

## IMPACT OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON THE RURAL AREAS OF ONDO KINGDOM, ONDO STATE-NIGERIA

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### Abstract

Africa, “the birth-place of mankind” and the second largest continent in the world has been maliciously described as the “dark-continent”. Though the continent has innumerable resources, it still experiences societal degradation in all facets of human existence. Violence, refugee problem and destruction of lives and properties have become almost daily features in the continent. The concept of development can either be viewed from a narrow perspective as high level of Gross National Product per person and increasing overtime, it can also viewed as a process of structural change in the economy with agriculture declining in importance while the industrial: the tertiary and the quaternary sectors are increasing. Various problems arise as a result of the influx of unemployed and underemployed migrants into the urban areas. The major consequence of the influx of migrants is evident in the mismatch between the large number of migrants invading the urban areas and inadequate employment opportunities. The side-effect of migration is also felt in the rural areas. The aim of this paper is to study the impact of migration on the rural areas of Ondo State, the gender and spatial characterization of the migrants and the problems encountered in the rural areas and ways by which the government can help stabilize the rural areas.

**Keywords:** Migrants, Migration, Economic development, Sustainable and Rural areas.

### Background to the Study

Migration is the movement of people or animals from one place to another. At different points in time, entire groups of people or animals have left their abodes and moved to new ones. In terms of human beings, migration specifically refers to movement of people from one locality to another sometimes over long distances or in large groups ([www.wikipedia/humanmigration](http://www.wikipedia/humanmigration), 2009). It is the movement of people leading to permanent settlement (Harver World Encyclopedia, 1973). Permanent here should be conceptualized to last for as long as the factors that engendered movement in the first place have not by themselves caused yet another.

Sustainable development is a pattern of growth in which resource use aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present, but also for future generation to come. The sustainable development ties together concerns for the carrying capacity of natural systems with the social challenges facing humanity. Sustainable development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generation to meet their own needs.

The concept of Economic development can either be viewed from a narrow perspective as high level of Gross National Product per person and increasing overtime, it can also be viewed as a process of structural change in the economy with agriculture declining in importance while the industrial: the tertiary and the quaternary sectors are increasing.

Migration is the temporary or permanent movement of individuals or groups of people from one geographic location to another for various reasons ranging from better employment possibilities to persecution (Zanker, 2008). Migration includes both movement of people out of a locality (emigration) and movement of a people into a locality (immigration). International migration takes place between two countries and intercontinental migration between two continents. Movement of people within a country is called internal migration. Four major types of internal migration have been identified. They are rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban and urban to rural (Mabogunje, 1970, Sada, 1984). These types of internal migration feature over time and space and are related to a country's economic development.

The most prevalent type of internal migration is the rural to urban (Afam-Anene and Nwajiuba, 2005). Rural to urban migration involves the movement of people who live in the rural areas to settle in the urban areas. Such movement can be voluntary such as in the case with search for better life. It can also be involuntary such as is the case with natural disasters. Peaceful internal migrations may be engendered by either economic or non-economic factors. Economic factors may include the search for new pastures, arable land and others. Non-economic include cultural migrations for religious purposes.

According to Ali (2005), central to the understanding of rural-urban migration flow is the traditional push-pull factors. "Push" refers to circumstances at home that repel while "pull" refers to those abroad that attract migrants. In a given population with an urge to leave home, some persons typically go while some stay behind. Thus "push" and "pull" factors do not exert their influence equally. The self-selection process by which migrants differentiate themselves from the non-migratory population (migratory selection), when analyzed affords a better insight why migration takes place.

According to Aworemi (2011) in the appraisal of the factors influencing rural-urban migration in some selected Local Government Areas of Lagos concluded that unemployment, education, family reasons, inadequate social amenities in the rural communities, avoidance of boredom in agriculture and health reasons are the major factors influencing rural-urban migration in Nigeria. It was however recommended that to stem down the rate of the rural-urban migration, functional amenities such as pipe borne water, electricity, recreational facilities should be provided in the rural areas. Good educational facilities and qualified teachers should be made available in the rural areas. Agro-allied industries must be set-up in the rural areas in order to provide job opportunity for the rural dwellers. (Aworemi, Abdul-Hazeez and Opoola, 2011)

In many developing nations, there had been a rapid growth of urban population far more than that of rural population. Nigeria is a typical example of this, where there had been a tremendous expansion of urban areas consequent to the rapid rural urban migration. In 1974 rural population was 75 per cent of

the total population but by 2001 urban population had assumed a high dimension of 44 per cent of the country's population. This rapid urban growth portends serious implications on the environment and the wellbeing of the citizenry. In Africa, estimates have shown that between 1990 and 2020, half a billion people will be added to already overcrowded conurbations as against the less than 200 million people in north America and Europe (USAID, 2002).

