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The Role of Remittances to Rural Infrastructural Development in Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The study evaluates the contribution of migrants to rural infrastructural development in Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State. The research data were obtained through inventory of infrastructure in rural areas, questionnaire and focused group discussion. The study used 307 respondents and 92 discussants for data collection. Research data were presented in tabular form. The chi-square was used in testing the research hypothesis. The finding shows that migrants do send remittance to their home of origin and their contribution to rural infrastructural development in Otukpo Local Government Area is significant. These infrastructures include educational facilities, roads, culverts, local bridges, water supply, power supply, health facilities and market stores. Monetary remittances were often made by the migrants through donation at public functions, while the decision on how to invest community resources is vested on the community. The challenges faced by migrants in developing infrastructures in rural areas include corruption and embezzlement of funds by community and youth leaders, lack of commitment to rural projects, lack of understanding and cooperation between migrants and home communities as well as poor implementation of public projects. The study recommend adherence to societal laws and orders, strict punishment of corrupt persons, cooperation among various facet of the society as well as encouraging Government, private individual and communities to collaborate in funding rural infrastructural projects. This will help in developing the rural areas.

Keywords: Migration, migrants, remittances, infrastructure and development.

1. Introduction

Migration has become a global phenomenon that has traditionally been changing the sphere of human activity. Villages, towns, cities and countries have become closer to each other than before due to improved transportation and globalization. However, those factors enticing people to move have not been addressed; hence migration from rural to urban areas remains the most prevalent type of human movement. Across the world, millions of people are on the move due to one or more reasons. A migrant is a person who moves from one place, region or country to another by chance, instinct, or plan often for employment or economic improvement. It simply refers to a person who is involved in migration out of his or her home of origin (Free online dictionary, 2012). In this regards, migrants in Otukpo Local Government Area (L.G.A) constitutes the sons and daughters of the area who have moved out of rural areas in Otukpo L.G.A to Otukpo town, other parts of Nigeria and beyond. Migrant workers contribute to the economies of their host communities and country, and the remittances they send home helps to boost the economies of their home of origin (International Labour Organization, 2009). Remittance is the transfer of money by a worker to his home of origin. It also includes other form of transfers such as social remittances (diffusion of various types of social practices, ideas and values), knowledge or technology remittances (knowledge, skills and technology brought back by returning migrants), and political remittances as changing identities and political awareness influenced by the returned migrants (Goldring, 2004). The socio-economic effects of migration vary within the home of origin. Significant rural out migration is taking place in sub-Saharan Africa where the majority of people are rural residents and poor. For instance, there are 4 million immigrants in Cote d'Ivoire between 1960 and 1995 mainly from Liberia, Nigeria, Burkinafaso, Mali, Senegal and Ghana (Toure, 1998) while about 2.5 million migrant workers migrated into Nigeria between 1970 and 1982 mainly from Ghana, Togo, Benin, Cameroon, Niger and Chad (Adepoju, 2005b). The United Nation (UN) opined that the West African region recorded 40% rise in international migration between 1960 and 2005 (UN, 2007). Similar migrations have occurred in other parts of the world (notably Europe, in the past) with urban population doubling and tripling in one or two decades (Wilson, 2001).

Most of the studies on migration were on the causes of migration, effects of loss of manpower and financial remittances on human society as well as identity and adjustment of migrants at destination areas rather than the current and potential role of migrants in the development of their home of origin (see Connell, 1980; Taylor, 2000; Connell and Conway, 2000; Boswell, 2002; ILO, 2002; Adger,

Kelly, Winkel, Huy and Locke, 2002; Adams and Page, 2005). Consequently, studies on the complex relationships between out-migration and local development at areas of origin are still scarce. The linkage between out-migration and local development has remained one of the most challenging and contending issues in migration studies. In view of these, this study examines and identifies the contribution of out-migrants to the provision of infrastructures in rural areas of Otukpo L.G.A between 1991 and 2011.

