

ASSESSING THE CRITICAL NEEDS DRIVING RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: In order to improve the values, the potential of rural resources must be fully realized. Only with the application of additional resources, such as time, money, infrastructure, knowledge, and the like, can these values be realized. The high demand for goods is anticipated to drive the use of the aforementioned resources to their fullest potential, raising the rural environment's value and proving that value is a function of profit. Regrettably, the requirement for balance between rural and urban development has not been reflected in government policies and activities throughout the last year. As a result, the majority of development programs and policies are focused on cities. Rural residents have consequently experienced economic and social flaws, unemployment, poverty, and inadequate infrastructure. By the way, those who live in rural areas continue to migrate. Thus, the critical needs influencing rural development in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja, Nigeria, are evaluated in this study. Results In order to reduce the rate of rural-urban migration in Nigeria generally and in Gwagwalada specifically, an integrated rural development strategy has been identified and suggested based on the data analysis.

Keywords: *Rural Development, Sustainable National Development, and critical needs.*

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Introduction

The administration of resources, services, and operations in rural regions is referred to as rural management. In order to accomplish particular goals and objectives that improve the standard of living for rural communities, rural management entails organizing, planning, directing, and controlling operations. According to Akash (2023), rural management is multidisciplinary in nature, incorporating ideas from a variety of disciplines, including public administration, economics, sociology, and agriculture.

Nigeria, a country in the West African sub-region is blessed with abundant natural and material resources. With an estimated land area of nine hundred and twenty-three thousand, seven hundred and sixty-nine (923,769) square kilometers, with a population of over 230 million, Nigeria is easily the most populous in Africa and one of the largest in terms of geographical area. About seventy percent (70%) of the population depend on agricultural activities for their livelihood and live in rural communities. Currently, the country's rural areas are home to the vast majority of the country's population (Chima, 2010).

According to the 2006 Census, 70% of Nigeria's population lives in rural areas. A more recent survey estimates that 70.13 percent of Nigeria's population lives in rural areas (Yakubu & Aderounmu, 2010). It appears that the majority of the population

used to reside in the rural areas of the country's geographic entity, but this has changed as a result of the large-scale migration of people from rural to urban areas. The nation is currently undergoing a significant socio-economic and technological transformation, leading to a distinct separation between rural development and the traditional notion of agricultural progress. While rural development and agricultural advancement have historically been conflated, it's now evident that rural livelihoods extend far beyond farming alone. This realization underscores the imperative to differentiate between rural management and agricultural development, Uma (2023). Emerging perspectives have shed light on a more expansive understanding of rural development, one that goes beyond agricultural activities. This broader outlook recognizes the importance of rural land development and management as separate entities from agricultural growth alone, Olatunji (2024).

Rural land management encompasses not only agricultural practices and economic expansion but also entails the formulation of strategic policies and programs aimed at enhancing the socio-economic well-being of rural communities. It signifies a shift towards modernization, seeking to not only increase productivity but also foster a shift in attitudes. This transition involves moving away from a reliance on the natural environment towards a

The aforementioned claim demonstrates how broad the scope of rural management is. Therefore, it encompasses the creation of new jobs, more equitable access to arable land, equitable income distribution, widespread and improved health, housing, and law and order, as well as the creation of opportunities and incentives for people to reach their full potential through education and participation in decisions and actions that impact their daily lives (Chidi, 2023). The government, various institutions, groups, and rural residents themselves have all worked to improve rural management. Even though the individuals who work in agriculture are the main focus of rural management, food is not the only issue facing the populace. More roads, schools, community centers, clean drinking water, rural electrification, and industrialization were among the most urgent requirements of the rural populace, according to (Okafor, 2019).

Some rural management proponents suggest that the major objectives of rural management should focus on non-economic goals, such as viewing rural areas as quality-of-life environments, that prioritize environmental quality. For instance, Chidi (2023) argues that 'rural areas should not be simply viewed as economic spaces but rather as spaces where quality of life and environmental integrity are paramount.' Alternatively, other proponents advocate for the 'empowerment' of local citizens as the most appropriate goal for rural management activities (Magaji & Aliyu, 2007). As noted by Okolocha (2024), this approach emphasizes the need for local people and institutions to develop the capacity to manage rural development effectively.

Generally in Nigeria, there have been uneven development and glaring inequalities of opportunities between the rural and urban areas (Magaji & Musa, 2015). In spite of the fact that the majority of Nigerians are rural dwellers, rural areas still have little or no opportunities for education and employment (Magaji, Musa & Salisu, 2022). No doubt rural areas in Nigeria are characterized by poverty, malnutrition, poor communication, illiteracy unproductive agriculture with the use of traditional implements, and generally low per capita income (Musa, Ismail & Magaji, 2024). Also includes a lack of health facilities, public electricity, borehole water, and motorable roads which hinder them from evacuating foods and industrial raw materials ((Musa, Magaji & Tsauni, 2022).

