



# The Implications of Grassroots Development Theory in Development Policy Making in Nigeria

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## Abstract

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*This research explores the implications of the Grassroots Development Theory in shaping development policy in Nigeria. The study identifies key challenges including economic inequality, corruption, regional disparities, and social conflicts that hinder inclusive and sustainable development in the country. The primary aim is to analyze the practical application of Grassroots Development Theory in addressing these challenges and promoting holistic development. To achieve this, a descriptive qualitative research method is employed, involving an extensive literature review encompassing scientific journals, books, research reports, government policies, and relevant literature sources. The findings of this study shed light on the potential of Grassroots Development Theory to guide policy formulation for more inclusive and equitable development in Nigeria. The research concludes that a deep understanding of these challenges and a commitment to addressing them collectively are essential for Nigeria to achieve inclusive, sustainable, and peaceful development for its entire population. The study recommends further research focusing on concrete impacts, comparative analysis with similar nations, participatory research to understand local perspectives, and policy analysis, particularly in the areas of education and grassroots skill development.*

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

Development is a profound and complex issue faced by many countries around the world. Nigeria, a country located in West Africa, attracts attention as one of the countries with a very large and diverse population. However, like many other countries, Nigeria is also not spared from serious development challenges. Among the major issues of concern when it comes to Nigeria's development are the high levels of poverty that are still rampant, the growing inequality, as well as the social conflicts that continue to rage. High levels of poverty reflect the inability for many Nigerians to meet their basic needs, such as access to food, decent housing, and adequate health services. Worsening economic and social inequality is another source of concern, with a handful of individuals and regions dominating wealth and opportunity, while most of the population lives in poverty and limited opportunities. Finally, protracted social conflicts, such as ethnic and religious conflicts, have become a serious obstacle to sustainable development efforts in Nigeria. Therefore, a thorough understanding and planning in dealing with these issues is crucial in terms of the country's development. (Abasilim 2019)

Nigeria, with its vast potential in natural resources, faces a glaring paradox: the high level of poverty experienced by a large proportion of its population. Despite the country's vast oil reserves and various other natural resources, many Nigerians still must survive below the poverty line. The impact is deeply troubling, as access to basic services such as quality education, adequate healthcare, and safe, clean water remains a major challenge for many residents. Poverty in Nigeria is also not just an economic issue, but also has serious impacts on the social aspects and well-being of the community, including lack of access to quality education that can hinder social mobility, as well as the impact of poor health that can threaten people's survival and productivity. Therefore, efforts to address poverty and improve people's access to basic services are integral to Nigeria's broader development agenda. (ALI 2019)

Economic and social inequality is a deep and serious problem in Nigeria. The stark disparities between social groups and specific regions of the country point to significant inequities in the distribution of wealth and opportunity. Most economic wealth and opportunities are concentrated in the hands of a few individuals and in certain regions, while most other Nigerians are trapped in an intractable cycle of poverty. These inequalities cover several aspects, including access to decent work, quality education and adequate healthcare. In addition, regional inequalities are also an issue, with some regions being more prosperous and having good infrastructure, while other regions are still lagging in development. These stark economic and social inequalities create social instability and can be a serious obstacle to sustainable and inclusive development in Nigeria. Therefore, efforts to reduce these inequalities and ensure a fairer distribution of wealth and opportunities should be a priority in the country's development efforts.

Nigeria is also a country faced with complex social conflict challenges. These conflicts involve various aspects, such as ethnic, religious and resistance to the government. Ethnic conflicts are often triggered by disputes between different ethnic groups in Nigeria, and religious conflicts often arise because of tensions between different religious groups. In addition, opposition to the government, whether political or economic in nature, also plays a role in generating protracted internal conflicts. These conflicts can have a serious impact on the development process in Nigeria. They can hamper efforts to achieve the political stability necessary for sustainable economic growth, damage infrastructure, and disrupt basic services such as education and health. Addressing social conflicts is therefore one of the critical priorities in the effort to achieve sustainable progress in Nigeria, while noting the importance of dialogue, reconciliation, and the provision of long-term solutions involving all stakeholders to achieve peace and stability. (ALI 2019; Abasilim 2019)

To address these challenges, the Nigerian government has implemented a number of development policies over the past few decades. Unfortunately, however, the outcomes of these policies have often fallen short of expectations and have not fully met the needs of the people. There are several factors that can explain this phenomenon. First, the lack of active community participation in the policy formulation process has been a significant obstacle. Policies formulated without involving the perspectives and inputs of local communities tend to be less sensitive to their real needs. In addition, corruption has also been a rampant problem in Nigeria, with development funds often being misused or diverted into the wrong hands, hampering the expected positive impact of development policies. Finally, the inability to implement policies effectively and efficiently is also a serious problem. Limitations in administrative capacity, insufficient budgets and other structural challenges can hinder proper policy implementation. Therefore, to maximize the effectiveness of development policies in Nigeria, there is a need for serious efforts to strengthen public participation, fight corruption, and improve administrative capacity. This will help ensure that policies can have a greater and more equitable positive impact on Nigerian society. (Ibietan and Ikeanyibe 2017)

It is therefore imperative to review the development approaches that have been used so far in Nigeria and look for more effective and inclusive solutions in formulating development policies. One promising approach is the Grassroots Development Theory, which emphasizes the active participation of communities in all stages of the development process. In Nigeria, where communities are heterogeneous and have varied needs, Grassroots Development Theory can be a useful instrument to ensure that development policies and projects truly reflect local needs and aspirations.

