



CONTRIBUTIONS OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF EGBEDA LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF OYO STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the contributions of infrastructure to the development of Egbeda Local Government Area of Oyo State, Nigeria. The objective is to identify the types, distributions and impacts of these infrastructural facilities on the lives of the people and their general economic well being. Data used were obtained from the field through questionnaire, oral interview and personal observation. Results on the distribution of economic activities showed that respondents engaged in more than one economic activity. The result on availability of infrastructures and their conditional service to the rural people showed that facilities such as public transport, local market were adjudged good by the respondents while both secondary and primary schools were adjudged fair. Roads, dispensary and electricity were adjudged by respondents to be in a poor state. The PPMC result showed that the assessment of infrastructure facilities showed that they have low significant (26%) on the livelihood of the respondents. The results further reveals that few infrastructural facilities were located in the study area, which were however not equitably distributed. The study concludes that facility provision was confronted with numerous problems in the study area which include inaccessibility, inadequacy, lack of maintenance of existing infrastructures and the attitude of government to rural facilities location. The impacts relating to poverty alleviation as observed were in the areas of access to medical care, mortality rate, employment and literacy. The study recommends policy reforms of rural development to contain rehabilitation and maintenance; there is need for government and non-governmental organization to recognize the need for sustainable infrastructural development programmes that will not change as government changes and calls for attitudinal change of the rural dwellers pertaining to public infrastructure in their domain is also recommended.

Keywords: Infrastructural Facilities, Poverty, Purchasing Power, Rural Areas, Standard of Living.

INTRODUCTION

The rural areas of Nigeria engage in primary activities that form the foundation for any economic development (Olayiwola and Adeleye, 2005). Despite this role, rural areas have been unattractive to live in due to the dearth of infrastructures, which are the major instruments for both human and economic development. According to the Federal office of Statistics Report [FOS] (2000), the rise in rural poverty levels followed largely the trend in national poverty. As at 1980, rural poverty was at 17.20%. It rose to 37% in 1985 and to 58.2% in 2000. According to Kessides (1993) better rural infrastructure and human development programmes promote economic growth, social development and reduce poverty.

Considering that over 75% of Nigerians live in the rural areas, it therefore supposes that the available infrastructure in this area is largely inadequate. Studies have also shown that the few available ones are poorly distributed. These problems no doubt have left the rural areas



deprived of some socio-economic opportunities. This lack of opportunities has translated into uncontrollable diminishing standard of living among the rural dwellers. The rural people have low purchasing power and standard of living. Attempt at solving rural neglects had been the concern of the Nigerian government over the years. Examples of such attempt were Operation Feed the Nation (OFN); the National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) and the Directorate for Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI). All these efforts failed to improve rural areas in whatever form, (Olayiwola and Adeleye, 2005).

The contention of the policy makers is that rural Infrastructure, if adequately provided, can enhance the quality of rural life. But it is assumed that the rural people have benefited very little from most rural infrastructure and economic development programmes of various governments of the nation. It is against this assumption that this paper is intended to evaluate the impact of such available infrastructures on the rural economic development.

This study is carried out to determine the role of infrastructure provision in economic transformation of the rural local government area of Egbeda, in Oyo state Nigeria. The study area is characteristically a rural area which evidently lack basic infrastructure. The available infrastructural facilities are few, inadequate and poorly distributed (Ojeifo, 2006). Irrespective of this however, it is believed that the few ones are having some impacts on the socio-economic life of the people. How much impact they are generating is however not known and it is upon this that this study has been undertaken.

Infrastructural facilities, according to Hirschman (1958), refer to those basic services without which primary, secondary and tertiary productive activities cannot function. In its wider sense, infrastructural facilities embrace all public services from law and order through education and public health to transportation, communications and water supply (Mabogunje, 1974; Kahn, 1979). In other words, infrastructural facilities are elements in the package of basic needs, which a community would like to procure for better living. Kahn (1979) asserts that rural infrastructural facilities can be classified into three main types; Physical, Social and Institutional Infrastructures.