Such rapid urban growth in these African countries including Nigeria started even before independence. The migration to urban centres far outstrips services and infrastructural development resulting in deepening crisis in basic municipal services, a situation which was later further worsened by the Structural Adjustment Programme of the 1980s to which Nigeria has hardly recovered from. Also in Nigeria, the rural populaces continue to move out in large numbers temporarily or permanently to towns and cities to seek out new opportunities, improved livelihoods and standard of living. Subsequently, however, they end up in city slums scratching out a living with limited capacity to adapt to socio-economic changes in the new environments they find themselves

According to Braunvan (2004), people tend to be pulled to the areas of prosperity and pushed from areas of decline. Migrants are usually concerned with the benefits they hope to gain by moving and usually give less thought to the problems that they will incur as a result of the process. Some of these problems may impact more on the non-migrants left behind in the rural area. The movement of people from rural to urban areas is a common occurrence in Nigeria. The movement poses some problems in the rural as well as in the urban center even though, there are benefits derived from it. 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 (Mini, 2000). This arises 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.

#### Rationale for the Study

The choice of the research topic is justified by the fact that most research works on rural-urban migration focus more on the situation of the receiving areas with little or no attention to the origin before and after migration might have taken place and even when attention is paid to the source region, much work has not been done on the sustenance of economic development through government intervention in the rural areas. The researchers believe that a way of developing and sustaining African economy would be a reduction in the poverty level of rural dwellers. When the rural areas are appropriately managed, the problem of rural-urban migration will be checked and the resultant negative effects of rural-urban migration on the receiving regions will be averted.

#### Aim and Objectives

The aim of the research work is to examine the characterization of the rural dwellers in Ondo State in terms of the need for government intervention in a bid to strengthen economic development of the areas. The objectives of the study are to:

- (a) Examine the demographic characteristics of the rural dwellers in rural areas around Ondo Town

- (b) Attempt an analysis of the relationship between space and movement, what state feeds the rural areas surrounding Ondo more in terms of migrants and examine the proportion of migrants versus indigenes present in the rural areas of Ondo town
- (c) Find out if the rural areas dwellers are satisfied with the state of the rural areas where they live

### Research Methodology

Data for the study include primary and secondary data. The primary data is the raw information collected from actual field survey in the study area. The research instruments include oral interviews, direct observation and administration of questionnaires. The research design for this study employed both descriptive and inferential survey design. Descriptive statistics used to evaluate the socio-economic and demographic characteristics of respondents while the field survey was carried out in two phases. The reconnaissance survey of the study area was carried out in order to get the researchers acquainted with the study area. The area was observed and contacts with the respondents for the field work proper were established. The second phase was the field survey proper. It involves the administration of the well-structured questionnaire.

A total of eleven rural settlements were chosen for the purpose of the research work. Forty respondents were randomly selected to help in filling the questionnaires; this figure was chosen by the researchers so that a large percentage of the rural dwellers will be represented in the survey. A total of four hundred and forty questionnaires were administered through the help of research assistants employed for the purpose of the research work. The respondents were sixteen years and above. All the selected rural areas have direct link with Ondo Town in the sense that most of the rural dwellers bring their farm produce to Ondo Town to sell and they in turn buy things needed from the town.

Data collected was presented with the use of tables and analysis was done through the use of simple frequency and percentages.

### Problems of Data Collection

Various problems were encountered in the course of this study.

- (1) A considerable number of the respondents could not answer the questions themselves as a result of the high level of illiteracy in the rural areas. Eighty percent of the respondents had to be helped in writing the answers to the questions asked.
- (2) The roads leading to most of the rural areas were very bad. Most of the roads were not motorable; some were water-logged so the research assistants co-opted for the administration of the questionnaires had to go on motorcycles.
- (3) There was also time constraint. Most of the respondents had to be interviewed at a time they believed would be better spent minding their business or on their way to farm so the administration of the questionnaires had to be done in the evenings.
- (4) The financial implication of the survey cannot but be mentioned. A lot of money was spent in the production of the questionnaires and on logistics. Also the researchers had to finance the trips to the rural areas and take care of the research assistants.

