified on the ground that, understanding the way the SCCs participate in managing the church's development projects enhances projects' sustainability and thus improve SCC own benefits (Sitienei *et al*, 2021; Swapan, 2014).

## 2.0 LITERATURE UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

### 2.1 The Ladder of Citizen Participation

The Ladder of Citizen Participation, as proposed by the Sherry Arnstein in 1969, served as the underpinning model for this study. In fact, one of the most popular and significant models in the area of community participation is the ladder of citizen participation. The ladder was created to help people grasp how participation impacts on the expansion and development of projects under execution. This model is suitable for this study as management of Church projects engage the community, local leaders, organisers, and donors in development activities. SCCs' participation in several stages of development projects for the Catholic Diocese of Moshi is comparable to the ladder of participation. It is an approach the underprivileged use to participate in deciding how information is disseminated, objectives and policies are formed, how programmes are run, and how incentives such as contracts and sponsorship are distributed. As a result, SCCs can profit from the advantages of Catholic Diocese of Moshi projects. In other words, participation without power distribution is a meaningless and discouraging process for the underprivileged.

The assumption under the participatory ladder is that when beneficiaries participate they can induce the inclusivity of the decision-making process, thereby instituting a sense of ownership over the development process that can lead to sustainable impacts. To create a ladder to promote children's participation often referred to as the ladder of youth participation, Hart (1992) relied on Sherry Arnstein's model. White (1992) used Sherry Arnstein's model to develop a typology of participation to underscore how the politics of participation get undermined by conflicts involving actors, terms and power.

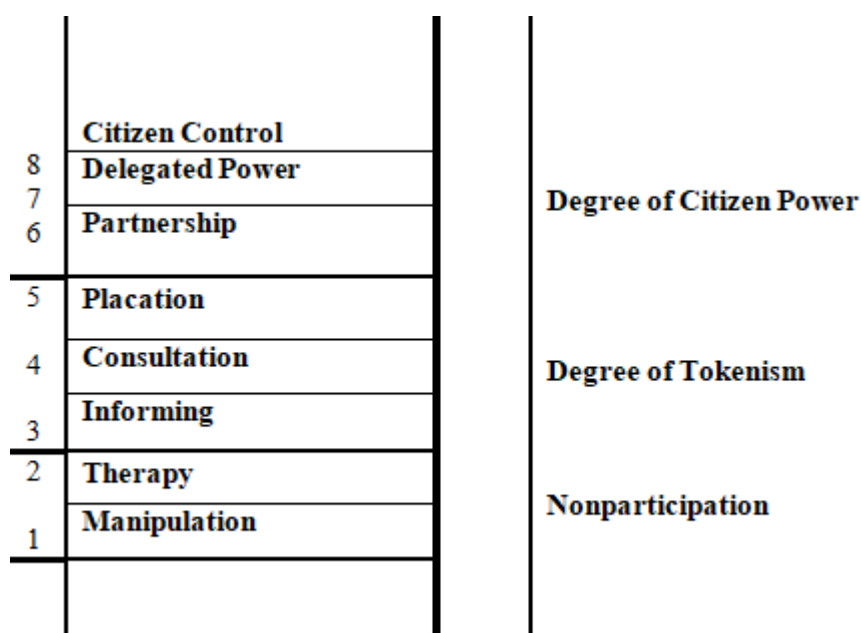


Figure 1: Ladder of participation

**Source: Adopted from Sherry (1969).**

The first two rungs indicate a lack of technical participation; communities are about the projects and decisions. Leaders in stage one (manipulation) may invite community members to meetings to create an impression before donors that beneficiaries were involved in decision-making when the opposite was true. Stage two is therapy. During this phase, the project leader may ask for opinions and ideas, possibly, adjusting and deciding accordingly based on their feedback. The third to fourth rungs entail tokenism as a form of participation. Rung three entails informing people about the projects and issues of concern. Ultimately, sensitisation and dissemination of information to community members are critical for community members to attain their objectives, community should be given opportunity to air their views (Arnstein, 1969).

