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# ASSESSMENT OF THE LEVEL OF IMPLEMENTATION OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN IFELODUN LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF KWARA STATE, NIGERIA.

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## Abstract

The study assessed the level of implementation of rural development strategies in Ifelodun LGA of Kwara State. The instruments used in this study are questionnaires, key informant interviews and observation. The study employed a cluster sampling technique and delineated the study area into districts. The adopted sample size for the study is 384 persons. Data analysis for this research was descriptive, inferential and narrative. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the level of implementation of development strategies in the study area. The result from the socio-economic characteristics of respondents revealed that 66% of the respondents were male, while 34% were female. Most (51.3%) of the respondents are within the age bracket of 31-45 years. It was also observed that over 90% of the respondents have attained one level of formal education or the other and apart from 17.13% and 28.73% that engage in civil service and business enterprises other than farming, 44.20% of the respondents are solely farmers and 94.5% earn above ₦20,000 monthly. Furthermore, the State Government were the major contributors to health, transport, agriculture and education with a percentage contribution of 28.2%, 30.4%, 29.6% and 44.8% respectively. This was closely followed by the local government with a percentage contribution of 24.3%, 29.8%, 16.6% and 19.6% respectively. The keys for scoring implementation are, very poorly implemented (0-24% of delivery), poorly implemented (25-49% of delivery), partially implemented (50-74% of delivery), and fully implemented (75-100% of delivery). About 52.8% of the development strategies being employed in the health sector in the study area are partially implemented, 31.8% stated that it is poorly implemented, while 15.5% stated that it is fully implemented. Majority of the respondents stated that the development strategies being employed in the road/transport sector is either partially or fully implemented as attested to by 39.5% and 23.8% respectively. In the same vein, 63.8% of the respondents stated that the development strategies in agriculture sector are either partially or fully implemented, 24% are poorly implemented while 12.2% were very poorly implemented. On the implementation of development strategies in the education sector, majority (36.5%) of the respondents opined that the implementation is partial, 27.1% believe that the implementation is full, 21% observed that implementation is poor while 15.5% opined that it is very poor. The regression analysis result reveals an R-squared of 0.82, implying that 82% of the impact of development strategies implemented in the study area could be explained by the transport, health and education sectors. Therefore, it was recommended that government at federal level need to be more involved in development of the study area and rural dwellers should be involved in the initiation, planning and execution stage of development strategies, this will ensure the active participation of communities.

**Keywords:** Agriculture, Development, Ifelodun, Implementation, Strategies.

## 1. Introduction

Development goes beyond economic and social indicators to include the improvement of human resources and positive change in their behaviour. Development is commonly understood as the promotion of people's well-being (Okoye, 2021). Undoubtedly, basic to any development process is man's desire for a better life and better environment (Paul et al., 2019). So, development is perhaps one social and economic phenomenon that is desired by every society, group or community.

Deriving from our understanding of what development generally is, rural development is then that part of development that seeks to enhance the quality of life in rural areas (Ezeah, 2015). Indeed, the basic objective of rural development is a reduction in poverty and improvement of the quality of life of rural people. Ezeah (2005) in this vein defined rural development as a spatially sectional but determined and conscious attempt to focus on the general upliftment of the living conditions of people in the rural areas. So, rural development in Nigeria entails the process of making life more satisfying and fulfilling for the millions of Nigerians who live in rural areas.

Rural development is a many-sided process or a multi-dimensional process involving the totality of the rural people and their environment. Emphasizing the aspect of human development as an essential part of rural development, Ajadi (2010) notes that rural development implies a broad-based re-organization and mobilization of the rural masses to enhance their capacity to cope effectively with daily tasks of their lives and with changes consequent upon it. It is perhaps in this direction that Ele (2016) posits that it is not enough to provide for the rural people; they should be enabled to develop themselves and their environment. The foregoing entails that development can only be meaningfully achieved when the population becomes agents of their own development. The development requirement of the rural areas should, therefore, be multi-

dimensional using various strategies. Strategies for rural development are varied depending on the peculiar needs, characteristics, and capacities of rural people as well as state and national development objectives. Strategies are the specific processes and activities carried out to achieve programme objectives and policy directions.

