

Evaluating the Contributions of Youth Groups in Community Development in the Nkwanta South Municipality

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Abstract

The youth constitute the backbone of every society and they have critical role to play towards community development processes. This study evaluated the role of youth groups in the community development processes in the Nkwanta South Municipality. The study adopted mixed method approach, specifically concurrent triangulation which allowed the researcher to employ both the quantitative and qualitative approaches to study a phenomenon at the same time. The purposive sampling technique was employed to select 180 respondents for the study. It was realized that the youth groups in the area sensitize their members on the importance of education. It was also found out that there exist a positive correlation between youth development and the contributions of youth groups in the community development processes in the area. The study recommends that the capacity, knowledge, attitudes, values and skills of the youth should be developed through organization of trainings sessions, workshops, conferences, seminars and sports and games to enable them contribute meaningfully towards community development.

Keywords: Community development, self-help projects, youth groups

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1. Introduction

The youth no doubt constitute the backbone for the development of every society and therefore their contribution towards the development processes of every society cannot be underestimated. They (youth) form an important and sensitive age group whose philosophies, dreams, capacity, competence, commitment and participation are crucial in national development (Ayertey, 2002). They are the most active and potential human resource of every nation. The development of nations to a greater extent depends on the competences and participatory levels of the youth. Integrating them in the developmental agenda is therefore very crucial since development centres around them.

The question to ask is who constitute the youth? There seems to be some variation among different writers on who the youth are. Ayertey (2002:336) for instance, indicates that the youth “refers to young people who fall between the ages of ten and twenty-five years”. However, according to Yakubu and Abdulai (2012), the youth are young people between the ages of ten and nineteen years. The youth is the physical period and psychological development from the beginning of puberty to maturity and early adulthood. According to Hoetu (2011) the youth is defined by the United Nations as those between the ages of 15 and 24. The Ghana National Youth (GNY) policy document by the Ministry of Youth and Sports (MYS) (2010:5) consider the “youth” as people who are between fifteen (15) and thirty-five (35) years. This national definition was informed by the one used by African Youth Charter. Irrespective of the variations, one could describe the youth as the period between childhood and adulthood (Hoetu, 2011; Umeh & Odom, 2011). They are young people who are energetic, exuberant and full of ambitions.

The youth are young people who are energetic and exuberant in actions and possess the capacity to play distinct roles in the building processes of a every community. Every society ought to harness and utilize these potentials of its youth to bring about community growth and development. The youth should be assisted through community initiatives and processes for them to make choices necessary for support the pursuit of development of life skills necessary for community and national development.

Development is a complex term that has multitude meanings. It is defined as the progress made by a nation to overcome its social, political and economic problems in order to improve the quality of life of the people through the effective mobilization of its resources (Ayertey, 2002). Development can also be defined as bringing about meaningful social change that allows people to achieve quality of life. Another point worth noting is that development is a process rather than outcome. It involves changing from one state to another which is normally a positive one, that is, an improvement of a sort. Development involves transformation in all spheres of the society.

The aim of community development is to bring improvement that will lead to better standards of living or quality of life. The youth have diverse roles to play in community development. The youth is considered as the backbone of the community. Their competence, energy and capabilities support the process of community development. They also form a sensitive age group that harbours good dreams needed for relevant social changes.

The development of communities and nations is fully dependent on the knowledge, competences, commitment and participation of the youth.

It is a common saying that youth are the future leaders of every society. It could therefore be seen that their contributions to community development is very important, hence people look up to the youth for active leadership, loyalty, selfless service, patriotism and discipline. Generally, youth constitute a greater proportion of the active population. They have some qualities, which includes ability to initiate the process of social changes (Oadire, 2010). The youth have a key role to play in the development of the nation in general and their communities in particular especially with current pressure on the national government.

The government of Ghana has been implementing various policies aimed at ensuring the development of various communities in the area of economic, social and cultural. It should be noted however that the cost of implementing these policies to improve community development has been rising too fast in relation to government budget. Government continues to borrow huge amount of money to promote community development resulting in high national debt. It is for this reason that the idea of self-help development projects has become vital. Government and Non-governmental organizations (NGO's) mostly go to the aid of communities who initiate self-help projects. Therefore, most communities have initiated projects in order to improve their welfare, and to bring about social and economic development in their respective communities. Most development processes in some community tends to overlook the potential of the youth population (Udensi et al., 2013; Umeh and Odom, 2011). Often the youth have been relegated unto the background when it comes to planning and execution of development processes in most communities. This no doubt could emanate from the gerontocracy nature of our African society over the years, where wisdom to some extent is equated to old age. However, it should be noted that wisdom is not and cannot all the time be equated to old age. It is a common fact that majority of the youth across the globe have exhibited excellence in wisdoms and maturity when it comes to contribution to community development.

