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Causes, Direction and Pattern of Out-Migration in Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The study examines the causes, age-selectivity, direction and pattern of out-migration in Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State. The research data were obtained through questionnaire administered to 263 heads of household selected via systematic sampling technique. Results were presented in tables using frequencies and percentages. The finding shows that migration is ongoing and common among the age cohort 18-40 years. The major pattern of migration is rural-urban migration while movements are directed towards large towns and cities in Benue State, Nigeria and beyond. This has reduced rural population in favour of urban areas since a number of youths eludes the rural areas for white collar jobs, education and social attractions in urban destinations. The causes of migration are inadequate jobs and access to education in rural areas, rural hardship and crises, while occupation, access to education, business and transfer among others attract people to urban centres. The author recommends creation of job opportunities, provision of social amenities like schools and spreading these facilities across the length and breadth of the rural areas, establishing agro-base (cottage) industries in rural areas rather than concentrating them in urban centres, empowering the rural youths through agricultural mechanization, loans and subsidies. This will help in reducing rural-urban migration thus developing the rural areas in Otukpo L.G.A. and beyond.

Keywords: Rural, Urban, Causes, Direction and Pattern of Migration

1. Introduction

Migration is one of the three components of population change apart from fertility and mortality. The changes in scale and pattern of migration have great consequence in both area of origin and destination; influences on social, economic, cultural and political configuration of a society (Onokerhoraye, 1993 and Ode, 2006). Migration and population redistribution are integral parts of modernization and a major symptom of basic social change (Matras, 1973).

Umoh (2001) opined that there is no universally acceptable criterion for the classification of migration. For convenience, its categorization is often based on the following; Duration/Time (short or long term), Distance (short distance or long distance), Volume (small or large), Direction (outward or inwards), Boundaries crossed (internal or international). This gave rise to the general classification of migration as internal and international migration. The major types of internal migration include rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-urban and urban-rural migration. Umoh (2001) viewed migration as the act or process of moving from one place to another with the intent of staying at the destination permanently or for a relatively long period of time. It may be embarked upon out of one's volition or compulsion. He opined that the inability of the available opportunities within the immediate environment of man to satisfy his unlimited economic, social, cultural and physical expectations at a given point in time has often been behind man's desire to move to other places in search of food, wealth, better environmental conditions and security.

Currently, it is difficult to ascertain the volume of internal migration in Nigeria due to poor data keeping and gaps by relevant authorities in the country in relation to lack of unified population statistics at local, regional and international levels. According to the Nigerian Demographic Profile (NPF), the 2014 net-migration rate estimate of Nigeria stands at -0.22 migrants/1000 population. However, one thing is certain; the effect that migrants will create at source and destination areas are intricately tied to the type of migration occurring. Any policy maker concerned with urban and rural planning should be concerned with migration and its underlying factors. The questions most commonly asked by migration theorists are; who is moving? Why are they moving? What is their life like at the destination area? and what is their impact both at the destination and the point of origin? Most research on migration revolves around the above questions.

This study is anchored on the Todaro's Model of Migration. The theory opined that rural-urban migration proceeds in response to urban-rural differentials in expected rather than actual earning. Todaro argued that "as long as rural income is less than expected urban income" migration will continue (Todaro, 1969). He split the economy into industrial urban centre and the agricultural rural areas. He acknowledges the presence of social, physical, demographic, cultural and communication factors in the decision to migrate, but believed that the economic factors were the primary reason for migration. This theory took the idea of push and pull factors one step

further to the existence of a potential “push-back”. His pushback factor is high urban unemployment. He found that migrants were mostly young males between the ages of 15-25 years. These migrants were often the highest educated in their home area. The theory states that “members of the labour force, both actual and potential, compare their ‘expected’ incomes for a given time horizon in the urban sector with prevailing average agricultural incomes and migrate if the former exceeds the latter”. He believed that because of the lag in communication and the fact that people will still choose to migrate even when there is unemployment, rising rates of urban unemployment are inevitable. He proposes ridding the urban and rural areas of the imbalances in employment opportunities to the greatest possible extent. This will help to reduce migration. While many policy makers would concentrate solely on creating more jobs in the city, according to Him, this will not solve the problem. This economic model is very fundamental in explaining migration decisions in Nigeria and Africa.