Rural development strategies are measures directed towards improvement in the existential characteristics of the rural people in ways amenable to their integration within the parameters of improved national life and their ability to contribute to the positive development of the nation. The foregoing exposition points to the fact that rural development should essentially entail a deliberately planned change in all aspect of the rural communities with a view to attaining desired improvement in all aspects of their life Nwuke, 2020).

Nigeria is still considered a rural society as a large number of her population dwells in the rural areas (Nwuke, 2020; Ele, 2016). The rural sector of Nigeria is very vital in the socio-economic development equation of the nation. It is as 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 manufactured goods. Very curious and worrisome however is that some policies and programmes initiated and implemented by government over the years have not resulted in meaningful enhancement of the development of the rural areas in Nigeria (Ezeah, 2005). All these strategies have differential effects among rural communities hence evaluation of which has beneficial impact and which do not is appropriate so as to find means of continuation and modification or discontinuation to achieve overall development goals.

In Nigeria, over the years the stated objectives and strategies of rural and community development have been pronounced by

policymakers and those concerned with the issue of development. This notwithstanding, there still exists an enormous gap, between policy formulation and implementation and the reality of the quantum of development those strategies have achieved. To put this in proper perspective, a few studies with direct links to this work are examined.

Adewumi and Omoresho (2019) analyzed the impact of the agricultural programme on the lives of rural women in Imo State, Nigeria, with the view of strengthening their subsistence agricultural production and encouraging rural development in the southeastern area of Nigeria. The findings showed that processing packages (cassava into pancake and cassava flour; soybean into flour paste and soya-meal; cocoyam into cocoyam flour; and tomato fruits into tomato paste) recorded high awareness values even though they had low rates of adoption. The study recommended that the government should empower the rural women dwellers financially and also provide infrastructural amenities that would aid in the development and improvement of rural lives. The strength of the study is in emphasizing infrastructure provision as a public strategy to complement income-generating agricultural programmes.

Adedeji et al. (2017) examined the impact of road transport on rural development using Obokun Local Government Area of Osun State as a case study. The study revealed an inequality in the provision of road infrastructure and rehabilitation of roads in the area, resulting in disparities in the level of development. The poor condition of roads in the area had negative effects on agricultural activities which is the major source of income of residents, thereby increasing the poverty rate.

## 2. Study Area

Ifelodun Local Government Area was created in 1976 with the Headquarters at Share. It is located between Latitude $8°15´55´´$ and $8°36´37´´$ North of the Equator and between Longitudes $4°27´12´´$ and $5°48´49´´$ East of the Greenwich Meridian. It

Furthermore, Ogbeide (2015) assessed cooperative society as a strategy for rural development in Edo State. The result of the analysis showed that the cooperative society strategy is successful and should indeed be encouraged in the development of rural communities. Despite these commendable results, there is a gap in using the work for generalization due to the small number of cooperatives used for the study and the convenient sample nature of the selected respondents, and the fact that the very poor members of rural communities may not benefit from cooperatives as a development strategy.

In Ifelodun local government area of Kwara state, which is a rural community, several rural development strategies have been implemented but their performance is not documented. It becomes necessary to evaluate these strategies so as to understand the impediments to realizing the desired enhancement in the quality of life of the people and to explore necessary policy actions or measures that would fast-track the development process of the study area.

However, considering the studies examined (Adewumi and Omoresho 2019; Adedeji et al., 2017; Ogbeide, 2015) that focused more on the impact of development strategies on communities, assessment of the level of implementation of rural development strategies in Ifelodun Local Government Area (LGA) of Kwara State will focus on the level of implementation of outlined rural development strategies in the study area. Therefore, the objectives of this study are to determine the rural development strategies in the study area and assess the level of implementation of these strategies in the study area.

shares common boundaries with Asa, Edu, Isin, Ire-podun, Ilorin South, Moro and Oyun Local Government Areas of Kwara State as well as Yagba West Local Government Area of Kogi

State (Figure. 1). It has a landmass of 4,000 square kilometres.

