

# The Effect of Community Participation in Reinforcing Sustainable Development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

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Research for this project was conducted with the support of “Princess Nora Bint Abdul Rahman University”.

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## ABSTRACT

Community participation is vital for sustainable development, fostering prosperity and social cohesion. It empowers individuals to initiate positive changes, enhancing their quality of life. Key objectives include empowerment, enabling individuals and groups to influence decisions; capacity building, developing skills and resources within the community for self-reliance; social cohesion, strengthening social bonds and fostering a sense of belonging; and sustainability, ensuring that initiatives are environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. Participation can be informative, consultative, decisive, or collaborative, each contributing to a holistic understanding of its impact. Effective participation is inclusive, transparent, responsive, and continuous. Motivations for community participation in Saudi Arabia include economic development, social welfare, environmental protection, and cultural preservation. Community involvement aligns with Vision 2030, aiming for economic diversification, social development, and environmental sustainability. Youth are crucial in this process, bringing innovation, energy, and technological proficiency. This study uses a descriptive survey approach to examine the role of community participation in sustainable development within Saudi Arabia, surveying 392 young Saudis. The findings indicate high engagement driven by desires for social and economic contributions, with positive impacts on education, healthcare, and social services. However, challenges like lack of awareness, limited resources, and bureaucratic obstacles persist. To enhance community participation, the study recommends strengthening education and awareness, fostering partnerships, empowering youth, and enhancing accessibility. By addressing these factors, Saudi Arabia can reinforce its commitment to sustainable development, ensuring a prosperous future for all its citizens

*Keywords:* Economic diversification Empowerment Social services Quality of life

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Statement of the Problem

Sustainable development is of utmost importance to governments worldwide. Achieving sustainable development extends beyond economic growth to encompass social services and the environment, collectively forming the foundation of sustainable development. This growing interest has led to the emergence of new methods utilized by both government and non-government institutions to achieve sustainable development. One of the most important methods is community participation, which helps institutions balance economic, social, and environmental goals while maintaining performance, excellence, and efficiency (Abdulghafur et al., 2021, p. 1). Community participation is the backbone of any developmental effort aimed at improving the quality of life for citizens at social, financial, and cultural levels. It enables members of society to willingly contribute to these efforts by working, funding, or simply sharing their opinions (Aljoyoush et al., 2016, p. 460). Community participation has become a major tool for implementing democracy and a means of change that helps build an effective, free, and just society capable of raising the living standards of its members (Abdulghafur et al., 2021, p. 50). Based on the aforementioned points, the problem of this study can be defined as follows: The effect of community participation in reinforcing sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In practice, the study focuses on young individuals since they are the pillar of the development process, and therefore their contribution must be highlighted. The study will contribute to enriching the discussion around community participation and its role in achieving the Kingdom's Vision 2030. It will also guide researchers to take new directions in their research, helping them adapt to modern-day changes and challenges, thus creating new schemes that tackle the shortcomings of community participation. In theory, the findings of the study are expected to provide a clear representation of the role of community participation in reinforcing sustainable development in the

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The study seeks to garner the attention of specialists in the field and inspire them to make efficient

developmental decisions and policies.

### **1.2 The Significance of the Study**

Community Participation refers to the degree of citizens' voluntary contribution to the development process, whether by working, funding, or sharing their opinions. It also encompasses the sensitivity to local issues and the responsiveness of individuals to them (Almulla et al., 2016, p. 460). Procedurally, the researcher defines community participation as the true and efficient contribution of society members (through opinions, actions, or funding) to achieve social, political, and economic development, improve their quality of life, or meet their needs justly without compromising national interests. Sustainable Development is defined by William Ruckelshaus, the first Administrator of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as the process that ensures economic growth compatible with the environment's natural capacity. This process is based on the principle that economic growth and environmental protection are integrated rather than contradictory processes (Ghunaim and Abuzant, 2007, p. 25). The researcher defines it as developing and improving current conditions to meet society's hopes and needs without endangering future generations' ability to live safely.

### **1.3 Importance of the community participation**

Community participation engages society members in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of ownership and responsibility among citizens. This engagement can begin with fundamental democratic practices, such as voting for representatives who will voice the concerns and needs of their constituents. However, true community participation extends far beyond the act of voting. Government officeholders strive to create and optimize opportunities for community participation by organizing various platforms such as town hall meetings, public discussions, opinion polls, and forums. These platforms are designed to facilitate dialogue between the government and the public, ensuring that the voices of community members are heard and considered in the policymaking process. The underlying belief driving these efforts is that when civilians are actively involved, government decisions and policies are more likely to reflect the public interest and address the real needs of the community (Mohammed, 2011, p. 11). participation is a multifaceted process that engages society members in decision-making, implementation, and evaluation of development initiatives. By fostering a sense of ownership, responsibility, and partnership, community participation ensures that development efforts are more effective, inclusive, and sustainable. It transforms civilians from passive recipients of government policies into active contributors to the development process, creating a dynamic and responsive approach to achieving societal progress and well-being. Numerous specialists from various fields have extensively addressed the importance of community participation, highlighting its multifaceted benefits and crucial role in sustainable development. Researchers in education studies, such as Jamaledin et al. (2016, p. 696), have emphasized how community involvement in educational initiatives enhances the learning environment, promotes better educational outcomes, and fosters a collaborative spirit between schools and communities. Meanwhile, economists like Almindeel (2008, p. 15) have explored the economic benefits of community participation, noting how it can drive local economic growth, enhance resource allocation, and increase the efficiency of development projects.