The study is anchored on the community self-help approach (self-help framework) otherwise known as the community development which has been defined as the process by which the efforts of the government authorities are united with the efforts of the people in a community in order to organize the people and their resources so as to satisfy their basic needs (Muoghalu, 1986) While Oni and Ohiani (1987) define community development as a process of socialization in which people of a community organize themselves for planning and for action to meet those needs with maximum reliance on their own initiative and resources, supplemented with assistance in any form, from government and non-governmental organizations. This approach to rural development may be viewed as a regional resource mobilization system in which most of the conceptual initiative and executive responsibility rest with the occupants of the region. Self-help project are therefore those projects, mostly spatially rooted in the rural areas, conceptualized, initiated and executed by the rural people themselves (either at individual or community level) aimed at uplifting the country side. Self-help framework has a great variety of structural facets, as well as operational scales ranging from group night-guard activities and cooperative gigantic multi-year and multi-million ventures.

Self-help projects are practical expressions, which at one time or the other have been embarked upon with varying degrees of enthusiasm, government support and success in Nigeria, Thailand, Mexico and Tanzania. The challenges of self-help approach include inability to solve rural problems completely due to marginalization of some communities, favouritism, and discriminatory manner of project execution as well as unnecessary duplication of projects at a very short space interval. More so, some communities may lack the threshold population for certain projects and services (Nwafor and Madu, 2002). Despite these limitations, the community self-help approach proves to be an indispensable framework for rural development as well as explaining the role of community members residing at area of origin and outside home area in proving infrastructures in their communities.

2. The Study Area

The study covers 23 rural settlements drawn from Otukpo Local Government Area as follows; Ogoli, Ipole, Okoto, Jerico, Ogobia, Igaluwa, Opa, Aune, Aukpa, Okpanehe, Ofiloko, Okpafulo, Edikwu, Otada, Oduda, Otobi-Otukpo, Akpegede, Adim, Egyoma, Allan, Igbeji, Otobi and Akwete (see Fig1). Otukpo Local Government Area lies between longitude 7° 45' and 8° 17' East of the Greenwich Meridian and latitude 7° 00' and 7° 40' North of the equator. It is bounded by Apa L.G.A in the North, Gwer-West and Gwer L.G.A to the East and Ado and Obi L.G.A in the South, Okpokwu L.G.A in the Southwest, Ohimini L.G.A in the West and Ankpa L.G.A of Kogi State in the Northwest. It has a population of 266,411 people according to the National population commission (NPC, 2006). At present the Local Government comprises of four districts namely Otukpo, Ugboju, Adoka and Akpa. The predominant socio-economic activities in Otukpo L.G.A include farming, trading, tailoring, hunting, as well as civil service. Major infrastructures in the area include road, electricity, school and medical centres.

