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**SOCIO-DEVELOPMENTAL APPRAISAL OF RURAL-URBAN  
MIGRATION IN RURAL COMMUNITY OF NIGERIA**

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**ABSTRACT**

There is no disputing or denying the fact that rural Nigeria is engulfed in chronic and endemic poor developmental situations. The background to the crisis in Nigeria's rural in terms of socio-economic and political impacts of the crisis dates back to the colonial era. This was when colonialism exploited the resources of rural areas by thus increasing the levels of rural poverty and thus changing the entire structure of the rural economy. By enhancing or even transforming the nature of land holding etc, it further affected the nature and system of social production and productivity, the social and physical provision of infrastructure, the ecology and labor force recruitment as well as worsening the overall poverty level amongst the rural residents. Nigerian government though several strategies like the nation's development plans from colonial era to date did not bring about meaningful developmental effort in checking migration out of rural areas.

Likewise international organizations and regional strategies have not lead to any significant improvement in the living conditions of the rural dwellers and rural development in general. It was also found out that a number of issues such as corruption and mismanagement, faulty planning from above rather than bottom-up approach; pursuance of the colonial and neo-colonial economic and social policies which were anti people among other factors led to failure of the rural development efforts. The paper therefore concludes among other things that for rapid and sustained rural development to take place, the lopsided and urban based development process must be reversed to rural based and bottom-up approach, government to continue to create conducive environment for rural development to thrive, change of attitudes and orientation by all and sundry, particularly the leadership class in Nigeria in order to minimize corruption and mismanagement of resources. Therefore, reduction in rural migration will be realistic and enduring, if these measures should be given priority attention.

**Keywords:** Rural, Urban, Rural-urban migration, Sociology, Socio-economic, Development, Infrastructure.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Migration as a phenomenon is a complex, multicausal, and nonlinear demographic phenomenon that has occurred throughout human history at a variety of scales and touches the lives of many people in sub-Saharan Africa (Adepoju 2008; Malmberg 2008; Naude 2010; de Brauw, Mueller, and Lee 2014). In Nigeria and other developing countries, population in cities is projected to increase from 1.9 billion in 2000 to 3.9 billion in 2030. This is principally due to rural to urban migration which is consequent upon the dichotomous planning and development which many developing countries adopted especially after independence. This subsequently results in the rural deprived and the urban endowed that translates into improved amenities and economic opportunities in these urban centres than the rural areas. Nigeria was a state characterized by a relatively narrow rural-urban gap, and therefore urban bias during that period was hardly a topical issue of debate. But with the emergence of oil as the main pedestal of the economy, urban oriented economy swiftly characterized the political economy and the public policy orientation.

Abah (2010) argued that rural area dwellers have been found to engage in primary economic activities that form the foundation for the country's economic development. As it is conspicuously apparent from the foregoing, given the national economy, enhancing the development of the rural sector should be central to government and public administration. Regrettably these rural sectors of Nigeria that are vital to the socio-economic development of the nation are faced with the problem of retard development. Eliss and Harris (2004), have stated that the incessant drift of the rural populace to the urban areas has led to social, economic, environmental, physical, and other severe problems such as congestion in the urban centres with attendant consequences such as spread of communicable diseases, overstretched social amenities such as electricity, health facilities, educational, recreational facilities, motorable roads, pipe borne water, housing etc. This has been attributed to the top down approach policies of most Nigerian government in the approaches to rural development. Another possible reason for the poor state of the rural areas could be attributed to lack of continuity in rural development policies and projects by successive government. In this regard, Ajadi (2010) noted that there is usually the absence of sustained, comprehensive and conclusive implementation of rural development policies in Nigeria. The result of the fact earlier mentioned is high rate rural-urban migration in Nigeria with its attendant challenges.

## **2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The crisis in Nigeria's rural areas are essentially on productivity, food shortages, and dwindled per capita income which, no doubt, manifest a serious crisis of poverty, apathy and despair within the rural communities. The nature and extent of rural malaise are, of course, immense and perhaps immeasurable. While rural poverty is not a new phenomenon in Nigeria, it has persisted despite the fact that the country is richly endowed in oil and other mineral resources. Rural-Urban migration has long been recognized as one of the main problems of rural development in Nigeria. Efforts to deal with it have not been successful (Nwosu, 1979; Makinwa, 1975 & 1988). In relation to agriculture, by far the greatest problem has been that of low production. This problem has been heightened by a large section of the Nigerian population which has taken to other non-agricultural occupations in the urban areas (Nwosu, 1979). As a result of this, the food security situation in Nigeria and other African countries has over the years deteriorated and a lot of people now face the problem of hunger and malnutrition (Ojiako, 1999). Migration process, especially rural-urban has grave consequences as it affects food production, agricultural exports, the rural require for manufactured goods and future economic surplus in agriculture available for investment elsewhere. Due to rural-urban migration, rural communities suffer from a loss of labour necessary for agricultural development. The impoverishment of rural areas in Nigeria is partly explainable by out-migration of able-bodied youths in search of white collar jobs in the cities. Agriculture which was the mainstay of Nigeria's economy prior to the discovery of Oil has been relegated to the background leading to the country's mono-economy status. The impact of rural-urban migration is indeed a rapid deterioration of the rural economy, leading to chronic poverty and food insecurity (Mini, 2001).. Rural crisis in Nigeria has reached such an extent and degree that even the peasant has failed to produce enough food for his personal needs, let alone produce in excess to be appropriated by the state. Therefore, food shortages, lower productivity, lower income and increased poverty have ravaged the rural Nigeria. Even though these are partly and directly due to the inability of the peasants to have access to fertilizer for the predominant fertilizer responsive HYV crops, inputs and other infrastructural facilities. Also, high marketing costs, labor shortages due to the rural-urban drift, infertile soils, pests, diseases due to the increased chemicalization of the soil and mechanization of agriculture have produced further impetus to new rural crisis.

