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ANALYSIS OF TRANSPORT SERVICES AS AN ANTIDOTE TO RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract:

Transportation is a critical factor in the economic growth and development as well as for the efficient movement of people and goods throughout the country. Transportation plays an important role in the social, economic and political development as it constitutes the main avenue for interactions and linkages. The sample consists of rural dwellers and service provider. The data collected was analyzed using regression analysis and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The analysis indicates that transportation plays important role in rural economic development, therefore it is essential for service provider and government agencies to make available adequate transport facilities to enhance economic growth.

Key words:

Transportation, Rural Area, Economic Development

INTRODUCTION

One of the key factors that play a pivotal role in a rural economic development is the presence of a reliable and efficient transportation system. Poor accessibility in the rural areas of developing countries perpetuates the deprivation trap by denying communities access to their most basic needs. Transportation is a critical factor in the economic growth and development as well as for the efficient movement of people and goods throughout the country. Transportation plays an important role in the social, economic and political development as it constitutes the main avenue for interactions and linkages.

In view of the numerous functions of transportation with regards to development, government through the national development plan outlay a huge capital to the transport sector with the aim of increasing the accessibility to rural regions. Transportation infrastructure is critical to sustain economic growth because people want to improve their standard of living and they see increased income as the way to achieve that goal, transportation system enhancement are in turns a means of maintaining or improving economic opportunities, quality of life and ultimately income for people in a particular region.

Transportation becomes the back bone of any economy, especially countries like Nigeria, as such, an anatomy of aspects relating to inefficiencies and lack of good transportation network in Nigeria coupled with low rate of economic growth (GDP) is crucial, attached to this is the poor government policy on transportation (Lack of regulation of fees charged by private transporters, inadequate fuel, lack of spare parts and above all the prevalence of bad roads and lack of security) have succeeded in trimming down the transport system in Nigeria which have a negative effect on the economic growth especially in rural areas. Poor transportation in rural areas poses a great challenge to rural development efforts in Nigeria as it has continued to make most of the rural areas isolate from the main stream of the modern societies [1].

Transport is vital to the well-functioning of economic activities and a key to ensuring social well-being and cohesion of populations. Transport ensures everyday mobility of people and is crucial to the production and distribution of goods. Adequate infrastructure is a fundamental precondition for transport systems. In their endeavour to facilitate transport, however, decision-makers in governments and international organizations face difficult challenges. These include the existence of physical barriers or hindrances, such as insufficient or inadequate transport infrastructures, bottlenecks and missing links, as well as lack of funds to remove them. Solving these problems is not an easy task. It requires action on the part of the governments concerned, actions that are coordinated with other governments at international level.

Transport also carries an important social and environmental load, which cannot be neglected. From a general standpoint, the economic impacts of transportation can be direct or indirect: Direct impacts relates to accessibility change where transport enables larger markets and helps to save time and costs. Indirect impacts relates to the economic multiplier effect where the price of commodities or services drop and/or their variety increases. The impacts of transportation are not always intended, and can have unforeseen consequences such as congestion.[2] established that, rural travel and transport in Nigeria remain difficult due to the poor condition of roads and transport services which have continued to aggravate the problem of low productivity and high level of poverty in rural areas. Therefore, there is need for a well integrated rural urban transport system in order to guarantee the movement of people, agricultural products safely and promptly within and without the country. [3], observed the import of directing attention to the construction of simple tracks suitable for the use of intermediate means of transportation in rural areas.

1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

In the general term, rural area serves as the base for the production of food, the major source of capital formation for a country and a principal market for domestic manufacturers [4]. Sustainable rural development is a function of a number of factors in which transportation is of importance. Efficient and effective rural transportation serves as one of the channels for the connection and exchange of goods and services, movement of people, dissemination of information and production of rural economy. Along this line, [5] stated that “immobility perpetrates poverty”, effective transportation eases accessibility to inherit potentials of rural area which could be harnessed for the development of its economy. Succinctly, rural transportation forms the intrinsic part of rural economy development serving as a mechanism

and catalyst for rural transformation through the reinforcement of rural development and contributes to poverty reduction by enhancing both equity and efficient outcome.

Rural transport cannot do without the element of mobility and infrastructure. Mobility could either be motorized or non- motorized and the infrastructure which is most important includes roads, tracks, paths, waterways responsible for movement and interaction between communities. It is sadly to say that these elements of rural transport sector are poorly developed which in turn hinder economic and social development. Rural transportation development in Nigeria is not a function of increase in the number of villages alone; other important factors are the nature and structural changes in the level of socio - economic characteristics of the country side. For example, the discovery and exploitation of mineral and forest resources such as timber motivated the construction of more rural roads which were initially maintained and used exclusively by those companies which built them and later made available to the general public (Such rural roads can be taken over by local communities or councils through whom they pass). The introduction of cocoa and other cash crops was substantially responsible for the evolution of rural transportation in different parts of the country [6].