The implication of the Grassroots Development Theory is to give communities greater authority and role in the development process. It involves the active participation of communities in policy formulation, project planning, and decision-making related to local development. This approach does not limit itself to merely listening to the views

of the community, but also gives them an active role in the implementation of the projects. By authorizing communities, they have the opportunity to express their needs, aspirations and views directly. This means that the development policies formulated will more accurately reflect the realities and challenges faced by local communities. In addition, involving communities in project implementation can also increase their responsibility and understanding of the development process, which in turn can support project sustainability and ensure more sustainable positive impacts. (Garamvölgyi and others 2022) Thus, the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory is expected to result in more relevant and sustainable development policies. This helps to ensure that resources invested in development are used effectively and efficiently, and that development efforts actually lead to improved welfare and positive changes in local communities. By encouraging active community participation, Grassroots Development Theory offers the potential to improve the responsiveness and sustainability of development in Niger and other countries facing similar challenges. (Abuiyada 2018)

Active community participation in the development process, as emphasized in Grassroots Development Theory, has an important impact in creating a greater sense of ownership of development projects. When local communities are directly involved in project formulation, planning and implementation, they feel that the project is the result of their own contributions. This creates a strong emotional bond between the community and the project, increasing their sense of ownership of it. As a result, resistance to development projects tends to decrease. When communities feel that the project reflects their needs and aspirations, they are more likely to support it rather than present obstacles or conflicts. This is in contrast to projects imported from outside without active community involvement, which often face local resistance and mistrust. (Shin and others 2019)

In Nigeria, where inequality and social conflicts are serious challenges, increasing community ownership of development projects can help ease tensions and conflicts. It can also help in creating a more conducive environment for sustainable development. With communities feeling that development policies and projects are part of their own solutions, community acceptance and support for development policies in general can increase, bringing positive impacts in the quest to achieve more inclusive and sustainable development goals. This research will further explore how Grassroots Development Theory can be implemented in Nigeria and the extent to which this approach can positively contribute to development in the country. It is hoped that this research will provide valuable insights for designing more inclusive and sustainable development policies in the future, which can help address a number of previously identified challenges, such as rampant poverty, economic inequality and social conflict. (Abasilim 2021)

Through a review of previous literature focusing on development in Nigeria, we can see a number of important aspects relating to the development efforts that have been



undertaken by the government. These studies have revealed the diversity of development policies that have been implemented with varying degrees of success. However, one issue that has consistently emerged in these studies is the lack of active community participation in the formulation and implementation of development policies. This reflects the lack of real involvement and influence of communities in the development process. When communities are not actively involved in the policy formulation process, the results are often less responsive to the real needs, aspirations and conditions faced by local communities. The impact of this lack of participation can manifest in the failure of development policies to deliver significant benefits to those most in need. Therefore, highlighting the importance of community participation as a key element in the development process is highly relevant and points to the need for a more inclusive and people-oriented approach in formulating development policies in Nigeria. (Ibietan and Ikeanyibe 2017)

In addition, these studies have also highlighted the grassroots development approach as a potential alternative to address the problem of community non-participation in the development process in Nigeria. This approach emphasizes the active role of communities in all stages of development, from policy formulation to project implementation. Through direct community involvement, the grassroots development approach can ensure that development policies truly reflect the real needs and aspirations of local communities. One of the key aspects of this approach is that it allows communities to have greater control over the development processes that affect them. This means that policies and projects are likely to be more responsive to real challenges and needs, creating more sustainable and relevant solutions. (Makinde and others 2016; Abasilim 2020)

In Nigeria, a country that still faces serious challenges such as rampant poverty, stark economic inequality and protracted social conflicts, the grassroots development approach has great potential to make a significant positive impact in the quest for more inclusive and sustainable development. In this context, it places community participation as a key element in the entire development cycle. One of the key benefits of this approach is that it gives local communities the opportunity to have more control over development processes that directly affect them. This creates conditions that are more conducive to achieving economic equity, as communities have greater opportunities to participate in economic activities and utilize existing resources.

The grassroots development approach has great potential to reduce economic inequality in the Nigerian context, and this is one of its significant positive impacts. It encourages the promotion of more equitable access to resources and economic opportunities among communities. In many countries, including Nigeria, stark economic inequality has become one of the serious challenges that need to be addressed in the quest for more inclusive development. By applying the grassroots development approach, different layers of society, including those that may be economically

disadvantaged or marginalized, can be more actively involved in the development process. In this context, the approach promotes more equitable opportunities for people to access resources, training, employment and other economic opportunities. This can create an environment where economic disparities can be gradually reduced as more individuals and community groups can experience the economic benefits of development.