Government concern with this situation has given rise in the past to various plans and projects aimed at checking the inflow of migrants from the rural to urban areas. Most of the schemes established by the federal government failed, due, to a large extent, to the inadequate specification of the problem and the target population of the migration-influencing programmes. Such programmes have included the "farm settlement schemes" patterned after the Israeli Moshav, which involved the building of rural houses with urban amenities (electricity and pipe-borne water supply) and the provision of modern farming machinery which were aimed at primary school leavers.

### **3. OBJECTIVES OF WRITE UP**

The main objective of the study is to examine the socio-economic effect rural-urban migration on rural community of Nigeria. While specific objectives are:

1. To add to body of knowledge on the subject matter.
2. To contribute to policy coherence between migration and rural development
3. To maximize the positive nexus between migration and rural development; and
4. To illustrates some of the migration and rural development policies

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

This write up adopted the survey design approach in its method of study. The paper is qualitative in nature. It discusses the challenges of rural development, the previous rural development programme.

### **5. LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **5.1 THE CONCEPT OF DEVELOPMENT**

Generally, development is seen as process by which man increases or maximizes his control and use of the material resources with which nature has endowed him and his, environment. Afigbo (1991) affirmed that development consists of five main ingredients: increasing material wealth for the use of individuals and the modern collectivity known as the nation; eliminating unemployment; eliminating poverty and want; eliminating inequality, and increasing the general availability of labour-saving devices. Development, from its inception, is a kind of totalistic movement and rural development is not an exception. Therefore, rural development is a multi-dimensional process by which the productivity, income and welfare, in terms of health, nutrition, education and other features of satisfactory life of rural people can be improved upon or transformed. According to Igbokwe and Ajala (1995), the earliest attempt at rural development during the colonial era took the form of community development, and later agricultural extension. The community development approach emphasized self-help to improve health, nutrition and community welfare, whereas the agricultural extension approach was concerned with improving the agricultural productivity. The goal of both programmes ultimately was to produce primary products for the feeding of European industries.

The early years of Nigeria's independence witnessed colossal concentration of development efforts on the modern sector of the economy to the exclusion of investment in the rural economic base. Therefore, the problem has been how to make rural development sustainable. Towards this end, a number of development approaches have been pursued by the various governments in

Nigeria. These consist mainly in the establishment of projects, programmes, and capacity-building institutions. One shortcoming of these efforts is the limited local community participation in problem identification, project prioritization, design, preparation and implementation. Suffice it to state that most of these development approaches are elitist and urban-biased, such that the rural areas are often given lip attention in virtually all ramifications of modernization process. The rural sector is still largely characterized by absence of basic human needs and underdevelopment in agricultural and non-agricultural activities (Williams, 1994). In line with the fore-going, Diejomaoh in Ayichi (1995) asserted that rural development is a process of not only increasing the level of per capita income in the rural areas but also the standard of living of the rural population measured by food and nutrition level, health, education, housing, recreation and security. It is therefore the process of rural transformation and the monetization of the rural society leading to its transition from traditional isolation to integration with the national economy.

## **5.2 MEANING OF RURAL AREAS**

Nigeria is predominantly a rural society as the vast majority of her population dwells in the rural areas (Ele, 2006; Nwuke, 2004). Indeed, about 70 percent of Nigerians dwell in the rural areas (Aboyade, 1976). Specifically, these rural areas refers to the geographical areas that lie outside the densely built-up environment of towns, cities and the sub-urban villages and whose inhabitants are engaged primarily in agriculture as well as the most basic of rudimentary form of secondary and tertiary activities (Adebayo, 1998; Ezeah, 2005). Nyagba (2009) sees a rural area to be an area that 90 percent of the population engages directly or indirectly in agricultural activities. Similarly, Ele (2006) also defines a rural area as an area which is the opposite of an urban area, refers to the country side whose population engages mainly in primary production activities like agriculture, fishing, and rearing of livestock .Nyong (1990) sees rural areas to be a settlement of small population occupied by people largely engaged in a monolithic occupational type and is generally accepted all over the country at that particular time as rural. A rural area was examined by Chenery et, al (1987). He explains that the rural area accounts for a large proportion of the national population of which the overwhelming majority engaged in agricultural and allied occupations and contains about two thirds of the poorest income categories of the country as a whole. They are areas of raw material extraction from the natural environment. In most cases, these extractions are done manually. Activities such as farming, hunting, fishing, gardening and laundering are all primary occupations which necessitate close interaction with the natural environment.

According Nyong (1990) rural area is also defined on the basis of three major parameters:

1. Population size: it is generally assumed that urban areas have larger population than rural areas and because of this, in most countries, population size is taken as an indicator of rural or urban settlement status. Usually, a certain figure is chosen which serves as the cut off point between the rural settlement and the urban areas. This figure varies from countries to countries and depends on two main factors;
  - i. Population of that country and
  - ii. Population density

In a country like India, the figure is 50,000. In Italy and southern Spain, it is 20,000. In Nigeria, it is 10,000. In Canada, it is 5,000. In Denmark, it is 1,000 and in Iceland it is 500 (Ibid: 1990:2). Generally, the population criterion assumed that heavily populated settlements are urban whereas sparsely populated settlements are rural. Olisa and Obiakwu, (1992), support that any settlement with a population of 20,000 people and below is classified as rural area.

