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INFRASTRUCTURAL FACILITIES AND LITERACY RATE OF CASH CROPS PRODUCERS IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on infrastructural facilities and literacy rate of cash crops producers in the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria. The survey research method was adopted for the study on a population comprised of sixty (60) cash crops producing firms in Rivers, Delta and Akwa Ibom States in the South-South of Nigeria. The judgmental sampling technique was adopted and four (4) respondents per firm were selected making a sample size of 240 respondents. A 5-point likert-scale questionnaire was administered to respondents, of which 200 copies of the questionnaire were returned, obtaining a 90.1 percent response rate. The study adopted descriptive statistics; multiple regressions, analysis of variance and stepwise regression course of action. The results put forward that infrastructural facilities have a strong influence on literacy rate. As such, the study recognizes infrastructural facilities as a catalyst that predicts literacy rate competence in improving a country's wellbeing; therefore, concludes that, infrastructural facilities affect sustainable development of cash crops producers in South-South, Nigeria to an enormous degree, and that not giving concerted attention to these initiatives can lead to economic stagnation or regression, thus hampering literacy rate. The study recommends amongst others that government should provide adequate infrastructural facilities to enable cash crops producers enhance their productivity and sales in order to impact positively on their wellbeing.

Keywords: Infrastructural Facilities, Literacy Rate, Cash Crops.

INTRODUCTION

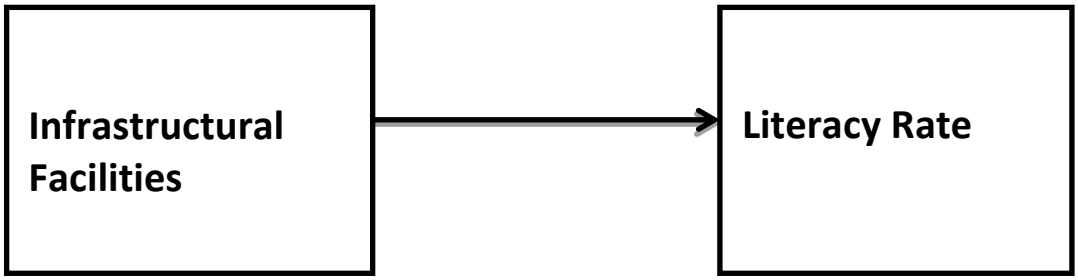
Sustainability is putting technical, scientific, ecological and economic social resources in order so that the resulting system can be maintained in an equilibrium state for some time and in space" (WCED, 1987). Sustainable development can be attained by a well-organized use of available resources and by increasing the capacity of production of a country. This is largely supported by the World Bank in its affirmation that promoting sustainable development will achieve consistent economic growth, poverty alleviation and sound environmental management as its critical objectives (World Bank, 1993).

Effiong, et. al., (2018) investigated economic integration incentives and non-oil export, using foreign reserve as dimension; Ismail and Mahyideen (2015), examined the impact of infrastructure on trade and economic growth in selected economies in Asia, using Transportation Infrastructure, Information and Communication Technology on Infrastructure and Soft Infrastructure as dimensions; Ashenafi and Gefaneh (2014) examined export trade incentives, using export value, export volume and export concentration as dimensions; Fidelis, et. al., (2014) examined Infrastructure development and economic growth in Nigeria, using Labour force and Infrastructure such as roads and

telecommunication as dimensions; Ugwuegbe and Uruakpa (2013) studied the impact of export trading on economic growth in Nigeria, using Non-oil export and foreign reserve as dimensions; Srinavasan (2013) used social and economic infrastructure as dimensions on infrastructural facilities and economic growth in India; Jalali (2012) studied the effect of export promotion programmes on export promotion in the Iranian manufacturing companies and used export promotion, export knowledge, export commitment and export strategy as dimensions. Bala (2019) made a presentation in line with Nigeria's 2017-2020 Economic Recovery & Growth Plan, with emphasis on health, wellbeing and literacy as prerequisites for sustainable development

The interest of this study is to explore infrastructural facilities as a catalyst that predicts literacy rate of cash crops producers in South-South Nigeria.

Operational Conceptual Framework



Research Hypothesis

Ho_1: Infrastructural facilities do not significantly influence literacy rate of cash crops producers in South-South of Nigeria.