The contribution of the youth in community development has attracted attention in current research literatures (Udensi et al., 2013; Lynn, 2005; Okwusi, 2008). There are publications on the role of the youth in community development. Ayertey (2002) for instance, stated that the youth help in planning and initiating development projects. However, youth groups have not been viewed as essential contributors to society in terms of community development due to misconception of their capacity (Gibbs, 2002).

There are few publications that cover the role of youth in development in Ghana. Most of these publications were mainly on the general roles of the youth in national development or nation building. Hoetu (2011) for instance looked at mainstreaming youth in national development. His paper gives extensive elaborations on benefits derived from mainstreaming youth in national development and challenges facing the youth. Hoetu could have obtained specific information on these issues if he targeted specific youth groups who may have relevant information. Another extensive work on youth participation was done by Gyampo and Obeng-Odom (2013). However, their work talks extensively on diverse processes and dynamics of youth participation in pre-colonial and post-colonial eras, and teases out implications of these in national development in Ghana. These studies did not assess the role of the youth in community development. These studies also did not look at youth groups. It is against this background that this study is conducted to assess the role of youth groups in community development. Specifically, this study seeks to find out the contributions of youth groups in the development of Akyode communities in the Nkwanta South Municipality.

The Akyodes are part of the Guan ethnic group who are located at the central and north-eastern part of the Nkwanta South Municipality. All the Akyode communities have youth groups that are supposed to spearhead development and deal with youth issues. In addition the traditional Akyode communities, Akyode youth groups are spread all over the country especially the big cities such as Accra and Kumasi. These youth groups are called Akyode Youth Associations (AYA) with different branches. These youth groups possess significant potentials for development of their respective communities and the nation at large and as such much is expected from them. Issues concerning development are most often put at the door step of these youth groups to enable them contribute their quota for addressing these issues.

It must be noted that the contributions of youth towards community development depends on many factors (Edberg 2008). One of such factors could be youth empowerment and development. According to Adesope (2007), there is the need for effective orientation to the youths for their proper impact to be felt in their communities. According to Umeh and Odom (2011) despite various programmes of government involving the youth in various communities, the contribution of the youth is minimal because they lack the capacity. Also despite the abundance of youth in most communities in Ghana, the communities are still poor in the areas of youth support for the needed development (Nkwede and Nwovu, 2014). The seemingly increased moral decadence and other social vices among the youth are becoming worrisome. There seem to be lack of data on the process of youth empowerment and development. Inasmuch as these youth groups occupy prestigious positions in the Nkwanta South Municipality, little seems to be said about their empowerment and support for community development. With the increasing challenges facing the youth in the area couple with deviant and immoral behaviours among the youth, a lot of questions have been raised on the process of youth empowerment development in the Municipality. Youth can

contribute meaningfully to community development when their skills, attitudes and values are developed. Therefore, it becomes pertinent to find out strategies for youth empowerment and development. Though much research has been done on youth, no research has tried to determine the relationship between youth development and contributions of youth groups in community development. This study tries to determine the relationship between youth empowerment and development, and the contributions of youth groups in community development.

2. Conceptual framework

The positive contribution of the youth in community development depends on certain key variables. The role of youth in community development depends on the capacity of the youth (Edberg 2008). In short, positive youth contribution emphasizes the capacity and potentials of the youth. The current study presents a fundamental shift from some conceptualizations of youth as deviants, dangerous, and “problems to be managed. It does not however, see positive youth development as the absence of negative or risk behaviors such as drug use, truancy, delinquency (Lerner 2005; Lerner et al. 2013). Many studies on the youth prior to the early 1990s focused mostly on irresponsible behaviors of the youth and reducing risk exposure (Lerner 2005).

One of the conceptual models relevant to this study is that of Benson and Saito (2000). Benson and Saito (2000) describe four concepts that provide opportunities for healthy youth development. They are programmes, organizations, socializing systems, and community.

