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Rural-Urban Migration and Socio-Economic Life of Rural Communities in Borno State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The continuous and high rate of rural-urban migration in Nigeria has become a societal tumour and a great concern not only to the receiving communities but also to the rural areas, which has grave consequences. This study, therefore, investigates the causes and; effects of rural-urban migration on the socio-economic life of the rural communities in Borno state, Northeastern Nigeria, focusing on Maiduguri the capital city. The study attempted to find answers to research questions using survey design and purposive sampling techniques to collect data from 372 respondents through a structured questionnaire and personal interview. The respondents comprised heads of households of migrants in the New Settlement Areas (NSAs) within the Metropolis. Data for this study were edited, coded and analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Science (SPSS-v20) and descriptive statistics. The finding revealed that most migrants migrated for fear of insecurity with corresponding values ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.86$). It is also revealed that the effect of rural-urban migration on the socio-economic life of the rural communities is a decrease in agricultural production with statistical value ($M = 3.89$, $SD = 1.89$). Based on the findings, the paper recommended that the government provide adequate security measures by eliminating all forms of social and political barriers to the security of the rural communities in the state among others.

Keywords: Rural-urban migration, Socioeconomic life, Insecurity, Rural community.

Introduction

Rural-urban migration has been a notable aspect of human society since time immemorial. The United Nations reports that more than half of the global population now resides in urban regions, a proportion expected to rise to two-thirds by 2050 (United Nations, 2018). Various factors compel individuals and families to depart from rural settings to pursue opportunities in urban centres. The allure of enhanced economic prospects in cities is a primary catalyst for rural-urban migration. Urban areas often promise higher wages, a broader array of job opportunities, and access to crucial services like healthcare and education (Islam, Jahan & Yesmin, 2022; Nkweke, 2012). In the same vein, Tunde (2005) also observe that rural-urban migration is motivated by the persistent inequality in the distribution of social and economic infrastructure such as pipe-borne water, good roads, electricity, health facilities and industries among others in rural and urban communities.

Statement of the Problem

The prevalence of mass influx of migrants to the urban centres, have posed a serious threat to the socio-economic life of the rural communities. The allure of enhanced safety and security in urban areas amidst the prevailing conflicts in the state serves as a primary impetus for this movement. Additionally, the search for better economic prospects and access to social services like healthcare and education further motivates individuals and families to seek refuge in Maiduguri may be

contributing factors. Based on this background, therefore, this paper sought to investigate the rural urban migration and how it impact the socio-economic life of the rural communities in Borno state.

Objectives of the Study

Specifically, the study sought to:

- i. Investigate the perceived reasons for rural urban migration in Borno state,
- ii. Examine the impact of rural-urban migration on socioeconomic life of the rural communities in Borno state,

Research Questions

- i. What are perceived reasons for rural-urban migration in Borno state?
- ii. How does rural-urban migration impact the socioeconomic life of the rural communities?

Literature Review

The movement of people from one settlement to another, apparently in search of a better livelihood is not a novel phenomenon. Scholars like Udo (1980); (Adewale, 2005 and Badolo (2020),) described migration as the movement of people from one geographical region to another, which may be on a temporary or permanent basis, depending on the situation at hand. The decision to migrate may vary from one person to another and it is mostly influenced by some prevailing conditions. In like vein, Adewale (2005)

observed that migration mostly occurs in response to economic development, as well as social, cultural, environmental, and political factors, affecting both the areas of origin and destination. People tend to migrate to escape violence, political instability, drought, flood, congestion, and persecution, whether suspected or real.

Ezeah (2005) and Ele (2006) conceptualized rural communities as areas with low-density populations or villages whose population engages mainly in primary production activities like agriculture, fishing, and rearing of livestock. Nyagba (2006) revealed that about 90 per cent of the rural labour workforce engages directly or indirectly in agriculture. However, on rural migration, Bukar, Mali & Ngada (2021) are of the view that rural-urban migration is the movement of people from rural areas (villages) to urban centres (cities). This movement, however, Tunde (2005) saw it as being motivated by the disparity in economic opportunities between rural areas and urban centres.