2. Economic functions: socio-economic activities are also among relevant parameters used in deciding whether an area is rural or urban. A rural area is socially, economically deprived and discriminated against in the citing of industries, technical infrastructure and professional personnel. it lacks social amenities such as good schools, hospital, roads, electricity, pipe-borne water, postal services, waste disposal etc. in urban situation, these facilities are available.
3. The third parameter is the legal definition of government. What this means is the tendency on the part of some government to artificially declare or decree an area as rural and another as urban in the basis of historical antecedents which may since have lost any present day relevance (Ibid, 1990).

### **5.3 CONCEPTUALIZING RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

Rural development as a concept has a definitional problem due to its multi-dimensional approach. As conceptualized by various scholars, Williams (1978) viewed rural development as a mass effort to increase production, create and spread of employment and to root out the fundamental causes of poverty, diseases and ignorance. Akeredolu –Ale (1995) sees rural development as a process whereby the government works in close cooperation with the people to improve the economic, social and cultural condition of their communities. Makanjuola (2000) defined rural development as a process of planned change in various aspects of a rural community with a view to attaining an improvement in the level of productive capacity, capability and general standard of living of the rural population. In other words, it is a process by which the rural population is expected to be able to judge themselves as having achieved a higher

standard of living over time. Oladipo (2008) observes that for rural development to occur and endure there has to be enhanced rural income, reduced poverty and unemployment, reduced inequalities, increased rural value, added production, enhanced good health and education, enhanced quality of life through potable water, electricity and good roads, greater integration of rural people into the political and economic process and good telecommunication services.

Therefore, combining all the essential elements of development, Rural Development can be described as the integrated approach to food production as well as physical, social and institutional infrastructural provisions with an ultimate goal of bringing about both quantitative and qualitative changes which result in improved living standard of the rural population. It therefore, infers that agricultural production (development) is a component of rural development as more than two-third of Nigeria's 150 million citizens are farmers. They live in an estimated 97,000 rural communities. Their lives are characterized by misery, poverty, morbidity and underdevelopment (Ekpo and Olaniyi, 1995). Hence, it has been widely recognized that the rural areas and people are characterized by the following: general poverty trap, low income and investment ratchet, underutilized and/or unutilized natural resources, rapidly increasing population, underemployment and/or disguised employment, low productivity, especially of labour, low and traditional technology, limited enterprise or entrepreneurship, high level of illiteracy, ignorance, disease and malnutrition, near absence of social and physical infrastructures (like all-season roads, potable water, electricity, good schools, health centres, etc.), and political powerlessness, gullibility and level of general vulnerability (Lele and Adu-Nyako, 1991: 1– 29).

Rural Development is part of general development that embraces a large segment of those in great need in the rural sector. Hunter (1964) was among the earliest to use the expression Rural Development which he considered as the "starting point of development" characterized by subsistence. World Bank in Ekpo and Olaniyi (1995) defined rural development as a process through which rural poverty is alleviated by sustained increases in the productivity and incomes of low-income rural dwellers and households. This definition is defective as it dwelt majorly on the economic growth, which is just an aspect of development. Taking into cognizance, the economic growth and social upliftment as aspects of development, Ijere (1990) regarded rural development, as the process of increasing the per capita income and the quality of life of the rural dweller to enable him become prime mover of his own destiny. Obinne in Ogidefa (2010) perceived rural development to involve creating and widening opportunities for (rural) individuals to realize full potential through education and share in decision and action which affect their lives. He also viewed it as efforts to increase rural output and create employment opportunities and root out fundamental (or extreme) cases of poverty, diseases and ignorance.

Rural development has scope that is broad and elastic, and it depends on the interaction of many forces such as the objectives of the programme, the availability of resources for planning and implementation, etc. In developing countries, such as Nigeria, rural development projects will include agricultural set-up projects, rural water supply projects, rural electrification projects, rural feeder-road and maintenance projects, rural health and disease control projects, rural education and Adult education campaign, rural telecommunication system, and rural industrialization. Based on the scope of rural development (as the improvement of the total welfare of the rural low-income people), the following objectives of rural development evolved:

- (i) To have greater commitment of the resources to the rural "areas in terms of budgeting allocation and actual expenditure.
- (ii) To ensure popular participation of the rural people in the identification of priorities, planning of programmes as well as their implementation.
- (iii) To lay greater emphasis on the use of total resources and promotion of local skills.
- (iv) To expand and improve on rural infrastructure such as roads, markets stalls, electricity, water and storage facilities.
- (v) To maintain political and social stability
- (vi) To create rural employment opportunities
- (vii) To increase commodity out-put and production and subsequently increase food and food supply as well as rural farm incomes

From the objectives of the rural development in Nigeria, Ijere (1990) postulated that the underlying principles of rural development are as follows:

