

## IMPLICATIONS OF COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDIUM-SIZED TOWNS IN KWARA STATE NIGERIA

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### Abstract

*Infrastructure has been recognized as the crux of human settlement development. This paper therefore examines the implications of community provision of infrastructure in the development of medium – sized towns in Nigeria. Medium-sized towns are settlements with population size of between 5,000 and 20,000. Data were collected from both primary and secondary sources. The findings generally revealed a high level of community participation in the provision of such infrastructure as schools, electricity, roads, water, market stalls, health facilities, and town halls. However, variations exist among the medium – sized towns in the type and number of infrastructure provided by community action. Kendall's Coefficient Concordance (W) used to test the degree of variations in ranks revealed a significant agreement in the ranking. Hierarchical Cluster Analysis used to classify the medium – sized towns based on infrastructure provision produced three classes. The general implication of this study is that, infrastructure provision by community action can lead to a balanced regional development as other smaller towns around the study emulate the action. Recognizing the role of small – sized towns in a balanced regional development process, government should encourage the people through the provision of financial support, machineries and technical know-how in the provision of infrastructure. This paper recommends the integration of community development plans with those of the local government towards achieving even development.*

**Key words:** Infrastructure, Medium-Sized, Towns, Community, Participation.

### Introduction

The state of infrastructure provision is a factor determining the efficiency of village, town and city management. This statement therefore raises questions as to the number of tarred roads in the housing settlements, frequency of water and power supply, the state of environmental sanitation and the efficiency of communication system. All these are indices of urban development. Mabogunje (1993) stressed that, infrastructure provision in an extensive continuous and self-sustaining basis becomes a sine-qua-non for the efficiency and livability of cities. Faz and Hazel (1999) also observed that investment in roads has assisted in poverty reduction in some neglected regions in India.

There are numerous opportunities in infrastructure provision, and these include, creation of job opportunities, positive impacts on the lives of urban residents, improvement of environmental sanitation, boosting of agricultural mechanization among others. Infrastructure needs according to Nigeria's National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy (NEEDS) 2004 cut across sectors and is central to economic development. The challenges of infrastructure provision have been recognized in Nigeria and have been listed as a cornerstone component for the realization of vision 20:2020 goals as well as the Millennium Development Goals target.

Despite the importance of infrastructure to the socio-economic and political development, the

medium-sized towns have not been adequately provided with these facilities. According to Rondinelli (1982), medium-sized towns which, he refers to as “intermediate cities” have received proportionally low share of national investment in infrastructure services, industries and their activities compared to the largest city in nearly every developing nation.

Okafor (1985) also noted that “the spatial distribution of urban amenities and resources” is a reflection of the manner of urban politics, the planners' attitudes to spatial equity and the dominance of modern part of the city as against the traditional neighbourhood.

In Nigeria, rural and medium – sized towns or intermediate cities are mostly marginalized in infrastructure investment when compared with larger urban centres. Most of these human settlements are characterized by inadequacy and dysfunctional infrastructural services. As a result, they are clogged with traffic and sewerage water, sanitation facilities are overworked, while electricity supply is at its lowest performance. A major drag on the pace of industrialization development in Nigeria over the years has also been attributed to the poor state of infrastructure facilities.

In recognition of the importance of infrastructure to the overall development of human settlements, inhabitants of medium-sized towns, have through communal efforts embarked on infrastructure provision as a means of promoting balanced regional development.

This article therefore aims at examining the implications of community infrastructure provision in the development of medium-sized towns in Kwara State, Nigeria.

The specific objectives set in this study were to:

- i. identify medium-sized towns and type of infrastructure provided by community action;
- ii. evaluate the performance of each town in the community based infrastructure provision; examine the relationship between population size and number of infrastructure provided; and
- iii. suggest possible ways of enhancing community infrastructure provision.

### ***Infrastructure and Urban Development***

The precise relationship or linkages between infrastructure and development is always a matter of discourse. However there is no doubt, that infrastructure has positive impact on the overall development of human settlements. It can deliver a major economic growth (Mc Neil, 1993).

Urban infrastructural needs are product of modern urban development. As observed by Dowall (1991), the strategic and timely location of urban infrastructure can play a key role in guiding the future form of urban area. Dowall (1991) developed a regression model to determine the effect of infrastructure development on price of land in 1987 and 1988 in Karachi, Pakistan and came up with the estimation of statistically significant results. According to Fawehinmi (2003), provision of infrastructure on sustainable basis has direct effect on the level of poverty of individuals.