Two main seasons are experienced in the study area. Dry and wet seasons with an intervening cold and dry harmattan from December to January. The annual rainfall ranges between 1,000 and 1,500mm while the average temperature is between 30°C and 37°C. The climate of Ifelodun LGA is the humid tropic type and is characterized by both the wet and dry seasons with a mean annual temperature that ranges from 25-28.9°C. In addition, the annual mean rainfall is about 1,150 mm, exhibiting the double maxima pattern between April and October of every year. Days are very hot during the dry season from November to February temperature typically ranges from 33-34°C while from February to April, values are frequently between 34.6 and 37°C.
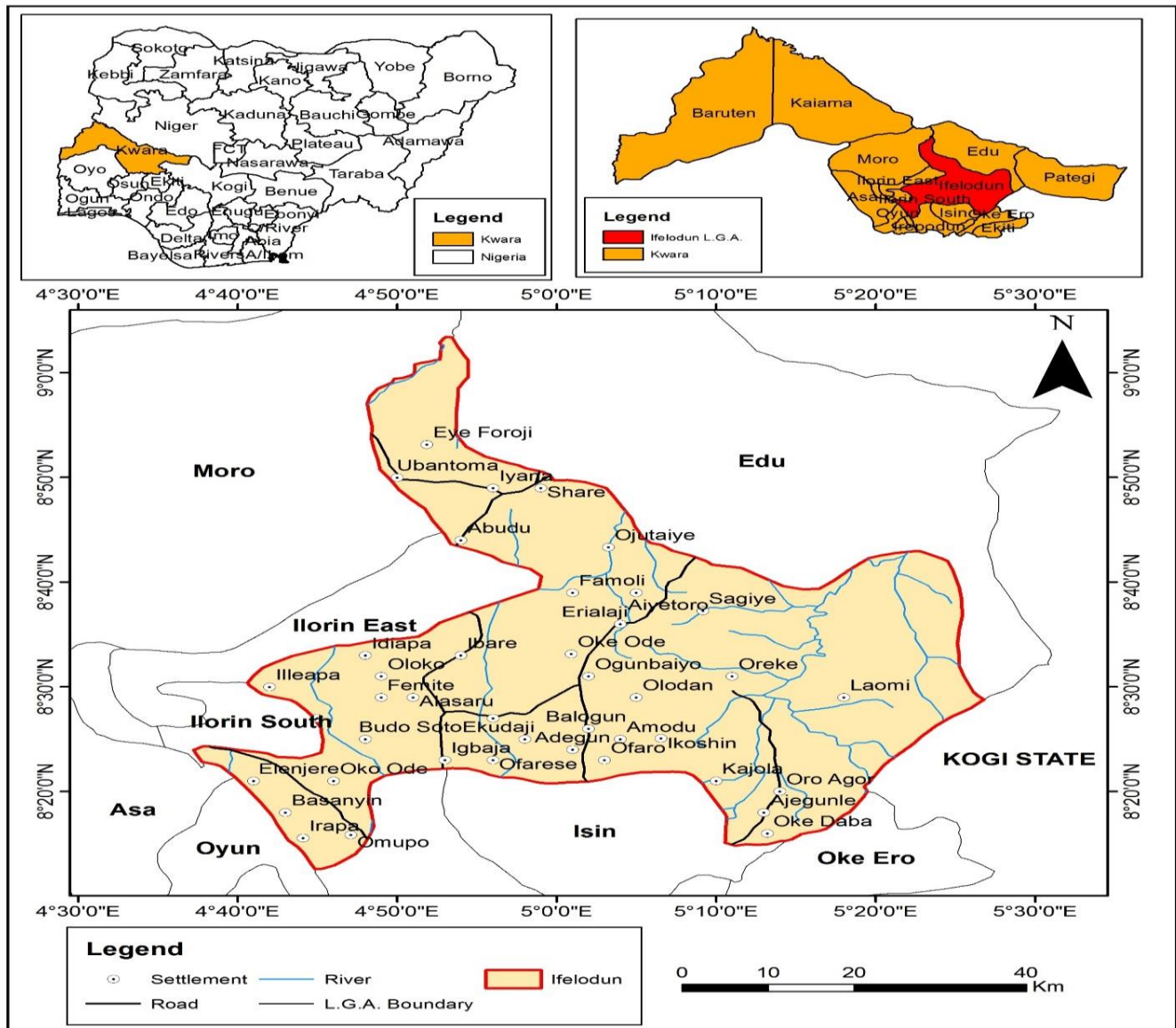