The final three rungs of participation demonstrate active community involvement in development projects, which amounts to “citizen control.” During these phases, community alongside their leaders, delegate authority and responsibility among one another. Community members own the projects; moreover, there is an understanding between contributors and beneficiaries. Also, community members no longer rely on donations. Most significantly, they now have complete control over their projects when they reach the top rung.

The Ladder of Citizen Participation, calls for active SCCs participation in utilising indigenous knowledge in project planning and execution: It enhances project acceptance, results in a more equitable benefit distribution, encourages local resource mobilisation, and contributes to project sustainability (Mansuri *et al.*, 2013). However, participation has some limitations because it may result in manipulation of the local community members that development agencies might deploy for their own benefits (Mubita, Libati and Mulonda, 2017). Cornwall and Pratt (2010) also contend that participation might facilitate the collecting information from local community but without necessarily empowering them as anticipated. In this regard, the Sherry Arnstein model of participation works on the assumption that members can identify who has power in the community and encourages redistribution of power among the members.

## **2.2 Literature Review**

Several scholars such as Swapan (2014), Kumar (2016) and (Sitienei *et al.*, 2021) insist on community participation to develop and strengthen capabilities to further empower the primary beneficiaries (Sitienei *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, Swapan (2014) contends that community-based development relies much on the organisation of communities. Many studies, however, have yet to address the SCCs’ participation in managing CDM projects.

Overall, there is severely limited quantitative and qualitative evidence on Church projects detailing how communities engage in and benefit from Church projects (Baporikar, 2019; Mansuri & Rao, 2013; Awortwi, 2013; Mbevi, 2016) particularly in Tanzania. Kamuzzaman (2020), who had examined the relationship between involvement and empowerment, established that participation strategies fell short of addressing problems pertaining to the actors’ power dynamics. Also, the numbers of studies on SCCs participation in socio-economic development projects in the CDM remain largely inadequate, which is a geographical gap. Earlier studies have not looked on SCC participation and the benefits gained by members of the community particularly in the Catholic Diocese of Moshi. Amos and Koda (2018) carried on a study on educational projects concentrated in the CDM but health and food were left out. This research will fill in the gap concerning education, health and food.

Equally crucial, studies carried on community participation tend to focus on government-funded projects (Mbevi, 2016). Furthermore, participation-based case studies and empirical data on Catholic Church SCCs are not equally common in extant literature (Puskás, Abunnasr & Naalbandian, 2021). This scenario could be linked to projects not being published in peer-reviewed journals or elsewhere. As a result, a gap on Catholic Church SCCs participation in socio-

economic development and its actualization in peer-reviewed scholarly literature has emerged. Therefore, this paper seeks to address issues pertaining to the participation of SCCs in CDM particularly in designing and managing development projects; the engagement of members in development projects from the designing stage to decision-making and the benefits associated with such participation.

### 3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Kilimanjaro region focusing on SCCs of the CDM. The selected area is home to several educational and income-generating projects initiated by CDM for members of the community to own and sustain these projects (Amos & Koda, 2018). The CDM has 11 pre-primary and primary schools, 29 secondary schools, 15 vocational training centres and five (5) colleges. The CDM has also initiated hospital facilities such as Kibosho, Huruma, Kilema, Ngoyoni and St. Joseph hospital-Soweto.

The study employed concurrent triangulation design in a mixed methods research approach that made use of qualitative and quantitative data collected separately but concurrently (Gibson, 2017). This design allowed the study to optimise the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods to overcome weaknesses inherent in one particular method, which helped to validate the findings generated using both methods (Creswell, 2014). The unit of analysis were SCC members drawn from CDM.