Infrastructure has been linked with defence, security, employment opportunities as well as well-being of people. Problems of employment and household poverty are addressed by adopting community based approaches or basic infrastructure provision.

### ***Medium-Sized Towns***

Attempts have been made to define and describe the concepts of towns, making use of various measures such as, population size, status, economic, administrative and political functions. This lends credence to the fact that, medium-sized towns have been described and referred to as “intermediate cities”, “small-sized towns” or “secondary towns”. The range of cities or towns that constitute the level of urban hierarchy vary among countries, depending on the pattern of urban settlement, their level of economic development and the structure of their economies (Rondinelli 1982). Classification of towns and cities using population as a measure depends on the population distribution of a particular area.

Okafor (1985) in the context of South east of Nigeria, classified medium-sized towns as having population between 75,000 and 30,000 and principally serving as local government and divisional headquarters. This classification is not unconnected with high population density of the region. However, geographers have traditionally laid emphasis on the size and location of towns as basis for differentiating various categories of settlements. Towns and cities are often recognized as those on the hills, mountains, corridors, passes, ports, plateau, rivers and lakes. Other classifications are based on cultural, economic and morphological characteristics.

For the purpose of this study, medium-sized towns constitute settlements with population of between 5,000 and 20,000. This is based on the low density population of the study area.

### ***Functional Characteristics of Medium-Sized Towns***

Medium-Sized towns are observed to blend urban and rural characteristics, sharing similar physical and social traits, “except that the level and magnitude of economic and social activities differ (Afolayan, 2008). Various authors have stressed the importance of medium-sized towns in their development functions (Rondinelli, 1982; Okafor, 1985; and Taylor, 1978). The medium-sized towns can offer sufficient economics of scale to allow the concentration of infrastructure like the education, water, health, roads, electricity and communication media among others. They also serve as regional marketing centres for the surrounding regions and their hinterlands. Okafor (1985) particularly stressed that medium-sized towns are centres for spreading ideas of external influences to the majority of rural population and serve as relief to big cities by absorbing population that are often experienced in the cities.