### Study Area

The study area consists of the rural areas of Ondo Kingdom in Ondo State of Nigeria. The rural settlements selected for the purpose of this research work are Aratundin, Bagbe, Fagbo, Bolorunduro, Litaye, Asewele Korede, Oboto, Ajue, Omifon, Ireje and Epe. Ondo Town is located between latitude 7° 14' North of the Equator and Longitude 4° 15' of the Greenwich Meridian. It is bounded in the North by Ile-Oluju/Okeigbo Local Government Area, in the East by Ondo East Local Government Area and in the South by Odigbo Local Government Area. According to the 2006 census, Ondo town has a population of 250, 156 people and an annual growth rate of 2.83 percent. In the last five decades, Ondo has witnessed massive rural-urban migration which may be linked with the low level of development of the surrounding villages. Ondo is noted for the influx of people because of its good soil that is very suitable for both cash and food crops. People engage in activities such as farming, trading, teaching and administration among others.

### Conceptual Framework

Fellman, Bjelland, Getis and Getis (2010) are of the opinion that migration patterns and conflicts touch so many aspects of social and economic relations and have become so important a part of current human geographic realities. In other words, human pressures on land and other natural resources, need for food, changes in climate and other challenges of individual and collective survival and development often necessitate deliberate permanent or semi-permanent movement and relocation in space.

Generally, migration theorists often attribute migration to a series of overlapping mechanisms such as differentials in opportunities between source (i.e. initial residential location of the migrant) and destination. Negative conditions that necessitate the decision to move are called push factors while the presumed positive attractions of the migration to the destination are called pull factors.

Fig 1: A Model of Migration

| Push Factors                          | Pull Factors                                     |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Lack/ Loss of job                     | Job Opportunities                                |
| Poverty                               | Food Security                                    |
| Lack of social amenities              | Security and Safety                              |
| War/Crisis/Terrorism                  | Social Amenities and Infrastructure              |
| Famine/Flood/Drought                  | Good and Fertile Soil                            |
| Poor soil/Land Shortage               | Better Climate                                   |
| Bad Climate                           | Good Schools and other Educational Opportunities |
| Lack of Educational Opportunities etc |  |
| Social stigma                         |  |

In 1885, E.G Ravenstein put forward seven “laws of migration” based on his studies of migration within the UK (Zanker, 2008). These laws are as follows:

1. Most migrants travel short distances and their numbers decrease as distance increases (distance decay)
2. Migration occurs in waves and the vacuum left as one group of people moves out will later be filled by a counter-current of people moving in.
3. The process of dispersion (emigration) is the inverse of absorption (immigration)

4. Most migrations show a two-way movement as people move in and out: net migration flows are the balance between the two movements.
5. The longer the journey, the more likely it is that the migrant will end up in a major center of industry or commerce.
6. Urban dwellers are less likely to move than their rural counterparts.
7. Females migrate more than males within their country of birth, but males are more likely to move further afield.  
 Most recent global migration studies have largely accepted Ravenstein's 'laws', but have demonstrated some additional trends: (Vaugh, 2002)
8. Most migrants follow a step movement which entails several small movements from the village level to a major city rather than one traumatic lump.
9. People are leaving rural areas in ever increasing numbers.
10. People move mainly for economic reasons, e.g. jobs and the opportunity to earn more money
11. Most migrants fall into the 20-34 age range.
12. With the exception of short journeys in developed countries, males are the more mobile. (in many societies, females are still expected to remain at home)
13. There are increasing numbers of migrants who are unable to find accommodation in the place to which they move; this forces them to live on the streets, in shanties and in refugee camps.

According to Lee (1966), factors which influence a migrant's decision to migrate and the process of migration are the: factors associated with the areas of origin, factors associated with the area of destination, intervening obstacles and personal factors. The theory states that there is a direct relationship between the volume of migration and the socio-economic differences between places. The push factors represent the deteriorating socio-economic conditions at the origin while pull factors stress the advantages and attractions produced by the opportunities and prosperities at the destination. The model is useful because of its ability to analyze the motivation for migration of all kinds; however the model has been criticized for its mechanical handling of forces which attract potential migrants and for the assumption that an alternative locality has only either positive (attractive) forces or negative (repulsive) ones (Zanker, 2008).