The study's target population comprised 165 SCCs and 4,950 SCC members drawn from parishes and sub-parishes of Himo, Matala, Makuyuni, Soweto, Majengo and Shanti town in the CDM. The SCC population and their respective members was obtained from Catholic Diocese of Moshi data base. The study used Yamane's (1967) formula, as cited by Israel (2013), to determine the sample of the members of SCCs by assuming 95% confidence level and  $p = 0.05$ , from which the size of the sample should be:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where:  $n$  = Sample size

$e^2$  = Margin error set a 5%

$N$  = Number of SCC members

$$n = \frac{4950}{1 + 4950(0.05^2)} = 370$$

$n = 370$  respondents

The study employed simple random sampling to draw a representative sample from the entire population of 165 SCCs where 370 respondents were picked randomly. Lists of SCC members were obtained from SCCs registers of 6 parishes and sub-parishes to select a representative sample from each SCC. Twelve (12) Key informants) were purposively selected from the six (6) parishes of the study area because they had comprehensive knowledge on how SCCs participate in managing Church projects. These participated in key informant interviews (KIIs). Their knowledge and experience were verified by their position in Church projects and experience (in years) of working on that project. The Key informants selected comprised a diocesan administrator (1), two (2) priests, one (1) nun, two (2) managers of Church income generating projects, two (2) health workers, two (2) education workers, and two (2) from SCCs.

To get in-depth information on the perceptions, experiences and attitudes of SCCs; the study used a questionnaire, KII and Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) for gathering information from a purposively selected group. In this regard, the study held six (6) focus group discussions, each comprising eight (8) participants plus a facilitator (the researcher) and a note-taker (an assistant of the researcher), which created more intimate environment for discussion. Open-ended

questions helped to generate information from a large number of SCCs' interactions. In selecting FGD participants, gender, age and cliques received special attention. The FGDs were led by the moderator and the note-taker with the goal of generating different opinions from different SCCs. The six FGDs were each allotted 90 minutes for the members to discuss and conclude on different issues, which Gibson (2012) recommends as ideal without boring adult participants. For children and the elderly, the duration could be less. In-depth interviews and open-ended questions that encouraged participants to express their ideas were employed to collect qualitative data.

Collected information was summarised using quantitative data analysis that combined descriptive and inferential statistics (Liou & Hung, 2015). Quantitative method which involved descriptive and inferential analysis was presented in tabular form. To improve the assessment of SCCs involvement in socio-economic activities, the study combined qualitative and quantitative data, which facilitated the integration of various theoretical frameworks by counterbalancing the weaknesses of one piece of data with its strengths. Qualitative data obtained from KIIs and FGDs were subjected to thematic analysis by summarising the data based on their themes and comparing the arguments to get meaningful information. The massive data collected were reduced to make sense of them, then organised, summarised and categorised, with patterns and themes identified and linked accordingly.

Furthermore, the binary logistic regression analysis was appropriate for the first specific objective because the dependent variable (management) had a binary outcome: Participatory and non-participatory groups. Additionally, because it involves fewer assumptions than discriminant analysis, logistic regression is simpler to apply. Like other types of regression, binary logistic is also a predictive analysis. The binary dependent variable (management) was regressed on five predictor independent variables. The dependent variable was dichotomized with a value of 1 for participation and 0 for non-participation for community members. The binary logistic regression model was specified as follows:

$$\text{Logit}(P_i) = \frac{\log p(x)}{1-p(x)} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \dots + \beta_p X_{pi} \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

To use logistic regression, an equation of the following form must be fitted to the data.

$$\text{Logit}(P_i) = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \dots + \beta_p X_{pi} + e \dots \dots \dots (2)$$

Where:

The chances of SCCs participating is represented by the binary Logit (Pi) = Y. Participation in management of development projects of the CDM was coded as 1, and no participation of members was coded as 0.