The grassroots development approach has great potential to address economic inequality, which has long been one of the major challenges in Nigeria. This approach not only emphasizes community participation as a key element in the development process, but is also capable of being an effective instrument in addressing stark economic disparities. In Nigeria, like many other countries, economic inequality has created significant gaps between social and economic groups. Much of the population lives in poverty, while some wealth and opportunities are concentrated in the hands of a few individuals and regions. This creates economic injustice that harms many people. Through a grassroots development approach, more equitable access to resources, training, employment and economic opportunities can be promoted among communities. This approach creates an environment where economic opportunities can be distributed more evenly, reducing existing economic disparities. (Abasilim 2021) With increased access and equitable economic opportunities, it is expected that development in Nigeria can become more inclusive and provide wider benefits to the entire society. This will not only help to reduce poverty and improve people's lives, but can also create a more stable basis for long-term sustainable development. In this way, the grassroots development approach has the potential to play a very important role in addressing the economic inequality that has long been a serious issue in Nigeria.

Beyond the economic aspect, the grassroots development approach also has great potential to contribute to efforts to promote peace and social stability in Nigeria. One of the significant positive impacts of this approach is its ability to actively involve communities in the development process. In Nigeria, like many other countries, social conflict is a recurring problem that can hinder sustainable development. Ethnic, religious and social conflicts are often factors that exacerbate social stability. However, the grassroots development approach can help address these conflicts more effectively. By involving communities in development, this approach creates a more inclusive forum for dialogue between groups involved in conflict. A more open and participatory development process can help identify the causes of conflict, listen to people's aspirations, and formulate solutions that better reflect the real needs of the community.

Therefore, the grassroots development approach can help in building the peace, stability and social cooperation necessary to achieve sustainable development. In the Nigerian context, where social conflict still predominates, this approach can make a very meaningful contribution to efforts to ease tensions and promote a more sustainable peace. As such, the grassroots development approach not only has the potential to



improve the economic aspects of communities, but can also play a role in creating a more peaceful and stable social environment, which is crucial in achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. In other words, amidst the challenges faced by Nigeria, the grassroots development approach has great potential to make a significant contribution to achieving more inclusive, sustainable and stable development.

This journal has a very relevant objective, which is to explain the implications of Grassroots Development Theory in terms of development policy development in Nigeria. The main focus of this journal is to propose that actively involving communities in the process of policy formulation and implementation of development projects has great potential to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of development in the country. By introducing a more inclusive and people-oriented approach, this journal hopes to provide a clearer view of how development in Nigeria can become more responsive to the needs and aspirations of local communities. In addition, this journal will also seek to identify the factors that influence the application of Grassroots Development Theory in the Nigerian State. This will help in understanding the constraints that may be faced in adopting this approach and also identify potential solutions to overcome these constraints. As such, this journal is expected to provide valuable insights to policy makers, researchers, and development practitioners in their quest to design more effective and sustainable development policies in Nigeria.

The main research problem that this journal focuses on is, "How can Grassroots Development Theory be implemented in the development of development policy in Nigeria, and what are the implications for the effectiveness of development in the country?" In order to answer this fundamental question, this journal will conduct an in-depth analysis of the principles of Grassroots Development Theory. These principles will be elaborated and applied in Nigeria to identify concrete opportunities. In addition, this journal will also identify potential challenges that may arise in trying to implement the Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria. These challenges could be social, economic, political or cultural factors that may hinder the process of more active community participation in policy formulation and development implementation.

In the next phase, this journal will explore the opportunities that exist to strengthen community participation in the development process in Nigeria. This involves exploring strategies that can be used to overcome the challenges identified earlier in terms of implementing the Grassroots Development Theory. These strategies may include community education approaches to increase their awareness of their role in development, as well as the active involvement of communities in decision-making processes regarding development policies. In addition, the journal could also explore practical models that have worked in other countries that have implemented the grassroots development approach successfully. Thus, through in-depth analysis and a comprehensive approach, this journal aims to provide a better understanding of how the grassroots development approach can be effectively implemented in Nigeria. In addition,

the journal will also discuss how this approach can contribute to increased development effectiveness in the country, as well as provide insights on how a more inclusive and people-oriented policy formulation process can help address existing development challenges in Nigeria.

The main objective of this study is to conduct an in-depth investigation into the potentials and constraints associated with the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory in terms of development policy in Nigeria. The study aims to explore the extent to which this approach can be successfully applied in an effort to enhance community participation in the development process. In this regard, the study will closely examine the extent to which the principles of Grassroots Development Theory can be adopted and implemented in existing development policies in Nigeria. This includes an analysis of the challenges that may arise during the implementation process, as well as the opportunities that can be leveraged to achieve more active community participation. By better understanding the potential and constraints of this approach, it is hoped that this study can provide valuable insights for stakeholders and policy makers in Nigeria. The aim is to help design policies that are more responsive to the needs of local communities and improve the overall effectiveness of development efforts. In other words, this study aims to make a positive contribution towards achieving more inclusive and sustainable development in Nigeria.

In addition, the study also has a very practical objective, which is to provide constructive recommendations to the Nigerian government, development agencies and civil society organizations. These recommendations will hopefully provide guidance to key stakeholders in their efforts to design more inclusive and sustainable policies. By integrating the principles of Grassroots Development Theory in their development policies, it is hoped that they can improve the effectiveness of development efforts, as well as increase community acceptance and support for development measures taken. Therefore, this study is expected to make a positive contribution towards achieving better and more sustainable development in Nigeria.