The decisions to migrate may involve contextual factors, such as push and pull factors which force migrants out of rural areas and pull factors which attract migrants to urban centres. Jahan (2012; Adewole, 2005 and Bukar, Hussaini & Ngada 2021) have identified the push factors like conflict, crop failure, unsafe environment, and natural disasters like floods responsible for rural-urban migration. The economic base of rural areas solely depended on agriculture; when the productivity of the land declines and the environment is not conducive to maintaining the livelihood of the peasants will definitely force people to depart from rural residences to the cities. The pull factor, however, relates to the place a person migrates to. These pull factors are economic and social glairing which attract migrants to urban centres which include good job opportunities, infrastructural facilities, entrepreneurial skills, adequate provision of social education, electricity and healthcare services (Braun, (2004)). Other factors like insurgencies have disrupted the essential services in the rural regions, compelling families to move to cities where schools and hospitals are more functional and accessible (IDMC, 2019); Onuoha, 2014; Tacoli, 2011). A study conducted by the scholars like Tacoli, (2004) & Tunde (2009 and Ishiaque & Ullah (2013) demonstrated unanimously agreement that the migration process especially rural-urban often has grave consequences on the rural economy as it affects food production, agricultural exports, the rural demand for manufactured goods and future economic surplus in agriculture available for investment elsewhere in the economy. Due to rural-urban migration, rural communities suffer from a loss of manpower necessary for agricultural activities as younger, more productive individuals move to urban centres seeking better opportunities. In like vein, Ajarero & Madu (2014) Lykke, 2002 in Omonigho & Olaniyan, (2013) lamented that rural-urban drift causes rural depopulation and this cause a lot of problems in terms of rural development as the young, skilled adults are missing. Similarly, Mini (2001) argued that in most rural areas, the impact of rural-urban migration was a rapid deterioration of the rural economy leading to chronic poverty and food insecurity. These arise mainly due to the excessive drain of youth from the rural populace thus leaving only the older and aged members to constitute the labour force of the rural area

Tunde (2009) conducted an exploratory and descriptive research on rural- urban migration and agricultural development in Nigeria. The finding revealed that rural-urban is selective of age, marital status, and educational background while the primary reason for the movement is to better themselves economically. The study also revealed that the massive influx of people to the urban centres is due to the dearth of agricultural infrastructure and economic opportunities and the neglect suffered by the agricultural sector.

Bukar, Hussaini and Ngada (2021) also conducted survey research on the consequences of rural- urban migration in Damaturu, Yobe state, Nigeria and the study revealed that among the major causes of rural-urban migration in the study area are seeking employment and business opportunities. Other factors include rural poverty, unemployment and lack of social amenities in the rural area.

Theoretical Framework

This study hinged on Everett Spurgeon Lee's (1966) theory of migration to explain the causes of rural-urban migration in the study area. Lee, a Professor of Sociology at the University of Georgia is known for his pioneering theory of migration, which is known as the "Push and Pull Theory". Lee identified push and pull factors as propelling forces for migration. The Push factors are associated with the area of origin, such as political instability, food scarcity, unemployment, and poor living conditions, while pull factors relate to the destination area, including job opportunities, better living conditions, and access to education and healthcare services

Lee (1966) proposed that conditions at the origin would be more influential than those at the destination and that personal factors affecting individual thresholds would encourage or delay migration. Summarily, the reasons that people migrate are determined by push and pull factors, which are forces that either induce people to move to a new location or oblige them to leave old residences. This theory, therefore, describes migration as an adjustment strategy where workers divide their time between various labour markets to maximize their expected earnings. Bukar, Hussaini & Ngada, (2021)) added that potential migrants consider the probability of urban employment, and despite higher current income in rural areas, they may migrate in hopes of higher future earnings. This theory, however, primarily reflects Western experiences, it provides a framework for understanding the causes of migration.

Methodology

The study used a descriptive survey research design. The population for the study comprised all household heads of migrants' families in Maiduguri the capital city of Borno state, Nigeria. A purposive sampling technique was used to select six New settlement areas occupied mostly by migrants. A total of 372 respondents were randomly selected for the study. From each New Settlement Area (NSA), 62 household heads of rural-urban migrants were randomly selected for the study. A questionnaire tagged "Rural-urban Migration and Socio-economic Life Questionnaire (RUMSELQ) developed by the

researchers was used for data collection. It was a questionnaire with three sections. Section (A) sought information about the migrants' demographic characteristics, section (B) consisted of 17 items focusing on scenario questions on reasons for rural urban migration and section C consisted of 12 items on impact of rural-urban migration on livelihood of rural communities rated on a 4-points Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), Strongly Disagree (SD).