**Figure 1: Map of the Study Area**
**Source: Adapted and Modified from the Administrative Map of Kwara State**

Essentially, Ifelodun LGA is located in the transition zone between the deciduous forest (rainforest) of the southwest and the savannah grasslands of the north (Jimoh 2013). The vegetation of the Ilorin is composed of species of plants such as locust bean trees, shear butter trees, acacia trees, baobab trees, elephant grasses, shrubs and herbaceous plants among others are common in this area. The soils belong to the order of oxisols in the American system of soil classification. The soil parent materials are in form of sedimentary rocks formed on sandstone and developed into Mineral hydromorphic soil (Olabode and Oriola 2013).

The study area has a population of 206,042 (National Population Commission [NPC], 2006) and projected to 261,673 persons by 2015 based on the National growth rate of 3% living in well over 1,000 towns and villages. The population figure is distributed amongst nine (9) districts namely Share, Agunjin, Idofian and Igabaja. Others are Ile-Ire, Oke-Ode, Omupo, Ora and Idofian. The people of Ifelodun LGA area are predominantly Yoruba and belong to Igbomina and Adako ethnic groups. Other groups in the LGA are Nupes, Fulanis, Hausas and Igbos. Majority of the people in the study area practice subsistence farming and petty trading to earn their living. Food crops are produced abundantly which include, yam, cassava, maize, rice, soya beans, locust-beans and groundnut. Generally, the people are very hospitable, peace-loving, accommodating and famous for their high level of self-help approach to development efforts.

## 3. Methodology

Based on the importance attached to rural development and overall growth of Ifelodun LGA, the survey design was employed for the conduct of this work. Surveys are used by behavioural scientists to describe people's opinions and attitudes (Baba, 2021). The instruments used in this study are a questionnaire to investigate the phenomenon quantitatively, key informant interviews and observation to evaluate the rural development strategies alongside real development indices in the study area.

The interview was conducted on the interviewees which includes the Local Government Chairman, traditional leaders in the communities, and community development associations' leaders to explain their role in the development of the study area. An interview guide check list was designed and used by the researcher (interviewer). The choice of these informants is premised upon the case study as well as the different development sources available to the study area that are being considered in this study.

The study employed the cluster sampling technique. A common motivation for cluster sampling is to locate the population of an area into a cluster and also reduce the total number of the population in order to achieve a degree of representativeness. This was used to locate the districts and communities in the local government area in order to evaluate rural development interventions.

In reducing the population to a sample size that was used to investigate the phenomenon, the sample formula from Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was used to determine the sample size of the study. The estimated population of persons in Ifelodun LGA drawn from the projected population is 267,854 at 2016. The adopted sample size for the study is therefore 384 persons. The sample size above was further allocated proportionally to the nine districts according to population size. The sample size is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sample size by Districts**

| S/No. | District | District Population 2006 | District Projected Population 2016 | Sample size |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Share | 45,857 | 59,614 | 86 |
| 2. | Agunjin | 30,208 | 39,270 | 56 |
| 3. | Idofian | 23,110 | 30,043 | 43 |
| 4. | Igabaja | 19,216 | 24,981 | 36 |
| 5. | Ile-Ire | 15,518 | 20,173 | 28 |
| 6. | Oke-Ode | 18,114 | 23,548 | 34 |
| 7. | Omupo | 32,253 | 41,929 | 60 |
| 8. | Ora | 6,134 | 7,974 | 12 |
| 9. | Oro-agor | 15,632 | 20,322 | 29 |
| | **Total** | **206,042** | **267,854** | **384** |

**Source: Adopted from the National Population Commission (2016)**

The Key Informant Interview (KII) sessions were held which comprised 20 interviewees. These include councillors for all the wards, village heads, traditional rulers, and the chairman of Ifelodun Local Government Council.

Data analysis for this research was descriptive, inferential and narrative. Data collected was carefully coded into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20. Having done this, three hundred and sixty-two (362) samples were found to be valid and worthy of analysis. Results were presented in tables, using cross-tabulation, frequency and mean. Multiple regression analysis was used to determine the level of implementation of development strategies in the study area.