The term development refers to the conscious action by utilizing in a co-coordinated way the resources available to a given political unit (Bernstein, 1978). Accordingly, rural infrastructural development could imply the desirability of overcoming deprivation and low quality of rural life. It could also refer to the provision of bridges, hospitals, schools, electricity and potable water in areas where they are lacking. Rural infrastructural development is a positive action in so far as it aims to improve the welfare of the people.

Economic development refers to the increase in the standard of living in a nation population with sustained growth sustained growth from a simple, low-income economy to a modern high-income economy. It typically involves improvements in a variety of indications such as literacy rates, life expectancy, and poverty rates. A country's economic development is related to its human development, which encompasses, among other things, health and education.

Infrastructure refers to resource systems that have been harnessed for the development of a society. Such systems include telecommunication, energy, transportation, government and other public utilities (Frischmann, 2007). The development of a society depends on availability of infrastructure at homes and industries. The quest for adequate infrastructure cannot be abandoned because it is the bedrock of development. Acute shortages of infrastructure in Nigeria affect individuals and organizations in the country.

The infrastructural approach to rural economic development is one method commonly used by most Third World countries. Abumere (2002) defined rural infrastructure to include the system of physical, human, and institutional forms of capital which enables rural residents



to better perform their production, processing, and distribution activities, as well as help to improve the overall quality of life. Some of these infrastructures are roads communication network, irrigation, storage facilities, market facilities, research and extension institutions, schools and universities which train and turn out a variety of skilled workers and professionals in diverse fields.

Rural economic infrastructure can be better understood as those specialized “elements” in the development process that bring about improvements in the socio-economic welfare of the rural dwellers. They are catalysts of development, and at the same time their presence can be an indicator of the level of development. On the other hand, the presence of certain types of infrastructure such as electricity may not bring about significant improvements in the life of the people unless when combined with other variables. The following can be classified as social infrastructure; health (hospitals, dispensaries, maternities, health centers), education (all types of schools except universities) and utilities (water and electricity).

Oyeleye (1987) conceived rural development as involving the process of trickling-down of modern infrastructural facilities and ideas from the more developed urban areas to rural areas, i.e. a process of the exportation of urbanization to rural communities. Abumere (2002) stresses that if rural development is defined as a strategy design to improve the economic, social, and cultural life of the poor rural dweller, then the definition connotes that the inputs of agents of development (good roads, potable water, electricity supply, etc.) into the rural areas must be carefully structured out and delivered in a consistent manner. This is regardless of whether these agents of improvement physically move from the urban to the rural area or vice-versa.

Calderon and (2008) offer a partial account of the literature on the growth and inequality effects of infrastructure; more comprehensive surveys include Estache (2006), Romp and de Haan (2007) and Straub (2007). The bulk of the empirical literature on the effects of infrastructure has focused on its long-run contribution to the level or growth rate of aggregate income or productivity. According to Adeyinka *et al.* (2011), “infrastructure can assume several meanings, and it covers transport, building, power, health, tourism, communication facilities, land and country planning, demographic structure control, etc”.

The role of infrastructure in achieving steady economic development cannot be over emphasized. According to Aina (2006), infrastructure helps in promoting rural employment, the author noted that the provision of electricity in rural areas would engage many welding works. Adeyemo (2002) noted that investment in infrastructure improves linkages between rural and urban areas which enhances productivity and raises the quality of life those living in rural areas.

In addition, infrastructure can help solve four problems: social; health and environment; development; and, economics. The linkages between infrastructure and economic development are multiple and complex. Not only does infrastructure affect production and consumption directly, it also creates many direct and indirect externalities. It also involves large flows of expenditure, thereby creating additional employment.