## **2. Literature review:**

The concept of community participation has been widely explored in academic literature, particularly in the context of sustainable development. Theories of social capital (Putnam, 2000) and community empowerment (Rappaport, 1987) have provided important theoretical foundations for understanding the motivations, processes, and outcomes of community engagement. Empirical studies have examined the role of community participation in supporting sustainable development goals. For instance, Abdulsadah and Abdulhussain's (2012) field study found that community participation enhanced young individuals' sense of responsibility and cultural dialogue in Baghdad. Similarly, Murtada and Sulaiman's (2019) research at Imam Abdulrahman bin Faisal University highlighted the importance of academic leaders in facilitating community engagement among students across various domains, including community service and voluntary work. Focusing on the Saudi Arabian context, Alraddadi's (2020) study proposed a pedagogical plan to reinforce community participation among female Social Studies students at Taibah University. The study identified the current level of community engagement and the limitations faced by students, such as inadequate university resources. Additionally, Hawashin and Hejazi's (2022) research on elderly community participation in Saudi Arabia revealed a significant positive correlation between community involvement and satisfaction with quality of life. These studies show many such benefits of community participation particularly in terms of sustainable development, youth empowerment, educational expectations, and social equality. However, more research is needed to better understand the sociocultural factors that allow or facilitate community participation in Saudi Arabia, especially from the perspectives of various demographic groups. The current study aims to add to the literature by investigating Saudi youth's perceptions and experiences with community participation and its role in sustainable development. The study also aims to provide decision-makers and community leaders with practical insights into the motivations, challenges, and results of community participation to increase youth involvement in sustainable development initiatives. Community participation is a cornerstone of sustainable development, essential for fostering prosperity and social cohesion. 17



empowers individuals to initiate positive changes, thereby enhancing their quality of life. The objectives of community participation are multifaceted, aiming to engage individuals in the development process, promote social inclusion, and ensure that development initiatives reflect the needs and aspirations of the community. Key objectives include empowerment, which enables individuals and groups to influence decisions that affect their lives; capacity building, which involves developing skills, knowledge, and resources within the community to foster self-reliance; social cohesion, which strengthens social bonds and fosters a sense of belonging among community members; and sustainability, ensuring that development initiatives are environmentally, economically, and socially sustainable. Community participation can be understood through various dimensions, each contributing to a holistic understanding of its impact.

### **3. Theoretical framework**

#### **3.1 Community Participation Objectives**

Community participation offers numerous advantages that significantly contribute to the overall success and sustainability of development initiatives. One of the primary benefits is cost reduction. According to Ashur (2017, p. 6), involving community members in development projects can lead to significant savings. This is because local participation often means utilizing volunteer labor, leveraging local resources, and implementing solutions that are more cost-effective and tailored to the community's actual needs. When community members are engaged, they can help identify the most efficient ways to achieve project goals, reducing unnecessary expenditures and optimizing resource allocation. Another critical advantage is the employment of social benefits, as highlighted by Andulkarim et al. (2016, p. 56).

#### **3.2 Forms of Community Participation**

Formal participation involves structured and organized methods where community members are engaged through official channels. This can include participating in public hearings, community meetings, and formal consultations where decisions are

#### **3.3 community participation barriers**

Social barriers are obstacles that arise from societal norms, cultural values, and social structures. These barriers can include issues such as gender inequality, where women may be excluded from participation due to traditional gender roles or cultural beliefs. Similarly, caste or class divisions can prevent certain groups from engaging in community activities. Social barriers also encompass prejudices and discrimination based on race, ethnicity, religion, or disability, which can marginalize segments of the population and limit their ability to participate fully in development projects. Overcoming social barriers requires promoting inclusivity and equality, as well as challenging discriminatory practices and attitudes within the community. Economic barriers refer to the financial constraints that can prevent individuals or groups from participating in community activities. Poverty, unemployment, and lack of resources can severely limit people's ability to engage in development projects. Economic barriers can also manifest in the form of unequal access to financial resources, where wealthier individuals or groups dominate decision-making processes, leaving poorer community members with little influence. Addressing economic barriers involves creating opportunities for economic empowerment, such as job creation, providing access to financial services, and ensuring that development initiatives are designed to benefit all economic strata within the community. Individual-related barriers are personal obstacles that can prevent people from participating in community activities. These can include a lack of awareness or understanding of the importance of participation, low levels of education, and limited skills or experience in community engagement. Additionally, personal issues such as health problems, disabilities, or time constraints due to work or family responsibilities can also hinder participation. To overcome individual-related barriers, it is essential to provide education and awareness programs that highlight the value of community involvement, as well as offering training and capacity-building initiatives to equip individuals with the necessary skills and knowledge to participate effectively. Providing support for those with health issues or disabilities, and creating flexible participation opportunities that accommodate people's schedules, can also help mitigate these barriers. Barriers related to central authority involve the challenges posed by centralized decision-making processes and bureaucratic systems that limit local participation. When decisions are made by a central authority without meaningful input from the community, it can lead to a lack of transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to local needs. Centralized authority can also create power imbalances, where local voices are overshadowed by higher-level officials or external stakeholders. Overcoming these barriers requires promoting decentralization and devolution of power, ensuring that local communities have a significant role in decision-making processes. It also involves improving transparency and accountability mechanisms, so that community members can effectively hold authorities accountable and ensure their needs and preferences are considered.

