

## **Rural sociology and rural development: a study of rural communities in Ethioppe East local government area of Delta State, Nigeria**

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**Abstract:** This study examined the influence of rural sociology on rural development in a few rural communities in Nigeria's Ethioppe East Local Government Area, which is located in Delta State. In Ethioppe East, Delta State, Nigeria, 400 rural residents were chosen at random from a total population of 362,753. A response rate of 71.75 percent was achieved after 287 of the 400 copies that were distributed were retrieved and examined. Data gathered were analysis through percentage, Spearman's Correlation, and linear regression using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 23. The research found a significant connection between rural sociology and rural development. The study also discovered that rural sociology has a favorable and statistically significant impact on rural development. Based on our findings, we came to the conclusion that rural sociology has a significant influence on rural development in Ethioppe east local government area of Delta State, Nigeria. Thus, among other things, the study suggests that the Nigerian government employ rural sociologists to assist in putting into action successful rural policies and programs. This will encourage the growth of Nigeria's rural communities.

**Keywords:** rural communities, rural sociologists, rural development, and rural policies

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The ability to see our own and others' lives as part of a larger social structure is essential to sociological imagination. The sociological imagination provides a fresh perspective on and solutions to common dilemmas or development challenges confronting rural communities. Rural sociology as an emancipatory empiricism, aimed at providing empirical foundation for more equitable social policy and better living conditions for rural dwellers. According to Du-Bois (1899, p.6) and Ndiaye (2017, p. 1), rural sociologists concentrated on enhancing rural residents' standards of living. They engage in a variety of initiatives, from the introduction and adoption of particular innovations to more comprehensive national government programs to increase the agricultural productivity of small farmers, promotional activities, policy implementation analysis, and communication." There is an old adage that if you want to teach a subject to a student, you must first understand not only the subject but also the student. This concept is applicable not only to classroom instruction, but also to managing and increasing production in industry and agriculture.

Knowledge of and technical skill with scientific implements and practices are essential for increasing agricultural production and promoting rural community development, but understanding of the farmer - the rural man and his home and community of which he is a part - is also essential. This is the knowledge that rural sociology makes available (Chitambar, 2016).

Rural community development requires an understanding of rural people and their lives. Thus, effective implementation of improved practices is impossible without a strategy approach based on a thorough knowledge and

understanding of the rural man, as well as the social and cultural context in which he operates.

With the help of rural sociology, one can plan a strategic approach for the desired change, continuously analyze the rural environment, and predict potential outcomes within reasonable bounds. Therefore, rural sociology is the academic study of rural residents in relation to the social groups they interact with. Rural sociologists can effectively promote change in Nigerian rural areas by influencing rural people's behavior (attitude, styles, and knowledge) because these changes are desirable in the interests of human, welfare, and national development. Poverty, depression, deprivation, limited economic opportunities, divorce, abuse, alcoholism, and other crises are common in Nigeria's rural areas, but these issues are sometimes exacerbated by the loss of a family business or farm. The significance of rural sociology to regional and societal development cannot be overstated. This study investigates the effect of rural sociology on rural development in Delta State, Nigeria's Ethiope East local government area.

### **The Concept of Rural Sociology**

A subfield of sociology called rural sociology examines rural and small-town life. It is the scientific examination of social structures and actions among those who live far from hubs of activity. Typical rural settlement patterns are low in scale and density (Jain, 2014). The vast majority of people on the planet reside in rural and agricultural communities, where they engage in occupations and lead different lifestyles from those found in urban centers. Their rural environment shapes and influences their behavior, way of life, and beliefs. Thus, rural sociology is a field of study that

focuses on men who live in rural areas (Chitambar, 2016). As a result, rural sociology is defined as a specialized field of sociology that provides people with a better understanding of rural people's and rural society's behavior (Chitambar, 2016). Olujide (2021) defines rural sociology as a subfield of sociology that focuses primarily on understanding how social and cultural factors affect people who live in rural and agrarian societies. General sociology gave rise to rural sociology. Rural sociology employs social knowledge appreciation to address real-world issues, in contrast to general sociology, which is more interested in the creation of social theories through fundamental research. Experienced field research is given precedence over the development of theories and social structure.