Studies have shown that infrastructure can have a significant impact on output, income, employment, international trade, and quality of life. Infrastructure development can reduce stress and promote good health. It will also reduce crime level. Infrastructure increases the availability and widens the distribution of basic life sustaining goods such as food, shelter, health and protection. It raises standard of living, in addition to high incomes, the provision of more jobs, better education and greater attention to cultural and human values, all which will serve not only to enhance material well-being but also to generate greater individual and national self-esteem. Adequate and well distributed infrastructure expands the range of



individual and social choices available to individuals and nations by freeing them from servitude and dependence not only in relation to other people and nation states but also to the forces of ignorance and human misery (Todaro and Smith, 2006). Likewise, infrastructure also has multiple effects on health and quality of life. (Kessides, 1993) pointed out that individuals are poor because they do not have access to infrastructure services of necessary quality. FAO (1996) stated that infrastructure though are key stimulants to agricultural development and growth, they are limited in all rural areas. Several studies (Fan *et al.*, 2000; Mundlak *et al.*, 2002; Fan and Zhang, 2004) have also revealed that investment in infrastructure is essential to increase farmers' access to input and output markets, stimulation of rural non-farm economy and vitalize rural towns. It also increases consumers' demand in rural areas and facilitate the integration of less favoured rural areas into national and international economies.

The main objective of this study was to analyze the contributions of infrastructural facilities to the development of rural inhabitants in Egbeda Local Government Area of Oyo of State, Nigeria. The specific objectives were to: identify the existing facilities and their distribution in the area; categorize the distributional patterns of the facilities in the area; examine how the existences of these facilities have impacted on the living standard of the rural dwellers in the area.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Study Area

The research was carried out in Egbeda local government area of Oyo State. The Inhabitants of the Local Government Area are mainly Yoruba of Oyo ethnic group. Yoruba is therefore widely spoken, while English is the official language. The area is mainly an agricultural society planting both cash and food crops. In spite of this however, a proportion of the population is also engaged in secondary and tertiary activities such as electrical works, mechanical works, barbing, banking, teaching, transportation and cattle trading. Public infrastructure facilities are few in the area and are also unevenly distributed.

Sample Size and Data Collection Approach

The data for the study were collected from primary and secondary sources. The tools used for data collection from primary sources were questionnaires, interviews and personal observation. For the questionnaires, two hundred and twenty were made and distributed in the wards of the local government area. In the distribution, the highest populated settlement in each ward was selected which brought the number of selected settlement to 11. The selected settlements are; Egbeda town, Erunmu, Ajia, Alakia, Baale, Owobaale, Adegbayi, Fasade, Abidolu, Ogungbade, Oke omi and Oki. In each of these selected settlements, twenty questionnaires were distributed and administered on respondents.

The questionnaires were specifically meant to determine literacy level among the people. Also interviews were conducted using a schedule prepared for the top management staff of some of the facilities and ancillary activities. Data on employment and mortality were thus generated by this means. Personal observation was helpful in obtaining information especially on the types and distribution of infrastructure and ancillary activities and also of the physical condition of the facilities in the study area. Secondary data on the other hand were collected from books and articles.

Analytical Techniques

Both descriptive statistics which include frequency count, percentages and mean, and inferential statistics which include chi-square (χ^2) and Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) were used.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Economic Activities of the Respondents

Analysis of the economic activities rural dwellers engage is presented on Table 1. Result of the analysis shows that respondents were more involved in trading (51.7%), crop farming (49.2%) and crop/food processing (24.2%) as their major economic livelihood activities. Other economic activities include livestock farming (19.2%), butchering (7.5%), carpentry (14.2%), civil servant (10.8%) and mechanic/okada riding (commercial motorcycle) (6.7%). It was observed during the field study that respondents were involved in more than one economic activity.