Rural development is appropriate for everyone, but there are a number of issues, including inadequate funding for program implementation, high labor and building material costs, a failure to include impacted individuals in planning, and—more seriously—a low level of awareness among rural residents, who expect the government to take care of everything for them (Magaji, Ismail & Musa, 2025). The study's rural residents are pushed toward metropolitan regions by all of these issues and circumstances, where they can take advantage of social amenities and infrastructure like a substantial water supply, power, medical facilities, paved roads, and plenty of employment prospects, among other things.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to assess assessing the critical needs driving rural development in Nigeria: implications for sustainable national development.

Literature Review

Conceptual Literature

Concept of Rural Area

The concept of a rural area is generally understood as a geographical region located outside cities and towns, where agriculture and natural resources play a dominant role in the local economy. According to Okafor (2019), rural areas are characterized by small populations living in farms or villages, often engaging in primary activities such as farming, fishing, and forestry. Uma (2023) emphasizes that rural areas are those settlements not classified as urban, with the key distinction being the lack of large-scale industrial or commercial activities typically found in urban settings.

For the purposes of this study, rural areas in Nigeria are identified by specific characteristics, including a high proportion of workers engaged in primary activities like agriculture, a physical environment largely composed of natural landscapes such as fields and forests, and relatively homogeneous social relations that are more personal and face-to-face. These areas tend to have lower spatial and social mobility compared to urban centers, where interaction is more impersonal and business-oriented (Uma, 2023).

The distinction between rural and urban areas in Nigeria is also marked by infrastructural and developmental gaps. Rural areas are often defined by the lack of essential social services, such as healthcare, education, and access to clean water and electricity, which significantly impact the quality of life (Musa, Enaberue & Magaji, 2024). Rural areas should not be viewed merely as economic spaces but as environments where the quality of life and environmental integrity are prioritized (Magaji & Musa, 2024; Chidi, 2023). This view is particularly relevant to discussions on rural management, which aims to improve living conditions and ensure sustainable development in these regions.

In Nigeria, rural areas house a significant portion of the population, yet they face chronic underdevelopment and marginalization. Shehu (2022) notes that over 70% of Nigeria's population resides in rural areas, relying heavily on agriculture for their livelihood. However, despite this large rural population, the disparity between rural and urban areas continues to widen, largely due to inadequate infrastructure, poor access to social services, and limited economic opportunities in rural areas.

Suleiman (2024) critiques the common view that rural development is synonymous with agricultural development. He argues that rural development encompasses more than just agricultural productivity and includes improving social conditions and infrastructure. This broader perspective is essential for understanding rural areas as complex environments that require holistic development strategies aimed at addressing various socio-economic challenges, including poverty, education, and healthcare.

Thus, rural areas are distinct not only in terms of geography and occupation but also in the level of access to resources and services. Developing these areas requires an integrated approach that goes beyond agriculture, focusing on infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and community empowerment to enhance the quality of life for rural populations.

Concept of National Development

The term 'development' has been defined from various perspectives due to the complexity and broad scope of its meaning.

In legal and planning contexts, particularly in the UK, the British Town and Country Planning Act of 1947 offers a formal definition in section 12, subsection 2. It states that 'development' encompasses 'the carrying out of building, engineering, mining, or other operations in, on, over, or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any building or other land.' This definition highlights the multifaceted nature of development, capturing both physical alterations and changes in land use. It underscores that development is not limited to the construction of structures but includes a wide array of activities, including infrastructural modifications and shifts in the functional use of property. Over time, this concept has evolved to accommodate changing societal needs, technological advancements, and environmental considerations, reflecting the ongoing expansion of what 'development' entails in both legal and practical terms. According to Okafor (2019), development refers to the upward movement of the entire social system, which encompasses both economic and non-economic factors. These elements of the social system are interconnected, meaning that progress in one aspect often influences others. Okafor argues that true development involves an integrated approach where social, political, and economic advancements work together. Moreover, he emphasizes that determining whether changes are upward or downward requires an assessment of their contribution to the broader goals of development. In other words, progress should be measured not just in economic growth but also by its impact on the well-being of society as a whole (Magaji, Ayo, Ibrahim & Ali, 2019). Therefore, development is not solely about material wealth but about enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities in a comprehensive and sustainable manner (Magaji, Musa, Ikechukwu & Ismail, 2025). Shehu (2022) asserted that development inherently involves transformative change within societies. He elaborated by stating that this societal change must lead to measurable improvements, which may include a higher standard of living, the adoption and integration of new technologies, and the creation of employment opportunities. For development to be meaningful, these changes must not only be visible but also sustainable and inclusive, benefiting a broad spectrum of society and enhancing overall well-being (Sule, Ahmad, Sabiu & Yunusa, 2024). Within the scope of this study, development refers to the systematic process of harnessing and mobilizing a country's, state's, or local government's natural, human, and financial resources. The primary goal of this process is to improve social, economic, and physical infrastructure, ensuring that it not only serves its intended purposes but is also easily accessible to rural dwellers. This improvement is crucial for fostering self-fulfillment, economic empowerment, and enhanced quality of life within these communities.

