Research Article

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Impacts of Rural-Urban Migration on Agricultural Development in Ekiti-State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Migration is a growing global concern with various effects and impacts. As structural transformation and concentration on other sectors and agricultural sector becomes smaller with lesser attention, the movement of people within and across countries becomes inevitable, especially in the rural areas where the major occupation and activity is farming. Hence, the aim of this study is to examine the impacts of rural agricultural development on rural-urban migration in Ekiti-State, and the following research objectives serves as guiding principles: to determine the impacts of rural agricultural development on the rural dwellers in Ekiti state, and to assess the contributory between the rural agricultural development on rural-urban migration in Ekiti state. 400 questionnaires were distributed in the 16 local governments, at 25 per local government. It was concluded that major causes of rural-urban migration from this study area are; seeking for urban job, seeking good education, lack of social amenities in the rural area, low income, seeking for skill and basic health care and the possible outcomes are; reduction in labour, high cost of labour, low agricultural productivity, low income and standard of living, poverty, and reduction in raw materials. The study recommends that social amenities, policies in favour of agricultural productivity should be made, agro-processing facilities and markets should be available, also, farm mechanization should be encouraged and subsidized through bodies and agencies.

Keywords: Migration, Agricultural Productivity, Agricultural Development, Rural-Urban Migration.

1. Introduction

Rural-urban migration and agricultural development are complex issues that require the utmost attention when weighing the effects and impacts on other sectors. The phenomenon of rural-urban migration is grounded in uneven distribution and persistent inequality in the allocation of social and economic infrastructure and utilities such as pipe-borne water, good roads, electricity, health facilities, and industries, among others, in rural and urban communities. This has been experienced since the colonial era.

Man would naturally hunt for better opportunities and chances in life for different reasons and purposes. People tend to be pulled to areas of prosperity and pushed away from areas of decline. Migrants are usually concerned and focused on the expected benefits or opportunities they hope to gain by moving and jettisoning the problems that may come with the process. Migration is an inevitable part of human existence, with a long history. However, its pattern has changed considerably over time, from the search for space, especially in the middle ages, to that of congestion in large cities (rural-urban migration) in the modern age, especially in the last millennium.

Natural resources, which can be utilized and harnessed for socio-economic development, abound in Nigeria, particularly in rural areas. Interestingly, Nigeria has a large proportion of both the rural sector and inhabitants (rural people), which is a typical feature of developing countries. The most distinct characteristic of Nigeria's rural areas is the widespread involvement of the inhabitants in agriculture, since a rural area is described by homogeneous activity. Agriculture is the most important economic sector in terms of its contribution to the GDP of the nation after oil. The sector contributes about 41 percent of the country's GDP, employs about 65 percent of the total population, and employs about 80 percent of the rural population (ADF, 2005).

Distinguishably, in Nigeria's context, the rural areas are different from the urban areas in terms of the respective volumes of agricultural and non-agricultural components of economic activity that take place in the two sectors. Thus, economic activity in the rural milieu revolves around the exploitation or utilization of land. It centers principally on farming, animal husbandry, poultry, fishing, forestry, food processing, and cottage industries. The

unavailability of basic economic and social infrastructure such as water, roads, electricity, and health facilities due to different factors has led to low agricultural productivity and a low standard of living for rural people.

1.1 Statement of Problems

On different occasions, various governments at some point made some moves or showed intentions to develop agricultural practices in Nigeria. Even though these efforts seemed to have been guided by genuine concerns, they failed to make the necessary impacts in the agricultural sector because of fundamental structural problems in the economy. There was an obvious decline in the agricultural sector due to underdevelopment of the sector; frequent changes in government policies and implementation strategies; little or no agricultural mechanization policy; poor infrastructures and facilities; poor research and development work. This has led to an increase in shortages as well as an increase in food importation and high prices that are evident in different states and towns. Agricultural exports dwindled at an alarming rate, as did the labour force for agriculture. Hence, the study aims to examine the impacts of rural agricultural development on rural-urban migration, and the general objectives of this study are to determine the impacts of rural agricultural development on rural dwellers in Ekiti state, and assess the contribution of rural agricultural development on rural-urban migration in Ekiti state.