## 4. Results and Discussions

### 4.1 Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondents

The socio-economic characteristics of respondents include indices such as occupation, educational status and income level of respondents. From Table 2, it was observed that 66% of the sampled population were male, while 34% were female. This is a result of the cultural and religious setting limiting the involvement of females in most economic activities. Also, as revealed by Table 2b, 51.3% of the respondents are within the age bracket of 31-45 years, 21.6% fall within the age bracket of 15-30 years, and the remaining 27.1% are 46 years and above. This indicates that most of the respondents are young.

Age is considered significant in the evaluation of rural development strategies in the study area because it reveals the beneficiaries of development strategies in the study area. It however, contradicts other characteristics of rural areas as portrayed by Uyanga (1980) where the researcher opined that rural areas are where the youths have migrated or classified rural areas as zones of high propensity for out-migration because in the study area, about 72.9% of the respondents are youths actively involved in agriculture, although they combine it with trading and schools. This is perhaps because of the differences in the period of study. Between 1980 and 2018 is over two decades which reflects the dynamics in characteristics of rural areas.

**Table 2: Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents in the Study Area**

| a.  Sex | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 239 | 66.0 |
| Female | 123 | 34.0 |
| **Total** | **362** | **100** |

| b.  Age (Years) | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 15-30 | 78 | 21.6 |
| 31-45 | 186 | 51.3 |
| 46.60 | 63 | 17.4 |
| 61 and above | 35 | 9.7 |
| **Total** | **362** | **100** |

| c.  Level of Education | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Informal | 30 | 8.3 |
| Primary | 78 | 21.5 |
| Secondary | 175 | 48.3 |
| Tertiary | 79 | 21.8 |
| **Total** | **362** | **100** |

| d.  Occupation other than Farming | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Civil Servant | 62 | 17.1 |
| Business | 104 | 28. |
| Student | 36 | 9.94 |
| None | 160 | 44.2 |
| **Total** | **362** | **100** |

| e.  Monthly Income (₦) | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---|---|---|
| 5,000-10,000 | 8 | 2.2 |
| 10,001-15,000 | 8 | 2.2 |
| 15,001-20,000 | 4 | 1.1 |
| 20,000 and above | 342 | 94.5 |
| **Total** | **362** | **100** |

**Source: Authors Field Survey, 2023**

In analyzing the educational qualification of respondents, Table 2c reveals that over 90% of respondents have attained one level of formal education from their various communities in the local government with 8.3% not having attended a formal institution of learning. From the distribution here, it implies that the populations used in this study are literate and should be able to respond well and provide the study with adequate information. This finding is supported by Odeleye and Oyekanmi, (2013) who stated that educational level is very important as it increases an individual's ability to obtain, analyze and interpret information and use their resources efficiently. Also, as revealed by Table 2d, apart from 17.13% and 28.73% that engage in civil service and business enterprises other than farming, 44.20% of the respondents are solely farmers.

Income is a major determinant of standard of living. As revealed by Table 2e, majority of the respondents (94.5%) earn above ₦20,000 monthly. This is followed by those between ₦5,000-₦10,000 and ₦10,001-₦15,000 representing 2.2% each. The level of income of the respondents might be connected with low educational status of the respondents which in most cases determine their income. This also necessitates the need for development and interventions.

## 4.2 Types and Providers of Projects under Selected Rural Development Strategies in the Study Area

Several projects are provided under different strategies. It is therefore considered more appropriate to look at the projects. Also, some of these are provided by stakeholders hence these are also captured. These are shown in Table 3. Respondents across the communities surveyed in the study area are able to indicate the type of development strategies used in the study area and the stakeholders who provided such projects. From the analysis in Table 3, the state, local government and NGO's were shown to have contributed more to the development of the health sector in Ifelodun representing 66% of the respondents as against the federal governments contribution with 12.2% and individuals with 6.4%. It could be inferred that the intervention in the health sector in the study area is more of the State's responsibilities.