Programmes are activities and processes, normally led by adults and designed to address certain objectives and youth outcomes. A programme can be considered a youth development programme when it intentionally integrates experiences to address the positive development of young people. This category includes a range of programmes maybe highly structured in the form of curriculum with clear activities for youth development. This study believes that youth groups could contribute meaningfully to community development if useful programmes for their empowerment and development are organized.

Organizations provide youth empowerment development opportunities in which a wide variety of activities and relationships occur that are designed to improve the well-being of youth. Examples include school-based clubs and associations and co-curriculum activities such as sports, field trips some of the youth organizations include Catholic Youth Association-CYO, Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, YMCA, YWCA. These kinds of clubs and associations can organise a wide range of activities for youth development. Youth participate more in community development when they mobilize themselves in groups or associations.

Socialization agencies also play important roles towards youth development. These include schools, families, neighborhoods, religious institutions, museums, and libraries. The exposure given by these agencies improve their knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which to a large extent help the youth contribute to community development.

Community is not only the geographic place within which programs, organizations, and systems intersect but also the social norms, relationships, resources, and informal settings that dramatically inform human development—both directly and indirectly.



Fig 1. Adapted Benson and Saito Youth development model

Benson and Saito (2000) model is relevant to this study because the contribution of the youth towards community development depends on the environment the youth find themselves. An enabling environment for youth development includes the structures of the community including the norms as well as socializing systems, youth organizations and programmes. These factors influence the attitude of the youth towards issues of the community. However, the concern of Benson and Saito Model is centered on the youth as individuals but not in groups which is the focus of this study. It is true that individual trees make up a forest. However, forest is not formed when individual trees are scattered. This study is of the view that the youth can contribute meaningfully to community development when they form associations rather than on individual basis. It is forest that help to bring rainfall not individual trees.

This research was designed to achieve the following objectives

1. To evaluate the contribution of the youth groups in community development in Nkwanta Municipality.
2. To find out ways of promoting youth development in the Nkwanta Municipality.
3. To determine the relationship between youth development and the contribution of youth groups to community development.
4. To determine the challenges facing youth groups in the Nkwanta Municipality.

3. Methods

This study adopted the mixed method approach as it satisfies the conditions explained by Greene (2007). Greene (2007) defines mixed method research as the type that combines elements of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches for broad in-depth comprehension and justification. Simply put, a mixed methodology is a

blend of both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection for the same study. Creswell and Clark (as cited in Almeida, 2018: 138) acknowledged that “mixed methods research is a research design (or methodology) in which the researcher collects, analyzes, and mixes (integrates or connects) both quantitative and qualitative data in a single study or a multiphase program of inquiry”. Similarly, “mixed method inquiry is an approach to investigating the social world that ideally involves more than one methodological tradition and thus more than one way of knowing” Greene, (as cited in Almeida, 2018:138). This method was chosen for the study because of its advantages of exposing the researcher to variety of data (rich and comprehensive data) needed to draw objective conclusions to findings (Creswell, 2003). Additionally, one of the reasons for employing the mixed method for a study is to complement one set of results with another, to expand a set of results, or to discover something that would have been missed if only a quantitative or a qualitative approach is employed.

There are six types of mixed method research design according to Creswell (2003): these are sequential explanatory; sequential exploratory; sequential transformative; concurrent triangulation; concurrent nested; and concurrent transformative. The study adopted the research concurrent triangulation. Creswell (2003) posits that the term ‘concurrent’ indicates that both qualitative and quantitative data are being collected at the same time. The concurrent triangulation method was used because it allows the researcher to collect and analyse data using both quantitative and qualitative approaches at the same time.

All the youth in the Nkwanta South Municipality constitute of the population. The target population however includes only the youth in the Akyode communities in the municipality. The purposive and snow ball sampling techniques were used to select one hundred respondents. The purposive sampling technique was used because the researchers were only interested in youth in the Akyode communities. The snow ball technique was used because it is suitable for gathering information when there is no sample frame (Issaka et al, 2021). With this method, the researchers were assisted by members of the research communities to identify leaders of youth association in the study area. The leaders were also asked to identify active members of the youth associations in the area. Names that were mentioned as active members of the youth group were traced and those found were interviewed.

