

The Politics Of Infrastructural Provision in Rural Areas of Oyo State Nigeria

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Abstract

Over the years, rural service delivery is often subjected to political players and less of the rural public interest. The study examined rural people experiences of local government rural LGAs of Oyo state, Nigeria. The concept of governance provides the conceptual balance for this study. The study made use of a mixed approach for data collection, qualitative and quantitative tools of questionnaire and in-depth interview respectively. Two hundred and fifty (250) rural households across six (6) LGAs were administered questionnaire randomly from the purposively identified rural local government areas. Study revealed that infrastructure politicking is a challenge that limits sustainable rural facility delivery. This is because infrastructures such as water infrastructure, school buildings and drainage construction were provided based on political affiliation. Over half of the respondents consider rural governance not to be participatory and inclusive towards rural development. The study recommends that democratic local government autonomy remains the feasible and responsive solution to efficient service delivery in the local space

Key words: Rural, Inclusive, Politics, Infrastructure development, Service delivery.

Résumé

Au fil des ans, la prestation de services ruraux est souvent soumise aux acteurs politiques et moins à l'intérêt public rural. L'étude a examiné les expériences des populations rurales des LGA rurales du gouvernement local de l'État d'Oyo, au Nigeria. Le concept de gouvernance fournit l'équilibre conceptuel de cette étude. L'étude a utilisé une approche mixte pour la collecte de données, des outils qualitatifs et quantitatifs de questionnaire et d'entretien approfondi respectivement. Deux cent cinquante (250) ménages ruraux répartis dans six (6) LGA ont reçu un questionnaire au hasard dans les zones de gouvernement local rural identifiées à dessein. Une étude a révélé que la politisation des infrastructures est un défi qui limite la fourniture d'installations rurales durables. En effet, les infrastructures telles que les infrastructures hydrauliques, les bâtiments scolaires et la construction de drainage ont été fournies en fonction de l'affiliation politique. Plus de la moitié des répondants considèrent que la gouvernance rurale n'est pas participative et inclusive vis-à-vis du développement rural. L'étude recommande que l'autonomie démocratique des collectivités locales reste la solution réalisable et adaptée à une prestation de services efficace dans l'espace local

Mots clés : rural, inclusif, politique, développement des infrastructures, prestation de services.

Introduction

Rural exclusion remains an underlining challenge to settlement sustainability of human. This is so because, planners and environmentalist have failed to realise that urban decay, poverty and collapse are a reflection of abject rural poverty and infrastructural neglect. Notwithstanding the rural denial of basic facilities when considered alongside city residents, rural spaces is not expected to disappear as it is expected to exist as a settlement type (FAO 2003; Grgić et al., 2010). Urbanisation is primarily the result of migration, and it is reasonable to treat it as such (Tacoli, 2015:4).

In low-income settings like Nigeria, rapid rural–urban (net) migration can in principle contribute to infrastructure, housing and service shortages, and create financial and delivery problems for the responsible local governments and national agencies (Tacoli, 2015:8; Aliyu & Amadu, 2017). Popoola and Akande (2016) iterates that the migration of rural dwellers due to infrastructure decay often limits the sustainability and liveability of urban areas due to pressure on city amenities and also food production for urban residents and income for rural farming households. Tacoli et al. (2015) buttressed that rural-urban migration is mainly attributed to the increasing urban poverty. The argument was that the increasing infrastructure demand in city spaces can be attributed to rural immigrants, many of whom are relegated to city fringes that is characterised by infrastructure dearth (Popoola et al., 2020).

Rural development driven by the provision of social and physical infrastructure (ADB, 2007) is a key element that will facilitate relationship between the rural areas and urban centres (Paul et al., 2014). Rural service delivery remains unequally distributed across space in Nigeria, with the service providers remaining unresponsive to the rural demands. Limitation to responsive service delivery in rural areas are lack of voice and representation in the decision making process (Amdam, 2000; Rakodi, 2010). The studies advocate for planning within the rural sphere to promoting rural governance, private public partnership, public interest and an inclusive planning.

Over the years, planning for infrastructural provision has been done without rural preference. Literature (Dalal-Clayton et al., 1999; Prato and Longo 2012; Mazibuko, 2012) indicates that despite the abundance of resources within rural spaces, they receive little attention and preference in terms of policies and plan formulation and implementation that should translate into development and enhanced rural sustainability. Rural exclusion remains a reality within this settlement and planning space. Thus, exposing and influencing rural dwellers living in poverty under poor conditions, subjecting them to induced rural-urban migration for access urban allocated services and infrastructure. This is reflected in the call for improved concentration of investments and policies on the rural disadvantaged majority people living in poverty (IFAD, 2001; Calabrò & Della, 2014; Markussen & Tarp, 2014).

However, the long neglect of the rural areas has always been associated with high poverty rate and under-development in the form of exclusion in infrastructure provision and service delivery. Owing to neglect to rural development and focus on urban areas (Paul et al., 2014) thus, neglecting physical infrastructure which indirectly influence rural economic sustainability. In Nigeria, the inadequate obvious basic social and physical facilities and extremely poor livelihood in the rural areas is an affirmation of the opinion that the rural sector of Nigeria has not experienced tangible developmental investments in over 5 decades of the country's self-governing identity (Ugwuanyi & Chukwuemeka, 2013). Social amenities are inadequate (Ezeah, 2005); there is the near absence of some basic infrastructure reflecting in degradation and deprivation (Okoli & Onah, 2002) of rural communities despite the country's oil wealth (Abonyi and Nnamani, 2011). Omeruah (1985; in Obiukwu, 1992) observing that the Nigerian rural economy is depreciating, as the areas continue to be characterised by informal settlements and loss of traditional identity that results from facility neglect.

Rural areas remain less relevant in the infrastructural provision map of politician and decision makers. Sometimes rural planning and local politics, often times, do work together towards the need for development and sustainability across all settlements, based on suggestions by the political office holders (Moas, 2012; Leone, 2013). Although there exist a poor definition of public interest and distrust among public stakeholders, private stakeholders and citizens as rural planning is being used as an instrument of manipulation, selfishness and selective development in places of choice by political office holders and their "instructive planners" (Johnson, 1997).