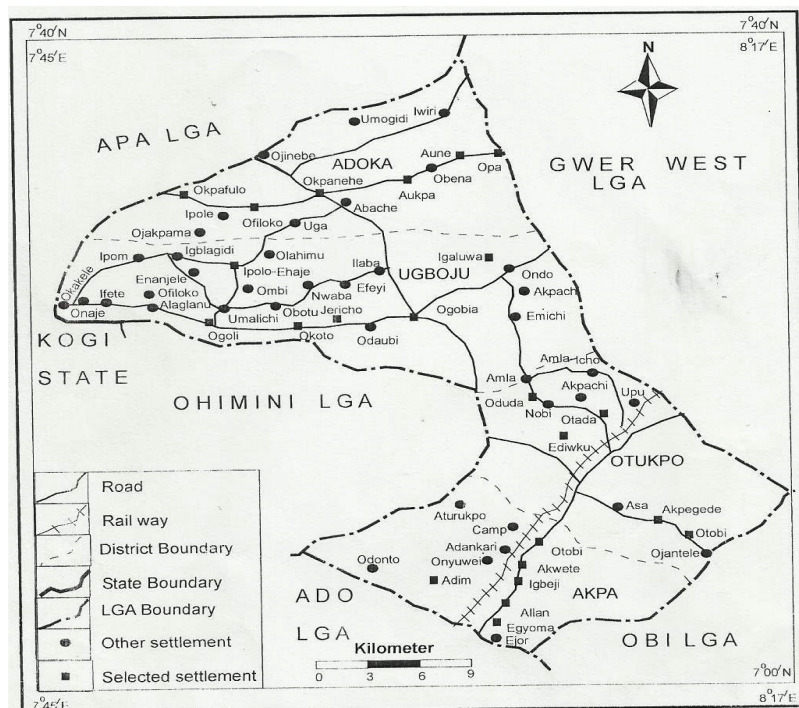


Figure 1: Map of Otukpo Local Government Area Showing Settlements

Source: Ministry of Lands and Survey Makurdi.

3. Materials and Methods

The research data includes information on infrastructures such as roads, electricity projects, schools, hospitals, bore holes, recreational centres among others in rural areas. This information was derived from the field through the inventory of infrastructures that have been provided in the rural areas of Otukpo Local Government Area. Other information include data on the means of providing infrastructures, decision making body, those who finance infrastructures and the role migrants played in the provision of infrastructures in terms of finance, facilitators and the challenges faced by migrants in infrastructural development in rural communities of Otukpo L.G.A as well as data on the purpose of migration. Information relating to migrants' participation in infrastructural development was obtained from the field through questionnaire administration and focused group discussion. Data on the population and map of the study area were obtained from the National Population Commission (NPC, 2006) and Benue State Ministry of Land and Survey. The study population include all the rural settlements found in Otukpo L.G.A and all Male and Female Heads of Households, Village Heads and Community Youth leaders in Otukpo L.G.A including returned migrants who have lived outside their home community who are within the age of thirty years and above, and are old enough to have the necessary information on migrants and their contribution to rural infrastructural development in their respective communities.

The study comprises of 23 selected rural settlements drawn from the four districts that makes up Otukpo Local Government Area namely Ugboju, Adoka, Otukpo and Akpa. The selection was done using simple random sampling technique. The settlements examined for the study include the following; Ogoli, Ipolo, Okoto, Jerico, Ogobia, Igaluwa, Opa, Aune, Aukpa, Okpanehe, Ofiloko, Okpafulo, Edikwu, Otada, Oduda, Otobi-Otukpo, Akpegede, Adim, Egyoma, Allan, Igbeji, Otobi and Akwete. A total of 399 people were used for the research. 307 respondents were drawn from the study area using systematic sampling technique for questionnaire administration (One respondent was selected within an interval of three compound passed a crossed) while the remaining 92 respondents constitute the village Heads and Youth Leaders which constitutes the Focused Group Discussants. This was purposively selected to allow the study to use the target population. The research data was presented in tabular form and analyzed using descriptive statistics with percentages. The Chi-Square statistics was used in testing the research hypothesis (Ho) which state that Migrants do not make significant contribution to rural infrastructural development in Otukpo L.G.A