#### Discussion of Results

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

|        | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|------------|
| Male   | 219       | 49.77      |
| Female | 221       | 50.23      |
| Total  | 440       | 100        |

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2013

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of the respondents used for the purpose of the study. Male respondents constitute 49.77 percent (219) of the 440 respondents. Out of the 440 respondents, 221 are females and these constitute 50.23 percent of the total respondents.

**Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents**

| Age (in years) | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------|-----------|------------|
| 16 – 20        | 71        | 16.13      |
| 21 – 30        | 20        | 4.54       |
| 31 – 40        | 40        | 9.09       |
| 41 – 50        | 60        | 1.36       |
|                |           |            |
| 51 – 60        | 116       | 26.36      |
| 61 above       | 133       | 30.22      |
| Total          | 440       | 100        |

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2013

Table 2 above shows the analysis of the age distribution of the respondents. Respondents in the 51-60 and 61 above age brackets formed the majority of the respondents accounting for 26.36 percent and 30.22 percent respectively. Age bracket 16-20 also accounted for 16.13 percent of the respondents found in the rural areas. The trend is different for age brackets 21-30, 31-40 and 41-50 which accounted for 4.54 percent, 9.09 percent and 1.36 percent of the total respondents. What can be noticed here were that the age brackets that should form the larger part of the working population appears to be very low when compared to the age brackets that can be referred to as the dependent population. It was also gathered through the oral interviews that a large part of the above 61 age bracket came back to the rural areas after having spent a large part of their active life in the surrounding urban areas. This shows that there is a difference in the proportion of the respondents who are in the working age (16-20, 51-60 and 61 above) and those in the dependent age (21-50).

**Table 3: Educational Status of Respondents**

|                                  | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| No Formal Education              | 127       | 28.86      |
| Primary Sch. Leaving Certificate | 192       | 43.63      |
| SSCE/NECO/GCE/WAEC               | 101       | 22.96      |
| Higher Education                 | 20        | 4.55       |
| Total                            | 440       | 100        |

Source: Authors' Field Work 2013

Table 3 above shows that 28.86 percent (127) of the total respondents had no formal education. 43.63 percent (192) of the respondents possessed the Primary School Leaving Certificate while 22.96 percent (101) possessed the Secondary School Certificate while only 4.55 percent (20) possessed the NCE and other higher certificates. This shows that most of the rural dwellers do not move back to their areas after obtaining higher education. This could also be one of the problems facing the rural areas as there is the loss of young, able-bodied and educated people to urban areas in search of greener pastures.

**Table 4: Indigene of Rural Areas versus Migrants**

|          | Frequency |        |       | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|--------|-------|------------|
|          | Male      | Female | Total |            |
| Indigene | 15        | 36     | 51    | 11.59      |
| Migrants | 204       | 185    | 389   | 88.41      |
|          | 219       | 221    | 440   | 100        |

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2013

The table above shows that there were more migrants in the rural areas studied when compared to the indigenes. 51 respondents which make up 11.59 percent of the total respondents are from the 11 rural areas used for the study (that is, they are indigenes of the selected communities) while 88.41 percent (389) of the total respondents are from other areas. This is so since most of the indigenes of these areas have also migrated to other places

Table 5: Major reasons for dwelling the rural areas

|          | Frequency |        |       | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|--------|-------|------------|
|          | Male      | Female | Total |            |
| Farming  | 170       | 18     | 188   | 42.72      |
| Trading  | 49        | 98     | 147   | 33.42      |
| Marriage | 0         | 105    | 105   | 23.86      |
|          | 219       | 221    | 440   | 100        |

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2013

Table 5 shows the major reasons for dwelling in the rural areas. As is expected, there is a difference in the reasons male and female respondents moved. A larger number of male respondents (170) dwell in or moved into the rural areas for farming while just 18 female respondents moved in for the same reason. 98 female respondents moved into the areas for trading while 49 male respondents moved into the rural areas for the same reasons. 105 respondents moved into the rural areas as a result of the fact that their husbands moved in, no male respondents moved because of marriage. This shows that there is difference in the reasons males and females move.