Discussions about the rural space have often been focused on food production and poverty with few pieces of literature (Maos and Charney, 2012 and Leone, 2013) addressing the politics of rural service delivery. Provisions of services are often defined by the political affiliation and the responsiveness of governance. Governance in a way that involves the people remains a way towards bringing about responsive and sustainable governance. Based on this, peoples' perception and experiences about governance vary across space. Within the rural space of Nigeria, the local government is responsible for the provision of infrastructures. Nonetheless, the rural people been planned for in facility location are not included in the decision-making process. It is against this backdrop that the study aims to examine the experience of local government by rural people. In responding to the study aim, the relationship between community representation, public participation, and politics and service delivery in Oyo state, Nigeria will be established.

The Context: Oyo state.

Oyo State is located in the South-Western part of Nigeria. It was carved out from the Western state and originally, it included Osun state, which was split off in 1991. Oyo state is homogenous, mainly inhabited by the Yoruba ethnic group who are primarily agrarian but have a predilection for living in high density urban centres (Adegoke & Jegede, 2016).

The state was formed in 1976. It has a total land area of 28,454km² and is ranked fourteenth in size in Nigeria. The state had a population of 5,591,589 people, according to the 2006 population census figure with a density of 200/km² (Ifabiyi and Ogunbode, 2014).

Oyo as a state in Nigeria is made up of thirty-three (33) local government, three (3) senatorial districts out of which twenty-eight (28) are considered to be rural or sub-urban local government areas (Bankole & Bakare, 2011). The local government areas under the supervision and management of a democratically elected Chairman/Chairperson by the LGA residents or a politically appointed caretaker administrator by State governor is in-charge of local grass-root politics and governance of the people in the rural local government areas.

Methodology

The rural terrain and the disperse nature of the rural people and space were some factors accountable for sample size selection across the study area. Combinations of qualitative and quantitative data were collected for the study. Structured questionnaire served as the quantitative data capturing tool while in-depth interview and field observation were the data capturing tools for the qualitative data. Questionnaires were administered across the purposive sampled rural local government areas (LGAs) and administered using a non-probabilistic (accidental) sampling technique to select the households where the questionnaires were administered. The rural LGAs were selected purposively based on the classification of Oyo state into urban and peri-urban and rural LGA. Also, the settlements where the questionnaires were administered were selected based on preliminary fieldwork and interview with officials of the Department of Agriculture in the sample LGA. The officers of the department of agriculture were approached for suggestions based on their established interactions with rural people and their clear familiarity with the rural terrain.

Owing to the nature of the research which depends on the experience of the responder about governance and service delivery, non-probability sampling technique remains best to be used. Non-probabilistic sampling techniques as been identified to provide a range of alternative techniques based on researchers subjective judgement, time and financial limitation (Yusuf, 2013). Purposive sampling as a type of non-probabilistic sampling is considered better when communal studies are carried out.

The sample frame for the selected LGAs for study is the 185,683 rural dwellers in Oyo state based on the household survey conducted by NPC (2006). A 0.1346% sample size representing 250 rural residents was adopted for the administration of the structured questionnaire in the six (6) rural LGAs as shown in table 2. Neuman (1991: 214 - 215) opines that for a study population of 150,000 a 1% sample ratio is suffice. Yusuf (2003) went further and explained that situations where the sample population is above 10million, to achieve accuracy, a researcher may make use of 0.0025%. Thus for this study considering the household population of 185,683 (National population commission (NPC), 2010) a sampling ratio of 0.1346% was considered suffice and was used to arrive at the sample size of 250 households.

The study employed cross-sectional survey approach to facilitate the collection of both qualitative and quantitative data from primary and secondary sources. This study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design for questionnaire-based data obtained from rural residents. The study area Oyo state, at present, has 3 senatorial district (*Oyo South, Oyo Central and Oyo North*), 33 LGAs and 337 political wards. Oyo state has a total of 1,279,681 households across 33 LGAs (NPC, 2006). However, for the purpose of this research, the state was delineated using the 3 Senatorial Districts (North, South and Central) in the state as contained in Table 2.

The option of senatorial district was adopted as against the federal constituency owing to the fact that some federal constituencies fall within the urban area with no rural local government area. A total of six (6) rural LGAs (two LGAs each from the three senatorial districts) were chosen purposively. It is from the purposively selected LGAs that communities were selected randomly based on outlook and rural characteristics as advised by the local government officials' contacted and preliminary filed survey. The settlement selected for sampling study within the local government areas were selected using accidental, convenience and cluster sampling technique. A total of two-hundred and fifty (250) rural households were administered questionnaire. Considering the rural disperse population and the uneven distribution of houses where households reside, the number of settlements sampled for household questionnaire administration per LGA was dependent on the number of targeted sample size population. One settlement was sampled from each purposively selected LGA amounting to a total of six settlements across the six LGAs purposively selected.

In the sampled rural LGAs, questionnaires were administered purposively and interview conducted accidentally. Community leaders served as the key informant and were interviewed. Also people along the circulation routes were interview using accidental sampling and based on the persons willingness to respond. For this study, the responders are household head, wife or the eldest person in the house. Instances where the responder is not educated or request for discussion to be in the native language for ease of communication, the questions are asked in the native language. Owing consideration was given to ethical issues such as the respondents' privacy to responses given and the right to withdraw from the interview when the need arises.

For the interview, a total number of seventeen interviews were conducted for rural stakeholders across the six LGAs. The stakeholders include four officers in the department of agriculture, two officers in the department of works, an officer in-charge of community and social development officers, an officer in the department of information, six rural community dweller (two of whom are traditional and community elder) and three teachers in rural schools. Field observation was used to investigate rural infrastructure provision.

To establish the association rural politics, participation, and infrastructure and service delivery in the sampled study area, a model was tested using R Studio 3.6.3. The subjected model testing also examined the association using Chi-Square tests.