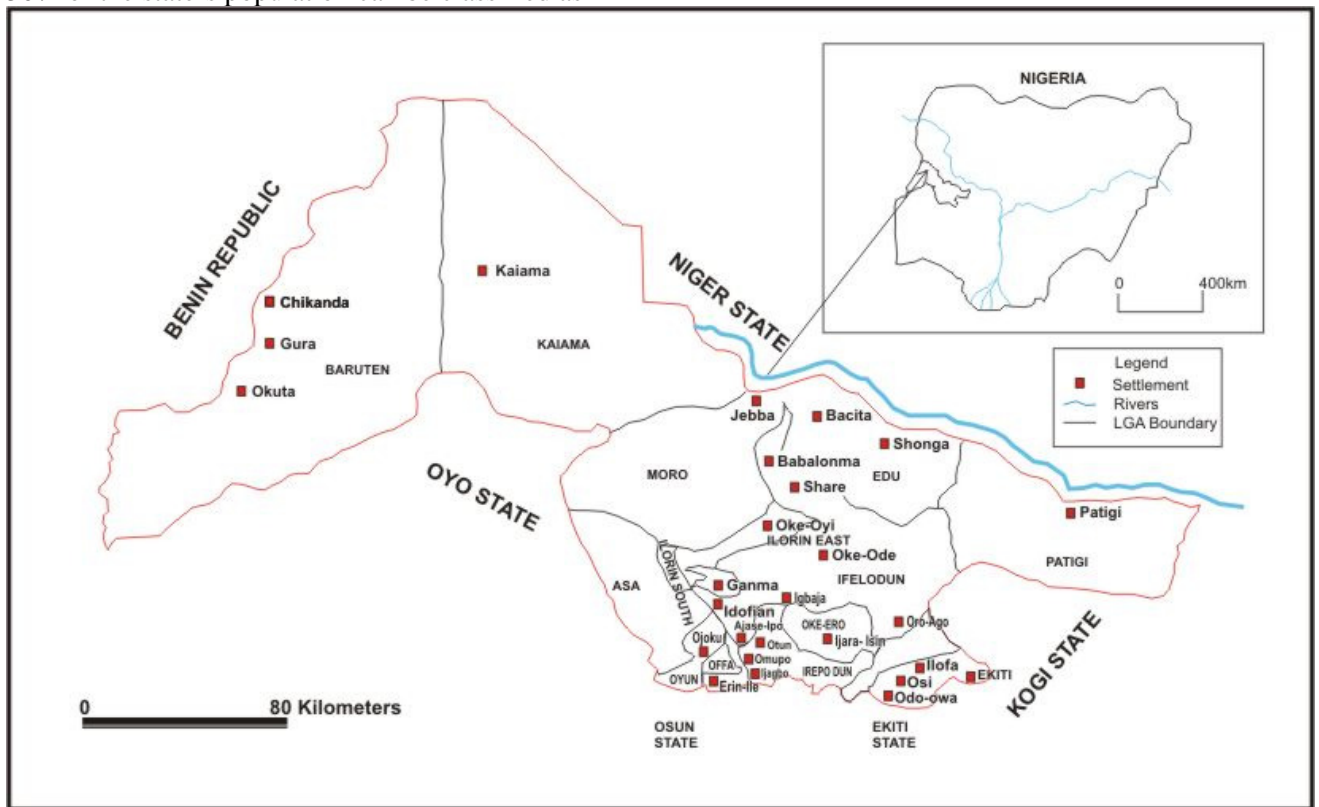
The Medium-sized towns in their roles on the spatial aspect of innovation diffusion operate as distributors of new technology and innovation. The introduction of new technology and innovation increases productivity and induce development in their area of location. Regularly scheduled institutional markets where most of the economic activities of medium-sized towns take place, efficient road networks and electricity supply will be required to perform these functions. The medium-sized towns are also regarded as regional centres for transportation and communication as rural hinterlands which constitute the small villages and towns are linked to one another and to larger towns and other regions through the medium-sized towns. These linkages assist in the diffusion process through interaction, a process believed among diffusion theorist to be of critical importance in the development process.

**Methodology**

**Study Area**

The study covers the twenty-seven medium-sized towns in Kwara State, Nigeria (figure 1). Towns are spread over twelve out of the sixteen local governments in Kwara State, Nigeria. Kwara State comprises of 4000 settlements spread over the state’s landscape. These settlements are made up of hamlets, villages, towns, medium sized and urban centres. Of all these settlements, only Ilorin, Offa, Omu-Aran and the Oro complex with a total population of 30% of the state’s population can be classified as

urban centres (Oyebanji 2000). The medium sized towns are 27 in number as indicated in figure 1. The study area has abundant human and material resources. People are predominantly farmers who engage in cash and subsistence crops. A considerable number of the people are also civil servants. Other economic activities include small scale factories, food processing, weaving, smiting, block making, hair dressing, carpentry etc. People here are predominantly Yoruba, with other tribes like the Hausas, the Fulanis and Baruba.



Map of Kwara State showing the Medium sized towns/LGAs  
Source: Kwara State Surveys/Author’s field work

**Data Collection and Analysis**

Primary and secondary data sources were employed to obtain the required information for the study. This was however preceded by pilot survey of the study area to identify physically the medium-sized towns, the community groups and community leaders. All the towns with population between 5000 and 20,000 were considered as medium-sized towns. The community groups made up of association, unions, clubs and religious group were randomly sampled. Twenty-Seven community leaders in each of the twenty seven towns were interviewed.

A total of 652 copies of questionnaire were administered to cover the twenty seven towns. The data collected were both qualitative and

quantitative. Descriptive and inferential statistical methods were thus employed for the analysis of the data collected. Descriptive analysis was used to summarize the type and number of community infrastructure provided in all the twenty seven medium sized towns. Spearman’s Rank Correlation was used to determine the relationship between population size and number of infrastructure provision. Kendall’s Coefficient Concordance which is a measure of agreement among several variables in assessing a given set of “n” objects was employed to rank the settlement, based on community infrastructure provision while Hierarchical Cluster analytical techniques was also used to classify the medium sized towns based on infrastructure provision by community action.