Theoretical Framework

To underpin this study, Modernization Theory is used and explained below.

Modernization Theory

Modernization theory is one of the earliest frameworks applied to rural management. This theory posits that rural areas must undergo a transition from traditional, agrarian lifestyles to modern, industrialized forms of existence in order to achieve development. The theory suggests that this process involves the

adoption of new technologies, practices, and attitudes that align more closely with those found in urban areas. Recent scholars like Okafor (2020) and Njoku (2021) have echoed Mabogunje's (1981) critique of the narrow focus on agricultural advancement in rural development. Okafor (2020) emphasizes the need to incorporate social infrastructure such as education and healthcare in rural management, while Njoku (2021) highlights the role of technological integration and digital access in fostering holistic rural development.

Empirical Review

Osaghae (2020) focused on understanding the dynamics of rural-urban migration and the corresponding impact on rural areas. The primary objective is to identify effective management strategies that can reduce the influx of people from rural areas to urban centers. This study is particularly relevant in the context of developing countries where rapid urbanization poses significant challenges. Osaghae employs a comprehensive mixed-methods approach to gain a deep understanding of rural-urban migration. The methodology begins with an extensive literature review, providing a theoretical foundation for the study. This review identifies existing research gaps and guides the formulation of research questions. Osaghae's research combines quantitative analysis of migration patterns, demographics, and economic indicators with qualitative insights from interviews and focus groups involving rural residents and stakeholders. Case studies of rural areas with innovative management strategies provide practical examples. His findings highlight key drivers of rural-urban migration, such as limited economic opportunities, inadequate education and healthcare, poor infrastructure, and cultural factors. To address this, Osaghae recommends a phased approach, starting with short-term improvements in basic services and infrastructure, followed by medium-term efforts in economic development and education, and long-term planning for sustainable rural development and monitoring migration trends.

Ogunsola (2020) explored strategies to manage rural areas effectively to curb the migration of people from rural to urban areas. This research is crucial as it addresses the increasing trend of rural-urban migration, which can strain urban infrastructure and resources while leaving rural areas underdeveloped. Ogunsola's research uses a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative data to study rural-urban migration in Nigeria. Surveys, questionnaires, and interviews with rural residents, officials, and key stakeholders provided insights into migration patterns, causes, and current management strategies. Case studies of successful rural areas offered practical lessons, while the research highlighted economic opportunities, infrastructure deficiencies, and policy gaps as primary migration drivers. To address these issues, Ogunsola proposes strategies such as economic development initiatives, infrastructure improvements, and policy reforms, emphasizing the importance of government-community collaboration, public-private partnerships, and continuous evaluation.

Nwuneli (2020) explored the multifaceted issue of rural-urban migration, which is a significant concern for many developing nations. The study aims to analyze the causes behind the migration trend, its impact on rural communities, and the potential strategies to mitigate the adverse effects. Nwuneli's work is positioned within the broader discourse on sustainable development and economic growth, addressing how rural areas can be revitalized to curb the mass migration to cities. Nwuneli employed a mixed-methods approach to explore rural-urban

migration, combining qualitative and quantitative data through surveys, interviews, and secondary sources like government reports and statistical databases. The research reveals that economic factors, such as limited job opportunities and inadequate infrastructure, drive many migrants to cities in search of better prospects. Additionally, rural areas face significant issues like insufficient investment in essential services, which further pushes people towards urban centers. Nwuneli identifies the negative impacts of migration on rural communities, including decreased agricultural productivity and weakened community ties. To mitigate these issues, Nwuneli recommends enhancing economic opportunities in rural areas through infrastructure investment, market access, and support for SMEs. She also advocates for rural development policies, such as business incentives and improvements in education and healthcare. Implementing these solutions requires a collaborative effort among governments, private sectors, and community organizations to align development initiatives with local needs.

Iweala (2020) explored the intricate relationship between rural development and migration in Nigeria, emphasizing how economic strategies can influence these dynamics. The research highlights the significant rural-urban migration issue and its impact on Nigeria's economic growth and stability. By investigating effective rural development strategies, the study aims to provide insights into mitigating migration pressures and enhancing economic opportunities in rural areas. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, Iweala combined quantitative data analysis with qualitative insights. This involved examining national and regional data on migration trends, economic indicators, and rural development, alongside interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders. Findings revealed significant economic disparities between rural and urban areas, with inadequate infrastructure and limited job opportunities driving migration. The study identified ineffective economic strategies and proposed solutions such as investing in infrastructure, promoting economic diversification, and enhancing education and skill development. Recommendations include integrating rural development into national policies, engaging stakeholders, and implementing robust monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure effective outcomes.