### **4. Methods:**

In this study, a survey was selected as the primary instrument for data collection due to its alignment with the research objectives and its effectiveness in gathering comprehensive data. Understanding the participants' backgrounds and how these factors might influence their responses to the survey. By analyzing these demographic variables, the study can provide a more nuanced understanding of how different groups engage with community participation and sustainable development. The second section of the survey consists of 31 statements, which are grouped into three distinct dimensions. The first dimension

addresses the motives behind community participation in sustainable development within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This dimension comprises 10 items designed to uncover the underlying reasons and incentives that drive individuals to participate in community-related activities. These items aim to reveal the various factors that motivate individuals to engage in efforts that contribute to sustainable development.

The second dimension focuses on the effects of community participation on sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. This section includes 11 items that assess the impact and effectiveness of community involvement in advancing sustainable development goals. The aim is to evaluate how participation influences development outcomes and to understand the tangible benefits that result from active community engagement. The third dimension explores suggested visions for reinforcing the role of community participation in sustainable development within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

| Variables                            |                                      | Percentage   | Frequencies |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|-------------|
| <b>Age</b>                           | 20 - younger than 25                 | 43.9         | 172         |
|                                      | 25 – younger than 30                 | 22.4         | 88          |
|                                      | 30 – younger than 35                 | 23.5         | 92          |
|                                      | 35 and older                         | 10.2         | 40          |
|                                      | <b>Total</b>                         | <b>100.0</b> | <b>392</b>  |
| <b>Gender</b>                        | Male                                 | 22.5         | 100         |
|                                      | Female                               | 74.5         | 292         |
|                                      | Total                                | 100.0        | 392         |
| <b>Academic qualification</b>        | High school                          | 22.4         | 88          |
|                                      | University                           | 77.6         | 304         |
|                                      | <b>Total</b>                         | <b>100.0</b> | <b>392</b>  |
| <b>Preferred participation field</b> | Environmental                        | 12.2         | 48          |
|                                      | Social                               | 64.3         | 252         |
|                                      | Healthcare                           | 22.4         | 88          |
|                                      | Other                                | 1.0          | 4           |
|                                      | <b>Total</b>                         | <b>100.0</b> | <b>392</b>  |
| <b>Profession</b>                    | does not work                        | 53.1         | 208         |
|                                      | An employee in the government sector | 23.5         | 92          |
|                                      | An employee in a private sector      | 23.5         | 92          |
|                                      | <b>Total</b>                         | <b>100.0</b> | <b>392</b>  |

**Table1:” Demographic Characteristics of Study Participants”**( Age, Gender, Academic qualification, preferred participation field and profession)

This dimension features 10 items designed to gather recommendations and strategies for enhancing community involvement. The focus is on identifying practical approaches and innovative ideas for improving participation and ensuring that it effectively supports sustainable development initiatives. To ensure the validity of the survey instrument, several steps were undertaken. Validity refers to the extent to which the survey accurately measures what it is intended to measure. This involves both the content coverage of the survey and the clarity of its language. The validity of the survey was assessed through face validity and internal consistency validity. Face validity, also known as interrater validity, was tested by having the survey reviewed by experts in the field. These experts provided feedback on the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the items, assessing whether they accurately addressed the dimensions of the study. Their constructive criticism led to revisions that improved the survey’s alignment with the study’s objectives. The finalized version of the survey, incorporating these adjustments, is detailed in Appendix (2). Internal consistency validity was evaluated by calculating the Pearson correlation coefficient to determine how well each item within a

dimension correlates with the total score of that dimension. This analysis ensures that items within each dimension consistently measure the same underlying construct, providing a reliable assessment of the dimension’s focus. The reliability of the survey instrument was also assessed to ensure that the results remain consistent over time and across different administrations. Reliability refers to the stability and dependability of the survey results. The reliability of the survey was measured using Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient, which evaluates the internal consistency of the items within each dimension. Higher values of Cronbach’s Alpha indicate greater reliability. The dimensions of Cronbach’s Alpha for each section of the survey are summarized in Table (10), providing an overview of the consistency of responses and the reliability of the survey.

|                          | <b>Dimensions</b>  | <b>Number of Items</b> | <b>Cronbach’s Alpha</b> |
|--------------------------|--|------------------------|-------------------------|
| <b>1</b>                 | The motives of community participation and sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia                                | 10                     | 0.839                   |
| <b>2</b>                 | The effect of community participation in sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia                                  | 11                     | 0.846                   |
| <b>3</b>                 | The suggested visions for reinforcing the role of community participation sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia | 10                     | 0.815                   |
| <b>Total Reliability</b> |  | 31                     | 0.876                   |