- i. The leaders and policy makers should be committed to the philosophy of rural development for the improvement of the rural sector.
- ii. There should be total community involvement in rural development. To ensure this, rural development organizers should delegate powers to at all levels of the population who should account for the exercise of that power, Also, a more suitable community participation approach using the people's institutions and leaders is imperative.
- iii. Incentives and motivation should be built into the rural development system. These could be in form of citations, honourable mentions, honorary titles and prizes, competition between villages, towns and local government areas, organizing rural



- development day to select the best farmers, cleanest communities, accident-free communities, etc.
- iv. All aspects of the peoples' life should be affected by the rural development schemes to allow for even development.
  - v. A core of local leadership should be built-up to sustain the rural development effort. There should be a standing development planning committee in every community from which such persons can be mobilized.
  - vi. There should be development of appropriate skills (human capital development) as well as implementation capacity to sustain new technologies and improvement of social welfare.
  - vii. Rural development programmes should utilize the cultural values and practices of the people. It makes the scheme understandable and meaningful, Indigenous institutions such as age grades: youth organizations, clubs and town unions should be used in reaching the people and in mobilizing latent energies (pp, 66 — 67).

#### **5.4 VARIOUS RURAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES**

The overall aim of rural development efforts is geared towards the improvement of the lives of the rural population. However, several approaches aimed at arresting the ugly underdevelopment situation in rural areas have been put forward. According to Ijere (1990: 52 —54), they include the following:

- 1. Growth Pole Centre Model:** This model is also known as "Growth Point Model". The model involves the development of a few strategic towns, communities and industries likely to activate other sectors. The model focuses attention on the development of few towns leading to the neglect of the rural areas.
- 2. The "Big Push" Policy:** This approach is similar to the growth pole centre model except that it is more concentrated. It takes a few sub-sectors and expends most of the resources' on them in the hope that in the long run, their multiplier effect will salvage the whole economy. The flaw in this model is that "in the long run" is not a specific period.
- 3. The Selective Approach:** This model/approach involves the selection of certain sectors for development based on economic, political, social or religious grounds, which may not necessarily be related or inter-connected.

- 4. The Protectionist Approach:** In this approach, the government carries out the development process on behalf of the people believing that it knows everything and that the people are not yet ripe to participate, in the management of their own affairs.
- 5. The Top-down Approach:** It is also called the Top-bottom approach. It is a strategy based on passing down to the poor certain policies and directives from the governing bureaucracy. This type of rural development approach requires force to maintain and sustain it.
- 6. The Decentralized Territorial approach:** This approach centres on the dispersal of benefits to the rural area. It has minimum linkage with the city but with settlements of various sizes to act as services and market centres. The defect in this approach is the undue fear of towns being exploitative and parasitic, and the consideration that size alone could determine the performance of a settlement.
- 7. The "Laissez-faire Policy:** In this model, the authorities use the role of thumb, past experience, hind-sight and the free market mechanism to manage the economy, with the hope that the invisible hand of God would ensure optimum happiness for everybody.
- 8. The Key Settlement Strategy:** This model is closely related to growth pole centre model except that its focus is settlement. It assumes a focal point for a given rural area, and the concentration of all rural development resources in such a settlement. This in turn will serve other regions through its network of roads and communication. This model requires a long time to mature, and therefore it is more expensive.
- 9. The Adaptive Approach:** It is a combination of selective approach and Laissez-faire policy and any other approach. It gives the people the opportunity to decide on their own lives, sometimes, wider under the guidance of the government.
- 10. The "Bottom-Up" Approach:** It is also called Bottom-top approach or Rurism strategy. This approach implies that development with the people. It is a new political development strategy. Rurism is a coherent national and social-value system in which human and material resources are mobilized and allocated from the lower echelon of the economic and social strata to the top. It is free from any foreign ideology and infection. It promotes self-reliance, self consciousness into balanced development of human and material resources It is the ideal approach. However, it is costly and rather slow.

## **5.5 INTELLECTUAL VIEW OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

The strategies for sustainable rural development in Nigeria, according to Eboh (1995) should include the following:

- a. Investing in human development to alleviate rural poverty, human misery and stabilize populations;
- b. Ensuring food security (not just food-sufficiency) through rural compensation measures like selective poverty-targeted relief;
- c. Creating incentives for rural growth and employment by improving access to production resources and institutional services;
- d. Empowering rural people via participatory and community-oriented development that is woven around local principles, skills and technologies, and protecting the environment by generating and facilitating appropriate resource management systems (pp. 8 – 9).

Based on the fore-going, Ogbazi (2006) states that the programme of action in rural development as contained in the objectives of the National Policy on Rural Development should include the following:

- a. **Adequate Supply of Infrastructural Facilities:** The government's efforts should aim at raising the standard of living of the rural people through adequate inter-village communication such as good road network, electricity, pipe-borne water, recreational facilities, etc. Government should avoid cultural invasion on the rural people.
- b. **Provision of Small and Medium-scale Industries:** Government should stimulate rural industries, which must be based on rural raw materials available in that area. The small and medium-scale enterprises will turn out goods that will feed the urban and sub-urban-based industries. Such rural-based industries must be essentially labour-intensive rather than capital-intensive since the required manpower must be indigenous and appropriate. It will therefore create large employment opportunity for rural youths, In doing so, the economic sector will be improved, and the youths would stay and develop their rural environment.
- c. **Formation of Co-operative Societies:** The formation of co-operatives eliminates the fat middlemen, and asserts the rights of the peasant farmers to negotiate the prices of their own product. It could help in checking the new spectre of exploitation by giving a voice to the farmers in the determination of the prices of their own goods.