Mberu (2021) primarily focused on the factors influencing rural-urban migration, the consequences of this movement for both rural and urban areas, and potential strategies for managing migration flows effectively. Mberu employed a mixed-methods approach to explore rural-urban migration in sub-Saharan Africa, combining quantitative data from national surveys and censuses with qualitative insights from interviews and focus groups with migrants and stakeholders. This methodology provided a comprehensive view of migration patterns, demographic changes, and socio-economic and environmental factors driving migration. The research identifies key drivers, including economic opportunities, income disparities, education access, and environmental issues like climate change and land degradation. Mberu proposes strategies to mitigate migration challenges, such as enhancing rural development through infrastructure and agricultural improvements and strengthening urban planning to manage growing populations, advocating for integrated policy interventions for balanced and sustainable growth.

Odu (2021) focused on the socio-economic drivers and impacts of this movement in Nigeria. His study explores how inadequate infrastructure, poverty, and limited economic

opportunities in rural areas lead to the migration of individuals to urban centers. Odu employed a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys across three states in Nigeria with high migration rates. The research sought to understand the lived experiences of migrants and the communities they leave behind. His methodology involved a combination of interviews with local stakeholders, surveys of migrants, and a review of governmental policies. In terms of discoveries, Odu identified that a lack of basic social amenities and employment opportunities were the primary factors pushing people to migrate. He also noted that the migration led to depopulation and a shrinking labor force in rural areas, which, in turn, reduced agricultural productivity. To address these issues, Odu proposed targeted rural development strategies, including infrastructure investment, rural employment schemes, and policies to incentivize young people to stay in their communities. His proposed solution aims to create sustainable rural economies that can retain populations, thereby slowing down rural-urban migration.

Dick (2021) delved into the complexities of rural-urban migration and its implications for both rural and urban areas. Her research is particularly notable for its focus on the multi-dimensional aspects of migration, including socio-economic factors, policy implications, and the lived experiences of migrants. Dick employed a mixed-methods approach to examine rural-urban migration in Nigeria, using national census records and migration surveys for statistical insights, alongside in-depth interviews and focus groups to explore personal and community impacts. The study revealed that limited job opportunities, lower wages, and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas are major drivers of migration, with educational, healthcare and environmental factors also playing significant roles. The migration trend weakens rural economies and labor forces, while urban areas face increased strain on infrastructure and services. To address these issues, Dick recommends local economic development, improved education and skills training, comprehensive policy interventions, and stronger community support systems to tackle both push and pull factors of migration.

Nwokoro's (2021) study on rural-urban migration offers a detailed exploration of the causes, effects, and possible solutions to this phenomenon. By examining specific regions, the study sheds light on how migration affects both rural communities and urban areas that receive migrants. Nwokoro employs a mixed-methods approach, using quantitative data from surveys and demographic statistics to identify migration patterns, along with qualitative methods such as interviews and case studies to capture personal experiences and motivations. This combination allows for a comprehensive understanding of the migration dynamics and their implications. The study identifies key drivers of rural-urban migration, including economic opportunities, educational aspirations, and inadequate infrastructure in rural areas. Nwokoro recommends solutions such as improving rural infrastructure, creating local job opportunities, and enhancing education and healthcare services. He advocates for targeted policies that address the root causes of migration and facilitate the integration of migrants into urban settings. Overall, Nwokoro's work provides a nuanced analysis of rural-urban migration, integrating quantitative and qualitative data to propose effective strategies for managing and mitigating its impacts.

Gwanshak (2022) offered a thorough analysis of the dynamics and implications of migration from rural to urban areas, exploring the factors driving this trend, its impacts on both rural and urban regions, and potential strategies for addressing its challenges. It focuses on the socio-economic consequences of

MRS Journal of Accounting and Business Management Vol-2, Iss-7 (July): 1-10 migration and aims to provide actionable solutions to manage the issues arising from this demographic shift. Gwanshak used a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative research to offer a comprehensive analysis of rural-urban migration. The quantitative component involved analyzing

demographic data from government and NGO reports to identify migration trends, while the qualitative aspect included interviews and surveys with migrants, local residents, and policymakers to explore personal experiences and perceptions. This methodology allowed for a thorough examination of migration factors and their impacts. The study concentrated on rural areas in Nigeria, with case studies from high-migration regions and a comparative analysis of urban destinations. Gwanshak's study identified key push factors driving migration from rural areas, such as inadequate infrastructure, limited economic opportunities, and poor living conditions, while pull factors included better job prospects, improved healthcare, and higher educational opportunities in urban centers. The study highlighted the strain on urban infrastructure due to rapid population growth. To address these challenges, Gwanshak recommended investing in rural development to enhance living conditions and economic opportunities, improving infrastructure, and creating local jobs. Additionally, better urban planning and resource management were advocated to accommodate growing urban populations. Implementing these solutions requires a multi-faceted approach with collaboration among government, private sector, and community organizations, focusing on balanced regional development and effective urban policies to manage migration.

Methodology

Research Design

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating both qualitative and quantitative approaches to comprehensively explore the relationship between rural management and rural-urban migration in Gwagwalada Area Council, Abuja. This design ensures a robust analysis of the factors influencing migration and the impact of rural development initiatives, combining statistical rigor with contextual insights.

