

EFFECT OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY IN UMUAHIA SOUTH AREA OF SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA.

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Abstract:

The study examined the effects of rural-urban migration on household food security in Umuahia South Area of Abia State, Nigeria. A multistage sampling technique was used to draw the sample for the study. Both descriptive and inferential tools were used to analyze the data obtained. The results indicated that majority of the respondents were young and married females whose major occupation was farming. The major factors that caused rural-urban migration as indicated by the respondents include quest for marriage (3.186 * * *), natural disaster (4.353 * * *), insecurity (-2.492 * * *), quest for money (9.150 * * *) etc. Findings of the study also indicated a negative but significant relationship between rural-urban migration and food security in the study area. It is recommended that basic infrastructural facilities and necessary incentives be provided to the rural farmers to discourage movement to the urban area. It is also recommended that medium and small-scale agro-allied industries be established by Government, non-governmental organizations and individuals as well, towards discouraging rural-urban migration in the study area.

Key Words: Effects, Rural –urban Migration, Household and Food Security.

INTRODUCTION:

One issue that has dominated discourse over the years among social scientists, especially the Economists, Demographers, Sociologists and Urban planners, as well, is that of rural-urban migration. According to Angoet *al* (2014), migration is the movement that involves a permanent and semi- permanent change in residence for one settlement or the other. Rural-Urban Youth Migration may also be defined as the physical movement of young individuals or group of young people from rural areas to urban centres. (Mbah et al, 2016).

According to the United Nations (2004), half of the global population live in cities and estimated to rise to sixty percent in 2030. Similarly, in Nigeria and other developing countries, population in cities and conurbations is projected to increase from 1.9 billion to in 2000 to 3.9 billion in 2030. One major concern on rural-urban migration is the attendant effect on agricultural production generally and food security in particular.

Admittedly, the movement of people from rural to urban areas is a common occurrence in Nigeria. The movement poses some problems both in the rural areas and in the urban centres, as well, though, there may be some benefits derivable from it. With the increasing migration of the able bodied youth to the urban centres, agricultural activities are left in the hands of the less productive and aged members of the rural populace. Onyenweaku (2005) agrees that rural-urban migration leads to labour scarcity, as potentially productive labour is drawn away from the village. The implications of this trend are low agricultural productivity and food insecurity, especially at the rural household level. Mini (2001) had explained that in most rural areas, the impact of rural-urban migration is a rapid deterioration of the rural economy leading to chronic poverty and food insecurity. Olayide (2009) and Lewis (2004) similarly noted that rural-urban migration have been associated with decline in food production, farming activities, fishing, urban congestion, infrastructural facilities in the urban areas etc.

Objective of the Study

The main objectives of the study was to ascertain the effects of rural urban migration on household food security in Umuahia South Area of South Eastern Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to

- i. Describe the Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents;
- ii. Examine the factors that cause rural-urban migration in the study area; and
- iii. Determine the relationship between rural-urban migration and household food security.

Hypothesis of the study

Ho₁– there is no significant relationship between food security and rural-urban migration.

Methodology

The study was conducted in Umuahia South Area of South Eastern Nigeria lying between latitude 5.4947°N and longitude 7.4165E.

The Local Government covers an area of 23km² with a population of 139,050 (NPC, 2006). Umuahia South Local Government Area is located within the tropical rain forest belt of Nigeria. The major food crops grown in the area include Yam, Maize, Cocoyam, Banana, and various types of fruits. The

livestock reared includes pig, goat, sheep and poultry.

A multistage sampling technique was used to select 120 respondents that were used in the study area. The first stage involved the random selection of three(3) major clans. The second stage was the random selection of four(4) villages, giving a total of twelve (12) villages. Finally, at the third stage, ten(10) persons, each from one household, were randomly selected from each of the villages, giving a total of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents representing the total sample size.

A structured questionnaire was used in soliciting information from the respondents. Objective one was realized with descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and mean scores. Objective two was analyzed using multiple regression while Objective three was realized using the correlation analysis. Similarly, the hypothesis was tested using the correlation analysis.

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MODEL SPECIFICATION

The multiple regression was employed in the analysis of the data collected.

The four functional multiple regressions were used to select the one that has provided the best fit. The choice of the best functional form was based on the magnitude of the R² value, number of significant variables, size and signs of regression coefficients as they conform to a priori expectation.