- $\alpha$  = intercept of the equation
- $\beta_1 - \beta_p$  = regression coefficients
- $X_1 - X_p$  = Predictor variables.
- $e$  = Error term

**Table 1: Definitions of model variables**

Variables	Definition of variables and units of measurement	
P/(1-P) variable	Dependent	Binary: Y = 1 if the members participated and 0 if members did not participate
	Management	
<b>Independent variables</b>		
X <sub>1</sub> MPD	Members participate in designing community projects	
X <sub>2</sub> MPD	Members participate in decision making	
X <sub>3</sub> PCM	Members participate in contributing cash or materials in kind	
X <sub>4</sub> PVW	Members participate in voluntary project works	
X <sub>5</sub> CPM	Members participate in project evaluation	

## 4.0 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 4.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

This paper aimed to determine the SCCs' participation in the management of CDM development projects. Specifically, the paper aimed to evaluate participation of SCCs in managing development projects of the CDM and to determine the benefits for the community. Socio-demographic profiles of the respondents were used to show the characteristics of the participants in the study's sample of respondents (Wang *et al*, 2018). Data from the sample used for the study were evaluated by considering factors including the respondents' gender, level of education, and employment history.

**Table 2. Distribution of socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents**

Variables	n=370	(100%)
Sex		
Male	173	47
Female	197	53
<b>Education level</b>		
Certificate	196	53
Diploma	85	23
Bachelor Degree	89	24
Total	370	100
<b>Working experience (Years)</b>		M(SD)=8.8(6.6): Range (1-31)
1-10	56	15
11-20	144	39
>20	170	46

M =Mean, SD=Standard Deviation

The study respondents from the selected SCCs of the CDM were 370, among whom 47 percent were male and 53 percent were female, as indicated in Table 2. The study revealed that more females participated in socio-economic development activities in most communities. This was evidenced by the most of the people who participated in prayer meetings and Church voluntary activities women. The findings in Table 2 show that 53 per cent of the respondents had attained primary school or secondary school certificate without any training, which could otherwise affect contribution of skills needed in designing, controlling and decision-making of Church projects in their communities, which may lead to a top-down development approach.

This indicates that most of the community members interviewed had a low level of education (certificates) and, hence, they could only participate in lower levels. Only a few educated members effectively participated in designing, managing and decision making. Diploma holders, as Table 2 illustrates, accounted for 23 per cent, and bachelor's degree holders for 24 per cent of



the respondents. Most of the elected leaders are diploma and bachelor's degree holders who work in administrative offices. In this regard, Rambe and Makhalemele (2015) who argued that the effectiveness of a company and the extent of community service participation might suffer because of staff's competencies.

Furthermore, the study sample had 46 per cent of the participants with more than 20 years' work experience. In other words, SCCs had registered both youthful and elderly people. Implicitly, the formation of SCCs had a well-balanced composition comprising both youthful and elderly people, which enabled them to share ideas and improve their living conditions. The presence in SCCs of a good number of youths was beneficial since they were very active and skilled in their activities and can contribute towards the development of Church projects. Similarly, Mwanzi (2010) and Otieno (2021) contended that youth involvement in community projects should be a long-term strategy in which the beneficiaries contribute to management of development initiatives beyond simply gaining an ownership stake in the project.

**Table 3: SCCs participation in managing CDM development projects**

CP	Coefficient (B)	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)	95% CI for Exp(B)
Designing	1.140	0.341	11.149	1	0.001	3.128	1.60-6.11
Decision Making	2.301	0.383	36.090	1	0.001	9.981	4.71-21.1
Contribution cash or materials in kind	2.046	0.493	17.208	1	0.001	7.738	2.94-20.3
Voluntary project works	-0.295	0.337	0.769	1	0.381	0.744	0.38-1.44
Members participate in project evaluation	1.879	0.366	26.295	1	0.001	6.545	3.19-13.4

Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients (Chi-square = 11.575; sig. 0.001); Cox & Snell R Square = 0.074; Nagelkerke R Square = 0.099.

#### 4.2 Small Christian community members' participation in designing initiated projects

The findings on Table 3 revealed that SCC participation is likely to influence designing community projects as Exp(B) value is 3.128 with a p-value of <0.001 which is less than 0.05. This implies a substantial strength and magnitude of association between SCCs participation in designing community projects established by the CDM. The results in Table 3 further reveal that the involvement of SCCs in designing had an effect of performing better 3.128 times higher if SCCs participate in socio-economic development.