4. Result/Findings

4.1. Demographic Data of the Respondents and Migrants

The research data was obtained from 307 respondents and 92 focused group discussants. Table 1 shows the marital status of the respondents (married, single, divorced and widow/widower). It reveals that 273 (88.9%) of the respondents are married, 30 (9.7%) are widow/widower and 2 (0.65%) are single and divorced. This also shows that the respondents are people who have settled down in their respective Villages with their families. High rate of marriage exists among the study population. The respondents collectively have a total of 1474 children. However, some of the Respondents' Children are not residing with them in their home of origin/communities. Table 1 indicates the number of respondents' children that have migrated out of their home area (village) in Otukpo Local Government Area. It shows that, 730 out of 1474 of the respondents' children have migrated out of their community. While 401 (54.9%) of those whom have migrated out are male, the female is 329 (45.1%). The respondents opined that some of their children are staying in the town other than their home area for the purpose of education, employment, marriage and trade among others. It can be deduced further that migration in the study area is sex selective in favour of the males than females. Table 1 show the most commonly exposed age-group to migration flows. It states that 294 (95.7%) of the respondents unanimously agreed that migration is most common among the age group 18 - 40 years, while 13 (4.3%) opined that migration is mostly associated with the age group 41 – 50 years. None of the respondents account for the age of 51 years and above. The study found out that young people are more exposed to migration than the aged, this may be due to the desire for education, employment and trade. The likely challenges associated with this trend in future, will be rural depopulation.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	No of Children
Marital Status			
Married	273	88.9	1400
Single	2	0.65	6
Divorced	2	0.65	4
Widow/Widower	30	9.7	64
Total	307	100	1474
Respondents' Children that have migrated out of their homes of origin			
Male	401	54.9	
Female	329	45.1	
Total	730	100	
Age - group mostly involved in Migration			
18 - 40 years	294	95.7	
41 - 50 years	13	4.3	
Total	307	100	

Table 1: Demographic Data of the Respondents and Migrants
Source: Field Survey, April 2012

4.2. Relationship between Migrants and home/Communities

Table 2 reveals the relationship between migrants and their home/communities even though they spent most of their time outside their village. It shows that 291 (94.8%) of the respondents opined that migrants do not sever ties or relationship with their home of origin while 16 (5.2%) of the respondents agreed that migrants do sever ties with their respective home communities or village. The study further revealed that migrants do send remittance to their home communities/villages for development as indicated by 294 (95.8%) of the respondents while 13 (4.2%) of the respondents are of the view that migrants do not remit part of their earnings for community development. Table 2 shows the types of remittances sent home for rural development by migrants staying in the urban areas as specified by the respondents. It indicates that 294 (95.8 %) of the respondents opined that migrants do send money at irregular bases to their respective home communities or villages for development purpose. However, they refused to provide information on the amount of money sent home by individual migrants which they claimed varied between the migrants while 13 (4.2 %) of the respondents opined that in addition to monetary remittance, migrants send goods like Generator, zinc, cutlasses, food items and cloths. More so, this table further affirmed the responses on table 2 which states that migrants do not sever ties with respective communities and also send remittance back home for development purpose respectively. This also agreed with table 3 which indicates the use of monetary remittances in rural areas.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Migrants sever ties with their respective Home Communities		
Yes	16	5.2
No	291	94.8
Migrants send Remittances to Home of Origin		
Yes	294	95.8
No	13	4.2
Types of Remittances Sent Home		
Money	294	95.8
Goods	13	4.2
Total	307	100

Table 2: Relationship between Migrants and Home/Communities

Source: Field Survey, April 2012

4.3. Means of Sending Remittance, Decision and Use of Remittance

Table 3 revealed the various means through which migrants send remittance to their respective home of origin for development. It shows that 269 (87.6%) of the respondent opined that most of the migrants donate or contribute part of their earnings to rural development at public functions organized by their respective communities while 19 (6.2%) of the respondents stated that migrants make their contribution through third party delivery and 19(6.2%) of the respondents failed to respond to any of the options. This is also in line with table 2 which state that 294 (95.8%) of the respondents agreed that migrants do send remittance to their home of origin and table 2 also stated that 294 (95.8%) of the respondents stated that migrants do send remittances in monetary form for rural development. Table 3 also indicate the decision making body with regards to the type of infrastructure established in the rural areas using the remittances from the migrants. It revealed that 232 (75.6%) of the respondents agreed that it is the community that makes decision on what and how remittance should be invested while 59 (19.2%) stated that it is the migrants themselves that took decision on how to invest the remittances and 13 (4.23 %) failed to make any decision while only 3 (0.97%) of the respondents stated that it is the youth that make such decision. This means that remittance and other community issues are discussed centrally at community level. On the use of monetary remittances in rural areas, the study found out that 136 (44.3%) of the respondents agreed that the monetary remittance were used for school infrastructures, while 51(16.6%) stated that it was invested on rural electricity project and 48(15.6%) of the respondents viewed that the remittances were used for road construction and 41 (13.4%) stated that remittance were used for building town hall while 26 (8.5%) of the respondents specify health, culverts, bridges, churches, water supply, microfinance bank as investment made from remittance and only 5(1.6%) of the respondents stated that remittances was used for all the listed items on table 3. This agreed with table 2 which states that migrants do send money for community development. Such money was often remitted through donation at public functions.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Means of sending Remittance		
Donation at public function	269	87.6
Third party	19	6.2
No response	19	6.2
Decision Making Body		
The migrants	59	19.2
The community	232	75.6
The youths	3	0.97
No response	13	4.23
Use of Monetary Remittances in Rural Areas		
Town hall	41	13.4
Road	48	15.6
School	136	44.3
Electricity	51	16.6
All of the above	5	1.6
Others	26	8.5
Total	307	100

