

DETERMINANTS OF RURAL OUT-MIGRATION AND PATTERNS OF MIGRANTS' EMPLOYMENT IN NORTH-CENTRAL ZONE NIGERIA

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Abstract

The urbanization growth rate of 5.3% per annum in Nigeria is at alarming rate. Rural out-migration to the cities, which contributes to this increase, has further impacted significantly on the declining agricultural employment in the country. The study examines the determinants of rural out-migration and patterns of migrants' employment. The research was anchored on Lee and Harris-Todaro's migratory models including structuration theory. A non-experimental survey research design was adopted to sample 402 rural out-migrants among five (5) selected rural migrants' streams in Kabba. Results show that although education (29.4%) and employment opportunities (29.4%) were most common motivating factors influencing migrants' decisions to move to the city, but due to their inability to secure reasonable white collar jobs at the destinations; new patterns of employments were formed ranging from part-time to non-engagement in agricultural employment. This suggests that migratory policies that will engender urban deindustrialization and rural development should be advocated.

Key Words: Rural out-migration, voluntary migration and employment.

Introduction

All over the world, internal migration exceeds international migration. There are over 740 million internal migrants in the world compared to about 214 million international migrants (United Nation Development Programme, UNDP, 2009). Internal immigration is a universal phenomenon which occurs in both industrialized and developing countries. Going by assertions made by Piotrowski, Ghimire & Rindfuss (2013) a lot of these internal immigrants, who are mostly youths, move *en masse* from rural areas in search of better living conditions in the cities.. Indeed, the World Bank (2007) observes that young people are 40 percent more likely to migrate from rural areas to urban centres or across urban centres than older individuals.

In many developing nations, there is a rapid growth of urban areas and a corresponding decline in the rural areas (Aworemi, Abdul-Aze and Nurain, 2011). Nigeria is a typical example. There is a tremendous expansion of urban areas consequent to rapid rural-urban migration. For instance, Nigeria's rural population in 1974 was 75% of the total population and 56% in 2001. With over 170 million people and a growth rate estimated at between 2.5 and 3.8 percent

between 2005-2009 (UNDP, 2009), Nigeria has a high urban growth rate which is a consequence of rural-urban migration. Going by the estimates of Nigeria urban population and an urbanization growth rate of 5.3 percent per year, which is one of the fastest growing in the world (National Economic Empowerment and Development Strategy, NEEDS, 2004), internal migration in Nigeria has a lot of implications on the socioeconomic development of the country.

The negative consequences of rural out-migration outstrip its positive consequences. Among other devastating consequences of global rural out-migration is a fundamental shift in population distribution which has tremendous implications on rural populations; affecting both ends of migration by extension. Indeed, the burden of rural-urban migration in Nigeria is multifaceted and intertwining (Nwokocha, 2010). At the place of origin, it gives rise to rural decay, brain drain and loss of innovative skills of able-bodied rural dwellers who ought to have contributed to the development of the rural economy. In fact, the massive movement of people from rural areas also results in a decline in agricultural production. At the destination end, it leads to devastating effects on the quality of life and well-being of both the migrants and non-migrants in terms of alterations in patterns of (traditional) employment.

In specific terms, the demographic consequences of rural out-migration is the rapid population increase in many areas which has given rise to population pressure, low and declining standards of living. In this sense, Ekpenyong (1999) observes that rural-urban migration results in agricultural stagnation and neglect of the rural areas because young educated people now prefer to live elsewhere (especially urban centres) in order to participate in the labour force and maintain an improved standard of living. NISER (1997) survey findings have also revealed that out-migration from rural areas contribute enormously not only to the change in the traditional division of labour on gender basis, but it has also caused changes in the occupational structure of the country, which has continued to record a marked decline in the agricultural work force. Again, the rise in the spate of rural out-migration has led to problems in the agricultural sector. It does not only lead to a decline in agricultural labour force, but also contribute to the high level of unemployment rate that has stood at 23.9 percent in 2011 as well as urban unemployment that has risen up to 29.5 percent (National Bureau of Statistics, NBS, 2011).

Although few studies have made attempts to analyze rural-urban migration in different perspectives such as the NISER survey (1997), Adepoju's work on rural-urban migration (2000), Ullah's study on rural-urban migration (2004) among others, an obvious gap in all these studies is the pattern of rural out-migrants' employment at the place of destination especially when they are in urban areas. This study attempts to fill this gap in the body of demographic literature by using selected rural out-migrants' streams in Kabba (semi urban) situated in Kogi State North-Central Zone.