Table 3: Sampled Size according to LGAs

S/N	LGA	Senatorial District	Sample Size in each LGA (0.1346%)	Percent (%)
1.	IDO	Oyo South District	37	14.8
2.	Ibarapa Central	Oyo South District	51	20.4
3.	Irepo	Oyo North District	43	17.2
4.	Olorunsogo	Oyo North District	38	15.2
5.	Oyo-East	Oyo Central District	40	16.0
6.	Egbeda	Oyo Central District	41	16.4
	TOTAL		250	100

Source: Authors' compilation (2018).

Conceptualising Infrastructure, Governance, Politics and Politics of Infrastructure and Service Delivery

The ongoing neglect of the rural areas in Nigeria has always been associated with high poverty and under-development in the form of exclusion in service delivery. Studies show that rural spaces are experiencing opportunities and challenges that demand efficient and responsive equity-based programmes and policies investment in social capital, as well as the more sustainable and effective use of scarce financial resources (Bongomin et al., 2016; Jones et al., 2016; Rechel et al., 2016).

Post-independence developmental experiences in various colonial countries were characterised by a focus on urban people, space (Paul et al., 2014). According to Mabogunje (1980), the Nigeria rural neglect displays an urban bias and neglect in national economic policies since the era of Africa political independence. Victor and Hope (2011:350) summed that the “recent resurgence of urban-bias and city-centric (development) thought is leading to two concurrent but contradictory trends: the

foregrounding of the city as the epicentre of investment or ‘engine of development’ as well as the relegation of rural development to the backwaters leading to widespread rural neglect and poverty. It was reported that Nigeria like every developing country is characterised by rural poverty, gross lack of capital and infrastructure. This as mentioned deepen this vortex of rural neglect and deprivation”. Reported is that focus modern agricultural practices, techniques and approaches (Lacroix, 2011) with neglect of the physical infrastructure that will help to promote economic sustainability (Olawoye, 2019) further deepend rural marginalisation (Iwu-James et al., 2019).

Rural development is focused on meeting the physical and socio-economic demands (agriculture and non-agricultural related) of rural dwellers in an environment that is open to interaction with the urban areas in such a way that the indigenous identity of the people in sustained, rural capacity enhanced, and resources well managed and controlled through an open market (The Asian Development Bank Institute (ADB), 2007). Paul et al. (2014) aver that access to basic amenities helps to promote household livelihood, which translates to rural communal development (physical and financial). Despite the space endowment with resources, with their dwellers remaining deprived of a good quality of life, and their livelihood often being threatened by a dearth of infrastructure, facilities and poor service delivery (Gbadamosi & Olorunfemi, 2016; Brinkerhoff et al., 2016). An attempt to identify the relevance of infrastructure provision as a wheel towards the development of a country is the foundation on which such country’s soundness, increased industrialization, state social cohesion, investment attraction, enhanced quality of life and total development rest (Popoola and Magidimisha, 2018). As noted by Rao (1980:10), “the link between infrastructure and development is not a once for all affair. It is a continuous process and progress in development has to be preceded accompanied and followed by progress in infrastructure, if we are to fulfill our declared objectives of a self-accelerating process of economic development”.

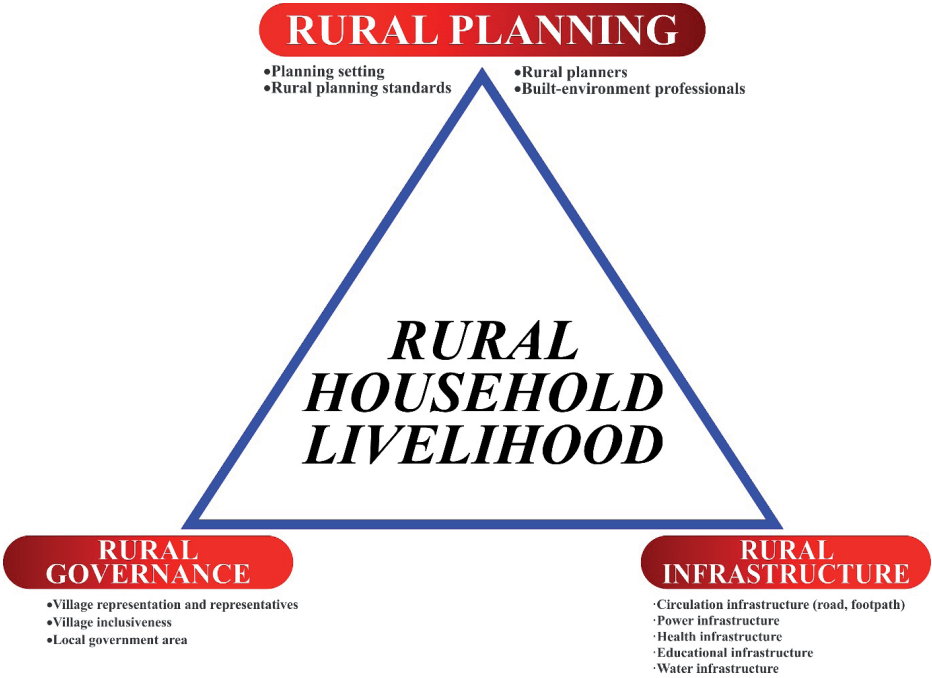
Hirschman (1958) and Biehl (1994) defined infrastructure as capital that provides public services. Buttressing this assertion, Reungsri (2010) state that there is an acceptance in the literature that infrastructure investment has a strong public involvement towards promoting livelihood. It is one of the complementary factors for economic growth (Stewart, 2010). Infrastructure remains a heterogeneous term (Jimoh, 2016) which can be classified as physical structures, social and economic includes servicing facilities such as schools, hospitals, network utilities, energy, water, transport, and digital communications (Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), 1998; Prud’homme 2004; Chan et al., 2009; Bottini et al., 2013) all of which involves large scale civic construction which directly or indirectly promotes economic development (Reungsri, 2010).