By investigating and exploring the implications of Grassroots Development Theory in the development of development policy in Nigeria, this journal has a clear objective. The hope is that it will contribute significantly to our understanding of how community participation can be a key element in promoting sustainable development and positively impacting the Nigerian society as a whole. In this regard, the research will help highlight the importance of incorporating people's views, needs and aspirations in the formulation and implementation of development policies. As such, it is hoped that this journal will provide a better view of how a more inclusive and people-oriented development policy can be an effective instrument in addressing the development challenges faced by Nigeria. As a result, this research will not only benefit stakeholders and policy makers in Nigeria, but will also make an important contribution to the global understanding of the importance of people's participation in the development process. In



this way, it is hoped that this journal will be a valuable source of insight in the quest to achieve more sustainable development and positively impact the Nigerian society and other countries that may adopt similar approaches.

## **II. METHODOLOGY**

The research methodology used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. Descriptive qualitative methods are used to analyze and describe a problem comprehensively in depth. This research aims to understand in depth the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory in terms of development policy in Nigeria. In the descriptive qualitative method, the author conducts an in-depth analysis of words, sentences, and images that have meaning and relevance in terms of research. In this study, data will be sourced from related literature relevant to the research topic, namely the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory in the development of development policies in Nigeria. The method used remains a descriptive qualitative method, but the focus of data collection will be focused on analyzing existing literature.(Koyan 2022)

Literature data will be obtained through in-depth search and study of documents such as scientific journals, books, research reports, government policies, and other relevant literature sources relevant to the research topic. These data will be used to support the analysis and understanding of the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria as well as its implications in development policy development. In addition, the literature data will be used to detail the principles of the Grassroots Development Theory, analyze the challenges that may be faced in its implementation in Nigeria, and explore opportunities to strengthen community participation in the development process. In the analysis stage, the author will synthesize data from relevant literature to develop a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The results of this analysis will form the basis for answering the research questions and identifying the implications of the Grassroots Development Theory in the development of development policies in Nigeria.(Rukin 2022)

This research emphasizes ontological activities, namely efforts to understand the existing reality and how Grassroots Development Theory can be implemented in terms of development policy in Nigeria. The results of the research will be presented in detail in the form of detailed, complete, and in-depth sentence descriptions, which describe the actual situation in terms of this research. In addition, the descriptive approach is used to provide a detailed report on the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory and its implications in the development of development policies in Nigeria. Thus, the descriptive qualitative method is a relevant and appropriate approach to answer the

research questions and achieve the objectives of this study by presenting comprehensive data and analysis.

The data collection process will involve searching, selecting and analyzing literature relevant to the research topic. The literature used will be selected based on certain criteria, such as relevance, credibility of the source, and the quality of the research methodology used in the literature. The data obtained from the literature will be used to identify key concepts, key findings and insights related to Grassroots Development Theory and its implementation in Nigeria. Furthermore, the collected data will be systematically analyzed. We will identify patterns, significant findings and implications from the literature reviewed. The results of this analysis will be used to support the arguments and findings in this study. The entire research process will result in a deep understanding of the research topic and its implications in terms of development policy in Nigeria. The descriptive qualitative method with a focus on literature analysis will help answer the research questions and contribute to the theoretical and practical understanding of how Grassroots Development Theory can be effectively implemented in Nigeria.

### **III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

In order to understand the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria, we conducted a rigorous literature review of various literature sources relevant to the research topic. The research process involved an in-depth search and analysis of various sources of information, such as scholarly journals, books, research reports and relevant government policies. Through an in-depth review of these literatures, we were able to identify some key findings of note regarding the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria. These findings not only illustrate the existing situation, but also provide a more in-depth view of the challenges and opportunities faced in enhancing community participation in the country's development.

#### **a. Lack of Community Participation**

The grassroots development approach has great potential to address economic inequality which has long been one of the major challenges in Nigeria. Nigeria, like many other countries in the world, faces stark economic inequalities, where most of the wealth and economic opportunities are concentrated in the hands of a handful of individuals and specific regions, while the vast majority of the population lives in poverty and limited opportunities. Grassroots Development Theory emphasizes the importance of community participation in the entire development cycle, including in the formulation of economic policies. By applying the principles of Grassroots Development Theory, Nigeria can create an environment where people's participation in economic



development becomes more equitable. This can be achieved through various means, such as supporting locally-owned micro and small enterprises, providing skills training to communities to improve their access to decent work, and developing inclusive programs that address the economic needs of diverse groups of people.(Adeniran and others 2021)

At the core of this approach is ensuring that economic policies do not only benefit a handful of individuals or groups, but also provide more equitable benefits to the entire society. In this way, the grassroots development approach not only emphasizes community participation as a key element in development, but also has the potential to be an effective instrument in addressing economic inequality which has long been a serious problem in Nigeria. In this regard, the approach has the potential to create a more equitable and inclusive economic environment, where economic disparities can be reduced along with increased opportunities and more equitable access. As such, the grassroots development approach can make a significant contribution to addressing economic inequality in Nigeria.(Omeje and others 2022)

In Nigeria, like many other countries, economic inequality has created significant gaps between social and economic groups. In the case of this country, these inequalities include aspects such as income, access to basic services and economic opportunities. Many Nigerians, especially those living in rural areas and less developed communities, live in extreme poverty, while some wealth and opportunities are concentrated in the hands of a few individuals and regions. These glaring economic inequalities create economic injustice to the detriment of many in Nigeria. Marginalized and disadvantaged communities face challenges in accessing quality education, adequate healthcare and decent jobs. This negatively impacts their quality of life and creates greater inequality in access to economic opportunities.(‘Human Development in Nigeria’ 2020)