Theoretical Frameworks

The push-pull theory as propounded by Everett Lee (1966) assumes that there are environmental, demographic, and economic factors predisposing or pushing migrants out of places, regions or countries of origins; while attractive social forces lure people to places of their destinations. Lee (1966) further divides factors causing migrations into two groups of factors which are termed to as "push and pull factors". For him, push and pull factors are those factors that either forcefully 'push' people to migration or those factors that attract people to an area of destination. The two categories are highlighted with their relevant factors:

Push Factors

- Not enough jobs
- Few opportunities
- Primitive conditions
- Low wage rate
- Lack of local employment
- Lack of electricity supply
- Poor infrastructure
- low use of agricultural inputs & technologies
- Low soil fertility
- High young & elderly dependency ratio
- Low agricultural yield and income
- Lack of credit & insurance market
- Investment on low-return activities
- Extreme rural poverty & under nutrition
- Desertification
- Famine or drought
- Political fear or persecution
- Poor medical care
- Loss of wealth
- Natural disasters
- Death threats
- Slavery
- Pollution
- Poor housing
- Discrimination
- Poor chances of marrying

Pull Factors

- Job opportunities
- Better living conditions
- Political and/or religious freedom
- Better opportunities for education
- Better medical care
- Security
- Family links
- Industry
- Emergence & Expansion of agro-processing industries
- Expected urban high wage
- Employment opportunities
- Better infrastructure & social amenities
- Attractive urban life
- Contacts and enhanced social networks in destination region
- Better chances of marrying

Conversely, while Lee (1966) provides explanations on the 'push-pull factors' predisposing people to migrate, Harris and Todaro Model of migration provides specific explanations on the economic rationality behind individual movement to the cities. In that, Harris and Todaro posit that rural to urban migration is embarked upon based on rational choices of individuals in terms of the expected income differential between rural and urban areas rather than just wage differentials (Harris and Toadro, 1970). This means that potential migrants rationally weigh the costs and expected returns of moving from one place to the other before they move (Findley, 1982). This follows that rural out-migration in the study area is based on the rational choice of the migrants to move in terms of their decisions to move to urban areas where they feel their standard of living would improve. In other words, factors like perceived probability of gaining good employment opportunities and the probability of higher earnings than the place of origin motivates people to engage in rural out-migration especially rural-urban typology of internal migration.

As Harris and Todaro (1970) argue, rural-urban migration persists in developing countries despite urban unemployment. This situation is due to the inequity between rural-urban income and wage. This is supported by the fact that the income generating activities in the rural areas are based on agriculture which is believed to be belittling and tedious whereas the industrial activities in the urban areas yield higher income. Hence, it is largely believed that the wage differential between the two societies (rural and urban) which tends to be higher in the urban industrial areas can only be earned when migrants or potential migrants are in the urban areas. And again, rural out-migration occurs following the calculus of cost-benefit analysis by intending migrants against the backdrop of the prevailing socio-economic situations in the rural areas which are less favourable than the urban socio-economic life.

Giddens' theory of structuration attempts to provide a blend of macro and micro sociological theoretical understanding of human social actions that structure and agency are mutually exclusive which cannot be ignored in providing theoretical explanations on rural-urban migration among the study population. Commenting on this, Busari (2013) observes that it attempts to recast structure and agency as a mutually dependent duality. In this sense, social actions of rural migrants in the study area are seen in terms of the relationship that exists between the prevailing

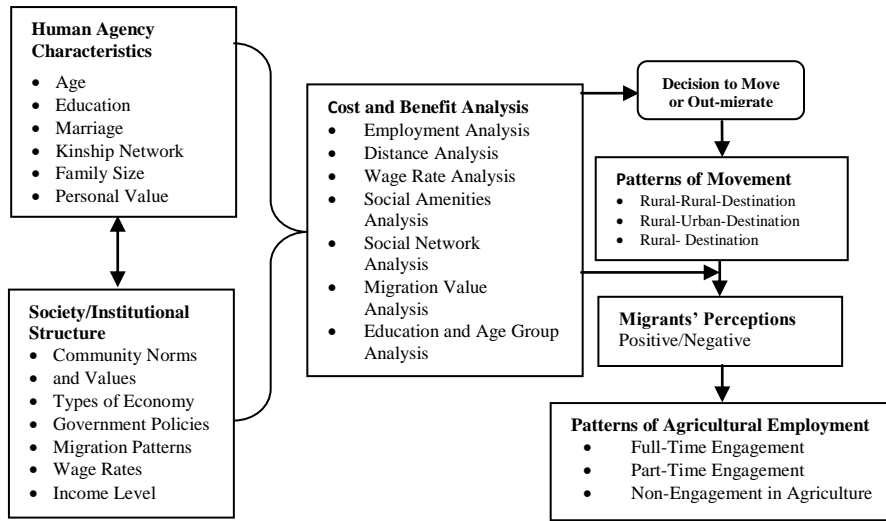
socio-economic structure (external forces) and the agency (internal motivations) which act as motivating factors that predispose them to migrate from their respective rural areas to the city.