- d. **Political Empowerment of the Rural People:** The government must make politics to go beyond paternalistic decentralization of power to the lower community. The traditional relationship and the stereotypic mutual attitudes of urban and rural dwellers must be restructured. The *silent majority*, who are subject to deceptions and exploitations by the city demagogues, should be given opportunity to express their political awareness. They should be rid of their ignorance of political clout and illiteracy, which both conspired to rob the rural people of the realization of their power to change things around to their own advantage. The rural people should be encouraged to form discussion groups to articulate their problems and try to solve them inevitably. Efforts should be made to keep them abreast on government's activities through the establishment of radio and television-viewing centres.

## **5.6 HIGHLIGHT OF THE RURAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT IN THE NIGERIA RURAL AREAS**

The rural sector of Nigeria is, very vital in the socio-economic development of the Nation. But in recent times this areas witnesses a backward shift in its development. It is observed by Nyagba (2009) that the most important sector of the Nigerian population is the rural areas. For instance, the rural sector is the major source of capital formation for the country and a principal market for domestic manufacturers (Olatunbosun, 1975). As a matter of fact, the rural areas engage in primary economic activities that form the foundation for the country's economic development.

Unfortunately, over the years, the development strategies and efforts in Nigeria has been more urban based or focused resulting to relative neglect of the rural area as evidence in the apparent dearth of basic infrastructural facilities in the rural areas (Abah, 2010). Indeed, as Okoli and Onah (2002) observe, the rural area in Nigeria are characterized by inadequacies of human needs as reflected in the near absence of some basic infrastructures with its attendant features of degradation and deprivation. Ezeah (2005:3) specifically, in this respect observes thus: The Nigerian rural areas are neglected area, even though social amenities are also not adequate in some urban areas. The situation in the rural areas is far worse and many communities lack basic amenities like good roads, markets, electricity, pipe borne water etc.

In the same vein, Abonyi and Nnamani (2011:225) note thus: "Today, rural poverty persist in Nigeria despite the prosperity created by the country's oil wealth and this is evident in the difficulty experienced by many in satisfying their basic needs for food, water and shelter. Lack of these basic needs has held rural development in Nigeria to ransom".

Indeed, Abah (2010) observed that the most evident display of Nigeria under development condition is the rural areas and that the deplorable condition of the Nigerian rural sector is emphatic.

Even though successive governments in Nigeria have made some efforts towards enhancing rural development, its meaningful realization has remained a mirage. Eke and Oghator (2011) observe this in their comment that most rural development programs in Nigeria has ended up in the pages of national newspapers and television announcements with the rural areas languishing in backwardness, stagnation, poverty and misery. This is evidenced by the apparent lack of basic infrastructural facilities and glaring presence of general low standard of living among the rural populace (Olatunbunso, 1975). Indeed as FOS (1996) and Nwuke, (2004) observe, poverty is prevalent among the rural dwellers as about 70 percent of the people in Nigeria living below poverty line are domiciled in the rural areas.

Specifically, the Nigerian rural areas are, for instance, characterized by deplorable road network and absence of all year-round reliable access road (Ugwuanyi et, al. 2013). Ele (2006) also observed that, there is, indeed, a problem of rural transport as mostly all the rural roads are not accessible and link bridges are dilapidated and in some cases even non-existent. And since accessibility is a necessity for development, its lack in most rural areas holds them back in the dungeon of underdevelopment. It is noteworthy that most of the road networks in rural areas in Nigeria are maintained through community efforts. This cannot really be effective as the contemporary road development needs of the rural areas are such that mere community efforts cannot adequately address.

More so, the quality of education in the rural areas of Nigeria is apparently very poor. Ijere (1992) stressed that rural education is characterized by limited functional or work oriented education and disdain for handicraft and technical subjects. Okoh and Onah (2002:159) also observed that the privilege of education which, for instance, is supposed to be a birth right of every Nigerian child is an illusion to many poor rural dwellers. In some places, there are no schools at all while in some others the schools are shabby, ill - equipped and poorly staffed. Nigerian rural areas are equally characterized by apparent lack of health institutions as there are hardly any well equipped hospital health centres, clinics, and maternal homes. Similarly, Onah and Okoli (2002) observed that in most rural areas in Nigeria, no medical institution of any sort exists at all and that where they do, the people have to travel very long distances to get to them. Similarly, Olusegun and Mabogunje,(1991) reiterated that there are also low level of health care delivery system, nutrition, hygiene, education and social awareness in the rural areas of Nigeria.

The World Bank (2003) also observed that, rural areas are characterized by dearth of infrastructure, roads, health, water and poor electricity supply. It went further to reiterate that the

per capita income of rural dwellers is below \$280, economic and social activities that are power-dependent are incapacitated, thus compounding rural unemployment.

Water supply in the Nigerian rural areas has also been discovered to be grossly inadequate and with the spread of water borne disease increases by the accompanying poor sanitary conditions (Ele, 2006). Abah (2010) also observed that, rural areas in Nigeria are also characterized by depressingly meager annual capital income, poor livable houses and various forms of social and political isolation.