The validity of the instrument was ascertained using the content validity approach to determine the extent to which the instruments in the questionnaire correspond with the research objectives. The content validity was done by submitting the instrument to two experts in the Department of Sociology who vetted and ascertained their adequacy for use in this research. The reliability was determined by the use of the Cronbach Alpha Reliability Method to get the internal consistency of the items. The result yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.76% and this value was considered good enough for this study. In order to answer the research questions, the respondent's mean score was calculated as the average of the 4-point scale used for data collection, that is $4+3+2+1/4 = 2.5$. Therefore the decision taken, that is any mean score equal to or greater than 2.5 will be accepted and any mean score less than 2.5 will be rejected

Results

Four hundred and ten (410) copies of the questionnaire were administered to the selected sample through six search assistants. This was done within a period of two weeks. Out of this number 23 were not returned and 15 were invalid. This gave a sample size of 372.

Demographic data analysis

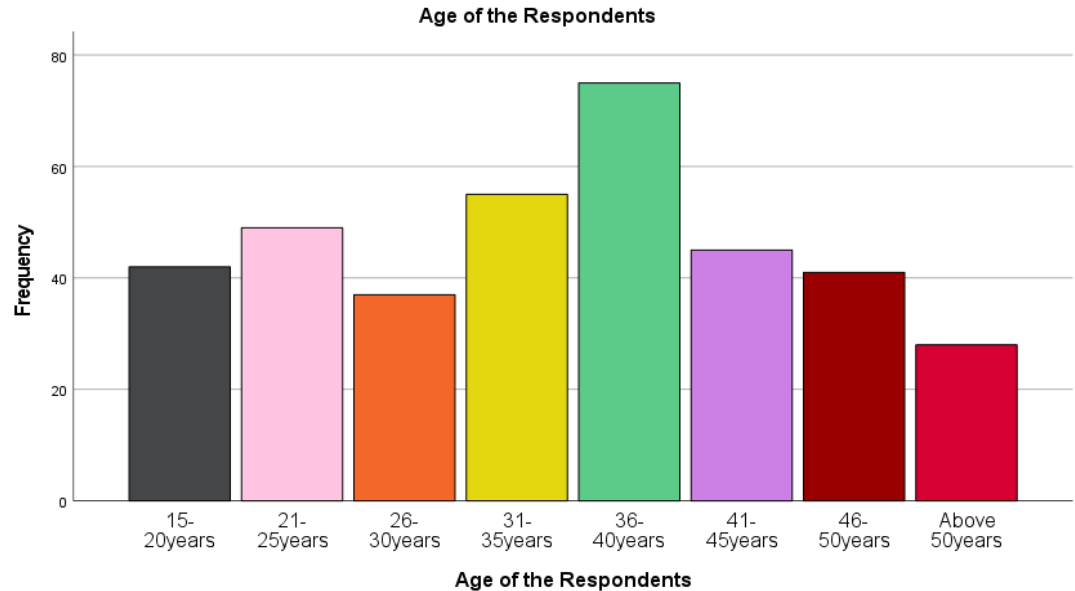


FIGURE 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Figure one above revealed that the majority of the respondents 75(20.2) are within the age group of 36 years-40 years. This shows that most of the respondents who responded to the questionnaire were young and head of household.

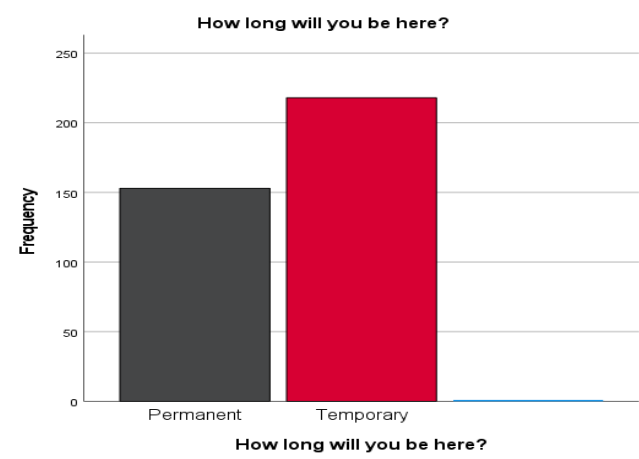


Figure 2: Duration of stay of Respondents

The Figure 2 above shows that 217(58.3%) of the respondent are on temporary migration While 155 (41.7%) of the migrants have left the rural area permanently. This demographic shift, though it is to the advantage of urban development has posed a serious threat to rural socio-