**Results and Discussion**

The findings confirmed that infrastructure provision through community participation have been the concern of the twenty-seven medium-sized towns in Kwara State, Nigeria. This therefore implies that these communities appreciate the role of infrastructure in the socio-economic and physical development of human settlements and their inhabitants. The study also confirmed the result of earlier studies that the motivating factor for the number and type of infrastructure provided implies government’s neglect in the provision of

infrastructure in the medium sized towns under investigation.

Community action in infrastructure provision as revealed by the study implies that through self reliant efforts people share common needs and values and are equally conscious of the benefits of these facilities to individuals and their settlements.

However, the findings revealed variations in the magnitude and type of infrastructure provision in the study area as indicated in Table 1. Table 2 displays variation in the performance of each town in the provision of type of infrastructure by community action.

**Table 1 Pattern of Community Infrastructure Provision by Medium – sized Towns**

S/N	Medium –Sized Towns	Populati on (1991)	Length of Roads	WATER		HEALTH FACILITIES			Electricity Supply (no and sources)	Market stall (no)	No of Sec Sch.	No of Town Halls
				Well (no)	Bore hole (no)	Hosp. (no)	Clinic (no)	Mat Disp (no)				
1	Ajase-ipo	8954	10	10	0	0	1	0	1	20	2	1
2	Babaloma	11,059	4	10	0	0	1	1	1	35	2	1
3	Bacita	15,379	0	10	0	1	0	0	0	58	0	0
4	Chiknda	6475	26	4	0	0	1	0	0	61	0	0
5	Erin-Ile	17041	40	10	0	1	1	1	0	50	1	0
6	Ganmo	5199	0	2	1	0	1	1	0	60	1	0
7	Gure	5370	4	3	0	0	1	0	0	40	1	0
8	Idofian	5519	20	4	1	0	1	1	1	44	1	1
9	Igbaja	11,012	0	8	0	0	1	2	1	40	3	1
10	Ilofffa	8030	35	5	0	1	0	2	1	30	2	1
11	IJagbo	8186	2	4	0	0	1	0	0	20	2	2
12	Ijara-Isin	5260	5	2	0	1	0	1	0	50	1	1
13	Isanlu-Isin	6454	9	4	0	1	0	2	0	40	1	0
14	Jebba	19,341	0	6	0	6	0	1	0	100	1	2
15	Kaiama	8657	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	94	0	0
16	Odo-Owa	11,967	6	7	0	0	1	1	1	25	3	1
17	Ojoku	5095	48	5	0	0	1	1	0	12	1	1
18	Oke-Ode	6734	5	4	0	1	1	1	1	56	0	0
19	Oke-Oyi	6887	0	5	1	0	1	0	0	40	1	0
20	Okuta	6610	3	3	0	0	1	0	0	40	1	0
21	Omupo	6411	0	3	0	0	1	0	1	20	1	1
22	Oro-Ago	8333	0	8	0	1	0	1	0	15	2	1
23	Osi	10,320	0	4	0	1	0	0	1	25	2	1
24	Otun-Oro	8012	3	4	0	1	0	0	1	26	0	1
25	Patigi	13206	12	4	0	1	1	0	0	69	2	1
26	Share	15359	3	4	0	1	1	1	0	58	1	1
27	Shonga	5666	4	8	0	1	1	0	1	60	0	0
			239	143	3	19	19	17	12	1188	35	18

Table 2 Rankings of Medium – Sized Towns Based on Community Infrastructure Provision.