2. Literature Review

The concept and consciousness of migration involve contextual factors, such as “push factors,” which force migrants out of rural areas, and “pull factors," which attract migrants to urban areas. The fact remains that even in Nigeria, the trend is clearly towards a preponderance of secondary and tertiary activities in the counter’s urban centers. These occupational differences between rural and urban Nigeria have grave implications for the heavy dependence of the urban on the rural sector and therefore the need for greater attention to rural agricultural development.

Rural-urban migration has long been recognized as one of the main problems of rural development in Nigeria. Yet, government efforts to deal with it have not been substantially successful In agriculture, by far the greatest problem has been low production [1]. This problem has been made more intense by the huge number of Nigerians who have embraced other non-agricultural occupations in urban areas. Because of this, the food security situation in Nigeria and other African countries has deteriorated over the years, and many people now face the problem of hunger and malnutrition. The migration process, especially rural-urban often has grave consequences as it affects food production, agricultural exports, the rural demand for manufactured goods, and future economic surpluses in agriculture available for investment elsewhere in the economy.

The strength, or supposedly the engine of agriculture, otherwise known as manpower, that is necessary for agricultural development due to rural-urban migration is unavailable in the rural communities where agricultural activities take place. The impoverishment of rural areas in Nigeria is partly explainable by the syndrome of out-migration of able-bodied youths in search of white-collar jobs in the cities, and this in another way would result in another crop of environmental issues in the destination, i.e., the urban areas. Agriculture, which was the mainstay of Nigeria’s economy before the discovery of oil, has been relegated to the background, leading to the country’s mono-economy status. The impact of rural-urban migration is indeed a rapid deterioration of the rural economy, leading to chronic poverty and food insecurity.

In 1973, the National Agricultural and Cooperative Bank (NACB) was established to facilitate agricultural financing to farmers. The National Accelerated Food Production Program (NAFPP) was initiated with an emphasis on agricultural research and extension support to farmers. With the massive exploration of crude oil, the oil boom came and stood astride the Nigerian economy contributing more than 98% of total export value and 73% of GDP. With a focus on crude oil, The agricultural policies and programs were clumsily executed and virtually abandoned by succeeding military regimes. The cocoa plantations suffered serious setbacks, the cotton and groundnut pyramids disappeared, hides and skin became food for the embattled Nigerian populace, and the oil palm plantations which were battlefields during the Biafra/Nigeria Civil War died a natural death due to neglect. The disaster on agriculture was enormous, and Nigeria has not ameliorated the effects to date. There was an obvious decline in the agricultural sector due to underdevelopment of the sector; frequent changes in government policies and implementation strategies; no serious agricultural mechanization policy; poor infrastructures and facilities; poor research and development work. There was an increasing shortage of food evidenced by increased food imports and increased high prices. Agricultural exports dwindled at an alarming rate as well as a decline in the labour force for agriculture.

3. Methodology

3.1 The Area of Study

Ekiti state is located in a tropical climate with distinct wet and dry seasons, these are the rainy season (April to October) and dry season (November to March). Temperature ranges in the State between 21°and 28°C, with the atmosphere evincing a high degree of humidity. The south-west wind and the north-east trade winds blow in the rainy and dry (Harmattan) seasons respectively. Geographically, It is located between longitudes 40°51′ and 50°451′ East of the Greenwich meridian and latitudes 70°151′ and 80°51′ north of the Equator. It shares boundaries with Kawar State in the north, Kogi State in the north-east, Osun State in the south, and south-east.

3.2 Agricultural Practice in Ekiti

Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of Ekiti, and it is the major source of income for many in the state. Some agricultural produce in the state is cash crops such as cocoa, oil palm, kola nut, plantain, bananas, cashew, citrus and timber; arable/food crops such as rice, yam, cassava, maize, and cow-pea. Although the state capital of Ekiti State (the study area) is fairly urbanized, the greater majority of the population still lives in the rural areas, and their major occupation is farming.

