

## **Socio-Economic Factors Associated with Urban-Rural Migration in Nigeria: A Case Study of Oyo State, Nigeria**

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**ABSTRACT** The study investigated socio-economic factors influencing movement of people from urban centres to rural areas in Nigeria with particular focus on Oyo State of Nigeria. Purposive sampling technique was used to sample 160 migrants in rural areas for the study. Data were collected from the respondents using interview schedule. The principal results of the study reveal that most of the respondents left the urban centres for the rural areas because of their inability to secure jobs in the towns, transfer to rural areas in their places of work, retirement and high cost of living in the urban centres. Also, the principal results show that there is a positive and significant relationship between lengths of stay of migrants in the rural areas and their ages ( $r = 0.442$ ,  $p = 0.01$ ). There are significant differences in the lengths of stay on migration by the single, married, widowed and divorced migrants since the calculated F-ratio (3.04) exceeds the tabulated F-ratio (2.74). It is recommended that government should encourage the drift of people to rural areas by making available such amenities that would encourage the stay of the migrants. This encouragement would enhance rapid rural development and bring the rural communities to the mainstream of national development.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Migration is considered as the movement of people from one geographical region to another, which may be on temporary or permanent basis. People migrate based on the prevailing conditions and the reasons for it vary from one person to another depending on the situation that brought about the decision. Migration is a selective process affecting individuals or families with certain economic, social, educational and demographic characteristics.

Migration occurs as a response to economic development as well as social, cultural, environmental and political factors and effects on areas of origin as well as destination. People tend to move away from a place due to need to escape violence, political instability, drought, congestion in various dimensions and suspected or real persecution. Also, adverse physical conditions such as flood, landslide (erosion and earthquake), insects and pests, soil infertility contribute largely to the reasons why people leave one environment for another.

Studies by Fadayomi (1998) reveal general persistence of rural-urban and rural-rural migration types. Studies by Okpara (1983) reveal that migrants from rural to urban areas are always many compared to those coming from urban to rural areas. The movement from rural to urban

areas makes a negative impact on the quality of rural life especially when such migrants carry away their needed consumption into the city. Migration of young adults from the rural areas also placed a greater burden on the farmers. For farmers to cover the same area of land as when he had extra assistance, he must work much longer hours thus depriving him of some time for leisure or participation in various social activities. On the other hand, studies by Ijere (1994) reveal that rural-urban migration has a positive impact on urban growth and social development, which makes generation of employment opportunities and provision of educational facilities and transportation infra-structure for the migrants.

Today, urban-rural migration is one of the most important modes of migration which exist in the society. Until recently, researchers have not paid much attention to the rural-urban drift. Studies by William (1970) reveal that some factors could send one off a place, which might be due to crisis, old age, transfer, retirement and invasion of pests and diseases. Also some social factors may evolve to make people migrate to rural areas. Studies by Jibowo (1992) show that factors influencing people to migrate to rural areas might be as a result of city congestion, traffic, dams, sanitation problems, increasing urban unemployment, increased crime rate and housing problem. These problems are so great in many

developing countries that rural development has been a cardinal programme of political campaigns by many politicians.

This study therefore investigated those factors that are associated with the urban to rural migration in Nigeria. Specifically, this study investigated factors associated with movement of people from towns to rural areas and some of the socio-economic characteristics of the migrants. The study hypothesized that there are no significant relationships between lengths of stay of migrants in the rural areas and some of their socio-economic characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, years of formal education and occupation.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study was carried out in Oyo State of Nigeria. Oyo State is located in the south-west Nigeria. The capital of the Oyo state is located in Ibadan, which is the second largest city in Africa. Ona-Ara Local Government Area is a rural area with close proximity to Ibadan. The urban-rural migrants in the area constitute the population for the study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the migrants for the study. A total of 160 respondents were sampled for the study. Interview schedule was used in collecting data from the respondents. Some socio-economic characteristics of the respondents were identified and measured at certain levels of measurement. Ages and years of formal education received by the respondents were measured at ratio level, while gender, marital status and occupations were measured at nominal level. Lengths of stay of respondents in the rural areas were measured at ratio level by asking the respondents to indicate how many years they have stayed in the rural community.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Socio-Economic Characteristics of the Respondents:** The results of the study reveal that a majority (57.5 %) of the respondents had their ages between 40 and 69 years, with the highest concentration in the range of 50-59 years (Table 1). A majority (76.3%) of the respondents are male migrants, while about 23.7 percent were female migrants. About 71.0 percent of the respondents were married, 22.5 percent were single. It may be inferred that most of the urban-rural migrants are married men. This category of

respondents is absentee heads of households.

The results also reveal that about only few

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents by their socio-economic characteristics**

| <i>Socio-economic characteristics</i> | <i>Frequency</i> | <i>Cumulative frequency</i> | <i>Cumulative percentage</i> |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Age (years)</i>                    |                  |                             |                              |
| 20 – 29                               | 34               | 34                          | 21.3                         |
| 30 – 39                               | 30               | 64                          | 40.0                         |
| 40 – 49                               | 28               | 92                          | 57.5                         |
| 50 – 59                               | 38               | 130                         | 81.3                         |
| 60 – 69                               | 26               | 156                         | 93.5                         |
| >70                                   | 4                | 160                         | 100.0                        |
| <i>Gender</i>                         |                  |                             |                              |
| Male                                  | 122              | 122                         | 76.3                         |
| Female                                | 38               | 160                         | 100.0                        |
| <i>Marital Status</i>                 |                  |                             |                              |
| Married                               | 114              | 114                         | 71.3                         |
| Single                                | 36               | 150                         | 93.5                         |
| Widowed                               | 4                | 154                         | 96.3                         |
| Divorced                              | 6                | 160                         | 100.0                        |
| <i>Years of Formal Schooling</i>      |                  |                             |                              |
| 0                                     | 28               | 28                          | 17.5                         |
| 1 – 6                                 | 42               | 70                          | 43.8                         |
| 7– 12                                 | 44               | 114                         | 71.3                         |
| 13–18                                 | 46               | 160                         | 100.0                        |
| <i>Occupations</i>                    |                  |                             |                              |
| Farming                               | 6                | 6                           | 3.8                          |
| Trading                               | 32               | 38                          | 23.8                         |
| Civil service                         | 42               | 80                          | 50.0                         |
| Artisanship                           | 80               | 160                         | 100.0                        |

