

EVALUATING THE IMPACTS OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY IN AKOKO SOUTH WEST LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ONDO STATE, SOUTH WESTERN NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the impacts of rural-urban migration on agricultural production in Akoko South-west Local Government Area of Ondo State. The objectives involve identifying the causes of rural-urban migration, finding out youths involvement in the agricultural production and finding out specific ways rural-urban migration has impacted negatively on agricultural production in the studied area. The data for the study were collected using questionnaires and interviews. 775 farmers were selected through proportionate sampling techniques as respondents across the 10 communities in Akoko south west L.G.A of Ondo State of people within the age of $\leq 20-60$ years. Data collected were presented using percentage frequency tables, bar charts, pie chart and graphs, From the results it was observed that 87% of the youths were leaving away from their rural communities due to inadequate social amenities, infrastructural facilities and lack of employment opportunities in their various communities. 30% of the respondents concluded that the negative impacts of rural-urban migration on agricultural production level was due to loss of manpower in the study area. It is therefore recommended among others that there should be localization of some industries, infrastructural facilities and an alternative method of farming.

Keywords: evaluating, impact, migration and agricultural productivity.

INTRODUCTION

Migration is the movement of individuals from one geographical space to another, involving permanent or temporary residence or settlement due to certain reasons such as natural disaster, physical conditions, worry of insecurity, differences in economic opportunities, differences in social amenities and change in standing such as high level of education and wealth (United Nation (UN), 2013).

According to National Geographic Expeditions (NGE) (2006), the region from where people are leaving is referred to as the source region, whereas the region where people are entering is known as the destination region. Rural-urban migration is the movement of people from rural areas (villages) to the urban centres (cities).

Migration of human population though a widely diverse phenomenon is generally recognised as an internal part of the process of socio-economic development because as a country develops more people leaves the rural communities due to lack of social amenities and infrastructural facilities in such areas like power supply, good roads, good hospital, schools, market and financial institutions (UN, 2013).

Many factors have also contributed to the poor performances of agricultural sectors. But one major factor was the rural-urban migration (especially the youths) which involves the shifting of labour force from the areas to urban centres, in search for employment, better standard of living and freedom of religion. One of the consequences of rural-urban migration is shortage of agricultural production (white, 2000).

Afshar (2003) contended that circumstances that make people to leave home for other areas are referred to as "push factors". Examples include famine, drought, low agricultural productivity, unemployment and lack of social amenities etc. He also contended that, the inadequacy of incomes, lack of gainful employment coupled with poverty in the rural areas, have pushed people out of their villages in search of better sources of livelihoods in the urban areas.

People migrate to escape from social and cultural imprisonment within extended family system which camp individuals on self development and hinder initiatives, Marriage is another identified factor influencing rural-urban migration, marriage has often been cited as a motivation for the outmigration of women (Lucas, 2003, Eze, 2016)

One of the most consistent findings of rural-urban migration was the positive correlation between education attainment and migration. There seems to be a clear association between those who had completed their education and the propensity to migrate, those with more years of schooling and everything being equal are more likely to migrate than those with little or no education at all, this may be because of the kind of jobs in the urban areas like banking, lecturing, and industrial work (Lucas, 2003), Eze, (2016) in his study in Nsukka Area equally corroborated these findings.

According to Mgbada (2010), another factor that leads to rural-urban migration is the environmental factors degradation. The intensity of human exploitation in the rural areas is a major cause of environmental degradation which in turn constitutes as major push factor causing large number of people to migrate to the urban areas.

Adepoju (2000) contended that the farming system in Nigeria has remained traditional; Farming operational activities are still being done using traditional farming implements such as cutlasses and hoes by the farmers for their agricultural production activities. This makes farming difficult, small and unrewarding, thus, making the youths not to show interest in farming and migrate to urban areas in search of better means of livelihood.

A couple of studies show the link between migration and agricultural production. First, the loss of labour through migration which may tighten the labour constraint for agricultural production and second is the earnings in the form of remittances from migrants which may loosen credit constraints and help with investments in agricultural production. These two impacts in terms of agricultural income may be positive, negative or they may offset each other. A positive effect would imply that migration complements agricultural production while a negative effect would imply that the loss of labour caused by migration reduces agricultural productivity (Rozelle, 1999).