The Study Population

The study population under this research work includes; farmers, traders, students, town planners, estate surveyors, etc (Gwagwalada community). Gwagwalada is surrounded by a number of geographic neighbors, including the Suleja Local Government of Niger State to the east and the Abaji, Kwali, and Kuje Area Council to the south, west, and north, respectively. It is located inside the Federal Capital Territory (FCT) of Abuja. Approximately 55 kilometers separate it from the center of the FCT.

Study Area

Gwagwalada Area Council, one of the six area councils in the Federal Capital Territory of Abuja, Nigeria, serves as the study site. With a land area of 1,043 square kilometers and a population of 157,770 according to the 2006 census (CSCDE, 2008), the National Population Commission of Nigeria (web) and National Bureau of Statistics (web) predict that number would rise to 346,000 in 2022. Dobi, Gwagwalada Central, Gwako, Ibwa, Ikwa, Kutunku, Paiko, Quarters, Tungamaje, and Zuba are among the ten wards that make up the local council. The Gwari,

Bassa, Housa-Fulani, Koro, and Gede make up the majority of the population. The local population's primary source of income is farming.

Sources of Data Collection

Generally, there are two sources of data collection which are as follows:

- **Primary Sources of Data:** These are mediums where data are specifically collected by the researcher for the purpose of the research work. Examples are; personal interviews, information from fellow students, questionnaires, observations, experimentations, etcetera.
- **Secondary Sources of Data:** These are mediums employed in the collection of data from published and unpublished materials, which are compiled for other purposes but are relevant to the research work. Examples are; textbooks, magazines, the internet, newspapers, lecture notes, journals, other researched works on similar topics, government policies as well as blueprints on rural development, etcetera.

Method of Data Collection

Data collection is a critical and foundational stage in the research process, significantly influencing the quality and reliability of the findings. To ensure comprehensive and accurate data gathering, the researcher employed a range of methodologies tailored to the study's objectives. The following methods were meticulously utilized to capture and analyze data effectively:

Primary Data Collection

Under this subheading, the following techniques were employed; interviews, observations, and questionnaire methods.

- **Interview Method:** The informants (respondents) were personally interviewed in their homes, workplaces, educational institutions, ministries, and, in certain situations, even on the sides of the roadways in order to gather data. Persons interviewed include; students, farmers, traders, civil/public servants, staff of Gwagwalada Area Council, and so on. Relevant data were collected based on the research work.
- **Observations Method:** Through the delegation of reliable and respectable people, this approach was used to track the rate of rural-urban migration. From there, the researcher was able to understand that most of the adults would migrate to urban areas for greener pastures.
- **Questionnaires Method:** In this case, the research area's families were given prepared, itemized questions on sheets of paper. The primary focus of the data gathered using this approach was the respondents' social, economic, and personal information.
- **Secondary Data Collection**
- Data from secondary sources were from; Published and Unpublished Materials.
- **Published Materials:** Reading materials such as books, journals, newspapers, and magazines, government policies as well as blueprints on rural development, were all resorted for information used in this study.
- **Unpublished Materials:** Reading materials such as lecture notes, unpublished articles, other project-researched works, thesis, etcetera, were also consulted in the consolidation of the research methodology.

Sample Size

The process of choosing a collection of items from a population (N) in order to draw generalizations about the population from which the sample was taken is known as sampling (n) (Ugochukwu, 2011). Five hundred (500) members of the general public were chosen as the sample size, and fifty questionnaires were distributed at random, one for each home, workplace, or organization.

Questionnaires containing relevant questions were used where they were more effective in obtaining reliable facts that were generalized. Gwagwalada community being a relatively large one cannot be effectively covered in a research work of this nature so questionnaires were administered. This analysis is based on the administration of the questionnaires distributed to about 50 buildings in the study area which give a sample size of 500 as earlier stated.

Sampling Techniques

The sampling technique used for analyzing the data collected was frequency percentages. Frequencies in this context entail the number of times the values of a variable occurred. This technique was achieved by the use of tally marks and percentages on the appropriate categories of all the responses chosen by the respondents, using one form at a time. At the end of the exercise, a table emerges showing the variety of response categories to each question and the number of respondents selecting them.

The frequencies were summed up and based on the total number of respondents or the number of respondents per item. The percentages were then calculated. Consequently, the following formula can be used to calculate percentages;

$$\text{Percentage (\%)} = \frac{F}{N} \times \frac{100}{1}$$

Where:

% represents percentage

F represents the number of times the responses in question occurred

N represents the total number of respondents.

The percentages were used to portray the distribution of respondents.

Method of Data Presentation and Analysis

In order to ensure that both qualitative and quantitative data collected from all various sources were properly presented, they were edited thoroughly, coded, and analyzed. In this case, statistical tools such as Chi-Square analysis were used to determine the relationship between rural management and migration intention.