Economic inequality can also be a source of social tension and instability in society. The economic woes experienced by a large section of the population can create a sense of discontent and inequality that can trigger social conflict. Addressing economic inequality is therefore critical to achieving inclusive and sustainable development in Nigeria. In this regard, a grassroots development approach that emphasizes community participation in economic development has great potential to address the issue of economic inequality. By actively involving communities in economic policy formulation and providing more equitable access to economic opportunities, this approach can help reduce existing economic disparities. As such, the grassroots development approach can be an effective solution to address the economic inequality that has long been a serious problem in Nigeria.(Aderemi and others 2022)

Through a grassroots development approach, more equitable access to resources, training, employment and economic opportunities can be promoted among communities. This approach creates an environment where economic opportunities can be distributed more equitably, reducing existing economic disparities. The basic concept of Grassroots Development Theory is to enable communities to participate in decisionmaking processes related to economic development. By giving communities better access to resources and economic opportunities, this approach can break the long-standing cycle of economic inequality. The grassroots development approach encourages local initiatives, such as micro and small enterprise development, skills training, and economic empowerment programs. It helps reduce the dependence of communities on a small number of individuals or companies that control a large part of the economy. In this way, it creates a more inclusive environment where more people have access to economic opportunities that can improve their quality of life.

In addition, by reducing economic inequality, grassroots development approaches can also contribute to social stability and reduce tensions in society. When more people have access to equitable economic opportunities, a sense of discontent and inequality can be reduced, which in turn can reduce the potential for social conflict. Therefore, the grassroots development approach not only emphasizes community participation as a key element in economic development, but also has the potential to be an effective solution in addressing the economic inequality that has long been a serious problem in Nigeria. By promoting fairer access to economic opportunities, this approach can create a more economically balanced society and contribute to more inclusive and sustainable development in the country. (Omeje and others 2022)

With increased equitable economic access and opportunities, it is expected that development in Nigeria can become more inclusive and provide wider benefits to the entire society. The grassroots development approach, which emphasizes community participation in the entire economic development cycle, has the potential to create an environment where more people have access to equitable economic opportunities. This will not only help reduce poverty and improve the lives of previously marginalized communities, but can also create a more stable basis for long-term sustainable development. In this way, the grassroots development approach has the potential to play a very important role in addressing the economic inequality that has long been a serious issue in Nigeria. By creating more equitable opportunities in the economy, this approach can change the existing economic structure that has been discriminating against some groups of people. By doing so, not only will there be more winners in the development process, but there will also be a heightened sense of inclusiveness in society. (Aderemi and others 2022)

In addition, more inclusive development also has the potential to create a more stable basis for long-term economic growth. When more people have access to economic opportunities and more communities are involved in the development process, social and political stability can increase. This can create a more conducive environment for investment, economic growth and job creation. Therefore, the grassroots development approach not only emphasizes community participation as a key element in economic development, but also has the potential to transform the existing economic landscape, create a more inclusive society, and provide wider benefits to all Nigerians. As such, it can be an effective instrument in addressing the economic inequality that has long been a serious problem in the country.

#### b. Corruption Challenges

A serious challenge in the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria is the widespread corruption in the country. Corruption has been a chronic problem that has hindered sustainable development and undermined efforts to realize honest people's participation in the development process. When it comes to the Grassroots Development Theory, the importance of honest community participation is key in achieving more inclusive and sustainable development goals. This theory emphasizes the active role of communities in formulating policies, planning projects, and implementing development. However, when corruption is rampant, honest community participation can be seriously hampered. Corruption is a serious challenge in the implementation of the Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria, and its impact can be very damaging on various aspects of development. (Abasilim 2019; Ibietan and Ikeanyibe 2017)

First of all, corruption can result in unfair and inefficient allocation of resources in development projects. Corrupt practices such as bribery, abuse of power, and extortion can lead to development funds that should be used for the benefit of society in a fair manner instead being used for the benefit of certain individuals or groups. This can result in development budgets that should reach the entire community instead flowing into the hands of a handful of individuals or groups who have access to the corridors of power. As a result, development programs that should provide broad benefits to the community are disrupted or even fail to achieve their goals. Funds that should be used to build infrastructure, health services, education, or other social projects may be used inefficiently or even misused. This has a direct impact on the effectiveness of development programs that are supposed to address issues such as poverty, inequality and social conflict. (Khoury and others 2022)

Corruption also creates a climate where development policies are no longer based on the interests of society, but rather on the interests of corrupt individuals or groups.