The findings are comparable to those by Cornwall (2018), who found that community participation in the initial stages is a crucial aspect in community development since it ensures that local communities develop a sense of ownership of the project and this would result to project sustainability. On the other hand, FGDs reported that some SCC members who were non-involved in designing due to lack of skills in support the community by undertaking voluntary manual activities.

Findings from the KIIs regarding how SCCs of the CDM participate in designing development projects revealed that Church-funded projects initiated by missionaries from Europe and the US obtained land from the community. Other Christians gave their land to Church for free so that dispensaries and schools could be built in their villages. One of the KIIs from Makuyuni; supported by three others from Himo, Majengo, and Matala; moreover, the issue emerged in FGDs from Shanti town:

*“SCCs participated from the project initiation by offering land even though they were not in the management team. Community leaders were informed about their intention of constructing schools and dispensaries, and so offered land for the new development. Thus, we can say that the community participated by offering land but not in designing and management...”* (KIIs and FGDs, Makuyuni, August, 2020).

This statement implies that community elders offered land to the donors who supported the early missionaries to construct Church projects as they understood the value of schools and dispensaries in their villages. The results are consistent with earlier research findings, including by Hoe *et al.* (2018), Masum (2018), and Toledo (2019), which underscored the value of community involvement in socio-economic development initiatives to cultivate a culture of project ownership and sustainability. Currently, the bishop and the clergy of the CDM have started involving SCCs in leadership for them to own and sustain health and educational projects handed over by missionaries. KIIs also revealed that after the bishop and the parish priest had continuously insisted on SCC participation, many members started contributing to the sustainability of the projects. Consequently, different Church projects have representation from the community in their board meetings.

#### **4.3 Members’ involvement in the management and decision-making**

Table 3 indicates a high likelihood of influencing SCCs participation in the management and decision making by an Exp(B) value of 9.981 with a p-value < 0.001. Impliedly, an increase of 1 unit per year increases the likelihood of an individual participating in management. On the other hand, KIIs informed the study that only some leaders of SCCs and some members with high education engaged in management, indicating that some SCC members do not participate in decision-making due to their low education and lack of skills. Mbithi (2019) opined that member participation was necessary for local projects to flourish to embrace local socio-cultural ideas. One KII reported that some community members lacked interest in attending unpaid meetings and participating in voluntary work meant for developing their own areas. This calls for community leaders to encourage their people to partake in project development works from designing, implementation to monitoring and project evaluation. Results from two FGDs, that is, Himo and Soweto informed the study:

*“SCCs participate in managing the projects initiated by the Church even though not all of them. You cannot make every member be a leader, but few members who have skills and ability are elected to represent the rest in the management board, and then after every phase of the project is completed a report is passed on to all members...”* (FGDs, Himo and Soweto, August 2020).

Implicitly, CDM involves SCCs leaders in the management team in their respective parishes’ development projects. Each parish has a chairperson representing it at the diocesan level during the presentation of all development projects of the diocese. After all, all the SCCs are represented in the management board of the CDM through their leaders.

#### **4.4 Member participation in contributing cash or materials in kind**

Regarding SCCs’ participation in contributing cash or materials for the development of the community projects, the results on Table 3 indicates a high likely influence with Exp(B) value of 7.738 and a p-value of < 0.001. This implies that probably SCC participation by contributing materials or cash has contributed to the development of Church projects 7.738 times high. According to Pope John Paul II, SCCs are a tremendous source of enlivening life in the Parish through charitable works organised by the SCCs of the same area (John, 2016). Similarly, Massawe and Chumbula (2018) asserted that the ability of the community to make strategic decisions on how to raise funds from local communities, starting from the designing stage to the operation and management depends on how Members contribute resources. Impliedly, the CDM

has insisted and encouraged SCCs to give materials or cash for sustaining projects which will help in eradicating poverty.