The four functional forms are,

Linear Function

$$Y = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + b_5x_5 + b_6x_6 + b_7x_7 + b_8x_8 + e_i$$

Semi-Log Function

$$Y = b_0 + b_1 \log x_1 + b_2 \log x_2 + b_3 \log x_3 + b_4 \log x_4 + b_5 \log x_5 + b_6 \log x_6 + b_7 \log x_7 + b_8 \log x_8 + e_i$$

Double Log Function

$$\log Y = b_0 + b_1 \log x_1 + b_2 \log x_2 + b_3 \log x_3 + b_4 \log x_4 + b_5 \log x_5 + b_6 \log x_6 + b_7 \log x_7 + b_8 \log x_8 + e_i$$

Exponential Function

$$\log Y = b_0 + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + b_3x_3 + b_4x_4 + b_5x_5 + b_6x_6 + b_7x_7 + b_8x_8 + e_i$$

Y= Household rate of migration

x₁= Search for job

x₂= Better Education

x₃= Marriage

x₄= Economic empowerment

x₅= Natural disaster

x₆= Apprenticeship

x₇= Insecurity

x₈= Quest for money

e_i = Error term

The implicit form of the correlation is stated thus;

$$Y = b_0 + b_x$$

Where;

Y = Food security

b₀ = Intercept

b = Slope

x = Rate of migration

Results and Discussion

Table 1 shows that a majority 61.7% of the respondents were between the ages of 20 and 49 years, while 38.3% only were between 50 and 79 years. This implies that there were relatively younger and more energetic people in the study area who naturally had the tendency to migrate from the rural to the urban centres in search of greener pastures. Akpabio (2005) had earlier explained that the average age of farmers in Nigeria was between 55-60 years and predicted that by 2030, it is expected to rise between 75-80 years. The attendant consequence of this prediction on food security would be very unpleasant. The table also reveals a very high literacy level (86.70%) among the respondents,

Table I also revealed that a majority, 55.8% of the respondents were females, while 44.2% of them were males. The result is in consonance with the explanations of Ekong (2010) that there is deficit of males between the age brackets of 15-19 to 40-44 in rural areas. He explained that these age brackets are the period that young men migrate to urban areas or engage in non-farm occupation, particularly in the Yoruba speaking western and non-Muslim northern parts of Nigeria.

It is therefore likely that we had more females in the study area which was an Igbo speaking part of Nigeria, than the males, because the young might have migrated to urban areas for greater pastures. Furthermore, the results in table I showed that 72.5% of the respondents had household size of between 5-11 persons. This relative high level of household size might be explained from the observation of the Ekong (2010) that, Household size is affected by the need for manual labour in particular, among other factors. Instructively, too, all the respondents earned above the Nigerian minimum month wage bill of N18000, as well as earned above one American dollar (1&) per day, considering the fact that Nigeria

naira currency was less than N200 per us dollar in 2013.

The implication is that the respondents received income above the internationally acclaimed poverty line of one dollar per day and cannot be said to be poor. The relative monthly high income among the respondents can be explained from the fact that most

of respondents, (68.6%) were all educated as graduates of secondary schools and tertiary institutions, capable of earning more than N50, 000 a month.

Again, since 86.7% of the respondents had formal education and they could also have been engaged in modern farming, with the attendant high income per month.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents according to Socio-Economic Characteristics Variables:

Age (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
20-34	27	22.5
35-49	47	39.5
50-64	37	30.8
65-79	9	7.5
Sex		
Male	53	44.2
Female	67	55.8
Educational Level		
None	16	13.3
Primary	22	18.3
Secondary	22	18.3
Tertiary	60	50.3
Marital Status		
Married	80	66.9
Single	23	19.2
Widowed	12	10.0
Divorced	15	4.2
Housed Size		
2-4	33	27.5
5-6	58	48.3
9-10	20	16.7
>11	9	7.5
Occupation		
Farming	50	41.7
Trading	6	5.0
Civil Servant	40	33.3
Artisans	14	11.7
Contractors	10	8.3
Monthly income		
<N50,000	53	44.2
N 51,000-100,000	32	26.7
N 101,000-150,000	32	26.7
N 151, 000 – 200,000	12	10.0

Source: Field Survey Data, 2012

DETERMINANTS/CAUSES OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION IN UMUAHIA SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ABIA STATE, NIGERIA.

Table 2 shows the regression estimates of the factors that cause rural-urban migration in Umuahia South Local Government Area. The factors taken into consideration were quest for job, education, and marriage, economic empowerment, natural disaster, insecurity. Others include quest for money and apprenticeship skills. The linear regression model was chosen as the lead equation. The R^2 value of 0.943 indicates that 94.30% variability in the factors that cause rural-urban migration is explained by the

above probability indicating a goodness of fit of the regression model.

The result in 2 reveals that the coefficient of marriage (3,186) was positively related to rural-urban migration and significant at 5% level of the probability. This implies that any increase in the number of married people arising presumably from migration to the urban centres will lead to a corresponding increase in the number of the rural-urban migrants. This is probably because, as people marry, their responsibility increases and this will make them to migrate from the rural to urban centres for better economic prospects.