The increasing rural-urban migration has caused on one hand the labour force for agricultural production to decline. The labour force which continuously loses a bulk of able-bodied men who are engaged in non-agricultural pursuits or are attracted away from the farms, because they received a better life in the cities and higher income. Even children who traditionally contribute a supplementary family labour force are mostly in school for a greater part of the farming year. This decreasing flow of labour and manpower from the rural areas has put a greater burden on agricultural sector, as decreasing proportion of agricultural population continues without any significant improvement in the methods of farming and production incentives, this problem may cause some farmers or families to hire labour in order to supplement the inadequate labour force, which in turns leads to increase in price of the output which may trigger off an increase in the demands by labourers thereby leading to a high price of agricultural food commodity in this area (Adepoju, 2003).

Vercueil (2004), explaining the negative effects of migration on the output of the agricultural household which receive remittances argued that remittances cause the rest of the household to substitute leisure for work which results in increased cost of labour and lands lying fallow. Mendola (2008) also argues that the use of remittances as payment for education of the future generation of the household is a very common practice which would pass as a long run investment to boost agricultural production, however in the short run it may be seen as a misdirected investment.

Rozelle (1999) worked on the relationship between migration, remittances and agricultural production in China and his findings showed that migration has a significantly negative effect on

yields and also that remittances are a positive function of migration, the negative effect on agricultural production should be a disincentive for labour migration.

The works on impact of rural-urban migration on agricultural productivity is still understudied in this part of the world and the few available ones are outdated; Moreover in Akoko South West L.G.A and its environs, no work in this area is known to have been done, yet such studies should have resulted to a more enhanced policies on migration and rural development. This present study fills this yawning research gap in time and space.

STUDY AREA

This study was carried out in Akoko south west local government area of Ondo state. This study area is located between the geographical coordinate of Latitude 7°27'30"N and 5°48'0"E and Longitude 7°27'20"N and 5°48'30"E. Oka is the administrative headquarter of Akoko south west local government area of Ondo- State. It is bounded in the East by Epinmi and Ipe, in the West by Supare and Akungba, in the North by Ise, Iboropa and Ugbe, in the South by Oba and Ikun community. According to 2006 National Population Census Figure, the population of Akoko south west local government was estimated to be 229,486 persons; Akoko south west local government covers an area of 226 Sq.km². The language spoken by the people is Yoruba, but Pigeon English are widely spoken in some communities the major occupation of the inhabitants of Akoko south west local government area is farming. The population for this study consists of (15,487) farmers that are actively involved in agricultural production in Akoko South West Local Government Area of Ondo State. The targeted population for the study constituted 15,487 farmers made up of Oka 3,050, Akungba 2,420, Iwaro 1,520, Uba 1,078, Oba 1,800, Supare 1,859, Aiyegunle 1,130, Okia 800, Aiyeye 1,090 and Etioro 740 farmers that make up of Akoko South West Local Government of Ondo State.

The atmospheric condition of Akoko South West remains almost the same as elsewhere in Ondo State. The climate of Akoko South West Local Government is equally determined by the South/ West monsoon winds and the North/ East trade winds. However, the relatively high topographic effect which produces on the plateau settlement gives better weather conditions than those on the surrounding lowlands, Akoko Southwest Local Government has a mean annual temperature of 21°C-32°C with annual rainfall of about 1,270mm, and humidity is relatively high for a good part of the year.

The economy of the study area is majorly attributed to agriculture and trading. The inhabitants engage predominantly in primary activities such as farming and trading. Precisely, a larger percentage of the people engaged in farming as their major occupation, while few engaged in other activities like trading. The soil of the area is ferruginous type, tropical hardwood such as

Mahogany, Iroko, Afara are found in this area. The major crops grown in this study area includes Cassava, Yam, Maize, Cocoa and Palm oil is mostly in abundant in this Area.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study; Proportionate sampling techniques were used to select the farmers on the basis of their communities. The sample size for this study comprise of 775 farmers selected Proportionately from the entire population of 15,487 farmers across the 10 communities that make up akoko south west L.G.A of Ondo State. The number of selected farmers according their communities are thus: Oka 153, Iwaro 76, Aiyepe 55, Okia 40, Akungba 121, Supare 93, Aiyegunle 56, Oba 90, Uba 54 and Etioro 37, farmers were selected. The sample size was determined by adapting the recommendations of Nworgu (2006), which states that the sample size for specific population could be at least 40% for a population of few hundreds, while 5% are considered appropriate for population of several thousands. Sample size of 5% of the farmers is considered appropriate for this study.