Considering the transport sector as one of the key elements of the country's needs, there has been series of effort on the provision of rural transportation and rural development in Nigeria. Successive government have come forth with various rural development strategies, for example, the establishment of the Nigeria Agricultural Cooperative and Rural Development Bank, the various State Agricultural Development Projects, River Basin Development Authority, Development of Local Government administrative systems among similar rural development initiatives has been embarked upon by government to facilitate the development of rural economy. The transport sector contributed about 2.4 % to real GDP in 2004; with road transport alone accounting for nearly 86 % of the transport sector output [7]. Nigeria's transport system consists of some 195,000 km of roads; this network comprises a combination of Federal, State and Local Government roads. The Federal trunk roads are the principal vectors of the system and have a total length of 32,100 km (16%) of which the majority is paved. State roads account for 30,900 km (16%) while the Local Government road system comprises approximately 132,000 km (68%). Out of the 195,000km roads, about 60,000km are paved, 3,775 km of railways, 3 international and 78 domestic airports as well as 13 sea and river ports. Roads are the country's dominant mode of transport carrying more than 90% of cargo and passenger traffic [7].

1.1 Strategies of Rural Transport Development

[8] defined transport as "that part of economic activity which is concerned with increasing human satisfaction by changing the geographical position of goods or people". Improving rural transport improves access people have to basic needs and social and economic goods, services and facilities including health care, education and income earning opportunities. A successful rural transport strategy contributes at the same time to restoration of the local economy and livelihoods of the people. This strategy will offer a set of principles for planning, designing, implementing and managing the rehabilitation and construction efforts in the rural road. Rural roads play a dominating role in the rural transport system. Rural roads enable motorized transport and link villages to each other and to markets and other important locations. Rural roads allow transport services to operate which increases mobility of people who do not own any means of transport.

Restoring rural access is a critical factor in the socio economic development of any area. Without adequate socio and economic goods, facilities and services, communities will find it difficult to grow. Improving the rural road network will restore the rural transport system, with traffic picking up, transport consumer prices falling and access to markets and improving

income earning opportunities. Improving rural access will bring immediate and long term social economic benefits to the areas affected.

Communities and local governments often attach a high priority to rural road improvements. Rural roads improve rural access, which facilitates marketing, schooling and health services. Better access increases income and employment opportunities and also helps alleviate poverty in different ways. Investment s in rural roads is often justified from a social and economic point of view. Although the link between rural roads and poverty alleviation seems to be more direct, it can generally be concluded that areas with poor accessibility and generally worse off compares to areas with better road access. Rural transportation is essential not only for connecting people to jobs, health care and family in the ways that enhances their quality of life, but also for contributing to regional economic growth and development by connecting business to customers, goods to markets and tourists to destinations. Commodities including timber, fuel and agriculture product must be moved from rural areas where they are produced to urban areas where they are processed, consumed, or sent out of the state or country. Rural road network has significant effect on the distribution of facilities in rural areas and has the potential of reducing poverty [2].

In other words, transport creates time and place utilities. It observed that the need for transportation arises in any economy that is distributed over space, this need is particularly so in the context of community development where transportation is considered as the engine of growth of such economy. Transportation as one of the tools of development is important and without the inherent potentialities of an area may not be realized.

1.2 Rural Transportation in Nigeria

The evolution of rural transportation in Nigeria has spatial and temporal dimensions. For example, [1] observed that, spatial development of rural road closely followed the evolution of rural settlement in South - Western Nigeria, while the temporal growth of rural roads take place in distinct stages coinciding with the three phases of the diffusion process; primary, secondary and saturated stages. While the spatial expansion of rural roads can be illustrated cartographically, temporal development may be demonstrated in Sigmund curve(s) in which the rate of road evolution was initially slow, then grew more rapidly, then fell or ceased altogether as soon as the geographical space was fully settle,the rural transportation development in Nigeria is not a function of increase in the number of villages alone; other important factors are the nature and structural changes in the level of socio-economic characteristics of the country side. For example, the discovery and exploitation of mineral and forest resources such as timber motivated the construction of more rural roads which were initially maintained and used exclusively by those companies which built them and later made available to the general public. (Such rural roads can be taken over by local communities or councils through whom they pass). The introduction of cocoa and other cash crops was substantially responsible for the evolution of rural transportation in different parts of the country [6].