The main instruments for data collection were a structured questionnaire and interview. The questionnaire was used because it helped to obtain reliable information and also ensured a wider coverage (Kwabia, 2006). The Likert scale was commonly used. Interviews were also conducted to obtain detailed information on the problem being researched into.

3.1. Validity and reliability of the Instrument

The questionnaire and the interview guide were vetted by experts, before going to the field. They read through the questions to determine whether their contents were adequate and relevant. They also helped to identify ambiguities. The instrument was reviewed and this helped to achieve validity of the instruments.

Reliability on the other hand measures consistency, correctness and repeatability of data (Chakrabarty, 2013). Cronbach’s alpha was used to determine the reliability using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21. Field (2015) posits that Cronbach’s alpha calculated the internal consistency and alpha coefficient of .50 and above shows strong reliability. The Cronbach’s alpha for all the items was 0.792 or higher indicating very high reliability levels.

Table 1: Reliability Coefficients for contribution and development of the youth

Items	Cronbach's Alpha (α)
Mobilization of funds for self-help projects	.825
Sensitization on issues of national concern	.812
Promotion of peace and order	.788
Assisting members to get jobs	.797
Initiating self-help projects	.792
Provision of labour for self-help project	.794
Mobilizing people for social activities	.799
Resolving conflicts	.797
Provision of leadership for community projects	.802
Organization of sports and games	.797
Provision of education	.830
Capacity building workshop	.798
Seminars on the role of the youth	.807
Attending conferences on youth related issues	.794
Training on leadership skills	.807

4. Results

The presentation and discussion of results were based on the research objectives. The first objective of the study was to evaluate the contribution of the youth groups in community development in Nkwanta Municipality.

Community development depends on active participation of its members including the younger people. Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister (2006), stated that active involvement of the youth in community development empower them to be problem-solvers, decision-makers, and committed leaders who will lead community development efforts in the future. The study therefore sought to evaluate the contributions of youth groups in community development in the Nkwanta South Municipality since this is crucial for the advancement of society. Respondents were asked to evaluate the contributions of youth groups in the municipality using a likert scale of 1-5 where 1 stands for strongly agree, 2 for agree, 3 for somehow agree, 4 for agree and 5 for strongly agree. Table 1 presents the evaluation of the contributions of youth groups towards community development.

Table 2: Contributions of Youth Groups in Community Development in Nkwanta Municipality

	Mean	%	Remarks
Mobilization of funds for self-help projects	3.77	75.4	Very good
Sensitization on issues of national concern	3.99	79.8	Very good
Promotion of peace and order	4.01	80.2	Excellent
Initiating self-help projects	4.04	80.8	Excellent
Provision of labour for self-help project	3.97	79.4	Very good
Mobilizing people for social activities	3.79	75.8	Very good
Resolving conflicts	3.95	79.0	Very good
Provision of leadership for community projects	3.90	78.0	Very good
General contributions of the youth (mean of mean)	3.93	78.6	Very good

Source: Field data, 2021

Key for Remarks

< 2.5 –Unsatisfactory; 2.5 – 2.99 - Satisfactory; 3.00 – 3.49 – Good; 3.5 – 3.99 – Very Good and 4.00 – 5.00 – Excellent

Table 2 shows that the general contribution of youth groups in community development in Nkwanta South Municipality was very good. Their contributions in most of the variables identified as contributions of youth groups were very good. Areas that their contributions were very good include mobilization of funds for self-help projects, sensitization on issues of national concern, provision of labour for self-help project, mobilizing people for social activities, resolving conflicts and provision of leadership for community projects. According to the results, the contributions of youth groups in the areas of initiating self-help projects (4.04) and promotion of peace and order (4.01) could be described as excellent.

Some of the respondents during interview also indicated contributions of youth groups in the Nkwanta South area. Most of them mention sensitization on importance of education, organization of sports activities, assisting in initiating projects, planning and implementing activities during the yam festival in the area.

One of the respondents reacting to the role of the youth groups said;

We normally meet to plan on what to do to develop our communities. As youth, we also have role to play towards the development of our community. [Eeemm], you know, the development of the community lies on the contribution of all and sundry. As youth groups, we educate both the youth and their parents on the importance of education. We advise them to eschew all forms of social vices and pre-marital sex since these can jeopardize their education. We have those in-charge of education who go to schools and communities to talk on the importance of education. We also organize talks on activities to promote peace and development. (#participant 4; March, 2021).