Furthermore, members of the Church are ready to contribute materials in kind when a newly-introduced development project in their area (Mbui, 2018). KIIs from the study area reported that development projects in the CDM are authorised by the bishop after all of the stages of the projects are announced and that members of an elected committee are involved in all the activities. The KIIs from Christ the King Cathedral explained how the Mwendoko Complex near Mkombozi Bank was built by tapping into the efforts of all the SCCs, with each SCC getting an envelope for each member to contribute depending on their earnings. SCCs also contribute tithes that are directed to development activities under the directives of the bishop, especially in education and health facilities. Members get a comprehensive report after the project's conclusion, which it is also read in Church for members to learn about how each SCC participated and the associated benefits.

#### 4.5 Community members' participation in project evaluation

Concerning members' participation in in project evaluation, results in Table 3 indicate an Exp(B) value of 6.545 with a p-value<0.001 and a Wald statistic of 26.3, which probably implies that when SCC members attend management meetings in evaluating a project, success rate of the project would increase 26 times. Impliedly, when members are entrusted with responsibility, they own the projects and put more efforts in development. On the other hand, in a FGD at Majengo, the participants agreed that in most of the CDM projects participation of CCS was through information or consultation. Similarly, Chumbula and Massawe (2018) opined that monitoring and evaluation involved only few leaders who then communicated the results to the beneficiaries.

**Table 4: Overall SCCs participation in management of CDM projects**

Variables of SCCs participation on managing CDM projects	Overall community involvement	
	N	%
Community participates designing different activities in the organization	251	68.3
Participation in the long-term planning of project activities concerning community development	247	66.7
Participation in decision making	239	64.7
Participation by contributing materials	268	72.3
Participation in voluntary works	266	75.2
Participate in project evaluation	311	83.8

Results in Table 4 show that 68.3 per cent of the SCC participants in designing development projects, which was supported by the KIIs who stated that most of the projects initiated by the Catholic Church normally involved leaders from all SCCs who then passed on information to all members concerning the new development plans in their parishes. The coverage includes income generating projects such as building shops and houses for renting, constructing community halls or parish offices.

Subsequently, the report is presented before all members in Church during Sunday masses, hence achieving mass dissemination. The parish council, with the parish priest, plans and designs project activities and thereafter report to the parishioners on all the works done. Mbevi (2016) similarly opined that the management's reporting on the community members enhances transparency and accountability. Implicitly, the Catholic Church advocates for community participation in most community-based projects by assisting people to acquire new knowledge on self-sustaining and involving those monetary and in-kind contributions for the disadvantaged.

Raji *et al.* (2018) further argued that community participation in socio-economic development provides local solutions to local problems. Besides, 66.7 per cent of the respondents reported that SCC members participated in the planning of Church development projects. Impliedly, communities are more informed of Church involvement in community development activities through their parish council and SCC leaders, who usually participate in meetings with the parish priest. These findings are consistent with Kicheleri (2020), who confirmed the essentiality of community members' participation in identifying problems, planning, and evaluation of the projects that directly benefited and benefited from local communities.

The results also show that 64.7 per cent of the SCC members participated in managing and decision-making. In this regard, FGDs revealed that not every member of SCC attended management meeting particularly those who are in a parish council. The rest of the members are informed through church announcements whereby members cannot change what has already been decided. These findings were supported by one of the KIIs who said:

*"...in our SCC, we participate in implementing what has been decided by our representatives in the Parish council. We normally contribute to the development of our projects in the diocese without being forced..."* (KIIs' Majengo August, 2020).

Impliedly, the SCC leaders, together with the Parish council, participate in designing and managing projects within the Parish. After setting the budget, each SCC gets informed about their monetary contributions.

#### **4.6 Participating in CDM development projects of benefit to the SCCs community**

The second objective of this paper examined benefits gained by the community members due to their involvement in CDM socio-economic initiatives. Participants in FGDs and KIIs gave different ideas concerning what they had experienced and gained from participating in CDM development projects. The benefits generated were insufficient for them to have a substantial impact on socio-economic progress. Results from the FGDs, which were supported by two KIIs from Matala, Soweto and Majengo, were as follows:

*"Although the CDM, through her income generating projects such as Kilacha production, has provided employment for the surrounding communities and supported a variety of individual local businesses especially in agriculture and animal husbandry, not all the community members enjoy such benefits. We, who live in the same area and have jobs elsewhere, have no direct benefits as we buy their products as we could buy somewhere else. So we cannot say we have gained because any service we get implies certain costs ....."* (FGDs, at Matala, August 2020).