Table 2

**Table2 :""Reliability Analysis of Survey Dimensions Using Cronbach’s Alpha"**

To achieve the objectives of the study and conduct a thorough analysis of the collected data, the researcher utilized several sophisticated statistical procedures using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). These procedures were selected to ensure a comprehensive examination of the data, providing valuable insights into community participation and its impact on sustainable development. The following statistical measures were applied: Frequencies and percentages were fundamental in summarizing and describing the data. Frequencies involved counting the number of occurrences of each response category within the dataset. This approach was instrumental in providing a clear overview of how often specific responses were given. Percentages were then computed to express these frequencies as proportions of the total sample size, facilitating a more intuitive understanding of the data distribution. This measure was particularly useful for categorical data, such as demographic characteristics and responses to individual survey items, allowing for a detailed presentation of the data and comparisons between different groups within the sample. Pearson correlation was employed to assess the strength and direction of linear relationships between variables. This statistical technique is valuable for understanding how changes in one variable are associated with changes in another. The correlation coefficient ranges from -1 to +1, with positive values indicating a direct relationship (i.e., as one variable increases, the other also increases) and negative values indicating an inverse relationship (i.e., as one variable increases, the other decreases). Pearson correlation was used to explore relationships between different dimensions of community participation and sustainable development, helping to identify patterns and potential areas for further investigation. Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient was utilized to measure the internal consistency and reliability of the survey instrument. This statistic assesses how closely related a set of items are within each dimension of the survey, reflecting the degree to which they consistently measure the same underlying construct. Cronbach’s Alpha values range from 0 to 1, with higher values indicating greater internal consistency. Values above 0.70 are generally considered acceptable for research purposes, ensuring that the survey items within each dimension are reliable and produce consistent results across different instances of administration. This procedure was crucial for validating the accuracy and dependability of the survey instrument. The mean, or average, was calculated for responses to individual survey items and dimensions to determine the central tendency of the data. This measure provides a summary of the average score or response within each dimension, reflecting the overall level of agreement or perception among participants. By calculating the mean, the researcher was able to identify general trends and patterns within the data, offering insights into the typical responses and perceptions of the participants regarding community participation and sustainable development. The standard deviation was used to measure the dispersion or variability of responses around the mean. This statistic provides an indication of how much individual responses deviate

from the average, offering insights into the consistency or variability of the data. A low standard deviation suggests that responses are clustered closely around the mean, indicating less variability, while a high standard deviation indicates greater variability and a wider spread of responses. Understanding the standard deviation was essential for interpreting the overall distribution of the data and for assessing the degree of agreement or disagreement among participants. In addition to the primary statistical measures mentioned above, the researcher may employ additional techniques such as: Regression Analysis: To explore the relationships between dependent and independent variables and to predict the impact of various factors on community participation and sustainable development. Factor Analysis: To identify underlying factors or constructs that explain the patterns of responses across survey items, helping to simplify and interpret complex data. Chi-Square Tests: To examine the relationships between categorical variables and to test for significant differences or associations within the data. By utilizing these statistical procedures, the researcher was able to perform a detailed and robust analysis of the data, drawing meaningful conclusions about the role of community participation in sustainable development. The use of SPSS facilitated efficient data processing and analysis, enabling the researcher to generate reliable and insightful results that contribute to the study's objectives and provide valuable knowledge in the field.

**5. Results**

This chapter will discuss the results of the field study by illustrating the responses of the participants and subsequently answering the questions of the study. The study findings provide insightful revelations into the motives behind community participation and its impact on sustainable development within Saudi Arabia. The analysis reveals several key conclusions about the drivers of community involvement and how these align with broader sustainable development goals.

| N          | Item   | Survey Scale   |      |       |      |         |      |          |     |                   |     | Mean | standard deviation | Order |
|------------|--|----------------|------|-------|------|---------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|------|--------------------|-------|
|            |  | Strongly Agree |      | Agree |      | Neutral |      | Disagree |     | Strongly Disagree |     |      |                    |       |
|            |  | f              | %    | f     | %    | f       | %    | f        | %   | f                 | %   |      |                    |       |
| 4          | Community participation helps me fill my spare time.   | 228            | 58.2 | 140   | 35.7 | 24      | 6.1  | 0        | 0.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.52 | 0.61               | 1     |
| 7          | My community participation helps me form social relationships  | 220            | 56.1 | 128   | 32.7 | 40      | 10.2 | 4        | 1.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.44 | 0.72               | 2     |
| 1          | Community participation helps me acquire personal projects planning skills                             | 192            | 49.0 | 176   | 44.9 | 20      | 5.1  | 4        | 1.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.42 | 0.64               | 3     |
| 3          | Community participation is an obligation towards my country  | 192            | 49.0 | 168   | 42.9 | 32      | 8.2  | 0        | 0.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.41 | 0.64               | 4     |
| 2          | Self-affirmation and self-satisfaction are what motivate me to participate in my community.            | 196            | 50.0 | 160   | 40.8 | 32      | 8.2  | 0        | 0.0 | 4                 | 1.0 | 4.39 | 0.72               | 5     |
| 8          | Loyalty and national belonging motivate me to participate in my community.                             | 204            | 52.0 | 132   | 33.7 | 40      | 10.2 | 16       | 4.1 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.34 | 0.82               | 6     |
| 6          | My community participation contributes in achieving the goals of sustainable development.              | 188            | 48.0 | 144   | 36.7 | 56      | 14.3 | 4        | 1.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.32 | 0.75               | 7     |
| 5          | My participation in community activities is motivated by my sense of responsibility towards my society | 188            | 48.0 | 152   | 38.8 | 36      | 9.2  | 12       | 3.1 | 4                 | 1.0 | 4.30 | 0.84               | 8     |
| 9          | I am keen on participating in formal initiatives   | 152            | 38.8 | 136   | 34.7 | 60      | 15.3 | 36       | 9.2 | 8                 | 2.0 | 3.99 | 1.05               | 9     |
| 10         | Gender equality motivates me to participate in my community.   | 152            | 38.8 | 92    | 23.5 | 84      | 21.4 | 28       | 7.1 | 36                | 9.2 | 3.76 | 1.02               | 10    |
| Total mean |  |                |      |       |      |         |      |          |     |                   |     | 4.29 | 0.55               | -     |