Infrastructure in this study comprises of water, road, education, power and health facilities/services are needed by rural dwellers towards improved livelihood. In Nigeria, the provision of these infrastructures is the role of public government. The argument is that the prospect of rural area is dependent on governance that is participatory and

inclusive in the provision of services and infrastructure (Popoola & Magidimisha, 2019).

In the quest for rural sustainability, this study has identified and argued that governance, rural planning (Popoola & Magidimisha, 2020a) and infrastructure provision can translate into improved rural household conditions (Figure 1). In the quest for space equality, advocacy planning and inclusive governance, bringing the rural areas into the fold of governance remains the way towards bringing about equality, equity and social inclusion and representation. The effect of the effective and responsive representation will help bring about improved service delivery in the rural LGAs and also generate an improved livelihood and settlement liveability for dwellers in the rural LGAs. In the same vein, planners’ involvement in the process of service delivery remains the route to improved livelihood for rural households (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Rural Governance, Infrastructure and Planning as a determinant of rural household livelihood



Source: Researcher's Construct

Governance of participation and representation in Nigeria is politics related (Local State and Federal governments). This is in line with the proposition of Frischmann (2005) and Popoola & Magidimisha (2018) that the government (political officer holders in Nigeria) is generally responsible for the provision of the infrastructure. The political actors (Local, State and Federal tiers) in this regard focus on the government in power that shapes the direction of infrastructure decision (Popoola & Magidimisha, 2020a:290).

Political capital (government, rural people, and traditional rulers) remains relevant to enhancing the rural quality of life. Nigeria operates as Federal system of government, which was introduced to consciously prevent the bias of development among various local government areas across the country (Lawal, 2014). Local government, as the lowest form of government in Nigeria, represent a legal political entity within the rural areas (Majekodunmi, 2013). It was historically driven by a democratic group of common interest (Agbakoba & Ogbonna, 2004), and remains the closest tier of government to the people, being aimed at encouraging local participation in decision making and attending to primary needs (Reegan, 2008; Alobo, 2014) through infrastructure provision.

Rural Governance in Nigeria

Majekodunmi, (2013) traced the origin of local government system in Nigeria to the pre-independence era, when the political arrangement of the country was according to first, second and third class kingdoms of the South-western Nigeria, the caliphate and empires of the Northern Nigeria, with these larger kingdoms and caliphates being sub-divided into smaller units for ease of power devolution and sovereignty. Oviasuyi et al. (2010) expressed the view that although local government in Nigeria existed before the coming of the British regime (1900 - 1960). The change in the political nature, functioning and spatial arrangement was implemented during the British colonial administration with the introduction of the tier system of government of Federal, State and Local Government. The reforms in 1976 gave birth to a multi-dimensional system of grass-roots governance (Ajayi, 2000), and provided a class cut definition of responsibility, with the jurisdictional power partitioning of the LGAs so as to prevent a upper class of authority, the collapse of power (Oviasuyi et al., 2010) and the management of resources and the constitutional responsibilities of the level of governments (Imuetinyan, 2002).

Local government is an administrative agency through which control and authority relate to the people at the grassroots or periphery, thereby providing the community with a formal organizational framework that enables them to conduct their affairs effectively for the general good. The political need for local government as an authority formed by the Federal or State government of Nigeria is to compliment her sovereign power (Adeyemo, 2005). Studies (Ezeani & Nwankwo, 2002; Ojo, 2009; Olojede &

Afegbua, 2011) have been summarized, with the finding showing the functions of local government being to promote local governance, encourage easy access to administrative responsibilities, engender development through cultural sustainability and promote public interest. The studies also reveals that the common needs of the people has been limited owing to insufficient capital, inadequate technical know-how, governance isolation in resource control, corruption, inadequate skilled personnel, lack of autonomy, weak democratic condition at rural areas and political instability, many of which has limited the effectiveness of rural governance in rural infrastructure provision.

The relevance of local governments to planning has been traced to 1900, with the subsequent evolution of legal backings (Alobo, 2014). The creation of local government was thus expected to usher in a new approach to planning activities and service delivery. As stated by Agagu (2004), providing for the societal and basic needs (material or non-material) of the rural dwellers is the responsibility of the rural government in Nigeria. The material needs are infrastructure, which are expected to bring about the development of the non-material (livelihood) demands of the rural people. Rural infrastructure comprises of the facilities and services needed for communal sustenance and rural development (FAO, 2006).

In Nigeria, this rural facility provision is the responsibility of local government, its purpose being to coordinate the socio-economic policies and physical policies that dictate rural living standard (Enero et al., 2004). This is because rural challenges and demands are better handled by the local rural government, as in most case, it is usually formed from and for the people. However, this assumption of local government being responsive is not always an accurate one, with over 20% of rural areas in Nigeria not being connected to the electricity grid (Lawal, 2014). In addition, many areas (over 85%) are still not able to access potable drinking water and have to depend on polluted sources (Hall, 2006), with rural residents paying more transport costs due to the poor condition of rural roads and long distances (Ipingbemi, 2001). The Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) survey (2002) established that most rural roads were in bad condition, the issue now arises as to what the relevance of local government is to the people. This point to the failing political governance in rural Nigeria. Situating governance into infrastructure delivery, this study integrates the three (participation, equality and inclusion), out of five criteria democratic process as proposed by Dahl (1989). The argument is that political participation defines infrastructure equality and inclusion in rural Oyo state.

Infrastructure and Rural Development in Nigeria

The rural populations of many countries (including Nigeria) have suffered different kinds of deprivation. The development has a dynamic change in the structural level and rate of economic growth of communities and individuals such that inequality and

poverty are (Umebali, 2006). This change translates to economic growth component, equality or social justice component, and socio-economic transformational component which are all on a self-sustaining basis. Viewing the concept differently, Simon (2004) sees development as an improvement in the quality of life (not just the material standard of living) in both quantitative terms.

UNDP, Human Development Report of (1990) stated that “*human development involves improving people’s chances of leading long healthy lives; providing access to education, and making it possible for them to have a decent standard of living*”. All of which are have been proven to be dependent on infrastructural investment within space (rural or urban). Development within rural settings has been regarded as the antidote to the poverty sting of rural communities. In perceiving development as modernization, the emphasis shifted to “*how to inculcate wealth-oriented behaviour and value in individuals*” (Mabogunje, 1980; Dube, 1988), which represents a shift from a commodity to a human approach.