economic development. If those on the temporal migration can be supported they would definitely regain their socio-economic strength.

Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question One: What are percieved reasons for the Rural -Urban Migration in Borno State?

Table 1: Migrants’ Mean Score on the percieved Factors Responsible for Rural-Urban Migration. *n=372*

SN	Variables	N	X	SD	DECISION
1	Fear of insecurity	372	3.43	0.86	Agree
2	Family disagreement	372	2.84	1.00	Agree
3	For children’s education	372	2.88	1.12	Agree
4	To reunite with my family members	372	1.89	1.10	Disagree
5	For better healthcare service	372	3.09	1.13	Agree
6	You were poor in the village	372	2.79	1.49	Agree
7	For better-paying jobs in urban area	372	3.08	1.50	Agree
8	Occurrence of famine	372	2.38	1.07	Disagree
9	Land degradation	372	3.09	1.88	Agree
10	Inadequate capital for the modern farming system	372	3.01	1.10	Agree
11	Inadequate infrastructure in villages	372	3.07	1.01	Agree
12	You came with your family after marriage	372	3.12	1.01	Agree
13	To get better opportunities for your own education	372	3.21	1.10	Agree
14	To become self-employed	372	3.17	1.34	Agree
15	Because of job transfer	372	2.94	1.39	Agree
16	There are entrepreneurial opportunities in urban areas	372	2.11	0.199	Disagree
17	I am tired of poor living conditions in the village	372	3.17	1.01	Agree

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 2 shows the mean provides a comprehensive view of the causes driving rural-to-urban migration. The highest mean scores reflect that "Fear of insecurity" (M = 3.43, SD = 0.860) and "For better healthcare service" (M = 3.09, SD = 1.13) are the most influential factors. This suggests that concerns about safety and the desire for improved health services are prominent motivations for relocating to urban areas. Conversely, "To reunite with my family members" (M = 1.89, SD = 1.10) and "Occurrence of famine" (M = 2.38, SD = 1.08) are less significant factors, indicating that family reunification and environmental hardships are not as central to the migration decision compared to other factors. The varied standard deviations across the items highlight differing levels of agreement among respondents. For instance, "Land degradation" exhibits the highest variability (3.09, SD = 1.88), suggesting a wide range of perceptions regarding its impact on migration. On the other hand, "There are entrepreneurial opportunities in urban areas" has the lowest standard deviation (SD = 0.199), indicating a strong consensus that urban areas offer better entrepreneurial prospects. Overall, the clustered mean of 2.991 (SD = 0.977) indicates a moderate level of agreement on the various causes of rural-to-urban migration. This suggests that while several factors contribute to the decision to migrate, concerns related to safety, healthcare, and employment opportunities are the most influential.

Research Question Two: What are the impacts of rural-urban migration on socioeconomic liferural livelihood of rural communities?

Table 2: Mean Score of the Migrants' percieved impacts of rural urban migration on rural livelihood

S/N	Variables	N	X	SD	DECISION
1	Decrease in agricultural production	372	3.89	1.79	Agree
2	Reduction of the rural population	372	3.88	1.02	Agree
3	Increase poverty levels in rural areas	372	3.86	1.33	Agree
4	Low enrollment in schools	372	3.09	1.03	Agree
5	Loss of talent and experts in rural areas (Brain drain)	372	3.41	1.07	Agree
6	Reducing housing facilities in the rural areas	372	3.87	1.94	Agree
7	Reducing job opportunities in rural areas	372	3.22	1.12	Agree
8	Loss of traditional skills	372	3.12	1.00	Agree
9	Increasing medical costs due to lower living standard	372	3.22	1.21	Agree
10	Reduction of the tax base in rural areas	372	3.77	1.03	Agree
11	Loss of labour force in rural areas	372	3.79	0.99	Agree
12	Loo of cultural heritage	372	2.89.	1.36	Agree