**Table3 :**”Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Responses to the motives behind community participation and sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

| n          | item  | Survey Scale   |      |       |      |         |      |          |     |                   |     | Mean | standard deviation | Order      |
|------------|---|----------------|------|-------|------|---------|------|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|------|--------------------|------------|
|            |   | Strongly Agree |      | Agree |      | Neutral |      | Disagree |     | Strongly Disagree |     |      |                    |            |
|            |   | f              | %    | f     | %    | f       | %    | f        | %   | f                 | %   |      |                    |            |
| 2          | Community participation helps satisfy the individual's desire for accomplishment and success.   | 232            | 59.2 | 132   | 33.7 | 28      | 7.1  | 0        | 0.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.52 | 0.63               | 1          |
| 7          | Community participation helps in affirming and developing individuals' personal identity.   | 232            | 59.2 | 140   | 35.7 | 16      | 4.1  | 0        | 0.0 | 4                 | 1.0 | 4.52 | 0.67               | 2          |
| 1          | Community participation contributes to achieving social solidarity among members of society.  | 224            | 57.1 | 144   | 36.7 | 24      | 6.1  | 0        | 0.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.51 | 0.61               | 3          |
| 8          | Community participation promotes the sense of social responsibility among members of society.   | 224            | 57.1 | 144   | 36.7 | 24      | 6.1  | 0        | 0.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.51 | 0.61               | 3 repeated |
| 6          | Community participation helps raise the individuals' awareness of the available resources that are essential for development projects | 224            | 57.1 | 144   | 36.7 | 20      | 5.1  | 4        | 1.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.50 | 0.64               | 5          |
| 9          | Community participation contributes to the improvement of activities and development projects.  | 212            | 54.1 | 136   | 34.7 | 36      | 9.2  | 8        | 2.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.41 | 0.74               | 6          |
| 10         | Community participation contributes to creativity and innovation in development projects  | 216            | 55.1 | 128   | 32.7 | 32      | 8.2  | 16       | 4.1 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.39 | 0.80               | 7          |
| 11         | Community participation contributes to the maintenance of public properties.  | 208            | 53.1 | 132   | 33.7 | 40      | 10.2 | 8        | 2.0 | 4                 | 1.0 | 4.36 | 0.82               | 8          |
| 3          | Community participation reduce individual's negative behavior and encourages politeness   | 188            | 48.0 | 156   | 39.8 | 40      | 10.2 | 4        | 1.0 | 4                 | 1.0 | 4.33 | 0.78               | 9          |
| 4          | Community participation contributes to reducing the financial charges of development projects   | 184            | 46.9 | 124   | 31.6 | 76      | 19.4 | 8        | 2.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.23 | 0.83               | 10         |
| 5          | Community participation contributes to preventing social issues related to education and other social services                        | 192            | 49.0 | 112   | 28.6 | 72      | 18.4 | 16       | 4.1 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.22 | 0.89               | 11         |
| Total mean |   |                |      |       |      |         |      |          |     |                   |     | 4.41 | 0.52               | -          |

**Table4:”Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Responses to community participation in sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia**

| Item   | Survey Scale   |      |       |      |         |     |          |     |                   |     | Mean | standard deviation | Order |
|--|----------------|------|-------|------|---------|-----|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|------|--------------------|-------|
|  | Strongly Agree |      | Agree |      | Neutral |     | Disagree |     | Strongly Disagree |     |      |                    |       |
|  | f              | %    | f     | %    | f       | %   | F        | %   | f                 | %   |      |                    |       |
| Promoting a community participation mindset for the Saudi individual                                     | 228            | 58.2 | 156   | 39.8 | 8       | 2.0 | 0        | 0.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 0.0  | 4.56               | 0.54  |
| Activating family involvement in community participation in the development of academic institutions.    | 236            | 60.2 | 124   | 31.6 | 32      | 8.2 | 0        | 0.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 0.0  | 4.52               | 0.64  |
| Launching an online platform that tracks individuals' community participations.                          | 248            | 63.3 | 112   | 28.6 | 20      | 5.1 | 0        | 0.0 | 12                | 3.1 | 4.49 | 0.85               |       |
| Emphasizing the important role of the family in encouraging its members to participate in the community. | 232            | 59.2 | 124   | 31.6 | 28      | 7.1 | 8        | 2.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.48 | 0.72               |       |
| Activating online participation in initiatives coordinated by official government institutions           | 228            | 58.2 | 128   | 32.7 | 28      | 7.1 | 8        | 2.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.47 | 0.72               |       |
| Fostering social responsibility by engaging individuals in community projects and activities.            | 232            | 59.2 | 120   | 30.6 | 32      | 8.2 | 8        | 2.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.47 | 0.73               |       |
| Launching programs that aims at raising school and university students' awareness of                     | 224            | 57.1 | 128   | 32.7 | 36      | 9.2 | 4        | 1.0 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.46 | 0.70               |       |