CASH CROPS	LOCATION	USES
Cocoa	Awo, lse, Emure, Ilawe, Ado, Igede, lgba-ra-Odo, Aramoko	Cocoa Butter, Cocoa Liquor, Cocoa Powder, Beverages
Oil Palm	Across the State	Vegetable Oil, Spices, Flavouring and Export
Timber	Ijero, Ikere, Aramoko, Ise, Ado, Ilawe	Log, Planks, Panel, Furniture and Export
Rubber	Southern part of the state	Tyre manufacture, crepe and Export
Source: Ekiti State Government website (ekitistate.gov.ng).		

Table 1: Cash Crops

ARABLE CROPS	LOCATION	INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTS
Rice	Awo, Ekiti West, Ekiti East, Ikole,Igbemo	Flour, Grits , Grain
Cowpea	Northern part of the state	Grits Flour
Yam	Widespread	Flour
Cassava	Widespread	Mosquito expeller, Adhesive, Starch, Livestock Feeds, cassava Chips, Yeast, Alcohol Product.
Maize	Widespread	Maize,Grit, Corn Flour
Citrus	Widespread	Food, Fruit Juice, Wines
Plantain and Banana	Throughout the state	Plantain Flour, Plantain Beer, Plantain Balls, chips/crepe
Cashew	Northern part of the State	Oil, Nuts
Kolanut	Ikoro, Awo, Igede and generally in the forest zone	Stimulants
Source: Ekiti State Government website (ekitistate.gov.ng).		

Table 2: Arable Crops

3.3 The Population of the Study

This population includes the sixteen local governments of Ekiti State, based on the volume of farming operations seen in each local government, respondents were chosen for this study from each district, also, a random sampling technique was used to select 400 respondents from the study area with each local government having twenty-five (25) questionnaires to solicit primary data, as shown in the table below, hence, descriptive statistics were used to analyze the collected data.

4.Results and Discussion

4.1 Gender Distribution of Respondents

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of respondents, it indicates that the majority (61%) were male while 39% were female, which shows that both males and females were involved in the survey, hence, this does not necessarily mean that the males are more than the females in the study area

S/N	SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Male	244	61
2	Female	156	39
	Total	400	100
Source: Fieldwork, 2023			

Table 3: Gender Distribution of Respondents

4.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

Table 2 below, shows the respondents' age distributions, it ranges between the age bracket 21-30 with 15%, 31-40 has 22%, which is supposed to have the highest percentage, been the youth bracket, also, age bracket 41-50 has 24% while 51-60 has 29%, with the highest percentage, this in a way is the reflection that most youths have embarked on rural-urban migration, leaving the elderly, furthermore, age bracket 61-79 has 10%, which is the lowest percentage.

S/N	AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	21-30	60	15
2	31-40	88	22
3	41-50	96	24
4	51-60	116	29
5	61-77	40	10
	Total	400	100
Source: Fieldwork, 2023			

Table 4: Age Distribution of Respondents

4.3 Marital Status of Respondents

The summary of the data collected on marital status among respondents is shown in Table 3. It can be inferred from the table that 33% of the respondents are single while 53% are married, 2% are widows, 7% are divorced and 5% are separated.

S/N	MARITAL STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Single	132	33
2	Married	212	53
3	Widow	8	2
4	Divorced	28	7
5	Separated	20	5
	Total	400	100
Source: Fieldwork, 2023			

Table 5: Marital Status of Respondents

4.4 Level of Education of Respondents

The table below gives the level of education of the respondents. 9% fall into no education, 12% have primary education, 42% of the respondents have secondary education, and 37% have tertiary education

S/N	LEVEL OF EDUCATION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	No Education	36	9
2	Primary	48	12
3	Secondary	168	42
4	Tertiary	148	37
	Total	400	100
Source: Fieldwork, 2023			

Table 6: Level of Education

4.5 Size of Farm

Table 5, shows the sizes of farms per acre, indicating that farming is one of the major activities in Ekiti State. 41%, 22%, 21%, 14%, and 2% respectively have 1-2 acres of farmland, 3-4 acres of farmland, 5-6 acres of farmland, 7-8 acres, and 9-10 acres of farmland. The implication is that an average person in the study area has at least a portion to farm, either to complement other jobs or as the main means of income.