**Table 3: Projects for Rural Development and their Providers**

| S/No | Projects | Stakeholders/Providers | Frequency (N=362) | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1.** | Health facilities and infrastructures | Federal Government | 44 | 12.2 |
| | | State Government | 102 | 28.2 |
| | | Local Government | 88 | 24.3 |
| | | Community Members | 49 | 13.5 |
| | | Individual/Philanthropist | 56 | 15.5 |
| | | NGOs | 23 | 6.4 |
| | | **Total** | **362** | **100** |
| **2.** | Road/transport infrastructure and service | Federal Government | 88 | 24.3 |
| | | State Government | 110 | 30.4 |
| | | Local Government | 108 | 29.8 |
| | | Community Members | 56 | 15.5 |
| | | **Total** | **362** | **100** |
| **3.** | Agricultural development projects | Federal Government | 56 | 15.5 |
| | | State Government | 107 | 29.6 |
| | | Local Government | 60 | 16.6 |
| | | Community Members | 61 | 16.9 |
| | | Cooperative Societies | 44 | 12.2 |
| | | NGOs | 34 | 9.4 |
| | | **Total** | **362** | **100** |
| **4.** | Education infrastructure and services | Federal Government | 85 | 23.5 |
| | | State Government | 162 | 44.8 |
| | | Local Government | 71 | 19.6 |
| | | Community Members | 23 | 6.4 |
| | | Individual/Philanthropist | 21 | 5.8 |
| | | **Total** | **362** | **100** |

**Source: Authors Field Survey, 2023**

Also, the State Government and Local Government are major stakeholders in the development of rural transportation and road construction in the study area. As shown in Table 3, the state government, local government and the members of the rural communities' support road infrastructure as strategy for development. More than 65% of the respondents jointly opined that state government, local government and community members contribute to the development of road/transport sector while 30.4% recognize federal government effort. Considering the peculiarity and importance of rural communities, the condition of road in the area has a significant effect on their contribution to national growth. In the words of Adedeji et al. (2017) efficient and effective road transport infrastructure will enhance the transportation of rural dwellers and agricultural produce to urban locations especially where their farm products are being sold in the natural form, distributed locally and exported for the growth of the nation's economy.

In the interview conducted with one of the village heads in Share. He stated that:

*"Government are trying on the construction and renovation of roads especially with the creation of usable access roads to the hinterlands. Examples of access road by the federal government is the road linking Share and Tsaragi and also Ganmon along Omupo. State government efforts are seen in roads like Alabe, Oreke and Oro-ago roads and communities graded roads within Omugo and Ahun".*

On the contributions to the agricultural sector, 63.7% stated that the state, local government and community members contribute to the development of the agricultural sector in Ifelodun. The state Ministry of Agriculture have embarked on agricultural initiatives like the "operation back to farm" programme where farmers were provided with farming implements like hoes, cutlasses, etc. Also, community members who form cooperatives provides finances and farming implements to their members especially every farming season as opined by 12.2% of respondents. This result contradicts the study conducted by Ogbeide (2015) where the researcher considered cooperatives as the major financial backbone of rural areas.

Indeed, as revealed by Table 3, about 44.8% stated that the state government contribute more to the education sector. The state government contribution to education included paying for the WAEC fees of poor students, construction of blocks of classrooms, employment of more teachers in the various schools especially in some isolated communities in the local government area, provision of sanitation facilities in schools and also the introduction of adult education. This is followed by 23.5% that opined that the federal government also contribute to the development of the education sector in the study area. The least contributors were the local government, community members and philanthropic individuals as opined by 19.6%, 6.4% and 5.8% respectively. These stakeholders provide school

**4.3 Level of Implementation of Development Strategies in the Study Area**

textbooks, school desk and chairs and also provision of scholarships to outstanding students.

Generally, from the analysis presented in Table 3, it could be inferred that a significant percentage of the respondents stated that the participatory role in rural development of Ifelodun LGA involved actively and collectively the efforts of the State Government and communities in Ifelodun through communal projects. It was also revealed that cooperatives and NGO's contribute also to the development of the study area.

The finding of this study is in line with the study conducted by Ogunleye-Adetona and Oladeinde (2013) in Kwara state which showed that projects embarked upon by the community is a collective effort of multiple stakeholders. Based on the stakeholders that have used different strategies for rural development, this study confirms the veracity of the system theory and integrated rural development approaches. The subsystems are education, health, transportation and agricultural production. The overall rural development effort is integrated in the delivery approach such that both government and other stakeholders provide these programmes under different strategies.