RESULTS

Table 1 Presents the age of migrants, It is observed that out of the 775 respondents, only 3% of the respondents agreed that migrants within the age of <20 years are involved in rural-urban migration, 35% of the respondents agreed that migrants within the age of 21-30 are involved in rural-urban migration, 52% of the respondents agreed that migrants within the age of 31-40 are involved in rural-urban migration, 7% of the respondents agreed that migrants within the age of 41-50 are involved in rural-urban migration, 2% of the respondents agreed that migrants within the age of 51-60 are involved in rural-urban migration, while 1% of the respondents agreed that migrants within the age of >60 are involved in rural-urban migration in the study area.

Table 2 shows that respondents within age of <20 years representing 2% do not take agricultural production as occupation, respondents within the age of 21-60years take agriculture as occupation.

Table 3 indicates the education status of the migrants, it is observed that out of the 775 respondents, 32% of the respondents responded that uneducated people were not involved much in rural-urban migration, why 68% of the respondents agreed that educated people were more involved in rural-urban migration in this study area.

Table 4 Shows the factors that cause rural-urban migration. It is observed that out of 775 respondents, 32% of the respondents were of the opinion that people migrate due to lack of social amenities & infrastructural facilities in the communities, 24% of the respondents were of the opinion that people migrate because of loss of soil fertility, 20% also were of the opinion

that people migrated in search of white collar jobs , 14% were of the opinion that people migrated for educational purposes, why 10% of the respondents were of the opinion that people also migrate, for marriage purposes. From the results it shows that the highest population of the migrants migrates as a result of lack of social amenities & infrastructural facilities in the study area.

Table 5 Indicates that 34% of youths are involved in clearing, 12% in weeding, 9% in planting, 16% in harvesting, and 29% in cultivation respectively

Table 6 Shows the impact of loss of labour force on agricultural production. It was observed that out of the 775 of the respondents, 14% of the respondents were of the opinion that as a result of loss of labour force on agricultural production the cost of agricultural produce has increased, 12% of the respondents were of the opinion that as a result of loss of labour force on agricultural production there has being high demand for agricultural food production, 22% of the respondents agreed that as a result of loss of labour force on agricultural production in the rural areas there has been a reduction in agricultural food supply, 32% of the respondents were of the opinion also that as a result of loss of labour force on agricultural production the cost of hiring labour has increased, 20% of the respondents were of the opinion that as a result of loss of labour force on agricultural production there has being a systematic reduction in farmland size being cultivated.

Table 7 Shows the impact of rural-urban migration on agriculture, it was observed that out of the 775 of the respondents, 30% were of the opinion that loss of labour force has affected agricultural production as a result of rural-urban migration, 12% were of the opinion that agricultural lands are now being used for other purposes, 22% were of the opinion that rural-urban migration has contributed to low level of agricultural production, 36% of the respondents were of the opinion that rural-urban migration has contributed to high cost of hiring labour in this study area.

Table 1: the age structures of the migrants

S/N	AGE	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAG (%)
1	<20	5	2
2	21-30	10	4
3	31-40	22	8
4	41-50	67	16
5	51-60	350	37
6	>60	326	30
	TOTAL	775	100

Source: Field survey, 2016.

Table 2: the age of the respondents who take agricultural production as occupation

S/N	AGE	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAG (%)
1	<20	32	3
2	21-30	218	35
3	31-40	424	52
4	41-50	72	7
5	51-60	20	2
6	>60	9	1
	TOTAL	775	100

Source: Field survey, 2016

Table 3: shows the educational status of the migrants.

S/N	GROUP	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Educated	554	68
2	Uneducated	221	32
	TOTAL	775	100

Source: Field survey, 2016.

Table 4: the factors that cause rural-urban migration.

S/N	FACTORS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Lack of social-amenities & infrastructural facilities	318	32
2	Loss of Soil fertility	168	24
3	In search for white collar jobs	142	20
4	For educational purpose	88	14
5	For marriage purpose	59	10
	TOTAL	775	100

Source: Field survey, 2016.

Table 5: Distribution according to activities engaged in by the youths

S/N	ACTIVITIES ENGAGED	NO OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Clearing	294	34
2	Weeding	88	12
3	Planting	75	9
4	Harvesting	91	16
5	Cultivation	227	29
	TOTAL	775	100

Source: Field survey, 2016.

Table 6: the impact of loss of labour force on agricultural production

S/N	IMPACT OF LOSS OF LABOUR FORCE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Systematic reduction in farmland cultivated	194	20
2	High cost of hiring labour	272	32
3	Reduction in agricultural production	216	22
4	High demand for agricultural food commodity	42	12
5	Increase in cost of agricultural produce.	54	14
	TOTAL	775	100

Source: Field survey, 2016.

Table 7: the impact of rural-urban migration on agriculture.