S/N	SIZE OF FARM(ACRE)	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	1 - 2	164	41
2	3 - 4	86	22
3	5 - 6	84	21
4	7 - 8	56	14
5	9 - 10	10	2
	Total	400	100
Source: Fieldwork, 2023			

Table 7: Size of farm

4.6 Farm Experience

The table below gives the farming experience of the respondents over the years, which further reiterate that farming is indeed a major deal in the study area. The highest percentage is 33% with 1-5 years experience in farming, this is not the product of age, rather it's the reflection of interest, most youths have emigrated to urban areas and few that are available don't have much experience. 28% of the respondents have 6-10 years of experience, 18% have 11-15 years of experience, while 13% and 8% have 16-20 years and above 20 years respectively. The percentage decreases gradually.

S/N	FARM EXPERIENCE(YEAR)	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	1 - 5	132	33
2	6 - 10	112	28
3	11 - 15	72	18
4	16 - 20	52	13
5	Above 20	32	8
	Total	400	100
Source: Fieldwork, 2023			

Table 8: Farm Experience

4.7 Major Source of Livelihood

he study revealed in table 7, that the major occupation in the study area is farming. 32% of the respondents are farmers, 24% are traders, 15% are civil servants, 21% are civil servants and yet, farmers, and 8% are artisans. It's clearer that either as an active or passive farmer, farming takes the highest lead in the activities of the study area. Hence, as the active farmers are growing old and the youth are seeking better opportunities outside the rural area, there will be a gradual reduction, as well as a ripple effect.

S/N	MAJOR SOURCE OF LIVELIHOOD	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Farming	128	32
2	Trading	96	24
3	Civil Service	60	15
4	Farming & Civil Service	84	21
5	Handcraft	32	8
	Total	400	100
Source: Fieldwork, 2023			

Table 9: Major Source of Livelihood

4.8 Annual Income

Table 8 below gives a brief breakdown of the annual income of the respondents. The income breakdown describes the status of living of the respondents and the rationale behind the urge to embark on rural-urban migration by the youth. 30% take below 200,000, 22% take between 201,000 - 400,000 as their annual income, 18% take 410,000 - 600,000, 15% take 601,000 - 800,000 as annual income, 10%, of the respondents receives 891,000 - 1000,000 as well as 5% of the respondents taking above 1000,000 as the annual income. Considering the reality of the country in terms of inflation and unchecked increase in commodities, a typical youth in the study area would naturally want to seek better opportunities to earn more money.

S/N	ANNUAL INCOME	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
1	Below 200,000	120	30
2	201,000 - 400,000	88	22
3	401,000 - 600,000	72	18
4	601,000 - 800,000	60	15
5	801,000 - 1,000,000	40	10
6	**1,000,000 and above**	20	5
	Total	400	100
Source: Fieldwork, 2023			

Table 10: Annual Income

4.9 Causes of rural-urban migration

Table 9 and Figure 1 below describe the various causes of rural-urban migration in the study area. Table 9 is detailed, but for better expression and clarity, Figure 1 is as well used. All the six peculiar listed causes of rural-urban migration such as seeking urban jobs, seeking better education, social amenities, better income, good skill acquisition, and basic health care services are the major factors responsible for rural-urban migration in the study area. 148,164,128,188,140 and 128 strongly agree (SA) that the above-listed factors are respectively causing rural-urban migration; as well as 152, 156, 96, 128, 164, and 112 respondents respectively agree (A) that the factors are responsible for rural-urban migration, hence, 48, 20, 56, 20, 28 & 44 respondents were undecided (U); 32, 52, 8, 36, 36 & 68 respectively disagree (D) with the factors above as well as 20, 8, 32, 28,32, & 36 respondents strongly disagree (SD) with the factors above. More details are represented in the chart below.