This paper is basically concerned with rural-urban migration which is the movement of people from rural areas (hamlets and villages) to urban areas (town and cities). The study attempt to answer questions such as; who is moving? Why are they moving? What are the pattern, direction and destination of their movement?

2. The Study Area

The study covers Otukpo Local Government Area of Benue State. The L.G.A lies between longitude $7^{\circ} 45'$ and $8^{\circ} 17'$ East of the Greenwich Meridian and latitude $7^{\circ} 00'$ and $7^{\circ} 40'$ North of the equator. It has a population of 266,411 people according to the National Population Commission (NPC, 2006). The Local Government comprises of four districts namely Otukpo, Ugboju, Adoka and Akpa. The predominant socio-economic activities in Otukpo L.G.A include Civil service, Business, Trading, farming, tailoring, and hunting among others.

3. Materials and Methods

The research used information on the socio-demographic data of the respondents such as age, sex, marital, occupational status and number of children while data on the migrants include their number, educational status, present location, reasons for migration, age category involved in migration, pattern, direction and destination of migrants obtained directly from the respondents in the field. Data on the population of the study area was obtained from the National Population Commission (NPC, 2006). The study population include the rural settlements found in Otukpo L.G.A as well as the Male and Female Heads of Households in Otukpo L.G.A who are age thirty years and above, old enough to provide relevant information on migrants and migration. A total of 263 people was used for the research. The respondents were drawn from the study area using systematic sampling technique for questionnaire administration. The Sample size was determined via the Hanlon and Larget formulae for determining sample size for an unknown population. The formulae are expressed as $n = \frac{(Z)(P)(M)}{d^2}$. Where $Z=1.96$, $P=0.5$ and $M=0.06$. The research data were presented in tabular form and analyzed using frequencies and percentages.

4. Result/Discussion

4.1. Socio-Demographic Data of the Respondents

The research data was sourced from 263 Male and Female heads of households. Table 1 indicates the socio-demographic data of the respondents such as age, sex, marital and occupational status. The respondents aged between 30 years and above. Most of them are old enough to provide information on migration on account of their age and experience over time. 211 of the respondents are between the age of 50 and above. Sex status indicates 199 males and 73 females used for the study. Data were obtained from the respondents irrespective of their marital status. 199 of them are married, 40 are widow/widower and 14 are single while 10 are divorced. The study found out that there is high rate of marriage among the respondents and the tendency to have children and experience out-migration issues. It also stipulates that the respondents are people who have settled down in their respective Villages with their families as indicated on Table 2. The occupational distribution of the respondents shows that most of them are farmers as indicated by 110 respondents. This is not uncommon with rural population in an undeveloped environment. 60 of them are civil servant, 40 are public servant while 30 are doing business/trade and 23 others are engaged in an undisclosed occupation. Since most of the respondents are farmers, rural-urban migration may be a disadvantage to them and their society because it can lead to shortage of labour, increase in cost of labour, decrease in farm size, production and individual income due to exit of young people into urban areas.

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|----------------------------|------------|----------------|
| Age Status | | |
| 30-39 | 20 | 7.6 |
| 40-49 | 32 | 12.1 |
| 50-59 | 60 | 22.8 |
| 60-69 | 70 | 26.6 |
| 70 and Above | 81 | 30.7 |
| Sex Status | | |
| Male | 190 | 72.2 |
| Female | 73 | 27.7 |
| Marital Status | | |
| Married | 199 | 75.6 |
| Single | 14 | 5.3 |
| Divorced | 10 | 3.8 |
| Widow/Widower | 40 | 15.2 |
| Occupational Status | | |
| Civil Servant | 60 | 22.8 |
| Public Servant | 40 | 15.2 |
| Business/Trade | 30 | 11.4 |
| Farming | 110 | 41.8 |
| Others | 23 | 8.7 |
| Total | 263 | 100 |

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Data of the Respondents in Otukpo L.G.A

Source: fieldwork, 2016

4.2. Demographic Data of the Respondents' Children and Migrants

The respondents collectively have a total of 770 children as stipulated on Table 2. The study found out that 300 of the children had acquired secondary school education, 250 had tertiary education and 100 attained primary education while 120 of the children had non-formal education. The level of education of the educated ones may have account for their migration to urban centres leaving the uneducated ones at home of origin. 390 of them had migrated out of their home of origin to other parts of Benue State, Nigeria and beyond while 380 of them are residing at their home of origin with their parents. More males (220) have migrated compared to the females (170). This has great economic implication for the respondents particularly those who are farmers and use their family members as major source of labour for agriculture.