S/N	Impact	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
1	Loss of labour force	263	30
2	Agricultural land are used for other purposes	59	12
3	Low level of agricultural production	164	22
4	High cost of hiring labour	289	36
	TOTAL	775	100

Source: Field survey, 2016.

DISCUSSIONS

From the result presented in table 1 it is seen that migrants within the age of 31-40years representing 52% were more involved in rural-urban migration than any other age group, followed by migrants within the age of 21-30years representing 35% From this result it is clearly shown that the main migrants are youths within the ages of 21-30years and 31-40years in this study area. According to United Nation report (2013), despite the lack of reliable data on internal migrants, it is assumed that 40% of the migrants originated from the rural areas and many of them are youth with high propensity to migrate. According to Adesiji, Omoniwa, Adebayo, Matanmi, Akangbe, (2009).”The main source of attraction to the city and their main reason for leaving the village was because of the absence of social amenities. This was equally supported by the findings of Eze, (2016) in Nsukka Area of Enugu state. Also Herreri and Sahn (2013). Stated that migration could also be a strategy to diversify income sources and coping with the risks associated with nature and manmade. This makes families to encourage younger members to migrate purposely to have higher earnings potential and also the likelihood to remit money to members of the family at home. Eze, (2014) equally found rural-urban migration as a livelihood diversification strategy undertaken by rural households in Nsukka area of south eastern Nigeria.

From the result presented in Table 2 the age of the respondents who take agricultural production as occupation, are within the age of 31-60years representing 61% and within the age of 60years above representing 30%. These age groups were more involved in agricultural production in akoko south west LGA of Ondo State than any other age group. This concurs with the findings of International Fund for Agricultural Development (2007), which pointed out that the high level of migration among the youths from rural to urban centres in Nigeria has affected agricultural production, thereby causing the problem of food insecurity. The youths who are the productive

group in rural areas migrate to urban centres leaving behind the aged farmers and children who are weak to perform effectively some tedious farm work reserved for the youths. Thus, agricultural production and rural development suffer serious setback as a result of the youth migration out of this rural communities which was also the case in akoko southwest LGA of Ondo State.

The result on the education status of the migrants, shows that 32% of the respondents stated that uneducated people were not involved much in rural-urban migration, why 68% of the respondent's stated that educated people in this study area were involved more in rural-urban migration. Lipton, (2003) argued that due to the concentration of industries, government offices and organizations in the urban centres youths now migrate to urban centres in search of jobs, many of these migrants are educated youths who do not show interest in any agricultural activities they tends to escape to the cities where they can get good source of livelihood and good comfort. Eze, (2014) equally enlisted this evidence in his study in Nsukka region of south eastern Nigeria.

From the result presented in Table 4 32% of the respondents were of the opinion that people migrate due to lack of social amenities & infrastructural facilities in the communities, 24% of the respondents were of the opinion that loss of soil fertility cause people to engage in rural-urban migration , 20% also were of the opinion that people migrated in search of white collar jobs , 14% were of the opinion that people migrated for educational purposes, why 10% of the respondents were of the opinion that people also migrate for marriage purposes. From the results it clearly shows that the highest population of the migrants migrates as a result of lack of social amenities & infrastructural facilities and loss of soil fertility in the studied area.

Another factor that leads to rural-rural migration was environmental factors degradation. The intensity of human exploitation in the rural areas have been a major cause of environmental degradation which in turn constitutes major push factor causing large number of people to migrate to the urban areas (Mgbada, 2010).

From the result presented in table 6, 34% of youths were involved in clearing, 29% were involved in cultivation, 12% in weeding, 9% in planting, and 16% in harvesting respectively. It is equally shown that the youths were more involved in agricultural production activities at a particular point in time which happens to be the beginning of a new farming season they are more involved in clearing and cultivation than any other agricultural production activities, this is because it falls into holidays period; they are less involved in other agricultural production activities because they are back to school during such period. According to Adepoju (2003), even the children who traditionally contribute a supplementary family labour force are mostly in school for a greater part of the farming year. Corroborating further Aworemi, Abdul-Azeez and

Opoola (2011) contend that the rural community is affected because the youths and adults who are supposed to remain and contribute to the development of agriculture in particular and the community in general leave the rural areas for the cities. Elaborating further Agbonlahor, and Enilolobo (2013), maintain that with more youths migrating into the urban centres (cities) to earn a living, more aged people are now left to accomplish the tasks which are reserved for the youths. Therefore, there is no doubt that the added responsibilities on the aged people and the few farmers left in the rural areas will reduce the level of their agricultural productivity in the rural areas.