Table 6: Spatial Distribution of Origin of Migration of Respondents

| State/Area  | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Ondo        | 166       | 37.72      |
| Osun        | 108       | 24.54      |
| Oyo         | 24        | 5.45       |
| Delta       | 14        | 3.18       |
| Kogi        | 14        | 3.18       |
| Edo         | 13        | 2.95       |
| Benue       | 13        | 2.95       |
| Kwara       | 13        | 2.95       |
| Ekiti       | 12        | 2.72       |
| Ebonyi      | 11        | 2.5        |
| Anambra     | 10        | 2.27       |
| Enugu       | 10        | 2.27       |
| Ogun        | 6         | 1.36       |
| Cross River | 6         | 1.36       |
| Sokoto      | 3         | 0.68       |
| Zamfara     | 2         | 0.45       |
| Akwa Ibom   | 2         | 0.45       |
| Nassarawa   | 2         | 0.45       |
| Ghana       | 1         | 0.23       |
| Total       | 440       | 100        |

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2013

Table 6 shows the states that respondents are from. Ondo State had the highest proportion 37.72 percent (166 respondents), Osun state accounted for 24.54percent (108 respondents), 24 respondents (5.45percent) were from Oyo State, Delta and Kogi States had 14 respondents respectively. Sokoto, Zamfara, Akwa Ibom, Nasarrawa States made up 0.68 percent, 0.45 percent, 0.45 percent, 0.45 percent respectively while there was a respondent from Ghana, this respondent constituted 0.23 percent of the total number of respondents. This shows that there was a direct relationship between movement and distance as there were more people from areas that are nearer to the study area when compared with other far places.

Table 7: Level of Satisfaction of Respondents

|       | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------|-----------|------------|
| Yes   | 83        | 18.86      |
| No    | 357       | 81.14      |
| Total | 440       | 100        |

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2013

Out of a total of 440 respondents, only 83 (18.86percent) were satisfied with the state of the rural areas while 357 respondents (81.14 percent) were not satisfied with the state of the rural areas. According to the respondents, some of the problems confronting the rural dwellers are the absence of good and motorable roads, lack of health centres, lack of portable water and lack of electricity. It is the belief of these rural settlers that if the government could attend to these needs, it will be a way of improving the status of the rural areas.

### Findings

The findings of the research work are as follows:

1. When the number of indigenes and migrants are compared, the proportion of indigenes is lower than that of migrants in the rural areas. This can be linked to the fact that most of the indigenes have left the rural areas in search of greener pastures elsewhere.
2. There were more old people (aged 51 above) when compared with the younger people (aged 50 below). This can also be as a result of the fact that the able bodied men and women have found their ways out of the rural areas as they believe that the rural areas have little or nothing to offer them.
3. There is a direct relationship between movement and distance. People from other settlements in Ondo State rank highest in the number of people who feed Ondo rural areas followed closely by people from Osun state.
4. The deplorable condition of the rural areas impedes the rate of development in the rural areas and also serves as the push factor for migration. The able-bodied men and women have left the areas in search of better opportunities in other places.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

It is very clear that the poor economic condition and productive system of the villages as well as the poverty-stricken population are all implications of the unfortunate phenomenon of rural-urban migration, which is persistent in the area.

- a. The siting of industries in the rural areas will go a long way in solving the problem of unemployment and rural-urban drift.
- b. Apart from the provision of job opportunities, some essential services should also be provided in the rural areas. The roads linking the rural areas should be constructed so that the areas are easily accessible.
- c. The provision of fertilizers for the farmers by the government is also a way of improving the condition of the rural areas. If the farmers have great harvest, most of them will be satisfied with the work they do.
- d. Portable water, electricity and other amenities should be provided for the people in the rural areas.
- e. Interest-free loans should be provided to farmers and also traders and people in small businesses.
- f. Good and affordable health facilities should be provided in rural areas too.
- g. Finally, there should be constitutional provision for siting and decentralizing government headquarters and government parastatals, especially educational institutions to the rural areas so as to achieve even development so that the rural areas can also be transformed.
- h. As a matter of urgency, specific effort and actions that will stimulate and enhance development must be taken to avoid putting the future of the communities and their inhabitants in jeopardy.

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