This goes against the basic principles of Grassroots Development Theory which emphasizes the active participation of all levels of society in the development process. When corruption is rampant, development policies can become an instrument to enrich the few, while the majority of people are marginalized. Tackling corruption is therefore a must in order to implement the grassroots development approach in Nigeria. It is only by ensuring equitable resource allocation, transparency in the use of development funds, and strict monitoring of corrupt practices that the Grassroots Development Theory can become more effective in creating inclusive and sustainable development. (Shin and others 2019)

Secondly, Corruption, as a rampant problem in Nigeria, has a profound impact on economic inequality in the country, which becomes an important aspect in understanding the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory. Secondly, corruption creates inequality in access to economic opportunities and resources. In this case, corruption can lead to a small number of individuals or groups having greater access to economic opportunities and resources, while the majority of society is marginalized. The basic principles of Grassroots Development Theory emphasize the active participation of all levels of society in the development process. This should create equitable opportunities for all citizens, regardless of their social or economic status. However, when corruption is rampant, social and economic disparities can worsen. Individuals or groups who have access to corrupt practices can gain significant advantages, while the majority of society who do not have such access continue to be marginalized. (Abuiyada 2018; Garamvölgyi and others 2022)

The impact of economic inequality exacerbated by corruption is that it hampers efforts to create a more inclusive and equitable society. When a small number of people or groups control economic resources and opportunities, the gap between them and the majority of society widens. This can result in uneven economic growth and increase inequality in the distribution of wealth and opportunities. Therefore, tackling corruption is not only key to maintaining the integrity of inclusive development, but also to achieving the goals of Grassroots Development Theory. Efforts to reduce economic inequality and ensure equitable access to economic opportunities and resources should be an integral part of the implementation of the Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria. In this way, more inclusive and sustainable development can become a reality for the entire society. (Khoury and others 2022)

Third, corruption has the potential to limit people's participation in the development process by deterring critical and honest voices. In this case, corruption is not only related to the embezzlement of funds or abuse of power, but also to the use of power to intimidate or punish individuals or groups who try to report or fight corrupt





practices. When individuals or groups who dare to try to expose or fight acts of corruption are faced with threats, repression, or even potential danger to themselves or their families, this can kill the spirit of active participation that is so necessary in terms of Grassroots Development Theory. Voices that are supposed to be agents of change in development can be silenced for fear of the possible consequences of standing up against corruption.(Braimoh and Onuoha 2022; C. and Ighodalo 2018)

This is a serious obstacle to implementing the Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria. As the theory relies on active participation, critical voices, and public monitoring, fear and intimidation arising from corruption can hinder this process. When people feel that reporting or countering corrupt practices could threaten their safety, the spirit of participation will be weakened, and efforts to achieve inclusive development will be hampered. Therefore, tackling corruption is not only important to ensure the effective implementation of Grassroots Development Theory but also to enable critical and honest voices in society to speak out. A crackdown on corruption, protection for whistleblowers, and fair law enforcement are key measures in ensuring healthy public participation and inclusive development.(Nneka and Tonia 2021)

Therefore, corruption is not only an obstacle to the effectiveness of the Grassroots Development Theory, but also threatens the integrity and purpose of this approach. Tackling corruption must be an integral part of efforts to implement the grassroots development approach in Nigeria. It is only by decisively addressing corruption and ensuring equitable resource allocation, honest community participation, and transparent decision-making that the Grassroots Development Theory can achieve its potential in creating more inclusive and sustainable development in Nigeria. Efforts to promote honest public participation and ensure equitable resource allocation are key in addressing this corruption issue. Tackling corruption should be an integral part of efforts to implement the grassroots development approach in Nigeria.

### c. Regional Inequality

An in-depth literature study also revealed that Nigeria faces serious challenges in the form of significant regional inequalities in the development process. The results show that most of the development projects and economic policies that have been implemented by the government are concentrated in certain regions, while other regions are marginalized and benefit much less. Such regional inequalities create stark disparities in access to economic opportunities, resources and development benefits among different regions in Nigeria. Regional inequality in development is a complex and serious problem. Regions that receive more development attention are usually those that have better infrastructure, access to more public services, and greater economic opportunities.

In contrast, marginalized regions often face unequal access to education, health, employment and other resources.(Fadipe and others 2020; Abasilim 2019)

The relationship with Grassroots Development Theory is that this approach emphasizes people's participation in the entire development cycle and stresses the need for fair and equitable policies for all groups and regions. In this regard, the regional inequalities occurring in Nigeria is one of the major challenges that must be addressed to achieve the goal of more inclusive and sustainable development. The application of grassroots development approach can be an effective solution to address regional inequalities in development. By actively involving communities in policy formulation and implementation of development projects, this approach can ensure that different regions in Nigeria have a voice and role in the development process. This can lead to more equitable policies and more balanced development across all regions of the country.

In terms of Grassroots Development Theory, significant regional inequalities such as those in Nigeria are a challenge that must be seriously addressed. The theory is based on the belief that people's participation is a key element in the entire development cycle, and that it encompasses all groups and regions, without exception. One of the basic tenets of Grassroots Development Theory is the need for policies that are fair and equitable to all levels of society and regions. When development projects and economic policies are only concentrated in a few specific regions, this goes against the basic principles of Grassroots Development Theory. An overly heavy focus of development on one particular region or group can lead to worsening inequalities and disadvantage underrepresented regions. It can create a deep economic and social divide between advantaged and marginalized areas.(Khoury and others 2022; Garamvölgyi and others 2022)