Source: Field Survey, 2003

respondents (17.5%) did not receive any form of formal education, while a majority (82.5%) had received one form of formal education or the other. About 27.0% and 28.8% of the educated migrants had received post primary and post secondary education respectively. It may be concluded that people who had received formal education also moved from urban to rural areas to settle down. About half of the migrants are artisans, while 26.3 percent are civil servants. Only 3.8 percent of the migrants went into farming.

**Socio-Economic Factors Influencing Migration:** The results of the study show that a majority (67.5%) of the respondents left the town for rural areas due to factors ranging from inability to secure jobs, transfer from their place of work, retirement to high cost of living in the town (Table 2). The greatest proportion of the migrants moved to rural areas due to high cost of living in urban centres. Another 11.3 percent moved away because of congestion in the urban centres.

**Lengths of Stay of Migrants in Rural Areas:**

The results of the study reveal that 45 percent of the migrants had spent between 1 and 5 years in the rural areas, while 37.5 percent had spent 6 to 10 years in migration (Table 2). The results indicate that a majority of the migrants migrated to the rural areas not too long. This is an indicator that if rural areas are well developed; it will encourage influx of people into rural areas from the urban centres.

**Relationship Between Migrants' Socio-Economic Characteristics and their Lengths of****Table 2: Distribution of respondents by migration**

| Factors influencing migration | Frequency | Cumulative frequency | Cumulative percentage |
|-------------------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Job                           | 28        | 28                   | 17.5                  |
| Cost of living                | 40        | 68                   | 42.5                  |
| Transfer                      | 26        | 94                   | 58.8                  |
| Old age/retirement            | 14        | 108                  | 67.5                  |
| Religious crisis              | 4         | 112                  | 70.0                  |
| Political unrest              | 10        | 122                  | 76.3                  |
| Congestion                    | 18        | 140                  | 87.5                  |
| Sickness                      | 4         | 144                  | 90.0                  |
| Family problem                | 16        | 160                  | 100.0                 |

  

| Lengths of stay (years) | Frequency | Cumulative frequency | Cumulative percentage |
|-------------------------|-----------|----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 – 5                   | 72        | 72                   | 45.0                  |
| 6 –10                   | 60        | 132                  | 82.0                  |
| 11– 15                  | 14        | 146                  | 91.3                  |
| 16 –20                  | 12        | 158                  | 98.8                  |
| > 20                    | 2         | 160                  | 100.0                 |

Source: Field Survey, 2003

**Migration:** The results in Table 3 show a positive and significant relationship between lengths of migration and the ages of the migrants ( $r = .442$ ) at 1% level. In order words, the older the migrant the longer he/she stayed in the rural areas. However, migrants' years of formal schooling had a negative but non-significant relationship with their lengths of migration ( $r = -.165$ ). Also the results reveal that marital statuses of the migrants contributed significantly to lengths of their migration. This is because the F-calculated value (3.04) exceeds F-tabulated value (2.74) at 5% level (Table 4). Married respondents stayed longer as migrants in rural areas. Gender of the migrants had no significant contribution to their lengths of migration. The F-calculated ( $F = 1.72$ ) is lower than F-calculated value ( $F$ - ratio = 3.95) at 5% level.

**Table 3: Correlation between migrants' lengths of stay and their ages and years of formal education**

| Variables                 | Lengths of stay | Ages    | Years of formal education |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---------|---------------------------|
| Lengths of stay           | 1.00            | .442**  | -.165                     |
| Ages                      | .442**          | 1.00    | -.402                     |
| Years of formal education | -.165           | -.402** | 1.00                      |

\*\* Significant r- value at 1% level

Source: Field Survey, 2003

**Table 4: Analysis of variance of differences in lengths of stay of genders and marital groups**

| Categories     | Mean years of stay | F-calculated | F-tabulated |
|----------------|--------------------|--------------|-------------|
| Gender         |                    | 1.72         | 3.95        |
| Male           | 7.51               |              |             |
| Female         | 5.74               |              |             |
| Marital status |                    | 3.04         | 2.74        |
| Single         | 4.17               |              |             |
| Married        | 8.11               |              |             |
| Divorced       | 7.00               |              |             |
| Widowed        | 4.50               |              |             |

\* Significant F-ratio at 5% level

Source: Field Survey, 2003

**CONCLUSION**

Majority of the respondents are married men who had received some forms of formal education. A majority of the migrants moved to rural areas in the recent past. The major factors that influenced the movement to rural areas from the urban centre included inability to secure jobs and high cost of living in the urban centres, transfer to rural areas in their places of work and retirement. The ages and marital statuses of the migrants contributed significantly to their lengths of stay in the rural areas.

It is recommended that government should encourage the drift of people to rural areas by making available such amenities that would encourage the stay of the migrants. Also, migrants should be encouraged to form themselves into cooperative societies which can be used to attract the attention of the Government or Non-governmental organizations to establish different cottage industries in the rural areas. This encouragement would enhance rapid rural development and bring the rural communities to the mainstream of national development.

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