S/N	CAUSES/FACTORS	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
1	Urban job	148	152	48	32	20	400
2	Education	164	156	20	52	8	400
3	Social amenities	128	96	56	8	32	400
4	Income	188	128	20	36	28	400
5	Skill acquisition	140	164	28	36	32	400
6	Health care services	128	112	44	68	36	400
Source: Fieldwork, 2023							

Table 11 Causes of Rural-Urban Migration

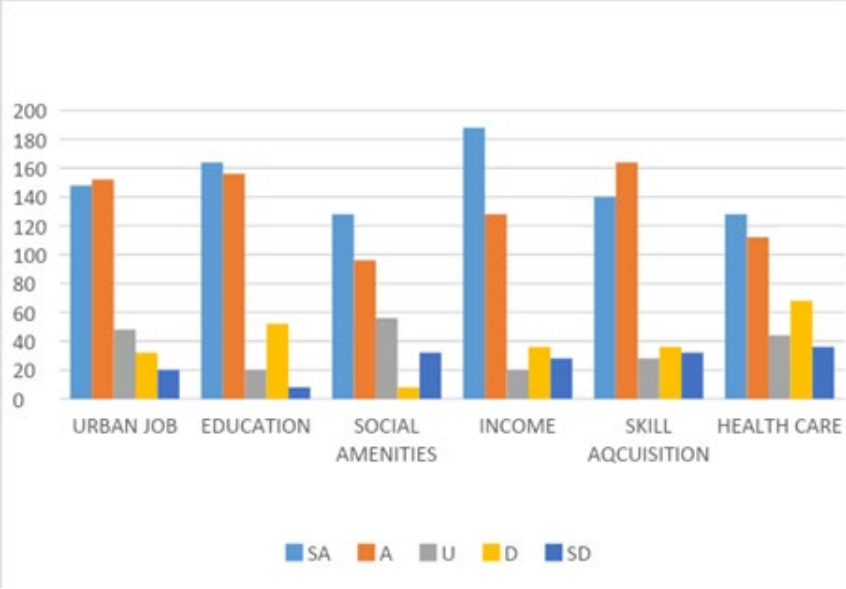

Figure 1: Causes of Rural-urban migration.

4.10 Effects of Rural-Urban Migration on Agricultural Development in the Study Area

Table 10 below gives a detailed effect of rural-urban migration on agricultural development in the study area, and it is well represented in the chart as Figure 2 below. The effects include a reduction in Labour, which is one of the direct effects of rural-urban migration in the study area, out of the 400 respondents, 188 respondents strongly agree (SA), 100 respondents agree (A), 36 respondent's undecided, 20 respondents disagree and 56 respondents strongly disagree that rural-urban migration would cause a reduction in labour. In the same way, out of 400 respondents, 160 respondents strongly agree(SA), 122 respondents agree(A), 80 respondents are undecided (U), 40 respondents disagree (D) and 8 respondents strongly disagree (SD) that rural-urban migration would cause high cost of labour. Similarly, from the 400 respondents, 192 strongly agree, 116 agree, 52 undecided, 28 disagree and 12 strongly disagree with the statement that rural-urban migration can lead to low agricultural productivity. Likewise, 172 respondents strongly agree, 148 agree, 40 were undecided, 24 disagree, and 16 respondents strongly disagree that rural-urban migration would cause low income and low standard of living in the study area. In like manner, out of 400 respondents, 148 strongly agree, 112 agree, 24 undecided, 52 disagree and 64 strongly disagree that rural-urban migration would cause poverty in the study area. Finally, from the 400 respondents, 140 strongly agree, 108 agree, 64 are undecided, 52 disagree and 36 strongly disagree with the statement that rural-urban migration can cause a reduction in raw materials.

S/N	EFFECTS	SA	A	U	D	SD	TOTAL
1	Reduction in labour	188	100	36	20	56	400
2	High cost of labour	160	112	80	40	8	400
3	Low agricultural productivity	192	116	52	28	12	400
4	Low income and standard of living	172	148	40	24	16	400
5	Poverty	148	112	24	52	64	400
6	Reduction in raw materials	140	108	64	52	36	400
Source: Fieldwork, 2023							