Steps used for Chi-Square Calculation

a. Calculate Expected Frequencies for each cell:

Expected frequency E

$$= (\text{Row Total} \times \text{Column Total})$$

b. Chi-Square Formula:

$$\chi^2 = \sum$$

where O represents observed values, and E represents expected values.

$$\frac{\text{Grand Total} \times (O - E)^2}{E}$$

Data Analysis and Results

Table 4.1: Questionnaire Distribution in the Area of Survey.

Questionnaires	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Not returned	129	25.8 %
Returned	371	74.2 %
Total	500	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the above table, it is shown that a total of 500 questionnaires were distributed around the study area but only 371 of the questionnaires were returned representing 74.2%. While the 129 others that were not returned represent 25.8% of the percentage.

Presentation of Data, Analysis, and Interpretation of Results

Table 4.2.1: Showing Distribution of Respondents in Gwagwalada in Terms of Age

Age range (year)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0 – 20	93	25.1%
21 – 40	123	33.15%
41– 60	103	27.76%
61 and above	52	14.02%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Table 2 above shows that the respondents' highest occurrences are in the age ranges of 21–40 and 41–60 years, with 33.15% and 27.76 percent, respectively. This constitutes the community's labor force. This supports the finding that there are more young people in the research area. Accordingly, the age group under 20 years old ranks third with 25.1% and is thought to be the one that remains in the community to complete their elementary education. However, 14.02% of people are 61 years of age or older, and naturally, the oldest age group is represented by the youngest.

Table 4.2.2: Showing Marital Status of the Respondents.

Marital status	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Single	74	19.9%
Married	190	51.21%
Single parent	42	11.32%
Divorced	25	6.74%
Widowed	40	10.78%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the above table, it is deduced that the greatest percentage 51.21% are residents in the Gwagwalada community are married people, and 10.78% may choose to take care of their children rather than migrate. However the majority of these married people are women, and most of their husbands have migrated to the cities. Those who are single have a rate of 19.9% because many of them migrated to the town for better job opportunities and for a better life.

Table 4.2.3: Showing Sex of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	228	61.46%
Female	143	38.54%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Out of 371 respondents, 228 representing 61.46% were males while 143 representing (38.54%) were female. The above table shows that some of the female out-migrants are those who went to the cities with their husbands. The percentage of males in the village is (40.4%). This shows those males are mostly the out-migrants because they account for the lower percentage. They migrate to urban areas mainly for better job opportunities because most of them are the breadwinners of their families.

Table 4.2.4: Showing Occupation of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Farming	182	49.06%
Trading	107	28.84%
Civil servant	36	9.70%
Unemployed	46	12.4%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The above table shows that the highest percentage 49.06% of the respondents are farmers which shows that the majority of the people in the community are mostly farmers. While those who go to the city or urban centers to buy goods in order to resell in the rural area have a percentage of 28.84%. The percentage of the civil servants 9.7% indicates that there are still some teachers and those that work in the local government secretariat. The 12.4% shows that there are still some people in Gwagwalada who are not employed, they are still looking for jobs.

Table 4.2.5: Showing the Level of Educational Background of Respondents

Educational Qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
No Formal Education	80	21.56%
Primary School Certificate	113	30.46%
WAEC/GCE/SSCE/TC II Certificate	120	32.35%
OND/NCE	25	6.74%
HND/PGD/B Sc	33	8.89%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The majority of respondents (32.35%) had an O' Level Certificate, whereas 21.56% had no formal education, according to the above table. Similarly, 30.46% of those surveyed had completed elementary school and obtained their first certificate of school leave. Given the low level of tertiary education in the study area, it is not surprising that 6.74% and 8.89% of the participants received OND/NCE and HND/PGD/BSc, respectively.

Table 4.2.6: Showing Community Development Expectations in the Study Area

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
YES	158	42.59%

NO	213	57.41%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The above table shows that 42.59% believed that there is going to be improved community development while others 57.41% don't have that faith due to the failure of governance in the past years.

Table 4.2.7: Showing Interest of People who Wish to Migrate to Urban Areas

Response	Respondents	Percentage %
YES	321	86.52%
NO	50	13.48%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the above table, it can be deduced that 86.52% of the respondents have the hope of moving to the city for a better life and for better job opportunities while 13.48% stated that they do not hope to move to the city because they derive satisfaction in what they engage in, for example, farming, trading, e.t.c.

Table 4.2.8: Showing Sources of Water Supply in Gwagwalada.

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Tap	63	16.98%
Well	239	64.42%
Borehole	47	12.67%
Rainwater	22	5.93%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The table above indicates that the primary source of water supply in Gwagwalada is well water, accounting for the highest percentage at 64.42%. This source is predominantly relied upon during the dry season. Tap water, with a lower percentage of 16.98%, is less commonly used, with only one main source (the water board). Additionally, borehole water constitutes only 12.67% of the supply, and it is scarce within the community. Residents often have to walk long distances to access borehole water. During the rainy season, rainwater collection accounts for 5.93% of the water supply. The reliance on well water and other untreated sources suggests that the community lacks access to safe, potable water, which increases their vulnerability to waterborne diseases such as typhoid fever and cholera.