Infrastructural Facilities

The accessibility of infrastructure approximating power, telecommunication and transport is extremely imperative for development and rejuvenation of a country. Resourceful and reasonably priced infrastructural services are solution to advanced productivity and output intensification. Energy, transportation, electricity, telecommunication, accessibility of skilled labors, technical and general education, health facilities, agricultural and rural infrastructure; approximating rural roads, irrigation facilities, fertilizers and pesticides, credit facilities, availability of markets, all have positive impacts on output intensification of as well as eradicate the pitiable performance of diverse sectors of the economy. The connection between infrastructure and economic growth is manifold and multifaceted, for the reason that not only does it affect production and consumption unswervingly, but it also fashions countless straight and not direct peripheral, and engrossed bulky surge of expenditure

World Development Report (1994) maintained that the crucial responsibility of infrastructure in development has been buttressed by succeeding research which revealed that not merely does expansion of infrastructure services bestow on growth, nevertheless growth also bestows on infrastructure expansion, in an upright sphere. Likewise, investments in human capital and in infrastructure work together, each greater than ever the proceeds to the other. Consequently, infrastructure development supply to investment

and growth through boost in output and competence as it connects amid resources to factories, people to jobs and products to markets.

The positive contribution of infrastructural facilities to economic growth move toward in the course of boost in investment, employment, output, and income in a chain of snowballing causation. World Bank Development Report (1994) stated that public capital investment in infrastructural services is affirmative and momentous input of national output, productivity, growth, and intercontinental competitiveness. Fedderke, et. al., (2006) asserts that individual states that have spent in infrastructure have a propensity to have greater output, supplementary private investment, and supplementary employment growth. Infrastructural facilities development does show the way to economic growth and influence the output significantly. It is also a colossal pressure on the productivity of the factors of production and performance of diverse sectors of an economy.

A one percent increase in the stock of infrastructure is associated with a one percent increase in GDP. The kind of infrastructure put in place also determines whether growth does all that it can to reduce poor performance of the different sectors of the economy.

Literacy Rate

Johnson (2014) proffered that literacy is more than just reading and writing but extends to include wider cognitive skills. He further elaborated that individuals with better literacy skills are more likely to be employed and earn more than those with poorer literacy skills. (Akhter, 2016) accepts that a country leading in natural resources has more opportunities to develop than that of a country lacking in such resources. However, it is only when these resources are utilized at their optimum can economic growth be achieved which is only possible when efficient manpower is available and utilized. Akhter also stressed that if no such efficient manpower is available, the resources may be mis-utilized, underutilized or unutilized resulting in economic inefficiency. In the 2012 report by the Nigeria National Bureau of Statistics, the total population of citizens in Nigeria was around 166.2 million people. In 2016, it is estimated to have over 178.5 million people although United Nations projections have placed the population as high as 186 million. Back in 1960, when the country declared its independence from the United Kingdom, the country recorded an estimated 45.2 million people. That constitutes a change of about 268% between the year 1960 and the year 2012. The entire population of Nigeria accounts for about 2.35% of the entire earth's population. This means that about 1 out of every 43 people in the world call Nigeria their home.

Heckscher-Ohlin Theory (1979)

This theory has been put forward by Bertil Ohlin, a Swedish economist, and it has replaced the traditional comparative cost theory. Just as individuals specialize in economic activity in which they have comparative advantages, similarly countries specialize in the production of certain commodities in which they have comparative advantage on the basis of factor endowments. Just as differences in individual capabilities are the cause of exchange between individuals, similarly differences in factor prices is the cause of international trade. Bertil Ohlin thus extends the analysis which is applicable to a single market to the determination of values internationally i.e. exchange between different countries.

Thus, Ohlin observes 'International trade is but a special case of inter-local or inter-regional trade.' Hence, according to Ohlin, there is no need to have separate theory of international trade. He says that the same fundamental principle holds good of all trade,

whether it is internal trade or international trade. The classical theory of comparative cost is based on the assumption of comparative immobility of the factors of production as between different countries. But Ohlin points out that this immobility is to be found even in different regions of the same country.

According to Ohlin, the immediate cause of international trade is the difference in commodity prices which in turn is due to the differences in factor prices. Goods are purchased because it cheaper to buy them from outside the country. The establishment of the rate of exchange between the two countries facilitates the comparison between the commodity prices prevailing in the two countries. Thus, in Ohlin's opinion there are no fundamental differences but only quantitative differences between inter-regional and international trade. Ohlin's theory represents a departure from the classical theory and marks a great improvement on it.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The survey research method was applied for this study, utilizing non-experimental design to provide a numeric description of the influence of infrastructural facilities on sustainable development of cash crops producers in Rivers, Delta and Akwa Ibom States of Nigeria.