Another respondent also indicated that;

We try to organize ourselves to embark on activities towards the development of our community. I could remember, every year, we plan the activities for our yam festival including the projects to embark on by the community. We also promote our cultural heritage during the festival. We undertake activities to promote our cultural heritage. We also educate the youth to take their education seriously (#participant 2; March, 2021).

One of the respondents also had this to say on the role of the youth in community development.

You know, we formed youth groups to undertake activities to promote peace and development. You know, without peace there cannot be no development. We organize peace talks in the various communities. Though we are not able to do as expected, we have been doing our bits. We educate our members on importance of education and the history of our community. We inspire our members to take up leadership positions. We undertake series of activities during the yam festival. We organize sports competitions and this helps to promote peace and unity in the area. You know, we also play an important role in Guan Congress. We send a delegation any time the Guan Congress is organized (#participant 5; March, 2021).

The data on the contributions of the youth groups towards community development is subjected to descriptive statistics using SPSS version 21. The descriptive statistics analysis presents the sample population, minimum, maximum, the mean, standard deviation, skewness and kurtosis. This is necessary to see the distribution and dispersion in order to see whether the data could be subjected to parametric statistical analysis. The result

of the descriptive analysis is summarised in Table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics on the Contributions of Youth Groups

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Mobilization of funds for self-help projects	180	1	5	3.77	0.950	-0.793	0.593
Sensitization on issues of national concern	180	1	5	3.99	1.067	-0.814	-0.105
Promotion of peace and order	180	1	5	4.01	1.114	-0.955	-0.105
Initiating self-help projects	180	1	5	4.04	0.942	-0.971	0.739
Provision of labour for self-help project	180	1	5	3.97	1.013	-0.812	-0.252
Mobilizing people for social activities	180	1	5	3.79	1.012	-0.950	0.784
Resolving conflicts	180	1	5	3.95	0.917	-0.911	0.803
Provision of leadership for community projects	180	1	5	3.90	1.173	-0.749	-0.805

Source: Field data, 2021

It could be observed from Table 3 that mobilization of funds for self-help projects records a mean of 3.77 with standard deviation of 0.950, skewness of -0.793 and kurtosis of 0.593. Initiating self-help projects has the highest mean of 4.04 with a standard deviation of 0.942, skewness of -0.971 and kurtosis of 0.739. The standard deviation of the various items shows closeness of the responses.

It could be seen from Table 3 that, the values of the skewness and kurtosis for all the items fall within -1 and +1. This shows that the data is normally distributed and could be subjected to parametric statistical analysis (Kim, 2013). Table 3 also shows that the skewness for all the items are in the negative. A negative skew value indicates that the tail on the left side of the distribution is longer than the right side and the bulk of the values lie to the right of the mean. The kurtoses of the four of the variables are positive while the other four are negative. Kurtosis is a measure of the peakedness of a distribution. A positive kurtosis (leptokurtic distribution) means high peak, while distributions with negative kurtosis (platykurtic distribution) means flat-topped curve (Kim, 2013).

Another important objective for the study was to find out the strategies for youth development in the Nkwanta Municipality. The respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement on certain strategies to develop the youth and their responses are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4: Descriptive Analysis on Strategies for Youth Development

	N	Min	Max	Mean	%	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Organization of sports and games	180	1	5	3.81	76.2	0.896	-0.750	0.818
Seminars on the role of the youth	180	1	5	3.24	64.6	1.257	-0.205	-0.966
Capacity building workshop	180	1	5	3.77	75.4	1.094	-0.897	0.320
Attending conferences on youth related issues	180	1	5	3.78	75.6	1.017	-0.927	0.824
Provision of education	180	1	5	4.29	85.8	0.722	-0.601	-0.541
Leadership training	180	1	5	4.01	80.2	1.106	-0.888	-0.289

Source: Field data, 2021

Table 4 shows that the mean distribution ranges from 3.24 in the case of seminars on the role of the youth to 4.29 in the case of provision of education. It could be realized that most of them agreed that organization of sports and games, seminars, workshops, conferences, education, and training are key strategies for youth development. Table 4 also shows that the standard deviation ranges from 0.722 for provision of education to 1.257 in the case of seminars. The skewness of all the items are in the negative showing negative skewness. This shows that most of the values lie to the right of the mean. That means that most of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed to the items. Three of the kurtosis are positive (high peaks) and three are also negative (flat peaks).