From the fore going it is observed that there is an apparent lack of development in the rural areas of Nigerian as reflected in the near total lack of basic infrastructure, and social services Since the end of the Second World War, particularly during the past three decades, rural development as a concept and as a programme of action has attracted much attention that it has been enthroned as a vital tool in the development of many developing countries. This conviction was predicated on the firm belief that rural development could be the panacea for replacing rural poverty with prosperity in the developing countries of the world. Olisa (1992), however, observed that the results have not been significantly positive in most countries which have received and lived on aid and other income generating investments, especially from the more developed countries. The failure of rural development and the indicators of that failure are as manifest in Nigeria as in the countries in Africa mentioned in a United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization's report in 1988. Special issue on Rural Development published in February 1988, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) painted vividly the discouraging picture in the following words: At least 700 million people live in poverty in rural areas of the developing world. And available evidence suggests, many of them are becoming poorer. "This grim picture emerges from the latest review of agrarian reform and rural development in the 1980s".

Nigeria, basic amenities such as pipe-borne water, electricity, hospitals and medical care, primary education and modern communication are inadequate in over 80% of the country's rural area. Agriculture is largely at subsistence level with traditional tools just as the rural agriculturist is without modern agricultural skill and knowledge. Over 80% of the country's population live in the rural areas and are engaged in agriculture and as Olisa (1992) observed, yet the country's internal food supply relative to domestic demands, has been consistently on a steep decline.

In the rural sector in Nigeria, public policy has consistently emphasized" increased agricultural out-put and productivity" as the main instrument for rural communities' development. Similarly, public policy makers also regard rural development as synonymous with agriculture.

As Olisa (1992) puts it, the Nigerian rural development dilemma, is that if all the agricultural and industrial projects started in all corners of Nigeria since 1950s to the present were successful, the

country would have recorded a substantial food surplus and much of its rural areas would have undergone substantial transformation. Instead, the present general picture of the country's rural population, is one of economic poverty, malnutrition, poor infrastructure, poor medical facilities, persistence of local endemic diseases which have reduced the quality of labour force, to name but a few.

For example, between 1973 and 2000, Nigeria launched successively, five national rural development programmes with more than eight supportive schemes. These development programmes were in addition to the activities of the Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources in the sphere of rural development. The programmes include among others: National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP) of 1973, Operation Feed the Nation (OFN) of 1976 (in addition to the establishment of Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme to make the programme to work), Green Revolution (GR) of 1980 (which albeit, a mere show or change in terminology) and the Directorate of Food, Roads and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) of 1986.

These rural development programmes were strengthened with more than eight supportive schemes, such as the River Basin and Rural Development Authorities (RBRDA), Agricultural Development Projects (ADPS), Rural and Cooperative Banking Policies of the 1970s, Mass Literacy Cum Nomadic Education Scheme of the late 1980s and the National Agricultural Land development Authority (NALDA) of the 1990s. The programmes and schemes were designed essentially to improve the rural output and thus develop the rural areas.

These efforts at developing the rural areas in Nigeria have not yielded the desired results, due largely to their inability to accelerate the development of this sector. The initiatives failed because of the exclusion of the people not only from policy making and planning but also from implementation. Other attendant factors for the low level of development of the rural areas include the failure to harness available resources within the rural areas, inability to sustain these programme managerial problems and the failure to take into cognizance the socio-cultural background and historical experience of the benefiting rural communities.

## **5.7 CHALLENGES OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

The challenges confronting rural communities especially in developing countries are numerous and cut across all spheres of life. Most often, rural development programs are discontinued whenever there is a change in government leadership. Most times, a new government abandons the projects and programs of its predecessor even when such programs are appropriate. As a result of this, Ajadi (2010) noted that there is usually the absence of conclusive, sustained and comprehensive implementation of rural development policies. The abandonment of Better Life for Rural Women program of late First Lady Mariam Bagangida for the Family Support

Programme by the succeeding regime of General Sani Abacha. Some are not well implemented and the targeted population (rural dwellers) hardly benefit as government officials are corrupt and pocket some of the funds released for such programmes. For this reason, some of the rural development initiatives are messily implemented as a result of poor supervision and corruption. This is evident in many rural communities with installed water taps that lack water since installation.

Umeabali and Akubailo (2006) as cited by (Leah et al, 2013) summarized the challenges of rural development to include the following:-

- I. High population density.
- II. Poor infrastructure.
- III. High level of illiteracy.
- IV. Extreme poverty.
- V. Rural urban migration.
- VI. Low social interaction

## **5.8 ASSESSMENT OF PREVIOUS RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN NIGERIA**

In recent times, due to persistent underdevelopment, there has been a noticeably high level of rural-urban migration in search of better standards of living and bigger opportunities for meaningful economic and social activities (Oghoghufe and Jerry-Eze, 2011). Nwuke, (2004) explains that extreme poverty is prevalent among the rural dwellers as about 70% of the people in Nigeria living below poverty line are domiciled in the rural areas. One major effect of this rural underdevelopment is rural-urban migration, which is fast reducing the active population which constitutes the workforce of the rural areas in Nigeria. This is dysfunctional not only to rural development but retards the overall national development. In view of the foregoing, various Nigerian governments in the past have initiated rural development programmes targeted at the rural sector. They include:

- 1) Agricultural Development Programme (ADP)
- 2) Operation Feed The Nation (OFN)
- 3) National Accelerated Food Production Programme (NAFPP)