The relevance of investment in education, or more broadly, in human resources, came to be regarded as a major and critical basis for social change (Mabogunje, 1980; Hinzen, 2000). Ogunkoya et al. (2015) perceived rural development to involve investing in individual opportunities that will bring about the attainment of potentials of a person that indirectly affects their households. It entails a well coordinated improved investment in infrastructures, service delivery, capacity development, job creation, provision of social amenities and increase agricultural production (Olayide et al., 1981; Titilola, 2008) in such rural communities.

This means that rural development is based on the need to balance the patterns and direction of government for the benefit of both the urban and rural sectors, and provides technical requirements for speeding up economic growth in the process. The direction of government in this sense is focused on the synchronization between the various tiers of governments, with more roles and focus placed on the local government.

Adebayo (2014) summarized the duty of local government to include providing, maintaining and servicing facilities relating to education, transportation and environmental infrastructure (waste, public toilet. etc.), water supply, medical and health, and law enforcement. Despite the state role of local government authorities (LGAs) in Nigeria, they remain dependent on the financing and political mechanisms of state and federal governments, thereby resulting in the lack of investments that could translate into development within the rural communities. It is against this backdrop that it has now become imperative for planners to act as advocates for rural infrastructural development, which will help translate indirectly into enhancing household quality.

Rural development is a deliberate attempt through service delivery of bring about improved living conditions of a people that usually reside along the peripheral of urban area (Omale, 2005). The service provision should be done in a coordinated to ensure that rural resources are used by the inhabitants for their livelihood enhancement

in a competitive economic open market. This livelihood improvement, as alleged by Ogeidefa (2010), can only be feasible through a continuous balance of the relationship between agricultural activities, heavy investment in human resources (capacity building) and improved infrastructure provision.

In Nigerian, the Government has implemented various policies and programmes in an attempt to revitalise the rural areas, with their failures and successes being detailed below. Attempts at reducing the vulnerability of rural dwellers through various rural development policies have led to the introduction of a range of strategies across political regimes in Nigeria (Uba 2012; Sam 2014). The relevant programmes being:

1. 1972 - National Accelerated Food Production Programme
2. 1976 - Operation Feed the Nation
3. 1979 - Green Revolution Programme
4. 1986 - Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure
5. 1987 - National Directorate of Employment
6. 1993 - Family Support Programme/Family Economic Advancement Programme
7. 2001 - National Poverty Eradication Programme
8. 2004 - National Economic Empowerments and Development Strategy

Paul et al. (2014) observed that across the tiers of government, there have been various programmes to support the above initiatives. These include the following:

Accelerated Poverty Alleviation Programme, Integrated Community Development Project, State Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (SEEDS) and National Directorate of Employment (NDE) (1986); Better Life Programme for Rural Women (BLP) (1987). The National Youth Employment and Vocational Skills Development Programme and School to Land Programme; People's Bank of Nigeria (PBN) (1987), Community Bank (1990), National Agricultural and Land Development Authority (NALDA) (1991), Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), The National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) (1989) and The Seven (7) Point Agenda (2007)

All these policies and programmes can be regarded as focusing on improving the physical, social, economic and quality of life of rural people. The physical quality of life improvement is focused on providing rural infrastructure, the social at promoting education and the economic at eradicating rural poverty. Nonetheless, all are aimed at promoting good individual and household livelihood conditions. The summary of the rural development plans shows that rural investments was focused on *food and agricultural investments* (The National Accelerated Food Production Project, Operation Feed the Nation, and Green Revolution Programme); *capacity building and poverty eradication* (National Directorate of Employment, Family Support Programme, the

National Poverty Eradication Programme, and the National Economic Empowerments and Development Strategy) and *infrastructure and service delivery* (Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure and National Fadama Development Project).

The infrastructure intention was to introduce a programme that would identify, implement and monitor practical indigenous standards and measures to enhance mobility, manage rural wetland, and bring about increased rural accessibility across the country by constructing a country-wide rural circulation road network (Agriscopes, 2001; Ezech, 2009; Ike, 2012). Studies (Iwachukwu and Igbokwe, 2012; Raheem et al., 2014) aver that the programme recorded success in enhancing mobility and accessibility (space and water) when compared to earlier programmes.

Results and Discussions

Governance in a way that involves the people remains a way towards bringing about responsive and sustainable governance. Based on this, peoples' perception and experiences about governance vary across space. With rural dwellers perceptions of governance and its relationship with rural service delivery remains less investigated. This study attempts to examine the rural dwellers perception of governance in their respective local government areas (LGAs) and how it relates to rural service delivery.

From the sampled respondents, 26.8% are less than 30 years of age, 53.2% are between the ages of 30 to 50 years of age, and 20.0% are aged above 51 years. In trying to understand governance over the years, age is very important. Thus, attention was given towards the age of respondents, as this defines the experience of the respondents which also translates to the robustness of data and information about the governance history of the study areas arrived at for this study. Effective age distribution among a study respondents help gather relevant data across various age grouping about a topic of discuss giving room for data comparability across various age groups. When talking about governance, peoples' perceptions across various governing regime over the years tend to shape their perception. It has been explained that age of a respondent influence their perception about the governance of service delivery and government responsiveness (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), 2013).

It was revealed (Table 4) that majority (80.4%) of the respondents have resided in the LGA for over 5 years, 39.2% reside between 5 to 10 years, 41.2% over 11 years while the remaining 19.6% have stayed in the area for less than 5 years. The five (5) years range was considered as the electoral and democratic regime of an elected government is usually a 5 years term. Therefore, many of them will have at least experience two term tenure of a democratically elected person. 58.8% of the respondents are engaged within the formal sector while the remaining 41.2% are engaged within the informal sector (see Table 4).