In Nigeria, such regional inequalities are one of the major causes of social conflict, instability and discontent. Therefore, the application of Grassroots Development Theory has become increasingly important to address these issues. This approach ensures that the participation of people from different regions in Nigeria is valued and integrated in the development process. This means that development should be equitable, take into account the needs and aspirations of different groups of people, and avoid the concentration of resources and opportunities in certain areas. By applying this approach, Nigeria can address regional inequalities and achieve more inclusive development, which will even out the gap between advantaged and marginalized regions. In this regard, Grassroots Development Theory can serve as a powerful framework to ensure that development in Nigeria is fair, equitable and sustainable for all its people and regions.(Khoury and others 2022)



Therefore, regional inequality in Nigeria's development is a challenge that can be addressed through the application of the Grassroots Development Theory. This theory provides the view that community participation is key in achieving equitable and sustainable development. By ensuring the active participation of the different regions in Nigeria, the country can achieve more inclusive and equitable development, which will even out the existing regional inequalities. One important aspect of applying the Grassroots Development Theory is the change in approach to development. This means that development projects and economic policies should be designed and implemented with the needs and aspirations of people in different regions in mind. This means that resource allocation and economic opportunities should be distributed equitably to ensure that no region is marginalized or sidelined.

In this way, the Grassroots Development Theory can be a powerful framework for addressing regional inequalities in Nigeria. This will not only help reduce economic and social disparities between regions, but can also create greater social and political stability. Equitable development can reduce tensions and conflicts that often arise due to stark economic and opportunity inequalities. Thus, the implementation of the Grassroots Development Theory can be one of the important steps in Nigeria's efforts to achieve more inclusive and sustainable development, which will benefit the entire society and its regions.

#### d. The Challenge of Social Conflict

The challenge of social conflict, which includes ethnic, religious and political conflicts, is one of the major obstacles to achieving sustainable development in Nigeria. These social conflicts have long been a serious problem in the country and have undermined social, economic and political stability. Ethnic, religious and political conflicts are often fueled by economic and regional inequalities in Nigeria, which create discontent among different groups of people. Stark economic inequalities between regions can fuel ethnic conflict, with certain ethnic groups feeling that they are not benefiting fairly from development. They may feel that certain regions or groups dominate the use of economic resources, while they are marginalized. This creates inter-ethnic tensions that can lead to physical conflict and violence. (Makinde and others 2016)

Religious conflicts also arise frequently, especially between different religious groups. Economic and social inequalities can exacerbate religious conflicts by creating discontent among religious groups that feel they are being treated unfairly. Such conflicts can include competition for economic resources and opportunities, as well as differences in government policies and treatment. In addition, political conflicts also often arise in fierce political competition, especially in election periods. Economic and regional

inequalities can amplify political conflict by making competing parties feel that the outcome of the election will not fairly affect the distribution of wealth and opportunities in the country. Political conflict can include protests, tensions and even political violence.(Fadipe and others 2020; ‘Human Development in Nigeria’ 2020)

In this regard, the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory can be an important step in addressing these conflicts. By ensuring that development is more equitable and inclusive, this approach can help reduce discontent among different groups of people and regions. This can create greater social and political stability and reduce the potential for ethnic, religious, and political conflict. Grassroots Development Theory therefore has the potential to make a significant positive impact in addressing the conflicts that often arise as a result of inequality in Nigeria.

The challenges of social conflicts, which include ethnic, religious and political conflicts, have a significant impact on development in Nigeria. These conflicts create instability in the country, disrupt the implementation of development projects, and affect the investment climate. The negative impacts of these social conflicts can slow economic growth, damage infrastructure, and hamper efforts to achieve development goals. Ethnic conflicts, for example, often force people to flee their areas, which can damage communities and impair economic productivity. Religious conflicts can also create tensions that are detrimental to development, especially if they lead to violence between religious groups. In addition, political conflicts can disrupt the political stability and governance necessary to implement development policies.

Grassroots Development theory offers a highly relevant approach in addressing the challenges of social conflict in Nigeria. By including the active participation of communities in the entire development cycle, this approach can help reduce social tensions and increase understanding between different groups. When different groups of people are involved in policy formulation and implementation of development projects, they have the opportunity to communicate, collaborate and share their understanding of the needs, aspirations and problems they face. In addition, involving communities in the development process can create opportunities for dialogue between different groups. In the case of ethnic, religious, and political conflicts, this dialog is essential for building trust, seeking joint solutions, and promoting reconciliation among different groups. Grassroots Development approaches can create space for open and constructive inter-group dialog, which can help reduce tensions and conflict.(Abasilim 2019; C. and Ighodalo 2018)

In addition, by enabling people's active participation in the development process, this approach can promote greater social and political awareness among communities. Communities become more involved in development issues and have more opportunities

to influence public policies. This can reduce the sense of discontent and tension that may arise when people feel that they do not have a voice in the development process. As such, Grassroots Development Theory has great potential to help address the challenges of social conflict in Nigeria by promoting community participation, inter-group dialogue and better understanding among different segments of society. This can create a more stable and conducive situation for sustainable development in the country.