| Variables | Male | Female | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------|------------|------------|------------|----------------|
| Educational Status | | | | |
| Non-Formal Education | 50 | 70 | 120 | 15.5 |
| Primary Education | 55 | 45 | 100 | 12.9 |
| Secondary Education | 165 | 135 | 300 | 38.9 |
| Tertiary Education | 150 | 100 | 250 | 32.4 |
| Place of Residence | | | | |
| At Home of Origin | 200 | 180 | 380 | 49.4 |
| Out-side Home of Origin | 220 | 170 | 390 | 50.6 |
| Total | 420 | 350 | 770 | 100 |

Table 2: Demographic Data of the Respondents' Children and Migrants

Source: fieldwork, 2016

4.3. Causes, Pattern and Direction of Migration of the Migrants

The respondents collectively opined that some of their children are staying in the town other than their home of origin for the purpose of education, employment, marriage, business and trade among others as opined by 68.4% of them as the factors responsible for out migration in Otukpo L.G.A of Benue State shown on Table 3. It can be deduced further that migration in the study area is age and sex selective in favour of the males than females and most common among age-category 18-40 than other age cohorts as unanimously agreed by 89.7% of the respondents. This is similar to findings of Udo (1982) which state that migration is common among the age category 15-35 and often involves more males than females leading to lose of productive manpower to the urban centres. Young people are more exposed to migration flows than the aged dueto youthful exorbitance and desire for education, employment and the prevailing modern urban life style which are not available or inadequate in the rural areas.

The major pattern and direction of migration is rural-urban migration as indicated by 83.6% of the respondents. This entails movement of people from rural areas to different parts of Nigeria, and beyond. Majority of the migrants move to large town and cities of high economic viability as observed in most state capitals, towns and cities in Nigeria and beyond. This is also similar to the views held by

(Mabogunje, 1970; Makinwa, 1980 and Udo, 1982) who both opined that the pattern of migration in Nigeria reflects the people's response to widely divergent economic and social situations. More so, Mabogunje (1980) believed that the centres of power, politics, commerce and education attract people from far and near. The likely challenges associated with this trend in future, will be rural depopulation and its attendant effect on agricultural activities, food production and development.

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--|------------|----------------|
| Causes of Migration | | |
| Inadequate Job opportunities in rural areas | 17 | 6.4 |
| Schooling/Working in urban centre | 15 | 5.7 |
| Take up Job/Transfer in urban centre | 16 | 6.0 |
| To join Spouse in urban centre | 5 | 1.9 |
| Doing Business in urban centre | 5 | 1.9 |
| Crises in rural areas | 8 | 3.0 |
| To avoid Village hardship | 10 | 3.8 |
| Lack of social amenities in rural areas | 4 | 1.5 |
| Others | 3 | 1.1 |
| All of the above factors | 180 | 68.4 |
| Common type of migration in rural areas | | |
| Rural-Urban Migration | 220 | 83.6 |
| Rural-Rural Migration | 20 | 7.6 |
| Urban-Rural Migration | 23 | 8.7 |
| Age-Category involved in migration | | |
| 1 - 17 | 24 | 9.1 |
| 18-40 | 236 | 89.7 |
| 41 and Above | 3 | 1.1 |
| Destination of most Migrants | | |
| Large Cities | 221 | 84 |
| Towns | 19 | 7.2 |
| Rural Areas | 23 | 8.7 |
| Total | 263 | 100 |

Table 3: Causes, Direction and Pattern of Migration from Otukpo L.G.A
Source: fieldwork, 2016

5. Conclusion/Recommendation

The study concludes that migration is an ongoing phenomenon and it is more common among the males compared to the females. The youths who constitute the rural manpower source are more susceptible to migration flows to large town and city destinations. The study recommends creation of job opportunities, provision of social amenities like schools and spreading these facilities across the length and breadth of the rural areas, establishing agro-base (cottage) industries in rural areas rather than concentrating them in urban centres, empowering the rural youths through agricultural mechanization, loans and subsidies to enhance rural livelihoods and meaningful development in rural areas in Otukpo L.G.A. of Benue State and beyond.

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