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Determinants of Rural-Urban Migration on Farming Communities in Wukari Local Government Area, Taraba State, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the determinants of rural-urban migration in Wukari Local government Area, Taraba State. The study was designed to achieve the following objectives; identify the push and pull parameters associated with rural-urban migration and to determine the factors responsible for rural-urban migration in the study area. Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire administered to 110 respondents, randomly selected from six council wards of the local government area. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression. The result of the study revealed that rural-urban migration in the area is caused by both pull and push factors of people. The pull factors include; better job opportunities in the cities with superior wages, better learning conditions, good marketing facilities, better health facilities, good electricity supplies in the cities are the pull factors that attract rural youths to the urban areas. While insecurity, lack of farm inputs, land issues, family conflict among others were the push factors that makes them to migrate away from their community to the urban areas. It was also found from the regression estimates of the rural factors influencing rural-urban migration that health facilities, sources of electricity, water source, distance to telecom service, distance to tarred road, security threat and availability of market were the significant factors influencing rural-urban migration in the area. The study therefore recommended that government should develop the rural areas in terms of formulating policies that would advance the education and health care facilities in rural areas. The government should also formulate policies that would provide basic social amenities in the rural areas that would help in curtailing the rate of movement from rural areas to urban centres for sake of basic amenities.

Keywords: Determinants, Rural-Urban, Migration, Farming, Communities

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INTRODUCTION

Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa with an estimated population of 198 Million (NPC, 2006). The population, like in most of Sub-Saharan Africa, is exceptionally young, and out of every 100 Nigerians, 55 are under age, 20 and 28 are between ages 20 and 40. Nigeria has witnessed high rates of urbanization in the last two decades. Between 1990 and 2014, the urban population has grown rapidly with an average annual increase of 4.5%, while the rural population has grown slowly at a rate of 1.4% (World Bank, 2016). According to the Hinde (2014), the country is projected to have the third largest absolute increase in the size of the urban population by 2050, and this means three times more than the size of its current urban population.

In spite of the oil, agriculture remains the base of the Nigerian economy, providing the main source of livelihood for most Nigerians (Boliko, 2019). The rural areas in Nigeria like most Africa countries have been typically associated with Agriculture (Oginni, 2019). According to the World Bank collection of development indicators in 2015, rural population in Nigeria was reported at 52.2%, and these rural dwellers rely largely on farming for their food and conventional earnings. Evidence has shown that majority of the population in most rural areas are small scale farmers providing food for human consumption and raw materials for export and manufacturing industries. Agriculture also serves as a source of employment to most rural people (World Bank, 2014).

The migration phenomenon in Africa can be better understood within the context of political and historical evolution of African societies (Adepoju, 2018). The effects of colonization

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and decolonization on the economy and indirectly on migration are most visible when examined in the context of the pre-colonial, the colonial and post-colonial era. In the pre-colonial era, population movements in Africa were associated largely with the prevailing socio-political and ecological conditions especially internecine warfare, natural disasters and the search for farmland (Awumbila *et al.*, 2014).

These movements were as a result unstructured, occurred in groups and the migrants were demographically undifferentiated. Colonial rule paved way for peace and political stability thereby reducing movements due to war and political stability (Onwudingo 2012; Ovharhe *et al.*, 2022). West Africa has experienced a variety of migrations caused by population pressure, poverty, poor economic performance and endemic conflict. Contemporary patterns of migration in West Africa are rooted in socio-economic, political and historical via cultural factors which have shaped the direction of movement and types of economic activities (Onwudingo 2012; Eze, 2014).

Colonial regime altered the motivation and composition of migration by introducing and enforcing various blends of political and economic structures, imposing tax regimes and establishing territorial boundaries (Eze, 2014). In Nigeria today, internal migration as is observed started on a small scale during the first decade of the twentieth century when British rule was firmly established in Nigeria. The pattern of migration, the distance covered and the number of people involved reflected the state of development of the economy of the young colonial territory. The colonial economy was based largely on the production of export industrial crops, mineral and forest products, and it was the areas producing these commodities, as well as the two major ports of Lagos and Port Harcourt, that attracted most migrants (Ango, 2014).