This study defines rural sociology as a thorough examination of rural social environments. It gives us important information on rural social phenomena and social issues, enabling us to comprehend rural society better and offer suggestions for its general advancement and prosperity. Since these relationships affect people's behavior and how societies as a whole change and develop as a result, rural sociology focuses on rural social relationships. Therefore, it is impossible to overstate the significance of rural sociology, particularly in developing nations like Nigeria where rural life is still prevalent. These are some examples of the importance of rural sociology:

- i. i. It clarifies the primary traits and issues that rural area face, which is helpful in fully addressing rural issues.
- ii. It informs the government about the needs of rural people so that rural development

programmemes can be properly designed.

- iii. iii. It gives the change agency feedback on the changes needed in their change programs and the progress made.
- iv. iv. It gives the change agent sociological knowledge on topics like leadership, power, roles, more culture, family organization, and so on that he or she needs to carry out his or her work effectively when interacting with rural people.

In order to ascertain the laws governing its development, rural sociology therefore focuses on the systematic, scientific, and comprehensive study of the rural social organization, including its structure, function, and objective development tendencies (Jain, 2014).

### **Origin and Development of Rural Sociology**

People have always been interested in themselves and their interactions with others. Early philosophers made general observations about human relationships from daily life, but their goals were usually to express desirable ethical standards and codes of conduct rather than to arrive at generalizations about human behavior. However, some predicted the emergence of a science of society and, as a result, took the first steps toward establishing such a science. Among the early philosophers who made such efforts were Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) of Arabia, Giovanni Battista Vico (1668-1747) of Italy, and Charles Montesquieu (1689-1775).

The most influential, however, was France's Auguste Comte (1798-1957), known as the "Father of Sociology. Conte saw sociology as the last offspring of

philosophy, and he worked to establish it as a science. The application of the scientific method had already distinguished the physical sciences; Comte attempted to apply the same method to the study of man in society. As a result, sociology was founded on scientific observation rather than authoritative pronouncements or philosophical speculation. Comte divided science into two parts in his work 'A study of positive philosophy.' I Social statistics - the study of major societal subdivisions such as family, government, industry, and religion; (ii) Social Dynamics - the study of society as a whole and its development as an entire unit. In France, England, Italy, Germany, Russia, and the United States, Comte had immediate successors. Herbert Spencer (1820-1903) of England published 'Principles of Sociology' in 1976, believing that social science should study the interrelationships between different elements of society, whereas Lester Ward, an American pioneer in sociology, published 'Dynamic Sociology' in 1882. He, like Comte, envisioned rapid progress in society and sociology, taking an active role in efforts to improve (Comte, 1845, Spencer, 1945; Nertrand, 1958, Rogers, 1960; Jain, 2014; Chitambar, 2016; Jakubek & Wood, 2018).

However, to describe the historical background of Rural sociology is to trace its early beginnings in the United States in 19<sup>th</sup> century. The period of 1890-1920 in America saw the rural societies facing many socio-economic problems which attracted the attention of the intelligentsia thus establishing study of rural society as an academic discipline. A significant turning point in the development of rural sociology was Theodore Roosevelt's appointment of the Country Life Commission. Human

society needed to be rebuilt after the Second World War's severe damage and destruction. Rural sociology in the USA thus gained momentum. Understanding and identifying the social and economic issues facing farmers has grown to be the primary focus of rural sociology. More focus was placed on the internal dynamics of rural community life and the shifting demographics of rural populations than on their connections to the land or the social facets of agricultural production (Jain, 2014; Chitambar, 2016).

It's fascinating to learn about rural sociology in the nineteenth century. From its modest beginnings and early pioneers to a fully developed discipline that provides understanding of rural communities, groups, institutions, cultures, and other forms of human association, rural sociology has come a long way. Through scientific research and analytical study, rural sociologists provide some solutions to social issues not only in the United States but also in many other countries around the world, particularly those that are developing their rural areas. Nigerian undergraduate and graduate students are not yet required to take rural sociology, but as the subject gains popularity in classrooms and in the field, its usefulness will become clearer.

### **Rural Development**

Establishing the framework for the expression of human personality is the aim of development. Low infant mortality, good nutrition, high employment rates, and inequality are signs of poor development (Forest, 1981 cited in Kamar, Lawal, Babangida & Jahun, 2014, p. 24). In essence, this definition of development explains how social amenities like good roads, enough and clean water, good health care,

education, and electricity, all of which make life more meaningful, alter the lives of a person, a group, or a community. "Different disciplines define development on the basis of their individual orientations," (Kadiri, Muhammed, Raji, & Sulaiman, 2015).