In other words, it is believed in this theory that people do not have entire preference of their actions; even as a matter of fact their knowledge on a particular social phenomenon may be restricted, and these may in turn tends to recreate the social structure and produce social change (Craib, 1992). That is to say, the social structure in itself is *recursive*. Thus, structuration theory combines the objective reality of the social world as well as the subjective interpretation of the world to provide explanations for personal decision-making with respect to out-migration.

In order to simply understand the determinants of rural out-migration and patterns of employment among the selected migrant streams in the study area, a conceptual framework situated within the context of the three theoretical frameworks is developed. The conceptual framework describes the push factors for rural out-migration within the confine of their motivating factors and *stimuli*. It also takes into consideration the decision to out-migrate which is based on calculated costs and benefits analysis in relation to the traditional occupational structure which is bound to change based on the prevailing societal socio-economic structures and situations. Consequent upon this, it permeates to the perceptions (positive or negative) of the migrants with regard to a change in their traditional occupational structure (agricultural employment) at the place of destination.

While these perceptions persists in time and space largely due to the interacting forces of structure and the human agency (migrants), alteration in the traditional occupational structure take a new shape (positively or negatively) which exceed individual control over time relative to the patterns of employment.

Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework



Source: Author (2014)

Methods

The study was conducted in Kabba, a semi-urban town situated in the North-Central zone of Nigeria. The population of the entire Kabba/Bunu LGA is 144, 579 according to the 2006 population Census (Federal Republic of Nigeria Official Gazette, 2009). The study population was made up of the migrants' streams whose ages fall within the range of 15 and 65 years old based on the fact that they fall within the demographically acceptable working age group, which included males and females population. The sample size for the study was calculated using Choncran's (1977) formula at an assumed 50% rate of rural out-migration because there was no accurate proportion for the rural migrants at the time of the survey. With 10% non-response rate, a sample size of 402 was used for this study. Cluster sampling technique was adopted to select five (5) communities of rural migrants' streams in Bunu District of the Local Government Area out of the 42 rural communities situated in the district, namely; Ike, Akutupa, Oshomule, Ilah and Olleh respectively. Thereafter, snowball and purposive sampling techniques were adopted to select individual respondents and participants for the study through their Home Town Associations (HTAs) in the study area. This is a non-experimental research design.

A structured questionnaire was utilized to obtain quantitative data while interview/discussion guides were designed to elicit qualitative data from 3 focus group discussions (FGDs) and 5 key informant interviews (KIIs). Analysis of quantitative data was based on the types of variable measured and specific focus of this study, and level of significance was set at $p < 0.05$ and $p < 0.01$ as appropriate. In the qualitative data, thematic and verbatim quotations were analyzed as complements to the quantitative method.

Also, ethical issues were considered throughout the research process: informed consent without any form of inducement, assurance of the respondent's voluntary participation, anonymity, confidentiality as well as the conduct of the research under a culturally sensitive environment. In other words, all social research ethics were strictly respected without any form of harm or discomfort or dehumanization to all respondents in the study.

Results and Discussion

Perceived Factors Motivating Peoples' Decisions to Out-Migrate from Rural Locations

The focus of the study was to determine the factors motivating rural migrants' decisions to move to Kabba and their patterns of employment with regard to their perceptions towards agricultural employment. The result in Table 1 shows that there were various factors motivating migrants' decision to move from their respective places of origins to their destination. Indeed, the most mentioned motivating factors are education (29.4%) and better employment opportunities (29.4%).

Table 1: Perceived Motivating Factors for Rural Out-Migration

Motivating Factors for Rural out-migration	Frequencies ($N = 402$)	Percentages
Education	118	29.4
Employment	118	29.4
Good Road	10	2.5
Good Communication Network	18	4.5
Exposure	15	3.7
Marriage	14	3.5
Electricity Supply	13	3.2
Business	31	7.7
Family	31	7.7
Work Transfer	12	3
Better Earnings/Offer	22	5.5

Source: Field Survey (2014)

This is also buttressed from some of the qualitative responses on the likely factors that motivates migrants movement:

Some of the factors that make people from rural areas to migrate to Kabba are because of state creation. Because of this, people will come to seek employment opportunities, to further their education, to do businesses, to stay with parents, to stay because of electricity supply, to stay because of admission into higher institutions or to acquire standard education, to stay because of good road and good communication networks which are not made available in the villages around Kabba (FGD/Akutupa/Male participant/2014; similar factors were expressed by other participants).