| Item   | Survey Scale   |      |       |      |         |     |          |     |                   |     | Mean | standard deviatio | Order |
|--|----------------|------|-------|------|---------|-----|----------|-----|-------------------|-----|------|-------------------|-------|
|  | Strongly Agree |      | Agree |      | Neutral |     | Disagree |     | Strongly Disagree |     |      |                   |       |
|  | f              | %    | f     | %    | f       | %   | F        | %   | f                 | %   |      |                   |       |
| the importance of community participation.   |                |      |       |      |         |     |          |     |                   |     |      |                   |       |
| Designing advertising campaigns that educate the public about the importance of community participation and its role in sustainable development.                                 | 220            | 56.1 | 140   | 35.7 | 20      | 5.1 | 12       | 3.1 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.45 | 0.73              |       |
| Holding workshops and scientific conferences to encourage community participation in Saudi society.  | 216            | 55.1 | 140   | 35.7 | 24      | 6.1 | 12       | 3.1 | 0                 | 0.0 | 4.43 | 0.74              |       |
| Creating academic curriculum for schools and universities which teaches students how to engage in community participation and the the rights and obligations of the participant. | 196            | 50.0 | 140   | 35.7 | 36      | 9.2 | 16       | 4.1 | 4                 | 1.0 | 4.30 | 0.87              |       |

**Table5 :**”Frequencies, Percentages, Means, and Standard Deviations of Responses suggested visions for reinforcing the role of community participation in sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**6. Discussion**

The study found a strong consensus among participants regarding the underlying motives for community participation and its role in sustainable development. Participants identified several prominent reasons that drive their involvement in community activities. For example, Optimizing Spare Time: Many participants view community engagement as an effective way to make productive use of their spare time. By participating in community activities, individuals can channel their free time into meaningful and constructive efforts that contribute to personal and communal well-being. This motive reflects a proactive approach to utilizing available time for the benefit of both individual growth and societal advancement. Forming Social Relationships: Community participation is seen as a valuable opportunity for building and strengthening social relationships. Participants recognize that engaging in community activities allows them to connect with others, foster social bonds, and create a sense of belonging within their communities. This motive highlights the social dimension of community involvement, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal connections

and collaborative efforts. **Acquiring Personal Project Planning Skills:** Involvement in community activities is also perceived as a means to develop and enhance personal project planning skills. Participants believe that engaging in community projects provides practical experience in organizing, managing, and executing initiatives. This skill development is seen as beneficial not only for community contributions but also for personal and professional growth. **Viewing Community Participation as an Obligation Towards Their Country:** A significant motive identified is the perception of community participation as a civic duty or obligation towards the nation. Participants feel a strong sense of responsibility to contribute to the betterment of their country through active involvement in community affairs. This sense of duty reflects a commitment to national development and a desire to support the broader goals of sustainable progress. Overall, these findings underscore the multifaceted nature of community participation in Saudi Arabia. The study highlights that individuals are motivated by a combination of personal, social, and civic factors, which collectively drive their engagement in activities that support sustainable development. By understanding these motives, policymakers and community leaders can better design and implement strategies that align with participants' interests and enhance the effectiveness of community involvement in achieving sustainable development goals.

The study findings reveal a strong consensus among participants regarding the impact of community participation on sustainable development within Saudi Arabia. Participants identified several significant effects of community involvement, reflecting its positive contributions to both individual and societal development. The most notable effects include: **Satisfying the Individual's Desire for Accomplishment and Success:** Community participation is recognized for fulfilling personal aspirations and providing a sense of achievement. By actively engaging in community projects and initiatives, individuals experience a profound sense of accomplishment that aligns with their personal goals and ambitions. This satisfaction stems from the tangible outcomes of their efforts and the recognition of their contributions to societal progress. **Affirming and Developing Personal Identity:** Participation in community activities plays a crucial role in reinforcing and shaping personal identity. Engaging in meaningful work within the community helps individuals understand their roles and contributions, fostering a stronger sense of self and personal fulfillment. This process of self-discovery and development is integral to individual growth and contributes to a deeper connection with one's community. **Contributing to Social Solidarity:** Community participation enhances social solidarity by fostering a sense of unity and cooperation among members of society. Through collaborative efforts and shared goals, individuals build stronger social bonds and reinforce the fabric of their communities. This sense of solidarity promotes mutual support and collective action, which are essential for achieving sustainable development objectives. **Promoting a Sense of Social Responsibility:** Participants strongly agree that community involvement cultivates a heightened sense of social responsibility. By actively participating in community activities, individuals develop a greater awareness of their role in contributing to societal well-being and development. This sense of responsibility motivates individuals to engage more deeply in efforts that address community needs and advance sustainable development goals. Participants also expressed strong agreement on several suggested visions for enhancing the role of community participation in sustainable development within Saudi Arabia. These visions reflect a shared commitment to strengthening community involvement and ensuring its effectiveness in achieving sustainable development objectives. The key suggested visions include: **Promoting a Community Participation Mindset Among Saudi Individuals:** There is a strong emphasis on fostering a mindset that values and prioritizes community participation. This involves raising awareness about the benefits and importance of engaging in community activities and encouraging individuals to actively contribute to development efforts. Promoting this mindset can lead to increased participation and more impactful community engagement. **Activating Family Involvement in Community Participation Within Academic Institutions:** Participants suggest enhancing family involvement in community activities, particularly through academic institutions. Encouraging families to participate in community-based initiatives and projects can strengthen the support network for individuals and amplify the impact of community engagement efforts. Integrating family involvement into educational settings can also promote a culture of participation from an early age. **Launching an Online Platform to Track Community Participation:** The development of an online platform to monitor and track community participation is proposed as a means to increase transparency and accountability. Such a platform would enable individuals to record their participation activities, track their contributions, and access information about ongoing community projects. This technological solution aims to facilitate greater engagement and ensure that participation efforts are effectively managed and recognized. **Emphasizing the Importance of Community Participation:** A key vision is to place a strong emphasis on the value and significance of community participation. This involves highlighting the benefits of engagement and demonstrating its impact on both individual and societal levels. By reinforcing the importance of participation, stakeholders can motivate more individuals to get involved and support sustainable development initiatives. **Enhancing Collaboration Between Stakeholders:** Encouraging collaboration among government agencies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and community leaders to support and coordinate community