This implies that the CDM cooperates with the community members in fostering community and raising the standard of living in the community and its surroundings. These results are consistent with Kipkeu *et al.* (2014) who found that some individual households failed to benefit from participating in community socio-economic activities as most of the times projects initiated by the Church targeted the underprivileged in the community. However, the SCCs compromise the poor and those with assurance of their income every month for them to support each other. The CDM does not only provide direct economic benefits but also failed to explain the social benefits to the society. Aga *et al.* (2018) opined in the same vein involved community members in a project enhanced their initiatives in participation and benefits more people. Impliedly, the communities' ownership of a development project would participate voluntarily and actively in all the activities without separating the poor and the rich (Tabsoba and Ayarkwa, 2021).

The study found that the SCCs' involvement in Church development projects had a significant positive impact on income generation of community members. Findings from the KIIs informed the study that the diocese initiated Kilacha Agriculture and livestock Training Centre (KALT)

aimed to train and involve local community members in farming through SCCs that could gain new knowledge. Documentary review indicated that the objectives of KALT were to offer free seminars to surrounding community members on agriculture and animal husbandry, to offer improved seeds and irrigation. Surrounding communities of Himo and Makuyuni ward are now involved in managing irrigation water by participating in meeting and voluntary works. The discussions brought about valuable information on how SCCs of the Catholic Church participate in development activities. FGD at Makuyuni explained how they had gained new knowledge from KALT by participating in free seminars offered concerning modern farming methods. One participant from Makuyuni near Himo town, supported by two participants from Matala explained:

*“Due to climate change, Makuyuni has been very dry. For instance, the area did not have enough rainfall in 2018 and 2019. KALT trained members of the surrounding communities on how to use modern seeds which can resist drought and application of irrigation. The community was trained on how to use irrigating on vegetable gardens, and this was very successful as it can be seen on Himo market, 23 km from Moshi Town, which is normally open on Mondays and Thursdays. The market supplies different agricultural products. Participation in modern farming methods introduced by the Catholic Church has enabled the community around Kilacha to be self-reliant in food production....”* (FGDs, Makuyuni Ward Moshi District August 20, 2020).

The main concerns raised by the participants in this FGD regarding the SCCs' participation in the development projects include knowledge gained through attending seminars conducted by KALT and how they used irrigation in improving food production. The local population revealed significant interest in irrigation farming by planting vegetables for sale. Participants said that they had gained from employment offered by Catholic Church projects including education and health facilities.

KIIs from Himo Parish informed the study that SCCs participated in development activities through tithes and other individual donations. They have constructed a nursery school and a community social hall to which all the SCCs contributed through cash and materials. Some community members contributed several bags of cement, sand and bricks; all these items were announced in the Church without mentioning the names of the contributors. Implicitly, SCCs participate in development activities as the diocesan financial administrator confirmed that most parishes have nursery schools or dispensaries which are financed by their own local communities. This development can enhance improved livelihood as communities are assured of early education and health facilities near their homes without walking long distances.

Field experiences indicate that community involvement is essential in supporting parishes; it encourages inclusivity in all diocese-wide events. In fact, all the diocese-wide projects and activities have SCCs in mind, hence allowing them to partake in socio-economic development and pursuing of personal objectives. One of the KIIs backed this view by saying:

*“The CDM has initiated health facilities in our community, and we are taught to own and develop more by contributing to the growth of the facilities introduced. Participation in projects can benefit the community; in fact, many members have developed a purpose and sense of contribution, which has helped to foster a sense of belongingness in society....”* (KIIs, at Himo, 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020).