1.3 Rural Transportation Problem in Nigeria

The condition of rural transportation has frustrated rural development efforts in the country and this has resulted in to series of challenges such as the cutting off of many rural areas in the country from neighboring larger settlements from which they could access higher order Ministry of Finance (FMOF) for budgeting and financing and Federal Road Maintenance Agency (FERMA) for maintenance, apart from State Ministries of Works responsible for the State network and Local Government Councils for the Local Government network. Apparently

a lot has been done by successive government to address rural transportation problem yet, little has been achieved due to frequency of policy variation and government instability [9]. At individual and community based level, some communities have taken it upon themselves to provide accessibility in their area through self - help approach; this community - driven approach according to [10] is as a result of Nigerians concern to foster rural economic development that is sustainable over a long term and the achievement of the national goal of sustainable development.

Rural transportation problem in Nigeria The condition of rural transportation has frustrated rural development efforts in the country and this has resulted in to series of challenges such as the cutting off of many rural areas in the country from neighboring larger settlements from which they could access higher order socio-economic services, low productivity, low income and a fall in the standard of living of rural residents and high rate of poverty [2]. Rural transportation problem in Nigeria relates generally to the provision of access to natural resources like minerals, agriculture, forestry and the provision of access for the rural population so that they can access services at affordable rate.

Findings by [11] have shown that the movement of passengers and freight in rural areas of Nigeria are comparatively smaller than those of intra-urban movement. People in rural areas travel less than their urban counterparts and this is not in dependent of the absence of reliable and easily affordable means of motorized public transport in those areas. The distance over which motorized transport is required within the rural areas is relatively shorter because of the small and compact nature of the rural settlement s generally. Rural transportation problem is accentuated by the dispersed spatial derivation of traffic, this is conditioned by the nature of rural environment and economy, bulkiness and perishable nature of rural product, imbalance in inflow and outflow, and marked variability in demand for transport. Demand for rural transport is subject to three dimensions of traffic variation and fluctuations and these are diurnal, short term, and seasonal [4]. The volume and direction of rural transport is influenced by the cyclic market system in rural areas. Hence, in most cases, traffic between main urban centre and dependent villages varies in volume depending on the cycle of the periodic markets in the area concerned. The cycle of rural transport demand also appears to correspond with the seasonal pattern of local agricultural and forest products availability

The condition of most rural roads in the country is very poor compared to inter - urban and intra-urban roads in the country. During raining season, most rural roads deteriorate and become impassable; this poses a threat to sustainability of rural socio-economic development. Apart from the networks and few terminals which are government property, almost all other aspects of rural transport in Nigeria belong to private sector. Some of the vehicles plying rural roads are not road-worthy, this makes their services to be slow, irregular, unreliable, inefficient, and even constitute risk to rural travelers [12] had observed that, rural travel and transport in most rural areas in Nigeria still take place with great difficulties thereby compounding and worsening the problem of rural productivity and rural poverty.

The ability of agricultural and forest freight to absorb motorized transport cost varies according to the purpose and type of agricultural production. On the whole, only large-scale or commercial agricultural forestry concerns and mining firms are found to be more able to absorb public transport costs than the subsistence primary producers who predominates the country's rural area [13].

2 MATERIALS AND METHODS

The paper focuses on transportation as an antidote to rural economic development in the study area. Survey approach was adopted and data were collected through primary sources, which consisted of personal observation and questionnaire administration. A number of factors

were assessed using a structured multiple choice questionnaire. Information on the existing road transport facilities in the area, the economic activities of the inhabitants and the causes of various transportation problems in the area were obtained through the administration of the structured questionnaire. Purposive sampling technique was applied in the selection of respondents adopted for the survey. Geographically, Surulere South L.C.D.A. is located in Ogbomosho Zone of Oyo State. It shares boundary with not less than nine Local Governments / L.C.D.A. within Oyo and adjoining state of Osun; namely: Ogbomoso North and Ogbomoso Center L.C.D.A. in the North Western axis, Surulere North in the Northern axis, Surulere Center in the North Eastern axis, Ogo-Oluwa in the South Western axis, Ejigbo and Ejigbo West L.C.D.A. in the Southern axis and, Ejigbo South L.C.D.A in the South Eastern axis. The headquarters of the L.C.D.A. is Oko, an historical town located at an accessible radius to all the adjoining communities of the Development Area [15]. It has four districts with 96 villages [14]. Surulere Local Government lies within the coordinate's 8°08'N and 4°15'E. Its headquarters is in the town of Iresa-Adu. It has an area of 23 km² and a population of 142,070 at the 2006 census. Some of the towns in the local government are Iresa-Adu, Igbon and Iresa-Apa. The main economic activities of the residents of the towns that make up Surulere local government is farming. And the main produce from there farming activity are: Yam, Cocoa, Palm oil, Maize, Tobacco.