Source: Field Survey 2024

Table 2 examines the impact of rural-to-urban migration on the socio-economic life of rural communities. The highest mean scores are observed for "Decrease in agricultural production

“(M = 3.89, SD = 1.79) and “Reduction of the rural population” (M = 3.88, SD = 1.02), indicating that respondents perceive these as significant adverse impacts of migration on the rural livelihood. In contrast, "Loss of cultural heritage" has a lower mean (M = 2.99, SD = 1.33), suggesting that while it is acknowledged; it is not seen as impactful as other effects. The standard deviations highlight varying levels of agreement among respondents, with "Decrease in agricultural production" showing the highest variability (SD = 1.79), reflecting diverse opinions on its significance. The overall clustered mean of 3.40 (SD = 1.21) suggests a moderate level of agreement on the negative effects of migration, emphasizing that while several socio-economic challenges are acknowledged, there is considerable variability in how these effects are perceived.

Discussion of Findings

This study intended to survey the causes and effects of rural-urban migration on the socio-economic life of rural communities in Borno state, Nigeria. The findings revealed that there are spontaneous reasons for migrant's exodus to the urban centres. The result in Table 2 shows that the major factors responsible for rural-urban migration are socioeconomic factors as presented in the order of their magnitude. Thus: fear of insecurity; seeking better health care; better-paying jobs in urban areas; land degradation and better educational opportunities. This result partly agrees with the findings from Bukar, Hussaini and Ngada (2021); Jahan (2012); Adewole, 2005; Braun (2009); (IDMC, 2019); Onuoha, 2014 and Tacoli, 2011) who also found that rural-urban migration were mostly triggered by push factors like unsafe environment, crop failure, natural disasters like floods, better, infrastructural facilities and healthcare services. However, the current study has additional information such as fear of insecurity in the rural areas as the reason that has compelled majority of the migrants to the urban centres for safer environment.

Research question 2 investigated the consequences of rural urban migration on the socio-economic life of the rural communities in Borno state and the results presented in Table 3. The results revealed that the serious consequences of rural urban migration on the livelihood of the rural communities in Borno state include the following: decreased in agricultural proeduction, increase in rural poverty level, Reduction of the tax base in rural areas, loss of labour force, reduction of the rural population and decreasing agricultural production among others have a rampaging impact on the rural dwellers. This is in line with the findings of Ajarero & Madu (2014) Lykke, Omonigho & Olaniyan, (2013); Tacoli, (2004) & (Tunde (2009 and Ishiaque & Ullah, (2013) who lamented that rural-urban migration often has grave consequences as it affects food production, agricultural exports, loss of manpower necessary for agricultural activities as younger, more

productive individuals move to urban centres seeking better opportunities. Furthermore, Mini (2001) was correct by observing that in most rural areas, the impact of rural-urban migration was a rapid deterioration of the rural economy leading to chronic poverty and food insecurity. These arise mainly due to excessive drain of youth from the rural populace thus leaving only the older and aged members to constitute the labour force of the rural area.

Conclusion

The rural urban migration has posed a serious threat to the socio-economic lives of the rural communities of the study areas. The security threats, inadequate healthcare services and lack of good paying jobs in the rural communities have had negative impact on rural livelihood; as agricultural productivity decreases, rural population decreases, and a general decline in tax based. In order to improve the livelihood of the rural communities, the paper provided some vital recommendations.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the paper has the following recommendations:

1. Elimination of all forms of security threats in the rural communities. This can be done through deployment of security personnels and the local vigilante groups to most vulnerable rural communities.
2. Provision of socio-economic infrastructures; such as healthcare services, electricity, good housing conditions, pipe-borne water, and other basic socio-economic services for the rural areas. This could be achieved through collaboration between government, NGOs and local communities income earning jobs.
3. Transformation of traditional agriculture to modern agriculture by encouraging agricultural activities through the provision of interest-free loans and highly subsidized agro-chemical products which will improve the agricultural productivity of the rural communities.
4. Establishment of industries, projects and businesses that will absorb the rural working population and reverse labour migration

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