S/N	Community	Length Road	Water Sources	Health Facilities	Electricity	Market Stalls	Schools	T/halls	Sum of Ranking
1	Ajase-ipo	10(7)	10(1)	1(5)	1(1)	20(15)	2(3)	1(2)	34
2	Babaloma	4(11)	10(1)	2(4)	1(1)	35(11)	2(3)	1(2)	33
3	Bacita	0	10(1)	1(5)	0	58(6)	0	0	12
4	Chiknda	26(4)	4(12)	1(5)	0	61(4)	0	0	25
5	Erin-Ile	40(2)	10(1)	3(2)	0	50(8)	4(1)	0	14
6	Ganmo	0	3(13)	2(4)	0	60(5)	1(4)	0	26
7	Gure	4(11)	3(13)	1(5)	0	40(10)	1(4)	0	43
8	Idofian	20(5)	5(11)	2(4)	1(1)	44(9)	1(4)	1(2)	36
9	Igbaja	0	8(2)	1(5)	1(1)	40(10)	3(2)	1(2)	22
10	Ilofffa	35(3)	5(11)	1(5)	1(1)	30(12)	2(3)	1(2)	36
11	Ijagbo	2(13)	4(12)	1(5)	0	20(15)	2(3)	2(1)	49
12	Ijara-Isin	5(10)	2(14)	1(5)	0	50(8)	1(4)	1(2)	43
13	Isanlu-Isin	9(8)	4(12)	1(5)	0	40(10)	1(4)	0	39
14	Jebba	0	10(1)	6(1)	0	100(1)	1(4)	2(1)	8
15	Kaiama	0	2(14)	2(4)	1(1)	94(2)	0	0	21
16	Odo-Owa	6(9)	7(9)	1(5)	1(1)	25(14)	3(2)	1(2)	42
17	Ojoku	48(1)	5(11)	2(4)	0	12(17)	1(4)	1(2)	39
18	Oke-Ode	5(10)	4(12)	3(2)	1(1)	56(7)	0	0	32
19	Oke-Oyi	0	6(10)	1(5)	0	40(10)	1(4)	0	29
20	Okuta	3(12)	3(13)	1(5)	0	40(10)	1(4)	0	44
21	Omupo	0	3(13)	1(5)	1(1)	20(15)	1(4)	1(2)	40
22	Oro-Ago	0	8(2)	2(4)	0	15(16)	2(3)	1(2)	27
23	Osi	0	4(12)	2(4)	1(1)	25(14)	2(3)	1(2)	36
24	Otun-Oro	3(12)	4(12)	1(5)	1(1)	26(13)	0	1(2)	45
25	Patigi	12(6)	4(12)	3(2)	0	69(3)	2(3)	1(2)	28
26	Share	3(12)	4(12)	3(2)	0	58(6)	1(4)	1(2)	38
27	Shonga	4(11)	8(2)	2(4)	1(1)	60(5)	0	0	33

Note: The numbers in parenthesis rank order (1)-(27) = Rank.

Applying Seigal method, the medium-sized town with the lowest rank has the greatest intensity of infrastructure provision while the highest has the least as shown in Table 2. Jebba as indicated in the table ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the provision of water, health facilities, market stalls and town halls, out of the seven variables of infrastructure. This could be attributed to the location of the town; being near River Niger and its increased populations, commercial activities which in turn could influence the demand for infrastructure provision. This is followed by Babaloma (Ifelodun LGA) that ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in provision of water and electricity. In the provision of wells, Ajasse-Ipo (Irepedun LGA), Babaloma (Ifelodun LGA), Bacita (Edu LGA), Erin-Ile (Oyun LGA), Jebba (Moro LGA) ranked 1<sup>st</sup> among the towns. Next to these towns were Igbaja (Ifelodun LGA), Oro-Ago (Ifelodun LGA), Kaiama (Kaiama LGA) and Ijara-Isin (Isin LGA) which ranked last (27<sup>th</sup> position) in the provision of this infrastructure.

Jebba (Moro LGA) again came 1<sup>st</sup> in the provision of market stalls closely followed by Kaiama (Kaiama LGA). As indicated in the table, all the medium-sized towns in the study area

performed well in the provision of this infrastructure, implying that, trading is one of the major economic activities of the communities in all the medium - sized towns in Kwara state. Ojoku (Oyun LGA) came 1<sup>st</sup> in the provision of earth surface roads which summed up to 48 kilometres. The level of self help spirits in road provision by the people in this community is not unconnected with their desire to link settlements like Offa and Afon which serve as their major periodic market centre for their products. Erin-Ile (Oyun LGA) and Ilofffa (Ekiti LGA) followed with a total of 40 kilometres and 35 kilometres respectively. Ijagbo (Oyun LGA) came last (27<sup>th</sup> position) among the medium-sized towns that provided road infrastructural facility. This could be attributed to the fact that Ijagbo enjoys road facilities provided in Offa to link other surrounding settlements like Igosun and Ipee. This suggests that infrastructure provision in a much bigger town could have positive spread effect in the surrounding smaller towns, thus creating spatial integration between them for a more balanced regional development.