Table 1: Distribution of Economic Activities of Respondents

Activities	Frequency	Percentage
Crop farming	50	49.2
Livestock /fishing farming	23	19.2
Cow selling	14	11.7
Butchering	9	7.5
Crop food processing	29	24.2
Carpentry/Bricklaying/Tailoring	17	14.2
Trading	62	51.7
Civil service	13	10.8
Okada riding	8	6.7
Cooperative	94	78.3
Community Based Organization	49	40.8
Other social Group like informal	94	78.3

Source: Field Work by Author, 2019

This corroborates Olawoye (2002) that rural dwellers were involved in several livelihood activities as a means of poverty reduction. This observation also corroborates the finding of World Bank (2003) that rural dwellers economic activities are diverse. Rural dwellers social activities were measured by their membership and participation in various types of social groups existing in rural areas. These social groups include cooperative (credit and thrift), community based organization, town development union, age group association, informal work exchange, informal savings group and market association. Result shows that (78.3%) majority of the respondents' were involved in society such as cooperatives and other informal groups, including informal work exchange, informal savings group, social clubs, associations which are semi-formal in nature.

This observation collaborate the findings of Okali *et al.* (2000) in their study of rural-urban interaction in southeastern part of Nigeria. They observed that social groups that enhance both economic and social relationship which exist in urban centres are now being found in rural settlements, but not as formalized as those in urban centres. The implication of this observation is the important role of social groups in rural transformation in the country. Infrastructural facilities in this study include basic amenities that are required for economic and social development of individuals within a community.

Availability and Conditions of Infrastructural Facilities

The result on Table 2 shows that basic infrastructural facilities which can promote rural economy were available in most of the communities visited in the study area. The result shows



that facilities such as public transport (65.0%), local market (64.2%) were adjudged good by the respondents while both secondary and primary schools (42%, and 41%) were adjudged fair. Roads (70%), dispensary (68%) and electricity (92%) were adjudged by respondents to be in a poor state. The reason that may be adduced for the observation in Table 2 is the presence of past government rural development programmes in the state, especially the Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI), Rural Electrification Project (REP) and Universal Basic Education (UBE).

Table 2: Distribution of Infrastructural Facilities Availability and their Conditions

Available Infrastructure Facilities	Present Conditions				
	Yes (%)	No (%)	Good (%)	Fair (%)	Poor (%)
Access Road	120(100.0)	-	1 (0.8)	35 (29.2)	84 (70.0)
Public Transport	120 (100.0)	-	78(65.0)	42 (35.0)	-
Local Market	109 (90.8)	11 (9.2)	77 (64.2)	25 (20.8)	18 (15.0)
Primary School	20 (10.0)	-	6 (5.0)	49 (40.8)	65 (54.2)
Secondary School	83 (69.2)	37(30.8)	27 (22.5)	50 (41.7)	43 (35.8)
Dispensary/ Maternity	96 (80.0)	24 (20.2)	19 (15.8)	20 (16.7)	81 (67.5)
Electricity	119 (99.2)	1 (0.8)	-	10 (8.3)	110 (91.7)
Bore Hole/ Water Supply	78 (65.0)	42 (35.0)	4 (3.3)	23 (19.2)	93 (27.0)

Source: Field Work by Author, 2019

Although these programmes/projects made available these facilities in the rural communities studied, no provision was made for their maintenance. The state or local government does not know who is maintaining the infrastructures after Federal Government had made provisions for them. The implication of this for the development of rural economy is the need to develop a maintenance culture which will involve the beneficiary communities. The present condition of these facilities will definitely not promote rural economy in a developing nation like Nigeria.

A major emphasis of the rural development programmes in Nigeria, whether in the past or presently, is the development of rural infrastructure for poverty reduction and economic well-being acceleration. Unfortunately, not much has been achieved due to faulty implementation (Biodun, 1998). As a result, the rural areas still remain places of poverty, disease, death, high unemployment and illiteracy. In the study area, few infrastructural facilities are available and their impacts have been highlighted. However, these impacts have not met the desires and the aspiration of the majority of the people of the study area. This is because poverty in all ramifications is still widespread in the area and their economic well-being is in dilemma. It is noticed that in most rural areas where this work was carried out, there was a lot of abandoned projects which the dwellers would have benefited a lot from assuming they were not neglected.