Population for the Study

The population of the study was made up of all producers of selected cash crops (palm oil, cassava and cocoyam) in South-South, Nigeria, while the accessible population involves sixty (60) cash crops producers in the Business Registration Directorate of the Rivers, Delta and Akwa Ibom States Ministries of Commerce and Industry. The cash crops producers in Rivers, Delta and Akwa Ibom States of Nigeria were chosen because they represent the initial three states in the South-South and relevant to the study of these concepts. Additionally, it is for the most part a sizeable group of the Nigerian cash crops producing sector representative of the States in the geopolitical zone.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size was the sixty (60) cash crops producing firms earlier mentioned. The simple random sampling technique is commonly used to select the number of respondents for a study as it aims to provide a sample that reflects the population of the study, based on predetermined parameters. However, the judgmental sampling method was adopted to select respondents for this study.

Respondents constitute senior staff of respective cash crops producers in the three states covered. According to Umar and Madugu (2015), an important consequence of taking a sample from a population is that the conclusions based on a sample can extend to the target population. Therefore, the sample size of this study constitutes two hundred and forty (240) key respondents, which were assembled based on four respondents per firm. The key respondents' approach enabled the researcher to collect data from medium-level Managers specifically Unit Heads of Production and Marketing Units and their Assistants from the sixty (60) cash crops producing firms identified. Each received four copies of questionnaire and this summed up to 240 copies of the questionnaire distributed to the respondents.

Method of Data Analysis

Data analysis techniques for this study were classified into the following:

Primary or Descriptive Statistics

The study variables were reported as tables, pie charts, bar charts and graphs indicating frequencies, percentages, mean scores, standard deviations, variances etc. (Bordens and Abbott, 2001). By means of Univariate statistics, the study described either the characteristics of a sample or the connection surrounded by variables (Rubin & Babbie, 2001).

Secondary or Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics tested the hypotheses by multiple regressions.

Results

Influence of Infrastructural Facilities on Literacy Rate

Ho_1: Infrastructural facilities do not significantly influence literacy rate.

H_1: Infrastructural facilities significantly influence literacy rate.

Influence of Infrastructural Facilities on Literacy Rate(N=200).

Model	RR Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the estimate
1	.872	.764	.703 45343

a. Predictors: (Constant), Infrastructural facilities

b. Criterion Variable: Literacy rate

Given that for hypothesis one, the significant is .000 which is less than 0.05; there is a significant influence of infrastructural facilities on literacy rate.

***One-way ANOVA for the difference in mean between Infrastructural Facilities and Literacy Rate* (N=200).**

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	77.074	1	77.074	374.879	.0000
Within Groups	23.849	199	206		
Total	100.94	200			

a. Criterion variable Literacy rate

b. Predictor Infrastructural facilities

The table shows that there is difference in mean between infrastructural facilities and literacy rate.

Relationship between Infrastructural Facilities and Literacy Rate

The hypothesis wanted to agree on the end product of infrastructural facilities on literacy rate using the multiple regression analysis. It was affirmed in the null form, statistically tested and discarded. The concept of infrastructural facilities as calculated in this study dealt with issues adjoining on infrastructural facilities as an affirmative to literacy rate. From our result, we comprehend that when infrastructural facilities are appropriately embraced it rubs on positively literacy rate. Our discovery agrees and supports the findings of Fidelis et al (2014); who found that infrastructural facilities positively affect economic growth consequently sustainable development by showing that infrastructure is transitional for goods and service in the real sector and complete goods and service for consumers.

CONCLUSION

This study assessed the degree to which infrastructural facilities affect literacy rate of cash crops producers in South-South, Nigeria by means of a quantitative analysis, which makes obvious that in attendance are ample substantiations that the components of infrastructural facilities investigated by this existing study were optimistically connected with literacy rate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were proffered:

1. Government should provide adequate infrastructural facilities such as power supply, transportation and good road network to enable cash crops producers reduce their cost of production, storage and transportation.
2. There should be government effort in sensitizing cash crops producers on the benefits of export incentives in promoting production for export.
3. The Nigerian government should scrutinize export marketing initiatives as a procedure that involves incessant modernization of infrastructural facilities, review of export incentives and periodically organize trade fairs to guarantee accessibility of cash crops producers to foreign market in order to enhance their competitiveness in this 21st century commerce milieu.

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