Table 12: Effects of rural-urban migration

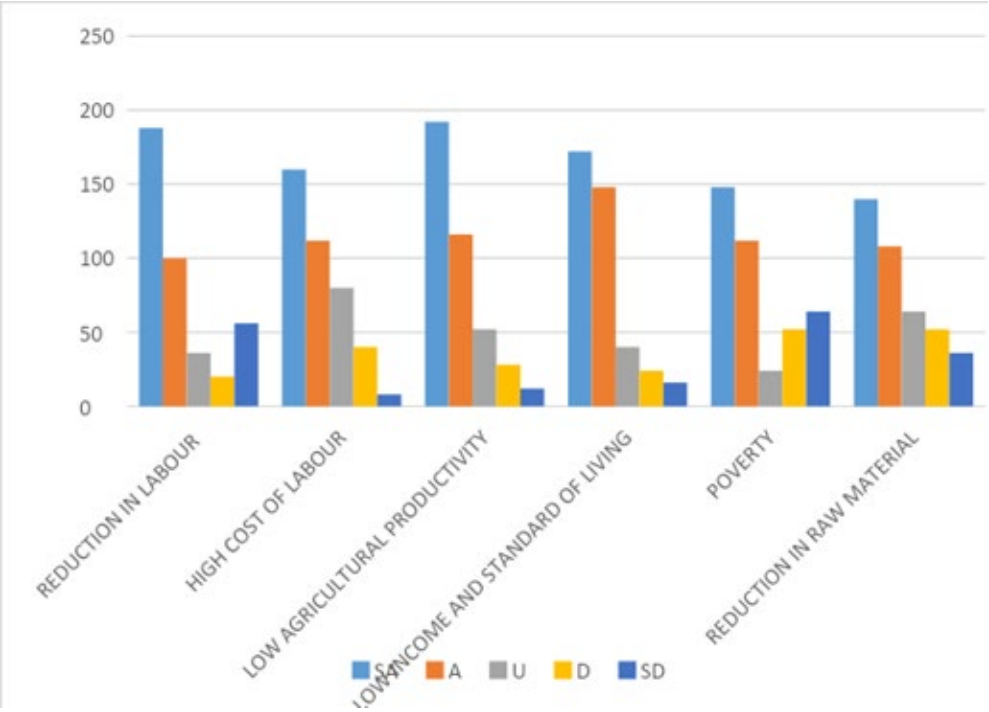

Figure 2: Representation of the causes of rural-urban migration

5. Conclusion and Recommendation

Agricultural sector in Ekiti-State is indeed a major occupation and practice that has become an identity, but it has been established that there is a huge gap that must be urgently filled up. From the results, it is clearly revealed that the youths have embarked on rural-urban migration leaving the adults to sustain the exercise. However, sustainability of agricultural practices cannot be ensured when there is a massive decline in labour. The unchecked rate of rural-urban migration must be urgently looked into by the government of the day. This paper shows that with appropriate rural development programmers by the government, rural-urban migration can be curtailed. One of the constraints to rural development is the non-adherence and non-commitment to policies initiated by past governments. The development of rural areas will bring about the development in agricultural practice thereafter. Availability of basic social amenities and other variables to make rural dwellers comfortable will checkmate rural-urban migration, and this will as well have positive effects on the urban-centers, i.e., reduction in urban associated issues. Major causes of rural-urban migration from this study area are; seeking for urban job, seeking good education, lack of social amenities in the rural area, low income, seeking for skill and basic health care and the possible outcomes are; reduction in labour, high cost of labour, low agricultural productivity, low income and standard of living, poverty, and reduction in raw materials. Hence, following are the recommendations, The recommendations are made in respect to the peculiarity of the study area and the results above [2-27].

1. The government should ensure that schools, pipe-borne water, and power are available in the area.
2. Non-governmental and cooperative bodies should join the government to organize training and skill acquisition programmers.
3. Farm mechanization should be encouraged and subsidized through different bodies, such as Africa Development Bank (AFDB), Central Bank of Nigeria etc.
4. There should be proper monitoring and appropriation to ensure efficiency and sufficiency .
5. Agro-processing facilities and market should be made available to increase the value of agricultural products and encourage the youth to fully participate in agricultural practice
6. Improved livestock and crop varieties through extension visits to encourage them to pursue careers in agriculture would go a long way to reduce rural-urban migration.
7. Insecurity should be tackled, especially the farmers-herders issues.

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