Education and employment are the major factors that make people migrate from rural areas to places like Kabba. There is need for the young school leavers to further their education and get white collar jobs in the city, get exposure and get civilized. Nobody wants to stay in the village now. It is either you come to the city and further your education after secondary school or you look for jobs in the cities. Even those that will not further their education and they want to be apprentice they need electricity supply such as welder people. Do we have light in the village to do that? (KII/Oshomule/Female respondent/2014).

Generally, it is education and employment. But sometimes it may be as a result of marriage or family or sometimes because of children education (KII/Ike/Male Respondent/2014, this was also shared by a participant in KII).

An examination of the perceived factors by age of the migrants is presented in Table 2. There is a significant association (Chi-square=120.9; df=6; p-value=0.000) between the reasons for moving and age of the migrants. At age group less than 20 years old, 55.4% of the migrants migrated because of education while 52.6% of age 30-39 years moved because of social amenities respectively. Majority of those in older age group 40 and above however migrated because of employment opportunities.

Table 2: Migrants' Age Group by Reasons for Out-migration (N= 402)

Reasons	Migrants' Age Group			
	< 20	20-29	30-39	40+
Employment	13 (17.6%)	54 (31.0%)	28 (31.5%)	18 (27.7%)
Education	41 (55.4%)	53 (30.5%)	14 (15.7%)	2 (3.1%)
Social amenities	20 (27.0%)	67 (38.5%)	47 (52.6%)	5 (69.2%)

Data Source: Field Survey (2014) *significant at 0.05

From the qualitative responses, reasons for moving by the age of migrants were also examined. The results are presented as stated below:

It is the educated youths that migrate more than the old people especially those that have finished their secondary schools. Old people may come but just to buy things and go back to their communities (KII/Ike/Male respondent/2014).

The Influence of Social Network in Rural Out-Migration

The influence of social network in rural out-migration is presented in Table 3. Out of those (65.9%) who were influenced by social networks, the most mentioned influence were parents (60.4%) followed by relatives (21.1%).

Table 4: Distribution of Respondents by the influence of social networks in rural out-migration

Influence of Social Network		Frequencies (n = 402)	Percentages
Influence of social network	Yes	265	65.9
	No	137	34.1
Types of social network influence	Friends	40	15.1
	Parents	160	60.4
	Relatives	56	21.1
	Sons and daughters	9	3.4

Data Source: Field Survey (2014)

Perceptions and Patterns of Rural Migrants' Employment at the Destination

The perceptions and patterns of migrants towards agricultural employment were investigated among the study population. Table 5 reveals that though greater number of migrants (60.7%) did not engage in agricultural employment, about 39.3% of the migrants were still found engaging in it. This is despite the fact that they have moved away from their rural settings. Result further showed that more than half of them (66.5%) are in agricultural employment so as 'to augment family income' because of the economic constraints of the urban centre at the study area. This result suggests that despite a greater number of rural migrants had negative perceptions towards agricultural engagement at the urban centre, agriculture still remains an alternative to migrants' coping strategies of high level of unemployment and low income capacity of the industrial sector. This further buttressed the fact that only few of the migrants engaged in agriculture for commercial purposes compared to those who indicated subsistence agricultural practice (60.1%).

An examination of the patterns of migrants' employment in relation to agricultural employment is presented in Table 5. About 71% of the migrants engaged in agriculture on part-time basis, while 29% of them indicated full-time basis. This means that majority of rural out-migrants who engaged in agriculture on part-time basis still have other sources of livelihoods.

Table 5: Perceptions and patterns of Migrants towards Engagement in Agriculture (N = 402)

Perceptions and patterns towards agriculture		Frequencies	Percentages
Engagement in Agricultural Employment	Yes	158	39.3
	No	244	60.7
Reasons for engagement in Agricultural Employment (n =158)	Augment family income	105	66.5
	I feel like doing it	8	5.1
	Condition	13	8.2
	Meet daily needs	6	3.8
	Because my parents are doing it	20	12.7
	Others	6	3.8
Nature of engagement (n =158)	Subsistence	95	60.1
	Commercial	24	15.2
	Both	39	24.7
Level of Engagement (n =158)	Part-Time	112	70.9
	Full-Time	46	29.1

Source: Field Survey (2014)

From the qualitative responses, the perceptions and patterns of rural migrants towards agricultural engagement were also examined. The following statements give further illustrations on the quantitative results:

Farming...hmm...am not sure. But I have not seen those from the rural communities going to farm here in Kabba town. Nobody prays for that. Everybody likes office jobs. Everybody wants to work in Chairman's Office now (KII/Olleh/Female respondent/2014).