Development is defined by economists as rising output and investment, GDP, and per capita income. According to political scientists, it is the improvement of political assets in which authority and related assets are distributed fairly. On the other hand, according to sociologists, development is the process of achieving structural differentiation, tranquility, order, and social advancement. A key driver of development is the involvement of the populace in programs and policies. This might corroborate Rogers' (1976) claim that social change is a broadly participative process of social changes in society intended to bring both social and material advancement (including greater equality, freedom, and other valued qualities) for the majority of the population by giving them control over their environment. This may have influenced Onyikwu's (2004) claim that there is an underlying association between development and positive change, whether one is speaking of societies, regions, or individuals. It involves ensuring that the majority of citizens are materially comfortable, reducing inequality, and, most importantly, ensuring that there is no poverty within the nation state.

Rural development, according to Rogers and Whiting (1976), refers not only to providing jobs and increased incomes to rural people, but also to improving the quality of rural living through increased and improved community services. To Olayide (1979), rural development is a process in which concerted efforts are made to facilitate significant increases in

rural resource productivity with the overall goal of increasing rural incomes and employment opportunities in rural areas. Ering, Out, and Archibong (2014) noted that up until recently, Nigerian rural development did not receive much attention or prominence. Her policies largely centered on improving the lives of city residents and the urban environment. Academic researchers, decision-makers, and development specialists in Nigeria have realized that until the vast rural areas of the nation are developed and integrated into the development process, we cannot truly speak of national development. Since the colonial era, Nigeria's rural areas have been socially and economically backward. In addition, the gap between urban and rural areas has widened alarmingly.

Furthermore, according to Ering et al. (2014), the government appeared to have neglected the peasant population, which made up the majority of rural areas and produced a large portion of the agricultural products on which the country relies. This situation gave rise to the well-planned issues of rural-urban drift, declining agricultural production and the resulting food shortage, unemployment, urban congestion, and overburdened infrastructure. This study defines rural development as the process of enhancing rural residents' social and economic well-being.

### **Rural Development Policies in Nigeria**

Since the colonial era, efforts have been made to develop rural communities; the focus has been on changing the largely agrarian society in order to achieve a shared set of development goals based on the capabilities and needs of the people. Since the 1960s, numerous governments (local, state, and federal) have implemented and pursued policies

and programs aimed at improving rural areas. According to Ering et al. (2014), the British colonial office adopted the community development strategy as a special development model for the rural areas of all colonial territories in the 1920s. Since then, a variety of modern rural development schemes have been implemented throughout Nigeria's rural communities, including the construction of village moats, shrines, village squares, and markets. The goal at the time was to develop skills in areas of community development like carpentry, house construction, shoe repair, and other trades in order to make up for the shortcomings of the traditional British educational system.

However, in the 1960s, the Nigerian government established farm settlement schemes, which gave rise to the various farm plantations found throughout the country. The policy's primary goal was to prevent youth migration from rural to urban areas. The policy, however, failed because it was largely incoherent and uncoordinated within individual settlements. In 1976, the Murtala and Obasanjo administration implemented another rural development policy known as Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), which aimed to reduce food prices and the rate of food importation. Other rural development policies include the River Basin and Rural Development Authorities established by the Obasanjo administration in 1978, the Green Revolution in 1980 by the Shagari regime, the Directorate for Food Roads and Rural Infrastructure by the The Poverty Alleviation Programmeme in 1999 by the Obasanjo regime, the Poverty Alleviation Programmeme in 2011 by the Yardua and Jonathan administration. Marian Babangida's Better Life for Rural Women in 1986. The objectives of these policies and programs

were to boost rural communities' productivity and income. Unfortunately, the social and economic well-being of rural residents has not improved as a result of these policies and programs. In actuality, some of these programs and policies failed as a result of political corruption, a lack of continuity in government programs and policies, and outright abandonment of programs and policies by government officials.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study conducted a thorough review using the modernization theory. When many people believed that developing nations would eventually overtake developed nations, the concept first appeared in the 1950s and 1960s (Chodak, 1937). According to the modernization theory, institutional and economic structures in society—particularly in rural areas—evolve over time from being simple to complex. The natural continuation of this evolutionary process is development (Brinkerhoff, White, Ortega & Weitz, 2011). Modernization theory describes and explains how societies move from being traditional or underdeveloped to modern.