Correlation analysis was employed to analyse the data to show the effect of the factors of transportation and its effect on rural development. To corroborate this, multiple regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between the identified variables. Analysis of various was later employed to test for its significance.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result of the survey shows the relationship between rural economic development and the factors of transportation which is explained with the condition of the existing road facility, accessibility to the facility, timeliness to the available mode, attitude of the service provider and government policy. Economic Development and good road are positively and statistically significantly correlated ($r=0.807, p<0.01$) which indicates that good roads will enhance the interaction between the rural areas and urban cities this will eventually increase and boost the economic development. There is also positive and statistically significant correlation between road network connection and economic growth ($r=0.618, p<0.01$) which indicates that if there is good road network connection linking developed areas movement also increases. Similarly, a positive and statistically significant relationship exists between economic growth and timeliness to available mode ($r=0.730, p<0.01$) which signifies that timely accessibility to modes available is important to economic development in rural areas. It is pertinent to note that rural areas is predominantly known for agricultural produce which is a major source of economic development, therefore it is important to have access to timely transportation.

Attitude of service provider has the lowest significant coefficient which is positively significant to economic growth ($r=0.593, p<0.01$), this implies that service provider plays a significant role in providing adequate transportation for the economic growth of rural development. Government policy also has the highest significant value, positive and statistically significant relationship to economic development. This implies that government has a major role to play in providing adequate transportation furniture for rural economic development.

A strong relationship exists between all the variables and economic development, this implies that all variables have positive association as presented by the value of r which indicates

that all the variables move in the same direction as a value increase so also is the other and vice and versa.

Tab. 1 Correlation analysis between rural economic development and factors of transportation

		economic growth	good roads	road network connection	timeliness to available mode	attitude of service provider	government policy
economic growth	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	67					
good roads	Pearson Correlation	.807**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000					
	N	67	67				
road network connection	Pearson Correlation	.618**	.796**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000				
	N	67	67	67			
timeliness to available mode	Pearson Correlation	.730**	.944**	.795**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000			
	N	67	67	67	67		
attitude of service provider	Pearson Correlation	.593**	.700**	.585**	.668**		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		
	N	67	67	67	67		
government policy	Pearson Correlation	.859**	.841**	.662**	.764**	.871**	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	67	67	67	67	67	

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

Source: Autor's computation (2017)

Tab. 2 Coefficient regression model

Model	Unstandardized		Standardized	T	Sig.
	Coefficients		Coefficients		
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	.762	.169		4.501	.000
good roads	.101	.137	.141	.742	.461
Road network connection	-.003	.059	-.005	-.059	.953
timeliness to available mode	-.003	.059	-.005	-.059	.953
attitude of service provider	-.889	.147	-.626	-6.030	.000
government policy	.906	.102	1.225	8.847	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Economic Growth

Tab. 3 Model summary

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	65.325	5	13.065	70.516	.000 ^a
Residual	11.302	61	.185		
Total	76.627	66			

Source: Author's Computation (2017)

R is 0.923 this implies the combined effect that the independent variables have on the dependent variable. Adjusted R² is 0.853, this implies that 85.3 percent of the variance in economic development could be predicted from the independent variables attributed to, accounted for and explained by variance in the set of predictor variable taken as a whole. The table also shows that the analysis of variance for the multiple regression data produced F-ratio of 70.516 which is significant at P<0.05, this implies that all the regression parameters are significantly different from zero.

Tab 2. shows the relationship between the dependent variable; rural economic Development and independent variables; good roads, road network connection, timeliness to available mode; attitude of service provider and government policy. Good road and timeliness to available mode has positive relationship with economic development which are statistically significant at p<0.05; this implies that lack of good roads hinders timeliness to the available mode which invariably hinders economy development of rural areas.

Similarly, road network has negative insignificant relationship with economic development in the rural area, this implies that decrease or inadequate linkage between rural and urban centers hinders interaction which also inhibits economic development of the rural area. Attitude of service provider and government policy shows a highly significant to economic development, therefore all arms making plans and policy see to the effective utilization and provision of the different mode in providing interactions that enhance development.

4 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, transportation is very essential in enhancing the increase in population of people living in the rural area. To improve the level of development in the area, there is need for adequate provision of rural transportation and other infrastructural facilities. The need to empower the grassroots government is of paramount importance owing to the fact that the construction and rehabilitation of most rural roads fall within the jurisdiction of the local government. Maintenance culture is one of the major factors lacking in the study area. To ensure that existing roads are kept in good condition, there is need to set up maintenance units.

This study has examined transportation as an antidote to rural economic development in Surulere Local Government area, Iresa – Apa town. This was done by examining the factors that hinders rural economic development. The survey shows that development in rural communities in the local government is being abandoned and more concentration in the urban areas which imperatively affect the economic growth of the area. To correct these anomalies and ensure sustainable development, there is need for integrated development strategy which according to [16] is a strategy which seeks to develop all sector of the rural economy and link them up effectively with their urban counterpart without a sense of backwardness. In other words, this approach seeks to promote spatial, social economic and even psychological linkage among the various sectors of the rural economy.

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