Erin-Ile (Oyun LGA) ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in the provision of secondary schools, while Igbaja (Ifelodun LGA)

and Odo-Owa (Irepodun LGA) came 2<sup>nd</sup>. Except Bacita (Edu LGA), Chikanda (Baruten LGA), Kaiama (Kaiama LGA), Oke-Ode (Ifelodun LGA) and Otun-Oro (Irepodun LGA), all other medium-sized towns established secondary schools for the

growth and development of the settlements. Table 3 presents the hierarchy of medium-sized towns from ranking parameters of infrastructure provision in the study.

Table 3 Hierarchy of Medium – sized Towns in Infrastructure Provision by Community Action

Hierarchy	Medium Sized Towns	Sum Of Ranking (R)	Means Ranking (X)	Standard Deviation (D)	Co-Efficient Variation (Cv)
1	Jebba	8	1.14	1.085	95
2	Bacita	12	1.71	2.060	120
3	Erin-Ile	14	2.00	2.329	116
4	Kaiama	21	3.00	4.259	141
5	Igbaja	22	3.14	2.403	92
6	Chikanda	25	3.57	3.239	90
7	Ganmo	26	3.71	3.548	95
8	Ogo-Ago	27	3.85	4.708	122
9	Patigi	28	4.00	3.66	91
10	Oke-Oyi	29	4.14	3.14	75
11	Oke- Ode	32	4.57	3.96	86
12	Babaloma	33	4.71	9.86	209
	Shonga	33	4.71	1.78	37
13	Ajase-ipo	34	4.85	4.61	95
14	Idofian	36	5.14	3.35	65
	Ilofffa	36	5.14	3.32	64
	Osi	36	5.14	4.75	92
15	Share	38	5.42	3.76	69
16	Isanlusin	39	5.57	3.15	56
	Ojoku	39	5.57	5.32	95
17	Omupo	40	5.71	5.08	88
18	Odo-Owa	42	6.00	4.47	74
19	Gure	43	6.14	3.61	58
	Ijara-Isin	43	6.14	4.30	70
20	Okuta	44	6.28	3.75	59
21	Otun-Oro	45	6.42	4.87	75
22	Ijagbo	49	7.00	5.08	72

The enthusiasm with which the people in the medium-sized towns provided the magnitude of infrastructure is a clear indication of government bias towards this hierarchy of settlements in the provision of basic infrastructure.

As indicated in table 3, Jebba still came 1<sup>st</sup> in the order of ranking, while Babaloma and Shonga tied at the 12<sup>th</sup> position. Three towns, Idofian (Ifelodun LGA), Ilofffa (Oke-ero LGA) and Osi (Ekiti LGA) tied at 14<sup>th</sup> place. These three towns have the same socio- cultural background which could have influenced almost the same degree of involvement in infrastructure provision. This implies that similar socio-cultural background is a strong factor that could influence common interest in infrastructure provision. Isanlu-Isin (Isin LGA) and Ojoku (Oyun LGA) tied at 16<sup>th</sup> position Gure (Baruten LGA) and Ijara-Isin (Isin LGA) tied at 19<sup>th</sup> positions. Shonga (Lafiagi LGA) has the lowest coefficient variables.

To test the degree of variation in the provision of infrastructure by community effort Kendalls

Co-efficient of Concordance (W) was used. (W) had a value of 0.8147 which implies significant agreement in the ranking. Kendalls Co-efficient (W) varies between 0 and1; 0 indicates absolute disagreement while 1 suggests complete agreement.

To determine the type and degree of relationship between the population size and community infrastructure provision in each medium-sized town, the data on the population size and community infrastructure provided were subjected to Spearman’s Rank Correlation technique. The correlation co-efficient obtained is 0.276 approximately 0.3 indicating a low positive correlation between population size and community infrastructure provision in the twenty-seven medium-sized towns.

The level of significance of the correlation was equally tested. The calculated t value of 1.995 at a significant level of 0.01 (99.99%) and the tabulated t of 2.78 suggest that, the correlation between the population size and community

infrastructure facilities in the medium-sized towns is low. It therefore implies that, population size is not a major determinant of the number of infrastructure provision in the medium-sized towns of Kwara State. This assertion is true for settlements like Ganmo which was in 26<sup>th</sup> position in the ranking of population size but ranked 11<sup>th</sup> position in the provision of infrastructure, Ojoku (Oyun LGA) ranked 27<sup>th</sup> in population, but ranked 10<sup>th</sup> in infrastructure provision, Chinkada (Baruten LGA) ranked 21<sup>st</sup> population wise, but ranked 4<sup>th</sup> in infrastructure provision. Shonga (Lafiaji LGA) which ranked 22<sup>nd</sup> position in population size, ranked 7<sup>th</sup> position in infrastructure provision.