Also, the various strategies are subsystems and their working together will give maximum benefits to rural dwellers. As illustrated, if agricultural strategies increase the yield and output but roads are not provided or cost of transportation are prohibitive, farmers and marketers will not be able to transport the produce, hence overall input or benefit would be minimal on the quality of life. Health and education are sub-indicators for human capital development and empowerment. As subsystems they will not individually contribute meaningfully to improved quality of life but will, in synergy with other strategies, increase the satisfaction with the quality of life.

Execution of projects as rural development strategies in the study area have different levels of implementation and these are observable

across the study area. The result as presented in Table 4 shows the level of implementation of rural development strategies in Ifelodun focusing on the listed projects. The scope to understanding implementation is whether all the components

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have been delivered, people have been using the projects, results of the program have been seen, whether the projects have taken off. The implementation varies between communities, hence the varied responses

**Table 4: Level of Implementation of Development Projects in the Study Area**

| S/no | Projects | Response | Frequency (N = 362) | Percentage |
|------|----------|----------|---------------------|------------|
| 1 | Health | Fully implemented | 56 | 15.5 |
| | | Partially implemented | 191 | 52.8 |
| | | Poorly implemented | 71 | 19.6 |
| | | Very poorly implemented | 44 | 12.2 |
| | | **Total** | **362** | **100** |
| 2 | Road/Transport | Fully implemented | 86 | 23.8 |
| | | Partially implemented | 143 | 39.5 |
| | | Poorly implemented | 62 | 17.1 |
| | | Very poorly implemented | 71 | 19.6 |
| | | **Total** | **362** | **100** |
| 3 | Agriculture | Fully implemented | 51 | 14.1 |
| | | Partially implemented | 180 | 49.7 |
| | | Poorly implemented | 87 | 24.0 |
| | | Very poorly implemented | 44 | 12.2 |
| | | **Total** | **362** | **100** |
| 4 | Education | Fully implemented | 98 | 27.1 |
| | | Partially implemented | 132 | 36.5 |
| | | Poorly implemented | 76 | 21.0 |
| | | Very poorly implemented | 56 | 15.5 |
| | | **Total** | **362** | **100** |

**Source: Authors Field Survey, 2023**

The keys for scoring implementation are, very poorly implemented (0-24% of delivery), poorly implemented (25-49% of delivery), partially implemented (50-74% of delivery), and fully implemented (75-100% of delivery). From Table 4, it can be seen that 52.8% of the respondents stated that the development strategies being employed in the health sector in the study area are partially implemented, 31.8% stated that it is poorly implemented, while 15.5% stated that it is fully implemented.

Also, from the analysis in Table 4, majority of the respondents stated that the development strategies being employed in the road/transport sector is either partially or fully implemented as attested to by 39.5% and 23.8% respectively. This is evident from the roads linking Igbaja to Okeode and Oyate and Ahun roads. Also, the poorly implemented roads include roads linking Ora to Igbaja and Odunade to Igbaja roads.

From the interview conducted with a union leader in one of the motor parks in Ifelodun LGA, he stated that:

*"We face some problems in commuting people to the rural areas due to bad roads, and because of these, our members usually avoid some roads; this eventually resulted to inadequacy of vehicles plying rural roads.  E.g. the roads from Egbeda to Awetoto has been abandoned due to its poor state which has made it unusable".*

In similar tone, another interviewee stated that:

*The roads linking Owu falls and Owakajola are so bad that when I use the road for some time, the money I spend in fixing my car will be more than what I have made.*

Furthermore, 63.8% of the respondents stated that the development strategies in agriculture sector are either partially or fully implemented, 24% are poorly implemented while 12.2% were very poorly implemented. This is not unconnected to the fact that governments, NGO's, private organization and individuals alike still view agriculture as key to rural development thereby attaching greater priority to development of the sector. This corroborates the work of by Adewumi and Omoresho (2019) where the researchers opined that most rural developmental efforts are geared towards supporting agriculture because of the multiplier effect of the development of agriculture.