participation activities. By fostering partnerships and leveraging resources, stakeholders can create a more cohesive and impactful approach to community engagement. Investing in Training and Capacity Building: Providing training and capacity-building programs to equip individuals and organizations with the skills and knowledge needed to participate effectively in community activities. These programs would focus on enhancing project management, communication, and leadership skills, enabling participants to contribute more effectively to development efforts. Monitoring and Evaluating Participation Efforts: Implementing mechanisms to monitor and evaluate community participation activities, assess their effectiveness, and identify areas for improvement. Regular evaluation ensures that participation efforts are aligned with development goals and provides opportunities for continuous improvement.

| <i>n</i> | <i>Main Content</i>                         | <i>Details</i>  |
|----------|---|---|
| 1        | The fundamentals of the vision              | The results and recommendations of previous literature.<br>a. The results of the field study.<br>b. The theoretical framework of the study.   |
| 2        | The assumptions that the vision is based on | The vision is based on the fact that social service is a dynamic profession that relies on the participation principle as a tool of social empowerment. Participation enables the society to achieve its goals by involving individuals and communities in decision making and taking responsibilities, which creates a prosperous society and satisfied individuals.                           |
| 3        | The goal of the vision                      | The main goal of the suggested vision is reinforcing the role of community participation in the sustainable development in Saudi Arabia.  |
| 4        | Levels of generals                          | Micro units (individuals)<br>Mezzo units (family)<br>Macro units (government and non-government social institutions)  |
| 5        | The recommendations of the vision           | a. Promoting a community participation mindset for the Saudi individual,<br>b. activating family involvement in community participation in the development of academic institutions,<br>c. launching an online platform that tracks the community participations of individuals.<br>d. emphasizing the important role of the family in encouraging its members to participate in the community. |

**Table 6: "Final Suggested Vision for Reinforcing the Role of Community Participation in Sustainable Development in Saudi Arabia"**

The study’s findings reveal a robust consensus among participants regarding the various motivations for community participation, highlighting the broad spectrum of benefits that such engagement can provide. The key motivations identified include: Optimizing Free Time: Participants perceive community engagement as a productive use of their spare time. By channeling their free hours into meaningful activities, individuals not only contribute to societal welfare but also gain personal satisfaction and fulfillment. Forming Social Connections: Community involvement is recognized for its role in building and strengthening social relationships. Participants value the opportunity to connect with others, enhancing their social networks and fostering a sense of community. Learning Personal Program Development Skills: Engaging in community activities provides individuals with valuable skills in project planning and management. These skills are beneficial both in personal and professional contexts, aiding in personal growth and development. These motivations underscore the importance of nurturing a culture that supports and promotes community participation. By creating environments and opportunities that facilitate engagement, societies can enhance the benefits derived from active participation. The study also highlights the significant positive effects of community participation on sustainable development, which include: Fulfilling the Desire for Achievement: Participation in community activities provides individuals with a sense of accomplishment and success. This sense of achievement is closely tied to the positive impact of their contributions on their communities and beyond. Affirming Personal Identity: Community involvement plays a crucial role in shaping and reinforcing personal identity. By actively contributing to community initiatives, individuals gain a clearer understanding of their roles and values, strengthening their sense of self. Contributing to Social Cohesion: Community participation fosters social solidarity and stability. Engaging in collaborative efforts helps build stronger, more cohesive communities, which is essential for achieving sustainable development goals. Promoting Social Responsibility: Active involvement in community activities cultivates a sense of social responsibility.

Participants develop a greater awareness of their role in supporting societal well-being and advancing collective goals.

The recommended strategies for reinforcing community participation include: Promoting a Participation-Oriented Mindset: Encouraging a cultural shift that values and prioritizes community engagement. This involves raising awareness about the importance and benefits of participation, motivating more individuals to get involved. Activating Family Involvement in Community Activities: Enhancing family participation in community projects, particularly through educational institutions. Involving families can create a supportive network and amplify the impact of community efforts. Launching an Online Platform: Developing a digital platform to track and monitor community participation. Such a platform would enable individuals to document their contributions, access information about ongoing projects, and facilitate greater transparency and engagement. Emphasizing the Importance of Community Participation: Reinforcing the significance of community involvement through various channels. By highlighting the value and impact of participation, stakeholders can encourage broader engagement and support for sustainable development.