Table 4: Socio- representation of Respondents in the Study area

Age Grouping of the study responders.			
S/N	Age (in years)	Respondents	Percentage
1	< 30	67	26.8
2	30 – 50	133	53.2
3	> 51	50	20.0
TOTAL		250	100%
Respondents Occupation Sector			
S/N	Occupation typology	Respondents	Percentage
1	Formal Occupation type	147	58.8
2	Informal Occupation type	103	41.2
TOTAL		250	100%
Duration of Stay in the LGA			
	Duration	Respondents	Percentage
1	Less than 5 years	49	19.6
2	6 to 10 years	98	39.2
3	Above 11 years	103	41.2
TOTAL		250	100%

State of Rural Infrastructure

Rural areas are scored lowest on the developmental map of Nigeria owing to lack of physical infrastructural investments that can help translate into financial, social, and human capital investments within these areas. These physical infrastructural investments are mainly driven politics of the rural area. Nonetheless, there is uncommon political undertone that has shaped rural infrastructure development. This study adopts both field observation and in-depth interview to investigate rural infrastructure provision.

Investigation across the study area shows that while the LGA remains a failure in infrastructure provision in the area, the roles of international donor agencies such as World Health Organization (WHO) in the collaborative funding mechanism with the local people remains important. The reported experiences through the CSDP co-funding agency reveals that international agencies contributes between 70 to 90% of the infrastructure project costs though CSDP. From the 19,539,925 invested in 2 villages of Oyo-East and Ibarapa Central LGA, the community contributed 10% of the infrastructure project capital (see table 5).

Table 5: Community-world bank infrastructure investments in Oyo East & Ibarapa Central LGA

Community	Project	Total Cost ₦	Community contribution	WHO Donor contribution
Igboora community in Ibarapa Central LGA	Procurement and Installation of Transformer and Electricity Extension	7181500	718150	6463350
	Drilling of 4 motorised borehole	2800000	280000	2520000
Asipa Konbuko, Oyo East LGA	Rehabilitation of 400m line drain and Construction of Culverts (Road 1)	3 824 200,00	382 420,00	3 441 780,00
	Rehabilitation of 450m line drain and Construction of Culvert(Road 2)	4 167 225,00	416 722,50	3 750 502,50
	Rehabilitation of Electricity and Replacement of Wooding Poles and Cables	1 567 000,00	156 700,00	1 410 300,00
TOTAL		₦19,539,925	₦1,953,992	₦17,585,932.50

Source: Community and Social Development Project (2018)

Perception of Participatory Governance in LGAs

The dichotomy in the individual wealth and locational status between rural areas and urban areas continue to be widened owing to the continued neglect of rural areas in the decision making process and provision of infrastructure despite its resource endowment (WHO European Region, 2010; IFAD, 2010; Mazibuko, 2012; Philip and Paul, 2017). As presented in Figure 2, 89.6% of the total respondent perceived that rural LGAs are not well catered for when infrastructure is taken in consideration.

Figure 2: Perception on Rural Welfare



Local government provides the community with formal organizational framework which enables them to conduct their affairs effectively for the general good”. This general good is subjective, in most cases the local community are not carried along in the decision making process for the “public good” by the governing body.

Public opinion and community consultations remain an avenue through which the voice of the rural people is heard and registered. Finding revealed that 88% of the sampled respondents have never attended or been invited for a rural public opinion meeting. This finding reveals that 2 out of every 3 respondent do not have their views represented at the local governing level. This perception is not far from the basis on which the people perceived the LGA and the leadership. The study revealed that 81.2% respondents perceive their LGA not to be participatory and inclusive (a subset of good) in decision making, out of which 54.4% (136) state that their local government chairman/caretaker does not engage the populace in governance (in the context of their view not well represented or considered sustainable) (see Table 6). Further finding showed that 31.6% (79) of the sample respondents are not sure if the chairman practices good and inclusive governance.

Table 6: Cross-tabulation Analysis of Participatory governance in the LGA

Is LGA politics and governance participatory?	Do you perceive LGA chairman as participatory?			
	Yes	No	Not Sure	Total
Yes	22	8	17	47
No	13	128	62	203
Total	35	136	79	250

The in-depth interview with a local community leader in Irepo on the level of communal participation in the decision making process portrays a governance at the local level with no rural communal representation. The leader stated that:

“...how do you expect them to be participatory when they weren’t democratically elected by the people of the community... we do not support them and they do not welcome our views....they were sent here by the governor (state government) as caretaker committee... so their participation is with the state government not the rural community...”
(Research Respondent, February, 2018)

Asked if represented during stakeholders meeting, a rural stakeholder at Ido said:

“....the meeting has always been a waste of time... as most times our views and suggestions are not welcomed or considered to be useful to them... they (local governing body) are subjected to the dictates of the state instructions”.

Further inquiry into the rural peoples’ experiences as to “what is and how is” good and inclusive governance in their LGAs. A plethora of responses were received. A respondent in Egbeda LGA stated that “...inclusive governance in my LGA calls for self-independence (state-LGA democratic independence)...” Supporting the perception, a leader in Oyo-East LGA states

“...the government of the day has failed the electorates because they do not keep to manifestoes...” as the local governance has “...not been very open but partial and non-participatory...” (Research Respondent, February, 2018)

As narrated by a leader this type of governance has failed and there exist a dichotomy between the masses and the leader. Although the people quite understood good governance as “...the participatory governance to me is okay because people are allowed to participate in the government ...” (Ibarapa central LGA leader); “...it is a process where every class of the society is involved in decision making and policy formulation towards development...” (Olorunsogo LGA leader); “...involvement of the locals in government...”; “...a kind of government that involves the LGA occupants in decisions...” (Irepo LGA leader).

Summarising this description reveals that the local respondents saw good governance as a type of government that incorporates the peoples’ views into the decision making process.