The coefficient of natural disaster (4.353) was also positively related to rural-urban migration and significant at 10.0 of probability. This implies that an increase in the occurrences of natural disaster such as flooding will lead to a corresponding increase in the migration of people out of the rural areas to the urban centres for fear of eventualities. This is expected and in accordance with the *a priori* expectation.

The coefficient of insecurity (-2.492) was negatively related to rural-urban migration and significant at 5.00% level of probability. This implies that any

increase in the level of insecurity in the area will lead to a corresponding decrease in the rural-urban migration of the respondents. This is against the *a priori* expectation.

The coefficient of quest for money (9.150) was also positively related to rural-urban migration and highly significant at 1.0% level of probability. This implies that any increase in the quest for money will lead to a corresponding increase in the rate of rural-urban migration. This in accordance with a prior expectation, as it is believed that people make money in the urban areas, where more opportunities abound than in the rural areas.

Table 2: Determinants/causes of rural-urban migration in Umuahia South Local Government Areas.

Variables	Linear +	Double log	Semi-log	Exponential
Constant	0.16 (1.416)	0.009 (0.272)	-0.367 (-6.453* * *)	1.067 (14.208* * *)
Search for job	-0.014 (-0.885)	-0.021 (-1.013)	-0.007 (-0.804)	-0.046 (-0.053)
Search for education	0.008 (0.061)	0.039 (1.289)	-9.110E-5 (0.011)	1.292 (0.752)
Guest for marriage	0.277 (3.186 * *)	0.73 (1.500)	0.205 (4.724 * * *)	-0.116 (-0.295)
Guest for Economic Empowerment	0.008 (0.062)	0.014 (0.427)	0.010 (0.150)	0.026 (0.372)
Natural disaster	0.288 (4.353 * * *)	0.275 (5.601 * * *)	0.033 (0.986)	1.020 (9.646 * * *)
Guest for skills acquisition	0.077 (1.153)	0.014 (0.255)	-0.034 (-1.038)	0.240 (1.983 * *)
Insecurity	-0.254 (-2.492 * *)	-0.264 (-1.404)	-0.135 (-2.653 * * *)	-0.045 (-0.110)
Quest for money	0.436 (9.150 * * *)	0.601 (15.503 * * *)	0.267 (11.245 * * *)	0.925 (11.111)
R²	0.943	0.953	0.945	0.944
R adjusted	0.939	0.950	0.941	0.940
F statistics	230.115 * * *	324.190 * * *	239.834 * * *	269.007 * * *

Source: Field survey, 2012

* * *, * * *, and * * * are significant at 10.00%, 5.00% and 1.00% levels of probability, respectively.

Figures in parenthesis are t- values

+ = lead equation.

Relationship between Rural-Urban Migration and House hold Food Security

From the result of the correlation analysis, as shown on Table 3, it was revealed that a negative and significant relationship was recorded between rural-urban migration and household food security. This implies that as the rate of migration of the respondents increased in the study area, food security reduced by 49.8%. This agrees with the *a priori* expectation since the migrants formed the major labour force for the farming enterprise. In other words, when these young people migrate out

of the rural areas to the urban centres, farm labour automatically reduces, hence food production reduces too.

Furthermore, the result revealed that the null hypothesis (Ho) which states that there is no significant relationship between food security and rural-urban migration was rejected. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis (Ha) which states that there is a significant relationship between food security and rural-urban migration was accepted and this was significant at 1.0% level of probability.

Table 3. Correlation result of the relationship between rural-urban migration and household food security.

Migration rate	Food security	value
n	-0.498	0.000
	120	

Source: Field survey data, 2012

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study confirmed that rural-urban migration has a direct effect on household food security in Umuahia South Local Government Area of Abia State due to a number of reasons. The study revealed that a majority of the young people who were energetic to work in the farms often migrated to the urban centers due to such factors as natural disaster, insecurity, quest for money and education as well as prospects for marriage, leaving farm work in the hands of the aged. This had a serious negative implication on household food security. Furthermore, the findings also showed that a significant relationship existed between rural-urban migration and household food security; the more the younger people migrated to the urban centres, the more the negative effects on the household food security in the study area.

Based on the above, it was recommended that incentives be provided to the farmers to make farming attractive to the youth. Similarly, basic employment through the establishment of rural-based agro-industries, should be provided for the rural youth. In addition, more educational institutions and skills acquisition centres should be established in the study area. All these measures will stem the tide of rural-urban migration, and by implication, engage more youth in agriculture and boost food security in the study area.

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