Finally, on the implementation of development strategies in the education sector, majority (36.5%) of the respondents opined that the implementation is partial, 27.1% believe that the implementation is full, 21% observed that implementation is poor while 15.5% opined that it is very poor. The payment of West African Examination Council (WAEC) fees for children especially indigent students in the study area has gone a long way in encouraging education in the study area. Though this initiative has been lauded in various quarters, the programme is not being fully implemented as observed by some respondents. According to those respondents who had reservations, their claim is that some well deserving students don't get registered during the registration period due to some bottlenecks.

This was confirmed by the Chairman of the Local Government Area when he said:

"*Sometimes the payment of the WAEC fees are bedeviled by corruption by both the programme administrators and school heads. This has made most beneficiary students to pay extra undue charges and, in some cases, parents bribe their way to secure slots for their children*"

In order to statistically establish the significance of level of implementation of the selected rural development strategies in the study area, multiple regression analysis was employed. The result is presented in Table 5. The regression result reveals an R-squared of 0.82, implying that 82% of the impact of development strategies implemented in the study area could be explained by the independent variables. From the regression result, road/transport ($X_2$) with a coefficient of .785 is a good predictor (strategy) of rural development in the study area. It is expected that when access roads are constructed for the rural communities, it would create enabling environment for easy movement of goods and humans. The intervention on roads has opened up access to communities in the hinterland to commute passengers and agricultural produce to the market. It shows that in the study area, road transport system like the use of buses, taxi, cars and motorcycles are used to commute from place to the other.  This is in agreement with the study of Enefiok and Ebong (2013) that road construction is significantly relevant to rural development as rural roads and bridges form the basis for transformation and communication. Rural roads infrastructure which consists of federal, state and local government roads (major feeder, tracks, footpaths, bridges and culverts) enhances capacity development and promotion of allied services.

**Table 5: Result of Regression Analysis**

|  | Coefficient | Standard Error | T-values | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Constant | 3.919 | .070 | 56.083 | .000 |
| Health ($X_1$) | .122 | .123 | .989 | .323 |
| Road/transport ($X_2$) | .785 | .110 | 7.117 | .000 |
| Agriculture ($X_3$) | .349 | .139 | 2.515 | .012 |
| Education ($X_4$) | .-755 | .056 | -13.561 | .000 |

**Source: Computer Analysis of data obtained from field survey 2023**
Number of Observation = 362; R-squared = 0.822; Adj R-squared = 0.820, Significant at 0.05 sig. level

In the same vein, another variable with positive value is agriculture ($X_3$) with a coefficient of .349, showed that it is a good predictor for development in the study area. When farmers are provided with everything, they need for their faming activities, they yield could be high. Most development strategies in agriculture in the study area are fully implemented, this is because agriculture is viewed as key to rural development. Also affirming the positive impact of agriculture as a development strategy is the study by Aderinoye-Abdulwahab et al. (2015) where the researcher posited that development in agricultural sector in the rural areas help to promote farmers' productivity thereby resulting in higher incomes for the people. Education also

had significant impact in the development of the study area as earlier established.

Although health ($X_1$) showed a positive coefficient of .122 but was not statistically significant at 0.05. This suggests that the development strategies in the health sector does not really impact on the lives of the respondents in the study area. It further implies that while the strategies being employed in the health sector like maternal and child care and nutrition though vital, respondents in Ifelodun local government still have not felt the impact. This is in agreement with the study conducted by Okafor (2016) who posited that budgetary allocations to the health sector in Nigeria remain far below the World Health Organization

## 5. Conclusion

The study found that rural development strategies are being employed in the development of Ifelodun LGA in different sectors of the economy ranging from health, road/transport, and agriculture to the education sector. The State Government contribute more to rural development in the study area. It was revealed from the regression analysis that road/transport, agriculture, and education were impacted

positively by the development strategies being employed in the development of the study area, therefore serve as good predictors of development strategies, and describe the beneficial impact of development strategies in the study area. Generally, rural development plays a significant role in the economic growth and development in the study area.

## 6. Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

i. The education sector in the study area should be looked into because it has not achieved its

desired result. The government should develop workable rural development strategies, proper coordination, funding and technical assistance which will reduce

bottlenecks in the development of the study area.

ii. The government at the federal level need to be more involved in the development of the study area.

iii. Projects with beneficial impacts on the people should be the focus of all stakeholders.

iv. Rural dwellers should be involved in the initiation, planning and execution stage of development strategies, this will ensure the active participation of communities.

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