- 4) River-Basin Development Authority (RBDA)
- 5) The Green Revolution (GR)
- 6) Agricultural Credit Guarantee Scheme (ACGS)
- 7) Directorate For Food, Road And Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)
- 8) Better Life For Rural Dwellers
- 9) National Agricultural Insurance Corporation (NAIC)
- 10) National Directorate Of Employment (NDE)
- 11) National Agricultural Land Development Authority (NALDA)
- 12) National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP)
- 13) Primary Health Care Programmes (PHCP)
- 14) National Rural Roads Development Fund (NRRDF)
- 15) The Nomadic Education Programme
- 16) Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme (RIDS)
- 17) Ferry Transport Schemes (In The Riverine Areas And Lagos)
- 18) Low-cost Housing Estate Schemes
- 19) Federal Environmental Protection Agency
- 20) Flood and Soil Erosion Control Programme.
- 21) Rural Banking Scheme (RBS)
- 22) Family Support Programme (FSP)
- 23) Universal Basic Education (UBE)
- 24) Expanded Programme On Immunization

These programmes were mainly targeted at rural development in an attempt to better the lives of rural dwellers, stimulate and enhance economic growth, as well as get the rural sector to contribute meaningfully to the national economic and social development. They have directly or

indirectly influence rural development. Some specific programmes were targeted at, education, agriculture, health, housing, transport, and infrastructure while some were generalized programmes put in place to handle general projects and other pressing issues such as unemployment, illiteracy and the likes. Such programmes include DFRRI, NDE. Family Support Programme Better Life and likes.

Many of these specific programmes had some positive effects on rural development although did not last long. Unfortunately, lack of integration of the various rural developmental efforts significantly militated against sustainable rural development. This is largely due to the inability of the rural development institutions to cooperate and ensure their respective initiatives, actions and mandates are coordinated to reinforce and support each other and that their activities are streamlined towards effective realization of government's rural development objectives.

## **5.9 RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION PROCESS**

Rural-Urban migration in Nigeria assumed prominence in the Oil boom era of the early 1970s (Olatunbosun, 1975; Adepoju, 1979). The situation has become more intractable with the obvious dichotomy in access to modern facilities and living standards between rural areas and the urban centres (FadaYInl, 1992). This trend has continued unabated in spite of so much orchestrated efforts at rural transformation. It is estimated that four of every five rural Africans are without reasonable access to safe water (Rimmor, 1988). And for Deavers (1992), most rural areas in developing countries especially in Africa, lack several social amenities and human resources, which contrast sharply with what is obtainable in urban centres. Traditionally, migration studies were devoted to investigating frequency, patterns and flows, distance and typologies of people's mobility and their assimilation in host societies. Recent explorations, however, have begun to venture into studying the effects of migration and the various meanings of the migration for people themselves (Rigg, 2(03). There is increasing interest in the 'migration process', which involves studying the lived reality of migrants; their migration, settlement, ethnic relations, public policies and identity construction as closely related and overlapping segments in a single process (Castles, 20(0). The migration decision has been shown to be selective. Migration mainly concerns young adults who are more likely to have a positive net expected return on migration due to their longer remaining life expectancy, or because social norms require that young adults migrate in search of a better life (De Haan and Rogally, 2002). It is imperative to understand that researches in the field have come to show that the reasons for migration have moved away from the economic causes and effects of migration streams to the problems of identity, ethnic conflict and changing self-identification of migrants (Bates, 2001). Also, studies on labour migration from rural to urban areas from a political economy perspective has similarly revealed that much of the migration has been circular, and does not really involve one-way

movements. Most migrants maintain close links with their place of origin, thus rendering a view of migration as a 'series of exchanges between places' (Breman, 1996; De Haan and Rogaly, 2002; Locke, Ager and Kelly, 2000). Migration not only arises as an option premised on the need to diversify livelihoods due to dwindling natural resources and weakening returns from farm activities, it also arises from the configuration of entitlements to resources and assets, life cycle factors, divisions of labour by gender, gender norms on mobility and individual aspirations that often determine which members are released for migration by households and which are retained. In addition, migration is largely network-mediated, and often its costs are offset by social networks that help a migrant work out the complex requirements and processes of migration. So households and social networks mediate the relationship between the individual rural migrant and the world at large (BretteH, 2000; Battistella, 2003). Attempts to integrate the multiple causes of labour migration into a single framework have been made by Gulliver (1955) and Mitchell (1959). In his studies of the Ngoni and Ndendeuli of Southern Tanzania, Gulliver christened and dismissed the 'bright lights theory' and emphasized instead that the main factors pushing men to seek work is economic. Other factors, a final quarrel with a brother or yet another dispute with a neighbour, some real or supposed injustice suffered at the hands of the chief or an adverse court decision, appeared to be no more than 'last straw' causes affecting only the timing of migration. Other causes of migration are relatively unimportant and are generally of the 'last straw' type such as difficulties which affect individuals in their family and social life and which go to tip the balance and induce a man to leave home for a spell at a particular time. A review of part of the considerable literature on the causes of labour migration led Mitchell to emphasize all the important economic factors that induce movements.

Although men have tended to dominate migration flows, women are becoming an increasing part of labour migration streams in Nigeria and other African societies (Agesa and Agea, 1999; Thadani and Todaro, 1984). Some studies have shown that women are less likely to migrate alone than men, but with increasing urbanization, they are becoming a more important component of the labour migration streams to urban areas (Guilmoto, 1998; Chant, 1992).

### **5.10 EFFECTS OF RURAL URBAN MIGRATION**

Rural areas are mostly disabled at various levels by inaccessibility, seclusion, underdevelopment, extreme poverty, ignorance, depopulation, hunger and all types of incapacities. Coupled with these is that migration from rural to urban areas leads to a reduction in the number of the rural populace with a negative effect on rural agricultural output and slowed pace of development in the rural areas.