The third objective was to determine the relationship between youth development and the contribution of youth groups to community development. Before the correlation analysis, all the different variables on the contributions of the youth in community development were computed into a target variable and the mean was calculated using SPSS version 21 and this mean became the dependent variable. In the same way, the different variables under youth development were also computed into a target variable and the mean calculated using the SPSS version 21 and this became the independent variable.

4.1. Correlation Analysis Results

To analyse the relationship, the Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to establish the correlation between youth development and the contribution of youth to community development. The result of the analysis is presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Correlation analysis results

Variables	contribution of the youth	Ways promoting youth development
Contribution of the youth	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.568**
	N	180
Promoting youth development	Pearson Correlation	.568**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	180

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Field data, 2021

The correlation between youth development and contribution of youth is 0.568 and this correlation is significant at one percent significance level. This means that youth development has a positive and significant relationship with the contributions of the youth. This further implies that if there is improvement in youth development, their contribution towards community development will also improve. It is based on this analysis that the observed model was developed.

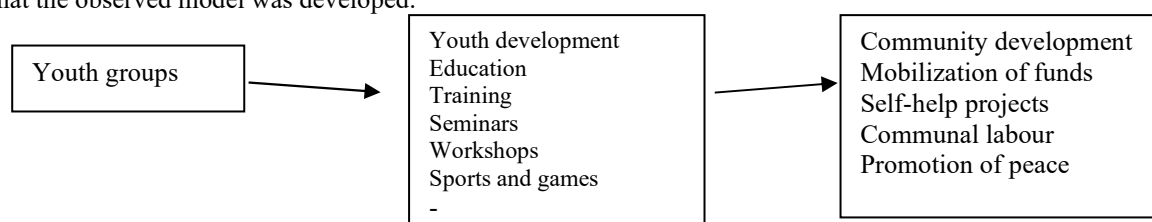


Fig. 2: Observed model of youth development and community development

The observed model shows that youth groups can effectively contribute towards community development when the capacity of the youth is developed.

Youth groups have a lot of roles to play in community development but they may be unable to do so because of certain challenges they may encounter. The responses from the subjects on challenges facing youth groups are displayed in Table 6.

Table 6: Challenges facing youth groups

Challenges	SA		A		NS		D		SD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Inadequate funds	118	65.6	62	34.4						
Poor leadership	14	7.8	94	52.2			65	36.1	7	3.9
Conflict within the associations	6	3.3	112	62.2			34	18.9	28	15.6
Lack of commitment on the part of members	132	73.3	48	26.7						
Lack of recognition	3	1.7	15	8.3			162	90.0		
Lack of effective rules and regulations	12	6.7	89	49.4			69	33.3	10	5.6
Lack of time	88	48.9	53	29.4			39	21.7		
Lack of accountability	34	18.9	108	60			38	21.1		

Source: Field data, 2021

Table 6 shows some of the challenges that youth groups face in their operation. It could be seen from the table that majority of the respondents agreed to most of the items as challenges facing youth groups except lack of recognition. The table shows that all the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that inadequate funds and lack of commitment on the part of members are challenges facing youth groups. It could also be seen in Table 6 that 52.2% and 62.2% respectively agreed that poor leadership and conflicts within the associations are challenges facing youth groups in the area. The table also shows that 60% agreed that lack of accountability is a challenge facing youth groups while 48.9% strongly agreed that lack of time is a challenge facing youth groups. These challenges can affect the effective contribution of youth groups in community development.

The results from the interview also reveal a lot of challenges facing youth groups in the area. One of the respondents indicated that;

For the problems, they are many. In the first place, most of us do not see the reasons why they should join the youth association. They don't see the benefits of joining the associations. Even though the association is compulsory for all the youth in the town, most of them are not ready to participate in activities organized by the association. When you organize meetings only a few will attend. When you ask them to pay money for projects most of them will not pay. The youth are not committed to the association. It is only by name, it is not functioning and/or active at all. You will only see this association during our yam festival. After that the association does not do anything (#participant 1; March, 2021).