In the country of Nigeria, where social conflict still dominates, the application of Grassroots Development Theory has great potential to help create a more peaceful and stable environment. Social conflict, be it ethnic, religious, or political, has become a serious obstacle to achieving sustainable development. These conflicts create instability, affect the implementation of development projects, and can even disrupt the investment climate in the country. The Grassroots Development approach places active community participation as a key element in development. It creates opportunities for different groups of people, including groups involved in conflict, to participate in policy formulation, project planning, and development implementation. By involving them in these processes, this approach can help reduce social tensions, increase understanding between different groups, and create a foundation for more constructive inter-group dialog. (Ibietan and Ikeanyibe 2017)

In addition, by facilitating community participation in development, the Grassroots Development approach can also create greater social and political awareness among communities. Communities become more involved in development issues and have more opportunities to influence public policy. This can help reduce the sense of discontent and tension that may arise when communities feel that they do not have a voice in the development process. Thus, the application of Grassroots Development Theory can help create a more peaceful and stable environment in Nigeria, which in turn will create a stronger foundation for sustainable development. This will benefit the country by reducing the disruption caused by social conflicts that often hamper development efforts and disrupt investment. (Abasilim 2021)

Based on the research results, we conducted an in-depth analysis of the implementation of the Grassroots Development Theory in relation to Nigeria. Despite the challenges identified above, the potential for community participation in the development process in Nigeria is immense. The Grassroots Development Theory approach offers a framework that enables communities to play an active role in formulating and implementing development policies. To successfully implement the Grassroots Development Theory, it is important for Nigeria to address the issue of corruption. Decisive action to fight corruption will create a more conducive environment for honest and empowered community participation. The implementation of the

Grassroots Development Theory must also take into account existing regional inequalities. Development programs need to be designed to create equitable economic opportunities across all regions of Nigeria. In order to achieve sustainable development, addressing social conflicts also needs to be a priority. Dialogue between different groups in society and an inclusive approach to policy formulation can help address social conflicts that hinder development.

Based on the results of the study, we conclude that the implementation of Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria has great potential to increase people's participation in development. Although there are challenges such as corruption, regional inequalities and social conflicts, concrete steps can be taken to address these issues. Addressing corruption, understanding regional inequalities, and attempting to dialogue between community groups are key to implementing this approach successfully. The results of this study provide a better understanding of the challenges and opportunities of implementing Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria, which can help formulate recommendations and concrete steps to achieve inclusive development.

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

Grassroots Development theory can serve as a tool to promote peace, reconciliation and understanding between different groups in Nigeria. In addition, it can also help address the root causes of conflict, such as economic and regional inequalities. By ensuring that development is more equitable and fair, Grassroots Development Theory can reduce the discontent that often fuels social conflict. Communities that feel that they have better access to economic opportunities and resources will tend to be more satisfied, which can reduce the potential for conflict. However, it is important to remember that addressing social conflict is a complex task and requires a comprehensive approach that includes reconciliation efforts, inter-group dialog, and conflict resolution. Grassroots Development theory can be one element in this effort, but it cannot be the only solution. Close cooperation between the government, civil society and various community groups is required to effectively address social conflicts.

In order to apply the Grassroots Development Theory successfully in Nigeria, we must have a deep understanding of some of the crucial challenges that exist in the country and must also have a strong commitment to addressing these challenges. One of the key challenges is significant economic inequality. This refers to the unfairness in the distribution of wealth and economic opportunities in Nigeria, where a small number of individuals and groups control most of the resources and wealth, while the majority of the population lives in poverty. To address this economic inequality, we need to adopt



an approach that focuses on empowering local communities and allocating resources fairly and equitably to all regions of Nigeria. This includes promoting local entrepreneurship, improving access to education and skills training, and ensuring equal employment opportunities for all citizens. In this way, we can ensure that the benefits of economic development are truly felt by all Nigerians, not just an elite few. In addition to economic inequality, the problem of corruption is also a serious obstacle to implementing Grassroots-based development. Corruption undermines the integrity of public institutions, impedes equitable economic growth and harms society at large. Therefore, it is imperative to strengthen anti-corruption institutions, increase transparency in the management of public resources, and impose strict sanctions against acts of corruption. In this regard, a bottom-up participatory and accountable approach, embraced by the Grassroots Development Theory, can help engage communities in corruption monitoring and prevention.

Regional inequality is another issue that needs to be addressed in Nigeria's development. Some regions in Nigeria still lag significantly behind in terms of infrastructure, education and access to other basic services. To address these inequalities, we need to allocate resources fairly between regions and support local economic development. This can include investing in infrastructure that supports regional economic growth and regional development programs that focus on the unique needs of each region. Finally, social conflict is another serious challenge that must be addressed in implementing the Grassroots Development Theory. Nigeria has faced various ethnic, religious and cultural conflicts that undermine peace and stability. To address these conflicts, efforts need to be made to promote inter-group dialog, build intercultural understanding and tolerance, and improve people's access to education and economic opportunities. In this way, we can strengthen social harmony and create an enabling environment for sustainable and peaceful development across Nigeria.

Overall, the successful application of Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria requires a firm commitment to address economic inequality, corruption, regional inequalities and social conflicts. Only by addressing these factors together can Nigeria achieve more inclusive, sustainable and peaceful development for all its people.

It is suggested that future research should focus on analyzing the concrete impact of applying Grassroots Development Theory in Nigeria, taking into account economic statistics, corruption levels, regional inequality, and social stability. Comparative studies with similar countries and participatory research to understand the perspectives of local communities can provide valuable insights. Policy analysis and more in-depth research on education and skills training at the Grassroots level are also important to support inclusive and sustainable development.



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