Migration is complex phenomenon with diverse effects on the economic, social and security lives of people which has to do with the movements of all works of life to different location (McAuliffe, 2021). This movement comprises of both international and internal migration to urbanize cities especially in Sub-Sahara Africa. Rural-urban migration has been a major driver of Nigeria's rapid urbanization, and this is as a result of demographic pressure on natural resources in rural areas, and higher potential incomes and economic opportunities in urban areas (World Bank, 2016). Rural push" factors have encouraged people to move to cities especially declining incomes in agriculture due to an overvalued exchange rate and high levels of conflict in northern and central regions. Rural-urban migration is the most important aspect of labour migration because it affects the structures and composition of the population.

Rural migration as noted by several writers (Fayomi and Ehiagwina 2019; Lewis and D'Alessandro 2019) have been associated with decline in food production, farming activities, fishing, urban congestion, inadequate infrastructural facilities in urban areas and so on. The decline in food production in developing countries such as Nigeria can be linked to the impart of rural-urban farmers migration as well as other

variable factors such as economic, soil quality, ecology, climatic conditions, socio-cultural setting and poor farm management (Lewis, 2013). With the mass migration of farmers from rural to urban areas, only few individuals are left behind, consequently the cost of labour has been on the increase. With this trend, most farmers have found it increasable difficult to afford the high cost of labour. Even when some can afford it, labour is readily unavailable because many individuals have migrated to cities and most of those left behind may not be interested in agricultural activities (Jha *et al.*, 2017).

Further, inadequate housing and associated facilities (such as water, electricity, waste disposal) in the urban areas resulting in millions living in substandard environments called slums and grossly inadequate social amenities, such as, a shortage of schools, poor health facilities and lack of opportunities for recreation among others. Migration to urban areas is placing pressure on limited appropriate housing, resulting in increases in the numbers of urban residents now found to reside in informal housing (Amrevurayire and Ojeh, 2016). Rural communities share this burden through loss of manpower necessary for agricultural activities and production. It also results into reduction in agricultural productivity which in turn leads to food insecurity and soaring price of food. Consequently, agriculture which prior to discovery of oil was the mainstay of Nigeria's economy with activities concentrated in the rural areas was far relegated to the background leading to the country's mono-economy status (Amrevurayire and Ojeh, 2016).

The rate of migration is generally increasing all over the world. In developing or poor countries, people migrate from one area to another due to facilities of employment, security and to fulfill the subsistence need. Islam *et al.* (2015) rightly put that rural poor consider migration as a process to be free from the vicious cycle of poverty. According to Wondimagegnhu and Zeleke (2017), the problem of rural out-migration has been rising in Nigeria and has been attracting the focus of government, non-governmental, national, regional, and international agencies. It is a major factor in the Wukari, occurring between rural to urban centers.

Bello and Abdullahi (2021) inferred that majority of migrants from rural to urban areas in Nigeria migrated because of ethno religious crisis, insecurity that affected the area while others to continue their education, search for employment, basic amenities, to join family members in the city and to look for money through labour. In same case, the prevailing economic situation, natural disaster, wars and political crises do compel people to migrate. Over the years, in Nigeria, political and religious crises have played a great role in urban-rural and rural-urban migration, but the latter is relatively more regular.

Actually, this situation has created a lot of imbalance in the sense that the available economic activities supposed to be engaged by the vibrant rural inhabitants have now been left to the very few elderly men and women. Hence, there is overcrowding of people in the cities. Besides, the available facilities in the urban places are being overstretched.

Consequently, different problems emanating from crowding in cities include: housing deficiency, leading to slums here and there; waste management difficulties due to the rise in urban waste, which does not match with the available waste management facilities; crimes and social vices are on the increase as the unemployed migrants resort to robbery, kidnapping, financial fraud, among others, as means of survival.

Notwithstanding, the rural communities are not exception as they to tend face a huge blow from lack of sufficient labour force which in turns result to high cost of labour as individual who ought to be available in providing the needed work force have migrated in search of better livelihood thereby resulting to low agricultural output in the rural environment. It is on this background that this study was aimed to analyse the determinants of rural-urban migration on farming communities in Wukari local government area, Taraba State. With specific objectives as follows; identify the socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, identify the push and pull factors affecting migration in the study area and analyse the determinants of rural-urban migration the study area rural.