Therefore, modernization is the process of converting to the social, economic, and political structures that developed in Western Europe and North America between the 17th and 19th centuries and later spread to other European nations, as well as to South America, Asia, and Africa in the 19th and 20th centuries. Modernization theory has played a significant role in the sociology of national development, rural development, and underdevelopment since the 1950s. The main emphasis has been on how pre-modern societies and rural communities become modern through economic development and

modifications to their social, political, and cultural structures, both in the past and in the present (Jain, 2014).

All of the political and economic transformations brought about by industrialization are referred to as modernization. It entails extending privileges, ideals, and opportunities from the affluent to the common people in a society, especially in underdeveloped nations (Kornblum, 2012). The five main tenets of modernization theory are as follows: (1) a degree of self-sustaining growth in the economy; (2) a measure of public participation in politics; (3) a diffusion of secular-rational norms in society culture; (4) an increase in social mobility; and (5) a corresponding change in the model personality that enables people to function well in a social order (Kar, 2012).

The ability of modernization theory to explain how social welfare programs, services, and benefits assist people, particularly rural residents, in meeting their fundamental social, economic, health, and educational needs determines its applicability to this study (Barker, 2003). The social and economic well-being of a society's majority is a concern of modernization theory. It promotes equity and a productive and stable society that opens the door for national and rural development; it offers a reasonable level of protection from want and assault (Chitambar, 2016). Though attempts to change society in modern times do not always succeed, most sociologists still think the Modernization theory is valuable. Furthermore, it could be argued that sociological imagination and modernization theory are more crucial than ever if we're going to manage the risk present in modern societies and realize the potential for bettering the lives of rural Nigerians and other people

in developing nations. Based on a review of related literature, the study's goals and null hypotheses were created.

### **Rural Sociology and Rural Development**

Nigeria and other developing countries are more convinced than ever that modernizing and integrating rural areas into national development processes is essential to ensuring the overall development of their countries (Abasiokong, 1982; Ering et al., 2014; Kamar et al. 2014). Obianigwe (1999), Ugwu (2003), and Ering et al. (2014) argued that although most of the villagers in Nigeria are farmers, in Nigeria, the villagers frequently rely on shallow wells and untreated water to produce food for the uncontrollably burgeoning urban population. They work the land from sunrise to sunset. Children with bloated bellies and spindly legs can be found in and around villages who lack a healthy diet, a formal education, and a sense of technical belonging. The majority of rural communities in Nigeria have self-built schools, but most of them are deficient in the necessary teaching resources. Because they are dying in the majority of facilities, qualified teachers refuse to work there. In fact, today's rural communities in Nigeria face challenges such as malnutrition, poor living conditions, diseases, illiteracy, high infant mortality, social ill-treatment of certain sections of society, long-term health problems, a lack of proper housing, injustice to women, and a lack of infrastructural facilities, as well as poverty and unemployment due to limited economic opportunities. All of these accurately depict the reality of rural communities in most developing countries, with particular reference to Nigeria. It paints a stark and pitiful picture of poverty, outright neglect, underdevelopment, and ineffective

policy and programme implementation. According to Kamar et al. (2014), the federal government of Nigeria has rationed development programmes across various ministries and departments at both the federal and state levels rather than establishing a rural development ministry. Local government continues to fall short of playing the crucial role of a bridge between the government and rural residents. Due to these failures, Nigeria is still looking for a fresh approach to rural development. In order to harness rural initiative for rural development, this research suggests a rural sociology.

It should be noted at this point that many of Nigeria's rural issues are sociological in nature, and that rural sociologists have primarily contributed to improving the planning and administration of rural community development initiatives. Most rural development policies and programs in Nigeria aim to achieve the following goals: lowering rural unemployment and poverty; involving rural citizens in sociopolitical and economic decision-making processes; and, most importantly, seeing each rural citizen as an individual citizen deserving of all the good things in life, just like his urban counterparts. A few of the objectives for rural residents include improving rural value-added goods, improving the quality of life by providing safe drinking water, electricity, health care, good roads, and other basic necessities. Rural sociology is widely regarded as a valuable tool for rural development and providing social services to the populace (Rogers, 1960; Ering et al., 2014; Jain, 2014; Chitamber, 2016; Moore & Ndiaye, 2017; Jabubek & Wood, 2018).