The result in Table 6 shows the impact of loss of labour force on agricultural production. It was observed from the result that, 32% agreed that as a result of loss of labour force on agricultural production activities in their various communities the cost of hiring labour has drastically increased, 22% of the respondents equally concur that due to loss of labour force on agricultural production in their communities there have been systematic reduction in agricultural food supply, 20% stated that loss of labour force on agricultural production has caused systematic reduction in farm size, why 14% of the respondents stated that loss of labour force on agricultural production has led to increase in the cost of agricultural production, 12% of the respondents believe that loss of labour force on agricultural production has resulted to increase in demand for agricultural food production in the study area, from this research results it is clearly shown that loss of labour force on agricultural production activities in this study area has made the cost of hiring labour higher and also caused systematic reduction in agricultural food supply. The 'lost labour' of able-bodied men and women could likely lead to a decline in agricultural production (Regmi, and Tisdell, 2002). According to White (2000) many factors have also contributed to the poor performances of agricultural sectors. But one major factor was the rural-urban migration (especially the youths) which involves the shifting of labour force from the rural areas to urban centres, in search for employment, better standard of living and freedom of religion. One of the consequences of rural-urban migration was shortage of agricultural production.

From the result presented in Table 7, it is observed that 36% of the respondents were of the opinion that rural-urban migration has contributed to high cost of hiring labour in the study area, 30% of the respondents agreed that rural-urban migration has caused loss of labour force which now have negative impacts on agricultural production in the study area, 12% of the respondents were of the opinion that agricultural lands are now being used for other purposes, 22% of the views that rural-urban migration has contributed to low agricultural production activities.

Rural-urban migration is a double-edge problem affecting both rural and urban communities. Aworemi, Abdul-Azeez and Opoola (2011) contend that the rural community is affected because

the youths and adults who are supposed to remain and contribute to the development of agriculture in particular and the community in general leave the rural areas for the cities.

The increasing rural-urban migration has caused on one hand the labour force for agricultural production to decline the labour force which continuously loses a bulk of able-bodied men who are engaged in non-agricultural pursuits or are attracted away from the farms, because they received a better life in the cities and higher income. Even children who traditionally contribute a supplementary to family labour force are mostly in school for a greater part of the farming year. This decreasing flow of labour and manpower from the rural areas has put a greater burden on agricultural sector, as decreasing proportion of agricultural population continues without any significant improvement in the methods of farming and production incentives, this problem may cause some farmers or families to hire labour in order to supplement the inadequate labour force, which in turn leads to increase in price of the output which may trigger off an increase in the demands by labourers thereby leading to a high price of agricultural food commodity in this area (Adepoju, 2003).

RECOMMENDATIONS

Government should provide social amenities and infrastructures to the rural areas which will serve as a check to rural-urban migration among the youths and also provide farm mechanization incentives like tractors, harvesters and planters to the farmers to perform their various agricultural production activities in order to boost the level of productivity. The rural farmers should be encouraged to form a kind of union in which the farmers can help themselves in carrying out agricultural production activities without collecting money from themselves. There should be free distribution of fertilizer to the farmers in the rural areas where they are experiencing loss of soil fertility in order to boost their agricultural productivity.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion the result from this research work revealed that the majority of the migrants in this study area were able bodied educated youths who migrate out of akoko south west L.G.A of Ondo State in search of white collar jobs, for educational purposes, for marriage purposes, due to loss of soil fertility, inadequate social amenities and infrastructural facilities in the study area. Majority of the farmers were faced with the problems of inadequate labour force as a result of youth's involvement in rural-urban migration in this area, majority of the migrants were youths who should have contributed to the work force in agricultural production activities but have migrated to the cities in search of greener pastures. The loss of labour force and able-bodied men and women had led to decline of agricultural productivity, in most rural areas. The impact of rural-urban migration resulted to a rapid deterioration of the rural economy leading to chronic

poverty and food insecurity. This arises mainly due to excessive drain of youth from the rural population thus leaving only the older and aged members of the family to constitute the labour force for agriculture in the rural area. Therefore, concerted effort should be made to retain our able bodied youths from migrating to cities and there must be provision of socio-economic amenities and infrastructures which will help to provide employment opportunities for the educated youths and those who are eager to go to the cities because of presence of social amenities and infrastructures Also introduction of farm mechanization system to perform some of the farming operational activities in other to improve the level of agricultural production is required. It is believed that if these suggestions are integrated into the policy framework and gregariously pursued, rural out-migration will be curtailed and agricultural productivity will be sustainably improved, not only in Akoko South-West Local Government Area of Ondo State but the entire South-Western Nigeria.

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