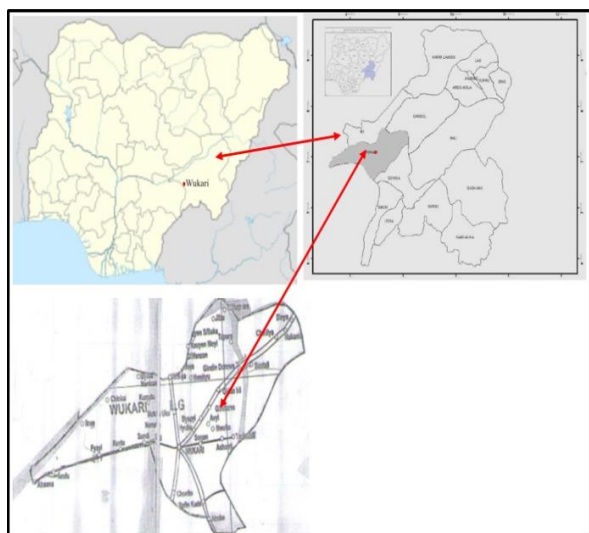


Figure 1: Map showing the study area

Sample and Sampling Technique

Multistage sampling procedure was employed in selecting respondents for this study. In the first stage, six wards out of the ten wards in the local government were purposively selected based on the prevalence of rural-urban migration as it affect agricultural activities in those areas. The second stage involved the random sampling of fifty five communities from the selected wards. The final stage involved a random selection of two respondents from each community to give a total of 110 respondents for the study.

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected from primary source. Primary data were collected with the use of structured questionnaires.

Data Analysis

Relevant data obtained from the questionnaire were summarized and subjected to both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistical tools such as frequency, percentage and mean were used to identify the push and pull factors affecting rural-urban migration in the study area and Inferential statistical (multiple regression) was used to analyze the factors influencing rural-urban migration in the study area.

Multiple regression

The model is stated thus:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \beta_3X_3 + \beta_4X_4 + \beta_5X_5 + \beta_6X_6 + \beta_7X_7 + \beta_8X_8 + ei$$

Y= Number of migrated youth

X₁= Access to education facility in meters

X₂= Distance to health facility in Km

X₃ = Electricity source in number

X₄= Source of water in number

X₅= Distance to access telecom services

X₆= Distance to the tarred road

X₇= Security operatives in number of sources

X₈= Market type in number

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Pull Factors as Causes of Migration

Results in table 1 revealed that better job opportunities in the cities with superior wages (26.36%), better learning conditions (29.09%), good marketing facilities (27.73), better health facilities (28.18), good electricity supplies in the cities (24.55) are the pull factors that attract rural youths to the urban areas. This shows that most youths migrated to the urban centers in order to improve their living standard. Furthermore, access to good road (27.27), good source of water supply (31.82), better access to network supplies (23.64) among others were sources of attraction to the youths. This implies that if the above mentioned infrastructural facilities are not provided to the people of the rural areas, mass movement of youths will continue. This is in conformity with the work of Alarima (2018) who revealed that better employment opportunities; superior wages in urban areas, improved living conditions are the pull factors that attract rural youths to the urban centers.

Table 1: Pull factors as a source of attraction to the urban areas (n=110)

Causes	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Job	29	26.36	6
Education	32	29.09	2
Marketing	25	27.73	4
Health	31	28.18	3
Electricity	27	24.55	2

Good road	30	27.27	7
Water	35	31.82	1
Network	26	23.64	8
Others	14	12.73	9

Source: Field survey, 2023.

The Push Factors for Leaving the Rural Areas

The results in table 2 revealed that the insecurity in the study area (34.55%), lack of farm inputs (16.36%), land issues (20.91%), family conflict in the study areas (18.18%) were the push factors that makes them to migrate away from their community to the urban areas. Other factors include communal dispute (14.45), religious crisis in the study areas (10.00%), lack of capital (11.82%), and other related factors (8.18%) were the push factors that make the youths to move out of their rural communities.

Table 2: Push factors for leaving the rural areas (n=110)

Causes	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Rank
Insecurity	38	34.55	1
Lack of farm inputs	18	16.36	4
Land issues	23	20.91	2
Family conflict	20	18.18	3
Communal dispute	17	14.45	5
Religion crisis	11	10.00	7
Lack of capital	13	11.82	6
Others	9	8.18	8

Source: Field survey, 2023.