Another respondent also indicated that;

I think the major challenge facing our youth association is effective leadership. For association like to perform the needed functions, everything depends on the leadership. Here people only struggle for leadership position because of personal interest and not for development. Another challenge has do with commitment on the part of members. Most of us are attending school and we are not always around to attend meetings and embark on activities we planned to do. It is also difficult to raise money to carry out activities (#participant 4; March, 2021).

In addition, of the respondents had this to say on challenges facing youth groups.

Our youth association has many problems. We don't like coming to meetings and it is only at meetings that you can plan towards development. If you ask them to contribute money too, most of them will say they are students and they don't have money. Without money there is nothing you can do. Money is the fuel of every engine. We also don't have effective rules to compel the youth to join the association (#participant 3; March, 2021).

4.2. Discussions

The development of a community highly depends on the contributions of the individuals and groups in that community (Akinbile, Ashimolowo, & Oladoja, 2006). Therefore, youth groups have diverse contributions to make towards the development of the community. This is why Brennan, Barnett & Lesmeister (2006), stated that active involvement of the youth in community development process leads to community development. Youth groups are expected to undertake programmes to promote peace and order (Umeh & Odom, 2011), sensitization on issues of national concern, provision of labour for self-help project (Yakubu & Abdulai, 2012). The youth groups can also contribute to community development through mobilization of people for social activities, resolving conflicts and provision of leadership for community projects. The youth are also expected to initiate and mobilise funds for self-help projects (Ayitey, 2002; Yakubu & Abdulai, 2012; Udensi, Daasi, Emah, Zukbee, 2013).

The development of human resource has a significant impact on national development. This is why nations spend huge amount of resources towards their human resource development. Youth development is very crucial in community development. The correlation analysis shows a positive relationship between youth development and the contributions of the youth. Therefore communities need to provide diverse programmes that will promote youth empowerment and development. The capacities, competences and abilities of the youth could be development through organization of sports and games, seminars, workshops, conferences, education, and training (Yakubu & Abdulai, 2012). Youth development could be accelerated when they are in groups such as scout groups, social clubs and religious youth groups (National Academy of Sciences, 2005). There is therefore the need to promote youth development through education, training (Larson, 2000), organization of seminars, workshops and sports and games to enable the youth contribute meaningful towards community development.

In life, most people are unable to achieve their potentials to the fullest because of certain challenges. Challenges facing the youth groups could affect the effectiveness and usefulness of youth groups. Inadequate funds, lack of effective leadership and lack of commitment can affect the organization of youth groups and for that matter their contribution towards community development. Many studies have attested to the fact that challenges facing the youth affect their contributions towards community development. Many young people remain uneducated and unskilled to be considered in the job market. This phenomenon coupled with limited employment opportunities is largely responsible for the high unemployment and underemployment rate (Hoetu, 2011). Such challenges result in drug abuse and aggressive behaviours (Ayertey, 2002) which affect the contribution of youth towards community development.

The youth are the backbone of every economy. Youth groups are very important groups that help to draw the attention of government and other agencies to issues affecting community development. Youth groups also organize their members to plan and implement programmes for community development (Ayertey, 2002). There is therefore the need to adopt certain ways to make youth groups effective. Some of the ways to make youth groups contribute meaningfully towards community development include effective leadership, support from adults, talks on importance of youth groups and reliable source of funds for youth groups. This agrees with Ayertey when he indicated that the youth should form clubs where they could be given training and education. Larson (2000) also indicated that communities should organise capacity building for youth groups in leadership and skills needed for the world of work as these are necessary for their involvement in community development.

5. Conclusion

The contribution of youth groups in community development in the Nkwanta South Municipality is very good. Since there is positive correlation between youth development and their contributions towards community development, communities should put in place mechanisms that will promote youth development to enable them contribute meaningful to community development. Challenges such as poor leadership, lack of accountability, lack

of funds, and lack of commitment to group activities have bedeviled the contribution of the youth groups in community development. For effective contributions of youth groups in community development, there is the need for communities to address the challenges facing youth groups such as poor leadership and lack of funds to enable youth people contribute meaningfully towards community development.

5.1. Recommendations

- The youth should be encouraged to join youth associations.
- Youth groups should be given the need support especially financial support.
- Equipping the youth with the need capacity through education, training, seminars, and workshops
- Communities should put in place measures to address unemployment, low level of education, use of hard drugs and alcoholism among the youth.

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