Table 4.2.9: Showing Electricity Supply in Gwagwalada

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Regular	-	-
Not regular	371	100%
Total	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

A field survey revealed that 100% of the respondents were of the view that the supply of electric power is not adequate. The inadequate power supply by PHCN (Power Holding Company of Nigeria) has led to people migrating to nearby communities and towns that have regular power supply. The inadequacy is due to the small number of transformers and poor cable used in connection to the power supply in the community. Some inhabitants in the community according to the respondents spend some part of their income on the purchase of gas and or /petrol to fuel their power generators which thus increases their cost of living.

Table 4.2.10: Showing Development Programs in Gwagwalada.

Project / Programmes	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Piped/borehole water	84	22.49%	287	77.51%	371	100%
Electricity	17	4.07%	354	95.93%	371	100%
Health Care	22	5.69%	349	94.31%	371	100%
Modern Market	312	84.28%	59	15.72%	371	100%
Town / Civil Centre	196	32.57%	175	47.43%	371	100%
Postal Office/Agency	191	5.42%	350	94.58%	371	100%
Police Post/Station	72	19.24%	299	80.76%	371	100%
Primary Schools	350	95.12%	21	4.88%	371	100%
Secondary Schools	230	62.06%	141	37.94%	371	100%
Tarred Road	19	4.61%	352	95.39%	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Important advancements like tarmac roads, piped or borehole water, electricity, and health centers have been pushed to the sidelines, as the above table demonstrates. Naturally, the research area's police post and station and postal office/agency suffer from the same issues. According to the table, there are more

"No" responses than "Yes" responses, indicating that these significant advancements are missing. The percentages of "YES" in each of these areas are higher than "NO," suggesting that primary and secondary schools, markets, and town/civil centers are more accessible.

Table 4.2.11: Showing Factors Responsible for Rural-Urban Migration in Gwagwalada.

Factors	Responses	Percentages (%)
Rural neglect by the government	80	21.56%
Lack of social amenities	57	15.36%
The demand for greener pasture	62	16.71%
Lack of rural planning and strategies	61	16.44%
Access to land is difficult	24	6.47%
Lack of integrated rural development	49	13.2%
All of the above	38	10.24%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

From the above table, it is evident that most of the respondents believed that the most influential factor for rural-urban migration is the neglect of rural areas by the government which has the highest percentage of 21.56%. Second in the order is lack of rural planning and strategies with a percentage of 16.71%. While the demand for greener pastures, lack of social amenities, lack of

integrated rural development programs and difficulties in accessing land have 16.44%, 15.36%, 13.2%, and 6.47% respectively. But 38 of the total respondents which represent 10.24% of the percentage believe that the push to urban areas is as a result of the combination of all the supra factors.

Table 4.2.12: Showing Effects of the Absence of Integrated Rural Development Programs in Gwagwalada

Responses	Yes		No		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Low income	342	92.41%	29	7.59%	371	100%
Illiteracy	321	86.45%	50	13.55%	371	100%
Poverty	354	96.21%	17	3.79%	371	100%
Hunger	200	53.93%	171	46.07%	371	100%
Marriage	47	12.47%	324	87.53%	371	100%
Diseases	350	95.39%	21	4.61%	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The standard of living in the study area is too poor from the above table. There is low level of income, high illiteracy, poverty, hunger and disease levels. The lack of integrated rural development has no negative effects on marriage because its proportion of "NO" is higher than "YES," in contrast to the other aforementioned, where its percentage of "yes" is significantly higher than "no." Therefore, migration from rural to urban areas is also caused by a low standard of life. It is crucial to remember that the study area's low level of life is strongly linked to the absence of integrated rural development.

Table 4.2.13: Showing Good Road Distribution as One of the Required Social Amenities in the Study Area

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Very bad	41	11.05%
Bad	59	15.9%
Fair	82	22.1%
Good	189	50.94%
TOTAL	371	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

The above table deduced that the condition of the road is good with the percentage of 50.94%. The respondents said the road network in the community is good enough to ply, thus decreasing the cost of transportation and make their perishable goods get to the market on time. The respondents' percentage 22.1% said the

road network to Gwagwalada is fair. While other respondents of 15.9% and 11.05% said that the roads are bad and very bad respectively.

Table 4.2.14: Relationship between Rural Development Factors and Migration Intention

Migration Intention	Adequate Rural Development	Inadequate Rural Development	Total
Will Migrate	51	268	319
Will not Migrate	31	21	52
Total	82	289	371

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

This table offers a basis for conducting a Chi-Square test, to determine if the relationship between rural development and migration intention is significant.

Testing of Hypotheses

Chi-Square Statistic (χ^2): 45.58

Degrees of Freedom (df): 1

P- Value: 1.47×10^{-11} (approximately zero)

Table 4.2.15: Expected Frequencies.