Rural Factors Influencing Rural-Urban Migration

The regression estimates of the rural factors influencing rural-urban migration in the area were analyzed in table 3. From the table, coefficient of multiple determinations (R^2) was 0.724 which implies that 72.4% of variation in rural-urban migration

was explained by the variable included in the model. The F-value was 7.009 and statistically significant at 1% level of significance indicating the goodness of-fit of the model for this analysis. The significant factors influencing rural-urban migration were health facilities, sources of electricity, water source, distance to telecom service, and distance to tarred road, security threat and availability of market.

The result of health facilities in the rural area was negative and statistically significant at 5% level; with a coefficient of -0.231. This implies that number of rural-urban migration will decrease as the number of health facilities in the rural area increases. Empirically, an increase in the number of health facilities will decrease the rural-urban migration by 0.231 unit assuming other factors were held constant. This is because the rural dwellers will not need to migrate to the urban centers to access health facilities.

Sources of electricity were negative and significant at 1% level of significance with coefficient of -0.563. This implies that rural-urban migration decreases by 0.563 units as the rural community gets one source of electricity. This could be as a result of the people moving to where they can have access to electricity.

The table further revealed that water source was negative and significant at 10% level of significance with coefficient of -0.171. This means that an increase in water supply to the communities will decrease rural-urban migration by 0.122 units. This suggests that the rural dwellers lack portable water and migrate in response to water scarcity.

The distance to telecom service of the rural communities had a direct relationship on the rural-urban migration meaning that the longer the distance from the rural communities to telecom services, the more it positively influenced rural-urban migration. Distance to tarred road also had a direct relationship with the rural-urban migration which means that the further the distance from the communities to the main road the more the number of people to be migrated from the community. This may be connected to the people desire to be closed to where they access social amenities that are lacking in their communities.

Security threat was positive and significant at 10% level of significance with coefficient of 0.162. This suggests that rural-urban migration increases by 0.162 units with every additional case of security threats in the community. This is due to the absent of security personnel in most rural areas studied.

Availability of market was negative and significant at 1% level of significance with coefficient of -0.376. This implied that rural-urban migration decreases by 0.376 units with increase in any level of markets in the communities.

Table 3: Rural Factors Influencing Rural-Urban Migration (n=110)

Item	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t-Value
	B	Std. Error	Beta	
Constant	-874.752	437.244		-2.001**
Education Facilities	32.805	74.708	0.047	0.439
Health Facilities	-341.917	141.991	-0.231	-2.408**
Sources of Electricity	-228.058	45.153	-0.563	-5.051***
Water Source	-114.617	67.425	-0.171	-1.700*
Distance to Telecom Service	133.228	48.051	0.236	2.773***
Distance to Tarred Road	28.729	7.557	0.351	3.802***
Security Threat	17.415	10.461	0.162	1.665*
Availability of Market	-412.739	100.115	-0.376	-4.123***
R-Square				0.724 (72.4%)
F-Value				7.009***

***Significant at 1%, **Significant at 5% and *Significant at 10%

Conclusion

The study conclusively establishes that rural-urban migration in Wukari Local Government Area is driven by a complex interplay of both push and pull factors, with significant consequences for farming communities. While urban centers attract rural youth through better job opportunities, superior wages, improved learning conditions, healthcare, electricity, and market facilities, the rural areas simultaneously face critical deficiencies including insecurity, lack of farm inputs, land disputes, and inadequate infrastructure such as poor roads, water sources, and telecom services. The regression analysis further confirms that health facilities, electricity sources, water supply, distance to telecom services and tarred roads, security threats, and market availability are significant determinants influencing migration decisions. This persistent out-migration of the agricultural labour force threatens local food production, increases labour costs, and undermines the viability of farming as a livelihood in rural communities. Therefore, addressing rural-urban migration effectively requires targeted government intervention to improve rural infrastructure, enhance security, provide basic amenities, and create economic opportunities that can reduce the attractiveness of urban centres and sustain agricultural productivity in the study area.

Recommendations

- i. The government should develop rural areas by formulating policies that advance education and healthcare facilities in rural communities.
- ii. The government should formulate policies that provide basic social amenities (such as electricity, clean water, and good roads) in rural areas to help curtail the rate of movement from rural areas to urban centers.

- iii. Authorities should address security threats and improve the availability of farm inputs and market facilities to reduce push factors driving migration.
- iv. Interventions should focus on reducing distances to telecom services and tarred roads, as these significantly influence rural-urban migration.

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