With the exit of youths and young adults from the villages and rural communities, the aged, women and children are left behind to labour on the farms which lead to reduction in agricultural

output with its attendant effect on the gross domestic product of the nation, lowered funds for development, income and standard of living of rural inhabitants, underdevelopment, and total desertion of the rural areas.

Constant reduction in rural population over the years will invariably lead to gross rural neglect by government as they tend to concentrate on developing the more obviously populated urban centres. This further reinforces the vicious cycle of gross rural neglect and underdevelopment as reflected in the lack of rural industrialization and poor physical, social and institutional infrastructures. Also, Lykke (2002) opined that rural-urban migration makes the highly educated and most agile people migrate from rural to urban areas, leaving behind the feeble and uneducated people who are not able to combat poverty successfully. This he argues consequentially increases the differences in the standards of living of the rural and urban inhabitants.

Authors such as Lykke (2002), McCarthy (2004), Adejugbe (2004), Badru (2004), Uma et al (2013), Eliss and Harris (2004), have stated that the incessant drift of the rural populace to the urban areas has led to social, economic, environmental, physical, and other severe problems such as congestion in the urban centres with attendant consequences such as spread of communicable diseases, overstretched social amenities such as electricity, health facilities, educational, recreational facilities, motorable roads, pipe borne water, housing etc.

Other consequences of rural-urban migration includes urban traffic congestion, unemployment, high crime rate such as advance free fraud, political and civil unrests, armed robbery, alcoholism, drug abuse, prostitution, hooliganism, health hazards from pollution; air, water, and noise, inadequate refuse and sewage disposal system, poor drainage system resulting in flooding. Growth of slums leading to shanty settlements, cultural changes, juvenile delinquency and likes.

### **5.11 CUASES OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION IN NIGERIA**

Rural-urban migration is one of the most distressing problems facing the Nigerian socio-economic development. A situation where the desire for better employment, business opportunities and education pushes both young and old out of the rural areas to the urban areas. Rural-urban migration represents a phenomenon of unprecedented movement of people from the rural countryside to the Rural-urban migration, occasioned by voluntary forces or involuntary forces. Involuntary or forced migration is migration that takes place when the migrant has no choice on whether to move or not. Examples include ethno-religious crises, conflicts and wars, political strife, family and land disputes, conflicts with neighbours etc. Voluntary migration is movement done by choice (Lykke, 2002). Historically, migration existed internally across city boundaries to enable excess labour to be taken slowly from the rural areas to provide workforce

for industries in the urban areas and therefore aid industrialization and economic growth. However, over time, the rate of rural-urban migration include urban job opportunities, better housing conditions, rural land tenure and inheritance patterns, better education opportunities, better health services, extreme poverty etc. Oftentimes, rural dwellers see and hear success stories about people that left the community, moved to cities and are supposedly ‘doing well’. This acts as incentives for out-migration especially among youths.

Various studies have been carried out on the causes and consequences of rural-urban migration. While some of these studies related the causes of rural-urban migration to discriminatory government policies in favour of urban development, response to disparities in income, employment and other socio-economic amenities available within the urban and rural areas, with the urban areas being privileged, others related it to spontaneous, emotional, structural, traditional and some other factors. In a cross sectional study of causes and effects of rural-urban migration in Borno State: A case of Maiduguri metropolis, Gimba and Kumshe (2012) found that the major causes of rural-urban migration are search for better education, employment, and business opportunities; while others include: poverty, unemployment, famine, and inadequate social amenities in the rural areas. Study carried out by (Adewale, 2006) reveals that various factors could predispose a certain rural population to migration, which might be due to crisis, ethno-religious conflicts and wars etc. Agyemang (2013) summarized the major causes of rural – urban migration in Nigeria. He noted that different motives account for rural-urban migration amongst rural dwellers. These include the following:

1. Socio-cultural issues where people are forced to migrate to avoid numerous social problems at their places of origin.
2. Poor infrastructural development and lack of basic amenities.
3. Search for better economic opportunities such as jobs.
4. Accessibility and ease of transportation and communication has also been noted to facilitate rural-urban migration.
5. The extension of road network from major towns to the peripheral urban and rural areas that resulted in the decrease in transportation cost and improved communication systems.

## **6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In conclusion, this paper shows that through appropriate rural development programme by government, rural-urban migration can be curtailed. As part of the findings of this paper, the

impediments to rural development is majorly the non-commitment to policies initiated by government in Nigeria, while the absence of rural development does facilitate rural-urban migration due to lack of basic social amenities and infrastructures. The findings also revealed that Government needs to do more to stem rural-urban migration. Government must intensify rural development in Nigeria as expected by majority of the rural populace. People in the rural areas have no need to migrate to the urban centers, if basic social amenities and other variables to make them comfortable are provided for in the areas.

The creation of the Federal/States Ministry of Rural Development like its counterparts of Housing and Urban Development is long overdue. Agriculture and rural development should be detached from each other so as to create a dividing scope between rural infrastructures and rural economic matters. The above recommended agencies should then be made as departments/units under the ministry.

There should be holistic rural development that will develop a dynamic system of rural settlements, to foster sustainable economic growth, to promote efficient rural community development, and to ensure improved standards of living for the rural dwellers.

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