Impliedly, SCCs' participation in the development of Church projects has translated into increased sustainability due to a sense of ownership. The Catholic Church has also established a sense of ownership by involving SCCs in contributing tithes from their monthly income for the development of Church projects. On the other hand, FGD participants at Soweto supported by participants in another FGD at Majengo explained that, depending on participation and

contribution in kind from SCCs, participation might delay budgetary allocation and project implementation as some people might not be willing to contribute on time, hence losing all the benefits they could otherwise gain had they partook in development projects:

*“In the CDM, the tendency of development projects is to focus on self-reliance. The Catholic Church, through its SCCs information, passes from the leaders to the members of the community. This way there had been a delay in information sharing coupled with poor communication elongates discussion unnecessarily and delayed feedback and decision-making in the process. This dilemma stems from low awareness of roles and responsibilities of community members in project planning. Due to lack of financial and technical resources, once the management comes across a donor who is willing to assist in health or education facilities owned by the Catholic Church decisions are made without seeking the stakeholders’ participation. Even without participating in development projects, once projects are set up, even those who did not participate in their construction say a dispensary or school also benefited them....”* (FGDs, at Soweto, Moshi Municipality, 21<sup>st</sup> August 2020).

The study findings imply that most of the people get attracted and attached to Church projects after contributing resources, especially in monetary terms. In this regard, results from an FGD at Matala sub-Parish revealed:

*“All the services offered to the individuals by the Parish start from the SCCs; if one member does not participate in the weekly meetings of the SCCs in an area, some services are banned from them because participation in weekly activities of SCCs including prayers allows them to learn about new projects introduced by the Catholic Church and how to participate in development activities. The parish priest receives and gives information on development plans of the parish starting from SCCs; he gathers ideas from all the SCCs of the parish and informs all the members of the parish accordingly. The sum contributed for development activities by each SCC is mentioned in Church on Sundays, and thus all community members become aware of how the amounts will be spent via their parish council...”* (FGDs, at Matala, 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2020).

This set-up is in line with the Catholic social teachings aimed to enable a person to participate in the life of the society by contributing to the common good (Hunnes, 2022). The parish also has a nursery and primary school dependent on funds raised from tithes, harvests (*mavuno*), thanksgiving masses, and celebrations in each SCC. These findings are consistent with those by Guitian (2017) who found that SCCs’ co-operation was both a moral principle and a virtue.

## **5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The primary goal of this paper was to evaluate the SCCs participation in managing development projects of the CDM and, secondly, and determine the benefits accruing from the community because of participating in managing development projects. The findings revealed that females were more active in SCCs than males as they attended in most voluntary works. The results signal a substantial association between SCC engagements in development project management. The findings also indicate that community members have benefited from education and health facilities provided, especially the SCCs of Himo Parish that receive free seminars and workshops from KALT. Matala and Makuyuni sub-parishes have also gained from irrigation and quality seeds.

### **5.1 Conclusion**

Overall, SCCs are actively involved in development projects by sharing necessary values crucial in successful implementation of CDM development projects. It is concluded that SCCs participate in designing, monetary contributions and decision making on the development projects of the CDM. It is also concluded that SCCs have no ownership of the projects as they believe the projects are for the Church and not for community. Moreover, the SCCs have benefited from education and

health facilities established by the CDM with support from donor agencies, particularly, from livestock and agriculture seminars including improved seeds and irrigation.

## 5.2 Recommendations

Thus, the study recommends that the CDM Parish priests and Parish council should continue involving and sensitising congregational members on participating in socio-economic development activities and their attendant benefits to attain success in all the diocese development projects. Also, Church leaders are recommended to work closely with the SCCs by involving the poor and rich, the educated and uneducated, in designing, managing and decision-making pertaining to community projects. It is further recommended that SCCs should own Church projects so as to sustain them and benefit more from the services rendered. Furthermore, a policy that emphasises participatory strategies should be enhanced especially in designing, management and decision-making of the CDM development projects. The implementation of such a policy can help to reduce challenges and risks inherent in the maintenance and sustainability of development schemes requiring meaningful SCC participation.

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