Therefore, it is believed that rural sociologists are well-positioned to carry out the aforementioned rural

development policies and programs because they have the ability to successfully persuade rural residents to act in a way that is advantageous to the welfare of the nation and its citizens, especially the welfare of the rural poor. A rural sociologist is familiar with the relationships, interactions, groups, institutions, organizations, and common culture of rural residents. All of these things have an impact on how they act. A crucial skill for the development of rural communities is an understanding of rural people's behavior and how culture and society affect them (Chtambar, 2016).

Rural sociology is obviously essential to the growth of communities in India and other developing nations. The success of rural community development programs in Africa, especially in Nigeria, depends on the ability of rural residents to change their attitudes toward community projects or programs. Without taking into account the contributions of rural residents, a society cannot truly develop.

### **Objectives of the study**

Specifically, this study sought to:

1. 1. Investigate the connection between rural sociology and rural development in Delta State, Nigeria's Ethiope East local government area.
2. 2. Determine the impact of rural sociology on rural development in Delta State, Nigeria's Ethiope East local government area.

### **Hypotheses of the Study**

The following null hypotheses were formulated for testing:

1. H1: In the Ethiope East local government area of Delta State, Nigeria, there is no meaningful connection between rural sociology and rural development.
2. H2: In Delta State, Nigeria's Ethiope East local government area, rural



sociology has little to no influence on rural development.

## METHODS

This study used a cross-sectional research design to examine the relationship between rural sociology and rural development in a few selected rural communities in Delta State, Nigeria. There are three districts within the Ethiope East Local Government Area: Abraka, Agbon, and Isiokolo. It has a land area of 380 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 463,813 as of the 2016 census. Among the communities picked are Abraka, Samagidi, Ikinigho, Oria, Ekerejeta, Umeghe, Ekirigbo, Eku, Okuighele, Orhokpo, Mosogar, Ejenesa, okuke, Erho, Uргуоka, and Adjikpotor. The Ethiope East local government area of Delta State had 362,753 registered voters as of 2019. (INEC, 2019). This is presented using Taro Yemeni's 91971) formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(r^2)}$$

Where: n = sample size

N = Total Registered voters (population size)

r = Error terms

$$n = \frac{362,753}{1 + 362,753(0.05^2)}$$

n = 400 Approximately

The study sample size is 400 respondents, as indicated above. The research tool used for this study was a structured questionnaire created by the researchers, consisting of 19 items structured along a 5-point Likert type scale that ranks responses on a scale from (1) strongly disagree (SD) to (5) strongly agree. Sixteen communities in

the Ethiope east local government area were chosen at random (SA).

## Validity and Reliability of the instrument

Three experts from the sociology and political science department at Delta State University in Abraka, Nigeria, face validated the research instrument to ascertain its validity. The final draft of the instrument was modified and created using the advice and opinions of these experts. A reliability test of the research tool was also conducted using 56 study participants from the districts of Abraka, Agbon, and Isiokolo. The internal consistency of the items was assessed using the Cronbach Alpha method, as can be seen in the table below.

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics of Variables**

Scale	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient
Rural sociology	8	.835
Rural development	11	.817

Source: Researcher's Computation, 2021

The obtained coefficients of 0.835 and 0.817 met the standard level of 0.70 for research indicators (Cronbach, 1951). The validity and reliability of the research instrument were thus found to be satisfactory by the researchers.

## Method of Data Analysis

With the help of SPSS version 23, correlation coefficient and linear regression analysis were used to analyze the data that was collected.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 3 shows how rural sociology and rural development are related in Delta State, the Ethiope East local government area of Nigeria. Rural sociology and rural development have a strong positive correlation that is statistically significant (r=.823, n = 287). This suggests that rural

sociology and rural development have a solid and advantageous relationship. Thus, the null hypothesis is disproved. In Nigeria's Ethiope East local government area, Delta State, Table 4's R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.624 indicates that rural sociology explains 62.4 percent of the variation in rural development. That is, while other factors outside of this model can account for 37.6% of the variation in rural development, changes in rural sociology can explain 62.4 percent of the variation. In Delta State, Nigeria's Ethiope East local government area, a 1% increase in rural sociology results in a 0.68% increase in rural development, according to Table 5, which shows a coefficient of 67.5. The F-statistics of 23.845 shows that the model is statistically significant at 0.05 significant levels. According to the model's Durban-Watson statistics of 1.927, the regression analysis shows no evidence of series autocorrelation. The null hypothesis is therefore disproved.