Odo-owa (Ekiti LGA), which ranked 6<sup>th</sup> position in population, took 18<sup>th</sup> position in infrastructural development. Osi ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in population size but ranked 20<sup>th</sup> in infrastructure provision while Igbaja ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in population but ranked 14<sup>th</sup> in infrastructure provision.

However, a positive correlation between population and infrastructure was observed in settlements like Jebba and Erin Ile. Jebba ranked 1<sup>st</sup> in population ranking and 1<sup>st</sup> in infrastructure provision, Erin-Ile ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in population and equally ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in infrastructure provision. This study has therefore, revealed that, population size alone cannot be used to determine the number of infrastructure provided among the medium-sized towns in the study area. Among other factors that could influence this relationship may be community development enthusiasm of the members in the various towns. The rich sons and daughters of each community positively influence the number and magnitude of community infrastructure provided through patriotic donations. In this circumstance, population as a factor influencing the number of infrastructure becomes secondary.

The local strategies employed in the mobilization and involvement of community members in the provision of infrastructure can be adopted in similar community project planning. The efforts of the community have the tendency of motivating the other smaller towns to emulate the medium sized towns studied. The implication of this is that, such emulations by the surrounding smaller towns and villages may lead to the upgrading of such settlements to the status of medium-sized towns. It therefore implies that, the growth and development of such towns will assist in the spatial integration between rural and urban settings for a balanced regional development in Kwara State and other geo-political units in Nigeria.

From the forgoing results, government neglect of the medium-sized towns in the provision of public infrastructure required for human settlement development has intensified the zeal

with which community members have provided the observed magnitude of infrastructure. This confirms the assertion by Adedayo (2000) that, "community development has long been widely accepted in Nigeria as an important change-oriented component of development planning and administration". This study also agrees with the observation of Adedayo (2000) that lapses exist in the conception and execution of community development and social welfare. According to him, every community wants to have its own market, school or health centers without regard for other projects like the agriculture and agro-industrial and other growth-generating projects.

As expressed by respondents in all the communities, the main sources of water supply are few boreholes and wells, the supply of which was claimed to be inadequate. This assessment supports the statement in recent policy document; Nigeria Economic Empowerment Strategies NEEDS (2004) that only 30% of rural dwellers and 50% of urban dwellers have access to portable water.

The inadequacy among the medium-sized towns is thus likely to hamper their role in spatial integration. This therefore stresses the need for greater involvement of government in community development efforts as a partner in socio-economic transformation of human settlement.

Another dimension to the issue concerns lack of maintenance of community-based infrastructure. A good member of the infrastructure provided according to the respondents was dysfunctional, seriously damaged and abandoned. For earth surface roads provided to be motor able throughout the year, will require yearly maintenance involving grading. This should form part of the support which the state and local government should provide.

## **Recommendations and Conclusion**

Provisions of functional and adequate infrastructure by community action have been generally established in this study to have positive impact on the physical growth and socio-economic development of human settlements. Based on the implications of the study, the following suggestions are required to enhance the provision of infrastructure in the medium - sized towns for a balanced regional development.

Government should enter into partnership with communities in the medium sized towns in infrastructure investment. This approach will not only bring the government closer to the communities but also enable government understand better the concerns, desires and aspirations of the inhabitants of various towns in infrastructural development. The next step is to strengthen the institutional framework of

government with a view to training the people in infrastructure maintenance. This will help to blend the local strategies with that of the government in infrastructure provision.

The community development officers in each of the local governments should bring together the people in the medium - sized towns and the surrounding smaller towns with a view to educating and training them on how to integrate plans in the provision of infrastructure for spatial integration and human settlement development. As a way of encouraging the involvement of the people in infrastructure development, the government's financial and technical support in the provision of infrastructure should be increased.

The findings of this study thus have profound policy implications which can be incorporated into community, state or national development planning document. This will provide a framework for planners in ranking settlements and advising government on financing infrastructure development through citizen participation.

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