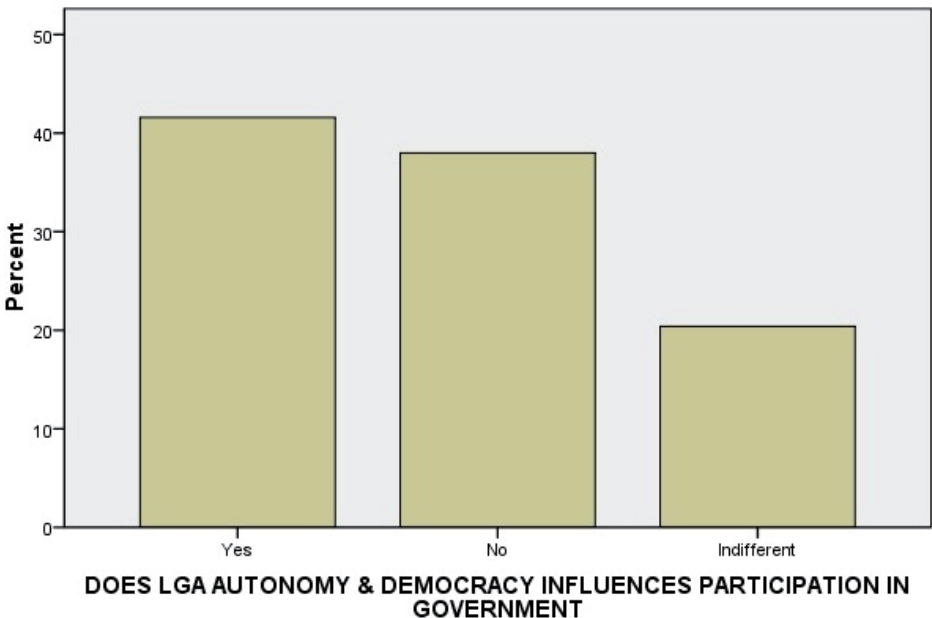
“...there by incorporating the young, old, adult without social marginalization into governance such that they all contribute their own quota to their societal development giving room for smooth running of governance, transparency and also accountability...” (Research Respondent, February, 2018)

It is still perceived that such governance is a mirage in the LGAs and as put by community leaders:

“... participatory governance is at zero level in the rural LGAs of Oyo state... although it is needed as it will help the government to understand the plight of the masses...” and put by another leader *“...it will be a welcomed development if our views were welcomed, respected and considered in decision making...”*.

The limited participation in governance has been attributed to lack of local government autonomy and democracy (see Figure 3). About 42% of the sampled respondents are not willing to participate governance if the LGA is not autonomous, 38% stated that their participation in governance has nothing to do with the internal democracy in the LGAs while the remaining 20.4% are indifferent to the role LGA autonomy plays in participation in governance.

Figure 3: Response on LGAs autonomy and participation in governance.



Politics, Political Representation and Service Delivery

Local government represent an ancient political entity in space recognised by the law of a country, governed by a democratic or non-democratically elected (Majekodunmi, 2013) with a common interest (Agbakoba & Ogbonna, 2004). Nonetheless, the politics of local government composition and representation at the local level has shaped the place of service delivery in the rural space.

From the sample rural dwellers, one hundred and one reported that they were never aware of ever been represented at any governance (executive and legislative) level (local, state and federal) in their community, ninety two had an mental history of representation while the remaining 57 also had the history of representation but over 20 years ago (see Table 7). Out 250 respondents, 40.4% (101 respondents) had no history of representation. From the 36.8% (92 respondent) that reflected a history of representation, 65.2% (60 respondent) perceived the service delivery was not noticeable during the period of representation while 13.04% (12 respondent) observed a noticeable difference in service delivery during the period of representation Follow up from the ninety two respondents with a history of representation shows that majority (65.2%) of them perceive that the representation didn't trickle-down into effective service delivery for the community.

Table 7: Cross-tabulation of Community Representation and Service Delivery

History of Representation	Perceived Level of Service Delivery.			Total
	Noticeable	Non-noticeable	Indifferent	
Yes	12	60	20	92
No	23	53	25	101
Maybe Over 20years	12	25	20	57
Total	47	138	65	250

Statements from the key informants present a mixed reaction as relating to inclusiveness, service delivery and responsive representation. When ask if the community has benefitted from the perceived history of good governance and inclusive representation. A person responded that “...we have arrived at this type of governance (participatory/inclusive) before and our advocacy (through responsive representation) led to the establishment of a primary health centre...” This portrays a notion of an effective communal representation by the political class. Nonetheless, a dweller differs in her perception and history of governance as relating to service delivery. She said

“...fair political government I will say and this is because infrastructure facilities is not readily accessible in area...”; further stated by a civil servant in Egbeda LGA was that “...the government is irresponsible and our political representatives are weak; they are not forth coming in the rural areas in terms of social facilities ...”

Although in Nigeria, LGAs are seen as a means of enhancing development and service delivery, improving living standards, human capacity building, improve governance and deepen democracy (Mabogunje, 1980; Buccus et al., 2007) living up to the expectation remains oblique. In Nigeria, nepotism in facility allocation and location has shaped service delivery. The level of political affiliation among the tiers of government and the level of LGA or community representation across the levels of governance is also a factor. Finding revealed that 58% of the respondents perceived and have experiences that show that political affiliation among the tiers of government influences service delivery. A leader states:

"... during election that we vote, you have to pray the party you voted for in a community wins... if not, do not expect them to carter (in service delivery)... even if they do, it will be minimal as compared to communities that voted for the candidate or party..." (Research Respondent, February, 2018)

Although subjective, yet the statement cannot be totally ignored as informant portrays a share of priority among the governing body when it has to do with service delivery. As the democratically elected continue to have a spatial arrangement for service delivery based on the number of vote they receive from each community. The place of interaction among the tiers of government was investigated. Finding show that 81.6% of the respondents perceive that there is no relationship between the three tiers of government as relating to the provision of services in their respective communities. Reacting to this, a community leader said

"... in those days (1980s) we used to see and enjoy the projects such as schools and community health care clinics and programmes from and by the state and federal government in our local community..., but nowadays (post-millennium) you can rarely see such..." (Research Respondent, February, 2018)

This assertion points to the perceived level of interaction between the tiers of government as relating to social infrastructure and service delivery prior to the millennium era which is marked by partisan politics and political ideology as against country-wide rural social welfare which was the focus of the pre-millennia democratic regime. As Dahl (1989) emphasised the relevance of participation in democracy (as defined by infrastructure good) in this study, the question of how participatory governance and politics explains infrastructure delivery was raised.