Yes, there are some that are engaged in farming but not for profit. They are just doing it as part-time job. If you will agree with me, there are many reasons for that: one of the reasons is change of environment; farming is a village work not in city, and nobody wants to do farming as major work in Kabba town (KII/Ike/Male respondent/2014).

...some migrants engage in farming, but not common. Because some will go to farm just to augment family food provisions. Also, not everybody has the power for farm work as those days. Farming is not a city job. It is a village job. Working in civil service or doing businesses are the works migrants engage in most (KII/Ilah/Female respondent/2014).

...to me, it depends on the type of job migrants are doing in the city. The kind of job they are doing especially in Kabba will determine whether they engage in agriculture or not (FGD/Akutupa/Male participant/2014; This view is also expressed by others).

In line with literature, most rural migrants perceive agricultural employment negatively as soon as they moved to urban centres, especially those with higher educational qualifications, table 6 shows that there is no significant association between the level of educational attainment and engagement in agricultural employment (Chi square =5.71, df=3, and p-value=0.127). This implies that educational credentials do not determine whether migrants engage in agriculture or not at the urban centre.

Table 6: Education Level by Agricultural Employment (N = 402)

Educational Level	Engagement in Agriculture		
	Yes	No	Total
No formal education	1 (16.7%)	5 (83.3%)	6
Primary	5 (33.3%)	10 (66.7%)	15
Secondary	40 (32.55)	83 (67.5%)	123
Tertiary	112 (43.4%)	146 (56.6%)	258
Total	158 (39.3%)	244 (60.7%)	402

Data Source: Field Survey (2014) *significant at 0.05

Discussion of Findings

Socio-economic factors such as employment, education and social amenities were most common factors motivating the movement of rural migrants to urban centre. This finding corroborates NISER 1993 survey and Ullah's (2004) work on rural-urban migration, as it showed that rural out-migration is mostly determined by social and economic factors such as employment, education and level of social amenities. Also in the finding, kinship ties and age were found to be very significant in determining rural-urban migration. This corroborates Ekpenyong (1999) that kinship plays a very vital role in rural-urban migration. This however, suggests that rural out-migration in the study area is characterized by voluntary and economic migration which is also in line with Harris and Todaro's model of economic rationality of migration.

Findings from the study revealed that majority of the rural migrants have negative perceptions towards agricultural engagement in urban centre because it is often associated with low returns and low social status. This further sheds more lights on the fact that the few that were engaged in agriculture did so because of a lack of decent employment which is equally found to be in line with the work of Juma (2007) who stresses that agricultural employment is generally perceived

by young people as the last resort. But of most interesting in this findings however, there were a number of migrants that still engaged in agricultural economy at the destination due to some form of socio-economic constraints associated with the study area. This suggests that among the study population, not all rural migrants in the city are not engaging in agricultural employment as earlier noted by the World Bank (2011a). This however, confirms Giddens's theory of structuration that the structure and the agency mutually exists, therefore they are recursive to the extent that the socio-economic constraints of the urban centre have pushed the migrants to resort to agricultural sector in combination with other sector of the economy which would not be ordinarily encouraged by the migrants to be engaged in.

Conclusion

The study of the determinants of rural out-migration and patterns of migrants' employment in the North-Central Zone, Nigeria with regards to agricultural employment showed that there were various factors predisposing migrants to move from rural locations to urban centre. These factors were found to be voluntary and economic in nature. Also, it was revealed in the study that though majority of the rural migrants do not engaged in agricultural employment at the place of destination but a few of the migrants engaged in it as part-time or full-time which contradicts the earlier assertion that rural migrants in the cities do not engage in farming in the cities completely whereas there were factors inhibiting such over time which include inadequate capital, cattle rearers invasion, lack of government support, etc.

In the view of these findings, rural development policies to take care of rural depopulation, brain drain and rural decay; mechanized agriculture and agro-allied industries; farm stead settlements; and nomadic policy that will discourage arbitrary grazing of farm lands especially in the study area should be encouraged at all levels.

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