The final vision for reinforcing community participation in sustainable development involves: Developing a Comprehensive Community Engagement Framework: Creating a detailed framework that outlines strategies, goals, and best practices for community participation. This framework would guide the implementation of initiatives and ensure alignment with sustainable development objectives. Enhancing Collaboration Among Stakeholders: Fostering partnerships among government bodies, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, and community leaders. Collaborative efforts can optimize resources, streamline activities, and maximize the effectiveness of community engagement. Investing in Training and Capacity Building: Offering training programs to enhance the skills and capabilities of individuals and organizations involved in community activities. These programs would focus on improving project management, leadership, and communication skills. Monitoring and Evaluating Participation Efforts: Implementing systems to assess and evaluate the effectiveness of community participation activities. Regular monitoring and evaluation can identify successes, challenges, and areas for improvement, ensuring that participation efforts remain aligned with development goals. The study's findings and recommendations underscore the importance of adopting a comprehensive, inclusive approach to sustainable development that recognizes and leverages the critical role of community participation. By aligning individual, family, and institutional efforts, Saudi Arabia can achieve more robust and equitable development. The proposed strategies and future research directions offer valuable insights and practical solutions for enhancing community engagement and advancing sustainability, ultimately empowering communities as active partners in the development process.

The findings of this study underscore the critical role of community participation in advancing sustainable development in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, particularly within the framework of Vision 2030. This research has confirmed that high levels of community engagement, especially among Saudi youth, are driven by a strong desire to contribute to social and economic development. The results align with previous studies that have emphasized the importance of public involvement in shaping and sustaining development initiatives (Abdulghafur et al., 2021; Aljoyoush et al., 2016). The positive impact of community participation on various sectors such as education, healthcare, and social services reflects the findings of Alraddadi (2020), who highlighted the potential of community engagement to enhance educational outcomes. Similarly, the results corroborate the study by Hawashin and Hejazi (2022), which demonstrated a significant relationship between community involvement and quality of life improvements. However, this study also identified persistent challenges, such as limited resources, lack of awareness, and bureaucratic obstacles, which hinder effective community participation. These barriers resonate with the observations made by Almulla et al. (2016), who noted similar issues in other contexts. Addressing these challenges is crucial for maximizing the benefits of community engagement and achieving the sustainable development goals set by Vision 2030. The significance of these findings lies in their implications for policy and practice. First, the study highlights the need for targeted interventions to raise awareness about the importance of community participation and to equip individuals with the necessary skills and resources to engage effectively. Educational institutions, NGOs, and government agencies must collaborate to create programs that empower citizens, particularly youth, to take an active role in the development process. Second, the research points to the importance of creating more inclusive and transparent platforms for participation. Ensuring that all segments of the population, including marginalized groups, have a voice in decision-making processes is essential for achieving truly sustainable development. The findings suggest that fostering partnerships between government, private sector, and civil society can help overcome the bureaucratic hurdles that currently limit participation. Future research should explore the specific sociocultural factors that influence community participation in different regions of Saudi Arabia. Understanding these nuances can help tailor strategies to increase engagement across diverse communities. Additionally, longitudinal studies are needed to assess the long-term impact of community participation on sustainable development outcomes. In practice, the insights gained from this study should guide the development of policies and programs that not only encourage participation but also sustain it over time. By addressing the identified challenges and building on the strengths of existing community engagement efforts, Saudi Arabia can reinforce its commitment to sustainable development and ensure that all citizens benefit from the country's progress.

## **7. Conclusion**

The study has demonstrated the significant role of community participation in reinforcing sustainable development within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, aligning closely with the Vision 2030 objectives. Community involvement is not only a democratic imperative but also a practical necessity for ensuring that development initiatives are sustainable, inclusive, and effective. The active engagement of young people, as highlighted in this research, proves to be a critical element in driving forward economic, social, and environmental progress. The findings indicate that while there is substantial enthusiasm among Saudi youth to contribute to their communities, challenges such as limited awareness, insufficient resources, and bureaucratic hurdles often impede their efforts. To overcome these obstacles, it is essential to enhance educational initiatives, foster public-private partnerships, and develop accessible platforms for participation. Moreover, addressing these barriers will ensure that the potential of community participation is fully realized, thereby creating a more resilient and prosperous society. In conclusion, community participation stands as a cornerstone of sustainable development, offering a pathway for individuals to effect change and improve their quality of life. As Saudi Arabia continues to advance its developmental agenda, the inclusion of diverse community voices will be pivotal in achieving the nation's long-term goals. Future efforts should focus on empowering all societal sectors, particularly the youth, to take an active role in shaping their communities and, by extension, the future of the Kingdom..

## **8. Recommendations:**

Based on the findings outlined in this research, several recommendations are proposed to further enrich the academic field of social service and to contribute to the ongoing discourse on sustainable development in Saudi Arabia. Firstly, future research should explore the specific requirements necessary for effective community participation in reinforcing sustainable development, particularly from the perspective of the youth. Understanding the needs, motivations, and barriers that young people face will provide valuable insights for designing more inclusive and effective participation strategies. Secondly, it is recommended to conduct studies that delve deeper into the challenges encountered by youth in their efforts to engage in community participation. These challenges, which may include socio-cultural, economic, and institutional barriers, need to be thoroughly investigated to develop targeted interventions that can empower youth and enhance their contribution to sustainable development. Lastly, further research should focus on examining the actual impact of community participation on sustainable development in Saudi Arabia. By evaluating the real-world outcomes of participation initiatives, researchers can assess the effectiveness of current approaches and identify areas for improvement. These studies will not only contribute to the academic field but also provide practical guidance for policymakers and practitioners working towards the goals of Vision 2030.

## **Declaration of competing interest**

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper. Furthermore, this paper/research has not been funded by anyone or organization.

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