Buttressing this, the study through inferential analysis investigated if rural development (infrastructure and service defined) during the limited instances of representation can be explained by the village alignment to a political party and participatory governance within in a LGA and most importantly by the Chairman. The Pearson Chi-square test

with a p-value of 0.03328 was derived. The analysis shows that rural development is influenced by political affiliation and alignment of a rural setting to the party in power. This means that political affiliation of a rural settlement is a determinant factor for a government provision of infrastructure during a particular democratic regime. This means that without a village aligning to the ruling political party, the village might not have access to infrastructure. There is actually no fairness in service and infrastructure delivery except your village aligns with the political party in power. Generally, political affiliation is one factor that determines inequality in rural areas of Oyo State, Nigeria.

Fourie (2017) narrating that politics from the lens of the role of government (as the same is in rural Nigeria where LGA are politicians that are democratically elected) influences infrastructure allocation, location and delivery. He argued that politics dictates the typology of infrastructure to be delivered and the direction to which facility will be maximised. In his views, the role of government is to determine the type and location of infrastructure. In Harris and Wild (2013), they reported that these political influence is not a South African or rural Nigeria experience alone, but that globally, the governance environment (rural politics) influences the delivery of services. The argument went further to pin that the relationship of governance of infrastructure without taking into consideration political cannot be downplayed. Buttressed was the need for politicians to be committed in the providing infrastructure common good. This, Henckel et al. (2010), suggested that is important that when politicians as public representative engage in representation and advocate they must remain neutral and corruption free.

In the United Kingdom, factors such as weak representation and political engagement limit infrastructure responsiveness and institutional sustainability (Coelho et al., 2014). In South Africa, while there exists a spatial difference infrastructure delivery (Greenstein, 2006; Twala, 2014), the role of political parties as power holder and governing authorities is not new to infrastructure provision. This political parties explains the alignment of affiliation to rural development in Nigeria. As summarised by Welham (2014:1), "the politics can travel in different ways: through the 'long route' of citizens' involvement in national or local politics to pressure government to deliver services; or through the 'short route' of citizens engaging directly with service providers". Key in this quote is citizen engagement. Emphasising the role of engagement, the study further revealed in the Pearson Chi-square test with a p-value of 0.007933, that a political leader (LGA Chairman) that embraces the tenants of participatory governance is likely going to translate into rural development when a village is represented. The argument laid in this analysis is that governance of participation as much as political affiliation promotes rural development.

Local government areas function as a grassroot system that supports governance and democracy participation. Despite these, Mathekga (2006) reported limited LGA capacity has undermine participation in government. Within the context of this study, limited capacity of the LGA Chairman to be participatory limited rural limits rural development. Popoola and Magidimisha (2020b) aver that a constructive collaboration

between governance stakeholders is key to total infrastructure location and allocation. The evidence as presented in this study shows that away from participation as a citizen right by law (Gaventa, 2004), a participatory local government chairman has the indirect possibility of influencing rural infrastructure development in Oyo State, Nigeria (p-value of 0.007933).

Conclusion

In the quest for space equality, advocacy planning and inclusive governance, bringing the rural areas into the fold of governance remains the way towards bringing about equality, equity and social inclusion and representation. The effect of the effective and responsive representation will help bring about improved service delivery in the rural LGAs and also generate an improved livelihood and settlement liveability for dwellers in the rural LGAs. Based on the study findings, it is proffered that improved sensitization of the rural public on the need to participate in rural governance and the benefits of participating. The reported neglect by the residents and the perceived non-accordance not given to their views and suggestions cannot warrant to total neglect in governance by the people. People must endeavour to be resilient towards engaging in the governance of their communities.

Government policies must consider adopting strict policies that enforces community representation which is not politically driven or motivated by any political parties but a communally people based representation in the roundtable of local governing stakeholders. Also, improved and responsive representation among the democratically elected people and the appointed local managers cannot be under-emphasized in the quest for efficient service delivery. This study further recommends that political tussle should be advocated to stop at the place of the election and thus not excluding communities that didn't vote for a candidate or party in the delivery of service. Likewise, means to promote better representation (LGAs like Olorunsogo and Egbeda) in candidacy election process and also effectiveness and responsiveness of the representative among the people need to be devised by the government.

Government must consider introducing a tool and agency that will assist in monitoring the activities of the rural representatives, so as to ensure that representation translates into improved rural service delivery. The relevance of local government autonomy towards sustainable rural politics and infrastructure development is imperative. LGAs must be made sustainable and independent on the other tiers of government before meeting their own peoples' needs. Thus, LGAs must be made independent.

Positive, collaborative and constructive relationship between the tiers of government remains important. As no LGA can survive on its own without external help same way the federal and state government cannot fully comprehend the infrastructure needs

of a society without the assistance of the grassroots managers. Therefore, there is need to blend the between the bottom-up approach as advocated by the local government and the top-down as designated by the federal and state government. The federal government must understand that the infrastructure location characteristics of these rural areas must be considered. In areas where respondents complain of dearth and lack of federal and state coordinated infrastructure projects, government at federal and state level must endeavour to encourage the allocation of need infrastructures in such LGAs and communities through purposive allocation of facilities.

As much as people understand what participatory governance is, there is a need for politicians to make their governing participatory and inclusive to all. Likewise, the place of rural representation must be well visited, as infrastructures provided should be examined by rural communities to be such that facilities provided at working at the expected standards. Also, local government chairmen whom are the custodian of governance should endeavour to focus on continuous maintenance of infrastructure as against a political driven ideology of constructing a new one. The study reinstate that for improvement in rural infrastructure condition which has been characterised by decay, rigid monitoring of the political officer representative cannot be ignored. In the same vein, private individual with investments within the rural areas should be encouraged and mandated to invest in community infrastructures within their areas.

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