Table 3: Means of sending Remittances, Decision and Use of Remittance
Source: Field Survey, April 2012

4.4. Infrastructures provided by Migrants in Rural Communities or Villages in Otukpo Local Government Area from 1991 to 2011.

The information on migrant's contribution to home community was collected through the use of questionnaire and focused group discussion. Table 4 indicates the number and types of infrastructures provided in rural areas in Otukpo Local Government Area by migrants from 1991 to 2011. This agreed with table 2 which revealed that migrants do not sever ties with their respective home of origin. The information was arranged according to districts. Adoka district received the highest contribution from migrants followed subsequently by Ugboju, Otukpo and Akpa.

Districts	Types of Infrastructures								Total
	School	Electricity	Road	Hospital	Water	Mosque/ Churches	Financial Institutions/ Market	Recreation	
Adoka	11	3	13	7	2	3	1	3	43
Ugboju	8	3	2	3	2	1	3	0	22
Otukpo	4	2	0	1	0	1	0	2	10
Akpa	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	4	9
Total	26	9	16	11	4	5	4	9	84

Table 4: Infrastructural Provision by Migrants in Otukpo L.G.A from 1991 to 2011.
Source: Field Survey, April 2012

4.5. Infrastructures Provided through Community Development Effort in Rural Communities or Villages in Otukpo Local Government Area from 1991 to 2011

Table 5 shows the number and types of infrastructures provided in rural areas through the community development effort from 1991 to 2011. This indicates or reflects the basic needs of the people residing in rural areas in Otukpo Local Government Area. This information was collected through the use of questionnaire and focused group discussion.

Districts	Types of Infrastructures								Total
	School	Electricity	Road	Hospital	Water	Mosque/ Churches	Financial Institutions/ Market	Recreation	
Adoka	5	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	8
Ugboju	2	1	3	2	0	0	1	1	10
Otukpo	2	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Akpa	3	0	1	2	1	0	0	0	7
Total	12	4	5	4	1	2	1	1	30

Table 5: Infrastructures provided through Community Development Effort in Otukpo L.G.A (1991 to 2011).
Source: Field Survey, April 2012

4.6. Challenges faced by Migrants in Providing Infrastructures in Rural Areas

The problems faced by migrants in an attempt to develop or provide infrastructures in rural areas in Otukpo Local Government Area are numerous. This information was obtained from the questionnaire and Focused Group Discussion. The challenges faced by Migrants include the following.

1. Mismanagement of resources meant for rural project community leaders
2. Lack of trust on the leaders in implementing rural project
3. Lack of commitment to rural project by community members
4. Corruption on the part of the community leaders
5. Lack of cooperation between migrants themselves on rural development
6. Lack of understanding between migrants and home community
7. Poor communication between migrants and community due to distance decay function
8. Poor supervision and implementation.

4.7. Hypothesis Testing

The Chi-Square was used in testing the research hypothesis using Table 4. The result is presented on Table 6.