The results showed, among other things, that rural sociology and rural development in Delta State, Nigeria's Ethiope east local government area, have a favorable and strong relationship. This finding is in line with those of Chitambar (2016), Ndiaye (2017), and Jakubek and Wood (2018), all of whom hold the view that rural sociology and rural development are closely related. The study's findings also showed that rural sociology influences rural development in Delta State, Nigeria's Ethiope east local government area, in a favorable and statistically significant manner. This result is in line with the theories put forth by Bertrand (1958), Ering et al. (2014), Jain (2014), Ndiaye (2017), and Jakubek and Wood (2018), according to which rural sociology encourages the creation and application of successful rural policies that enhance the livelihoods of rural populations and that rural

development is accomplished through the application of the practical spirit of rural sociology. Furthermore, according to Chitambar (2016), sociologists are interested in the behavioral and attitude changes that rural residents experience because they influence both national and rural development. Rural sociologists, according to Ndiaye (2017), are against African agricultural and rural development policies and programs.

**Table 2: Distribution of Questionnaire and Response**

S / N	Ethiope East Communities selected	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Retrieved	Percentage Retrieved
1	Abraka	25	19	4.75
2	Samagidi	25	17	4.25
3	Ikinogho	25	17	4.25
4	Oria	25	21	5.25
5	Ekerejeta	25	20	5.00
6	Umeghe	25	16	4.00
7	Ekirigbo	25	14	3.50
8	Urhoka	25	17	4.25
9	Ekue	25	18	4.50
10	Okuighale	25	19	4.75
11	Orhokpo	25	19	4.75
12	Mosogar	25	15	3.75
13	Ejenesa	25	21	5.25
14	Okuke	25	18	4.50
15	Erho	25	19	4.75
16	Adjikpotor	25	17	4.25
	Total	400	287	71.75

Sources: Questionnaire Administered, 2021

Due to the retrieval and analysis of 287 of the 400 copies of the question, we had a response rate of 71.75 percent. There were 287 respondents in total, with 123 men and 164 women.

**Table 3: Correlation Matrix**

Variable		Rural sociology	Rural development
Rural sociology	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1 287	.823 .005 287
Rural Development	Pearson Correlation Sig.(2-tailed) N	.823 .005 287	1 287

\*\*Correlation is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Sources: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2021

**Linea Regression Analysis**

**Table 4: Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

Model	R	R-Square	Adj. R-Square	Std. Error of Estimate
1	.745 <sup>a</sup>	.624	.617	.360

a. Predictors: (Constant) Rural sociology (RS)

b. Dependent variable: Rural development (CD)

Source: SPSS Output, 2021

**Table 5: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient	Standardized Coefficient	T.	F-Statistic	D.F.	Sign.

	B	Std. Error	Beta	3.205	2.138	1.621	.000
(constant)	.613	.207		8.214	2.345	1.927	.011 <sup>b</sup>
RD	.675	.163	.759				

a. Dependent variable: Rural Development

b. Predictors: (Constant), Rural Sociology

Source: SPSS Output, 2021

**CONCLUSION**

According to the study's perceived findings, rural sociology and rural development have a positive and significant relationship. Additionally, it was confirmed that rural sociology has an impact on rural development in Delta State, the Ethiopian East local government area of Nigeria. Based on our findings, we came to the conclusion that rural sociology has a significant influence on rural development. The study therefore recommends the following: To help develop and implement successful rural policies and programs, the Nigerian government should hire rural sociologists. This will encourage the growth of Nigeria's rural communities. The government of Nigeria ought to support rural sociological research as well. For policymakers, the deliberate development of rural communities in Nigeria continues to be a significant challenge. As a result, rural sociology needs to be made a requirement in Nigerian universities at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. The Nigerian government needs to create more institutions where students can pursue national diploma and degree programs in rural development. For

instance, more than 15 universities in India offer a course of study in rural development (Rank, 2010 cited in Kamar et al. 2014)

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