It was noted too that people’s orientation on public infrastructures in their domain is not encouraging; they never see those infrastructures as their own property and never bother to safeguard them properly from vandalism. According to information made available, there is no infrastructural monitoring group or mechanism put in place by government in making sure that the infrastructures are in good shape and well utilized. Maintenance culture is totally absent in all the infrastructures made available in those area and they are extremely not adequate.

The study went further to test if relationship exists between selected personal characteristics, present condition of infrastructural facilities and rural dwellers perception on



effect of infrastructural facilities on livelihood activities. Therefore the following hypotheses were tested and the results are presented in Table 3. The two hypotheses to be tested includes; H₀: There is no significant relationship between selected socio-economic characteristics and respondents' perception of effect of infrastructural facilities on their livelihood activities; and H₁: There is no significant relationship between respondent's assessment of present condition of facilities and their perception of the effect of infrastructural facilities on their livelihood.

Table 3 indicates that there is significant relationship between years of residency and perception of respondents. This indicates that the numbers of years of residency plays a crucial role in respondents' perception on the impact of infrastructure availability on their economic activities and standard of living. The respondent must have experienced a positive effect at the inception of the infrastructures but due to lack of maintenance instead of contributing positively to the economic development and livelihood it is negative. Because most of them claimed that they pay high charges for the electricity they do not use and school fees with learning environment are unbearable.

Table 3: Chi-square and Pearson Product Moment Correlation test of Hypothesis

Selected Socio Economic Characteristics	Chi-square (X ²)	PPMC (r)	Df	p-value	Decision
Sex	1.290	-	2	.525	Not significant
Marital Status	0.913	-	3	.822	Not significant
Educational Status	8.017	-	4	.119	Not significant
Age	-	0.105	4	.254	Not significant
Years of Residence	-	-0.252	4	.005	Not significant
PPMC test for Hypothesis 2		r-value		p-value	Decision
Present condition of infrastructure versus respondent perception		0.260		0.004	Significant

Source: Computer Printout by the Author, 2019

The r-value that is negative means that as the number of years of residency increase the number of respondents that perceived unfavourable or negative effect increases. The table also shows that relationship between present condition of infrastructure facilities and respondents perception. This result further confirms hypothesis 1 that is their assessment of infrastructure facilities informs their perception. This means, the facilities had effect on their economic activities. This result confirms findings of Olawoye (2002) and Okali *et al.* (2001) that present conditions of infrastructural facilities provided by past administration across ecological zones of Nigeria do not promote transformation of rural economy.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The main focus of this study is the state of rural infrastructures as related to economic development. The level of infrastructural development is a significant determinant of the ability of rural dwellers to improve their productivity and standard of living. The present poor condition of most of the infrastructural facilities is a constraining factor for ensuring sustainable livelihoods for the rural population in the study area. The study assessed the livelihood activities; infrastructural facilities available and present condition of these facilities; and



perception on the effect of infrastructural facilities on economic activities of rural dwellers in the study area. It also tests if relationships exist between selected personal characteristics, present condition of infrastructural facilities and perception on the effect of infrastructural facilities on livelihood activities in the study area. The following are recommendations that are likely to bring about sustainable expansion of economic development of the dwellers in the study area:

- i. Reform in the policy of rural development to contain rehabilitation and maintenance.
- ii. Need for government and non-governmental organization to recognize the need for sustainable infrastructural development programmes that will not change as government changes.
- iii. There is need for attitudinal change of the rural dwellers pertaining to public infrastructure in their domain.
- iv. In the study area, more infrastructural facilities should be located. Communities having over five thousand population should have a health centre, water facility, market, electricity and a postal agency. All roads linking them should be tarred for the purpose of improved accessibility.
- v. As a measure, the existing facilities can be expanded to accommodate the increasing demand for services. The hospitals can have annexes in some of the localities while more police posts, postal agencies, and motor parks, can be located in each ward of the study area. By these, facility services will not only be functioning, the impacts of infrastructure location will be accelerated.

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