Migration Intention	Adequate Rural Development	Inadequate Rural Development
Will Migrate	68.94	249.06
Will not Migrate	11.06	39.94

Source: Data Analysis, 2024.

Interpretation:

The p-value (1.47×10^{-11}) is much smaller than the conventional significance level ($\alpha=0.05$), which means we **reject the null hypothesis (H_0)**.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Rural–urban migration is widely recognized as a natural and inevitable phenomenon, driven by factors such as economic opportunities, access to better services, and improved living conditions in urban areas. However, efforts should not focus on trying to halt this movement, as stopping it entirely is neither realistic nor feasible. Instead, the emphasis should be on managing and controlling this migration in such a way that there is a balanced development between rural and urban areas. The objective is to achieve a situation where urban areas thrive without neglecting or exploiting rural regions, and vice versa. Striking a universal balance is essential so that urban development does not come at the expense of rural growth. When rural areas are left underdeveloped, it drives more people to cities, leading to overcrowding, pressure on urban resources, and the further marginalization of rural communities. Therefore, policies should aim to ensure that both rural and urban areas benefit from development initiatives, fostering interdependent growth rather than creating disparities between the two. This balance has been critically examined in the preceding chapters of this research, particularly in the context of the development of Gwagwalada and other rural areas across Nigeria. Gwagwalada, though classified as a rural area, represents a microcosm of the broader Nigerian rural experience. The

development of such rural areas is not only beneficial but essential for the overall development of the nation. This is because over 70% of Nigeria’s population resides in rural areas, and any serious attempt to develop the country must begin with uplifting these regions. Rural development is a national priority, as the rural population forms the backbone of the country’s economy, particularly in sectors such as agriculture, which provides food and raw materials for industries. Therefore, when we discuss rural areas in Nigeria, we are essentially talking about the majority of the Nigerian population. Developing rural areas like Gwagwalada is synonymous with developing the nation, as it directly impacts the livelihoods and well-being of the vast majority of citizens. Investing in rural infrastructure, education, healthcare, and economic opportunities will not only reduce the need for people to migrate to urban areas but will also contribute to a more balanced and sustainable national development trajectory.

In order to minimize rural–urban migration, it is recommended that an integrated rural development planning should be pursued with emphasis on the provision of basic amenities as well as provision of employment opportunities in the rural areas through the development and management of agricultural and agro based industries. Efforts should be made to solve various problems associated with rural – urban migration. i.e. efforts should be employed to make the rural areas to be as comfortable as in their counterparts (urban) as this will dissuades rural dwellers from moving to the urban areas. Establishing farm settlements: In other words to encourage and possibly maximize agricultural productions. The government should set up farm settlements where farmers will come together to work as cooperatives. More foods will be provided as a result of combined efforts and which the researcher believes will provide employment for a number of people as there will be need for staff to work in the various farm settlements.

The researcher proposes an Integrated Rural Development Strategy to address current policies, programs, and attitudes about rural development. This plan will address a number of concerning problems in the rural environment, in addition to the rural-urban movement. Therefore, it is necessary to go back to the time when the strategy's sole means of advancing rural areas was through the implementation of agricultural projects. It is advised that both internal and external capital resources be mobilized to establish industries that will increase employment, lower the cost of commodities, and provide the infrastructure that is required, such as improved public utilities, housing, and road transportation. It also involves raising the living of the rural people and creating the necessary organization and institution for effective functioning of the more complex rural society. The rural dwellers should be educated on the need for self projects since the government cannot do everything for them. Private investors should be encouraged by the government to invest in the rural areas to boost standards of living condition and to encourage the dwellers in the rural areas. Government should provide housing and adequate social amenities for the rural dwellers so as to enhance the development of rural areas. The government as well as the contractors should desist from the habit of abandonment of projects (like the ‘Passo’ – borehole Project which has been abandoned in Gwagwalada for over 10 years now) and misappropriation of fund allocated for the construction of basic amenities in the rural areas. Moreover, help should be given to the people to make sure that more rural development programmes of benefit are been organized.

Programmes like the Directorate of Food, Road and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI) which was established by the government with the aim of developing rural areas. This development programme agenda include; road construction, provision of pipe borne water, rural electrification and so on. This has helped in one way or the other to open up the rural areas, and also reduces the rate of rural – urban migration. When development and management programmes are well organized in all areas concerned, it will reduce rural – urban migration, thereby minimizing the problem of urbanization as well as promoting the well being of the rural dwellers in the study area. Gwagwalada is seen as a future commercial nerve in the FCT regions as it links the East and parts of the South to the Northern part of the country. It is suggested that rigorous planning of the town will boost economic activities, introduction of more higher education will draw development to the door step, proper road networks within and outside the town, the major rivers and vast unexhausted lands should be used for resorts, aside this; games should be organized in the rural areas annually to draw people home. All these and much more will encourage people to settle in the rural areas rather than migrating to urban areas.

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