Types of Infrastructures	Observed Frequency	Expected Frequency	$\frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$	X ² Calculated Value
Road	16	10.5	2.88	43.34
Electricity	9	10.5	2.14	
School	26	10.5	22.88	
Hospital	11	10.5	2.38	
Water	4	10.5	4.02	
Mosque/Churches	5	10.5	2.88	
Financial Institutions/Market	4	10.5	4.02	
Recreation	9	10.5	2.14	
Total	84	84	$\Sigma = 43.34$	

Table 6: X² Statistical Test of Infrastructural Provision by Migrants in Adoka, Ugboju, Otukpo and Akpa Districts of Otukpo Local Government Area from 1991-2011.
Source: Field Survey, April 2012.

$$\text{Chi-square } (X^2) = \sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$$

Where,

X² = Chi-square

O = Observed Frequency (Scores)

E = Expected Frequency (Scores)

$$E = \frac{84}{8} = 10.5$$

$$X^2 = 43.34 \text{ Calculated Value.}$$

$$\text{Degrees of freedom (df)} = N - 1(8 - 1) = 7$$

Significant Level = 0.05

Critical Table Value = 14.07

Decision: The null hypothesis (Ho) is that migrants do not make significant contribution to rural infrastructural development in Otukpo Local Government Area while the alternative hypothesis (Hi) is that migrants have significant contribution to rural infrastructural development in Otukpo Local Government Area. Because the chi-square (X²) calculated value of 43.34 is greater than the critical table value of 14.07 at 0.05 significant levels, the null hypothesis is rejected while the alternative hypothesis is accepted. This means that migrants have significant contribution to rural infrastructural development in Otukpo local government Area. The study is 95% confident that a right decision has been made.

4.8. Discussion

The study found out that migration is most common among the youths aged 18-40 years on table 1. This is closely related to the range 15-35 years reported by (Udo, 1982) and (Enefu, 2007) which found out that migration is common among the age group 18-45 years in Ugboju district of Otukpo Local Government Area. The implication of the age - group involved in migration is that, the rural areas will suffer severe shortage of manpower for agriculture if the trend continues. However, on the long-run rural areas will benefit from out migration through inflow of resources via remittances and human resources development when migrants returned home. This will further act as an impetus for rural development.

The types of infrastructures provided by the individual migrants and community development effort in Otukpo Local Government Area ranges from school infrastructures, roads, water supply, churches, electricity, hospitals, recreational facilities and market stores.

These have contributed to rural development. Rural residents need not trek or travelled long distances for education, medical services, nor market. If this contribution from the migrants can be sustained for the next two to three decades, rural areas in Otukpo Local Government will experience great social and economic transformation thereby improving the standard of living of the rural dwellers. The challenges of rural development are enormous. They include corruption and embezzlement of fund, mismanagement of resources by community leaders, lack of commitment to rural projects, lack of understanding and cooperation between migrants and home communities as well as poor supervision and implementation of projects. If these challenges are not properly addressed, it will further deplete any resources and development effort aimed at rural development in the study area. There is a need for migrants and community leaders to cooperate with each other and work closely in monitoring project implementation in rural areas in order to encourage rural development in Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State. The study recommend adherence to societal laws and orders, strict punishment of corrupt persons, cooperation among various facet of the society as well as encouraging Government, private individual and communities to collaborate in funding rural infrastructural projects. This will help in developing the rural areas as stipulated by the self-help framework for rural development.

5. Conclusion

The study concludes that migrants have contributed to rural infrastructural development in Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State leading to social and economic transformation of rural areas. This has further exposed the general public to the advantages of migration at the home of origin against the negative perception of migration as a product of exploitation, coercion, deprivation and ill-economy which hitherto may not apply. It has provided information to communities that are interested in self-help projects in knowing how to address their local demand and supply with regards to infrastructural facilities. To sustain these development strides and many more, the study recommend that both the Government, migrants and rural communities should collaborate in funding rural infrastructural projects since such projects are capital intensive for a single, group or even an entire community to carry out on its own.

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