

IMPACT OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON RURAL COMMUNITIES: A STUDY OF UMUNEKE AND OJEBE-OGENE CLANS, UDI LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF ENUGU STATE, NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The study investigated the impact of rural-urban migration in rural communities of Umuneke and Ojebe Ogene in Enugu State. Rural –urban migration in a colonial phenomenon which arose with the establishment of urban centres in colonized societies. These urban centres served as collection centres for the raw material for which the colonial masters invaded Africa and other less technologically developed societies. Natives were thus attracted to the urban centres to help the colonial masters to organize the raw materials for transportation to Europe. Four research questions were posed and some migration theories reviewed to guide the study. The methodology used was the survey research design using the questionnaire to collect data from a large number respondents from the study area within the shortest possible time. Simple descriptive statistics (frequency table and percentages) were used to analyze the data. It was found out that rural-urban migration really existed in the area of study as young men mostly were fascinated to the new urban centres by the new kind of paid employment, and facilities like electricity, pipe-borne water, health and recreational facilities. The consequences were shortage of able bodied young men for labour in the villages, and high cost of labour. There were also social-cultural consequences such as the disruption of village activities and erosion of kinship solidarity which existed among the villagers. It is hereby recommended that Government should give attention to rural communities and establish employment opportunities in the form of agro-allied industries, amenities like pipe-borne water, electricity, recreation and health facilities as well as education facilities should be provided and finally agriculture should be modernized by mechanization by providing modern farm implements and technologies.

Keywords: Rural-urban migration, internal migration, socio-cultural consequences, erosion of kinship solidarity, disruption of rural activities.

Introduction:

Migration which has ever been both an internal and global phenomenon, in recent times has become a monstrous one, as reported in the dailies and other media of how the citizens of various societies are trooping out in millions from one to the other, causing, food shortages and disrupting the social and economic conditions of host societies. Brockerhoof (1995) declares that internal migration accounted for at least half of all urban growth in African during the 1960s and about 25% of urban growth in Africa in the 1980s and 1990s. A typical example of internal migration is the case of the three North-eastern states of Nigeria namely-Borno, Yobe and Adamawa states, where the terrorist movement known as Boko Haram has unleashed unprecedented magnitude of mass destruction in the form of killings, large-scale burning and forcing out of the people from the region and foisting on the nation a huge refugee problem which has attracted the international community in what has become known as Internally Displaced Persons (IDP's). The example of global migration is the reports of people in their thousands desperately forcing their way through the Sahara Desert and Mediterranean illegally into Europe. A third example is the hundreds of thousands of Africans looking for visas and other resident permits into Western Europe and America.

Migration has various dimensions, among which are rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-urban and urban-rural. (Umoh 2001) (Adepoju 1974) Rural – rural migration is where the migrants leave their original homes in one local area for another in search of vast and better agricultural land. Rural – urban is migration of people, particularly able – bodied young men (and women) from rural to urban centres in search of better employment other than hoe- and- machet agriculture. Urban – urban is where people living in one urban centre move to another urban center in expectation of better opportunities and facilities eg. Enugu to Abuja or Lagos. Urban – rural is the movement of urban dwellers to the rural areas, especially on retirement from public service, or as a result of business failure, or to take rural community titles or to be elected as traditional rulers. (Umoh 2001).

Causes of Migration

Causes of migration are multiple – economic, political, social, natural disasters etc. Aworeni, Abdul-Azeez and Opoola (2011) revealed from a study that unemployment, education, family reasons, inadequate social amenities in the rural communities, avoidance of boredom in agriculture and health reasons are the major factors of rural-urban migration. They summarized these causes into three categories: The first set is related to the need for education and acquisition of skills in various vocations. The second set relate to the absence of job opportunities in rural areas. These include the absence of industries and companies, and boredom of agriculture. The third set is social, such as inadequate amenities and expulsion from rural areas due to offence or crime committed by the migrant. A number of other motivations include educational opportunities offered in urban areas, marriage and joining the family already at the destination.

Umoh (2001) said that there is an inherent desire in man to seek greener pastures anywhere the opportunity exists. He cites examples of Nigeria where the widening gap between rural and urban incomes has encouraged rural – urban migration. He noted other factors that cause rural- urban migration as the desire for better educational facilities, desire to escape from an inferior status imposed by the community (for example, the *osu* in parts of Igboland), the need to escape punishment for crimes committed in the local community (like rape incest, homicide), desire to move to an area with more varied recreational and cultural activities, or to join husband/wife in the urban centres.

The exodus of able-bodied young men and women from rural areas to urban centres has enormous consequences on the rural areas. For instance, Makinwa (1981) in a survey of six villages in former Bendel State of Nigeria discovered that this movement resulted (among other things) in the shortage of labour and recruits into (one or the other) age-based social groups. In this survey, she recorded a response from an *Iguogbe* elder who lamented that assignments traditionally due to youths are now undertaken by elders. Similarly, an *Odionwere* elder in *Evbogho* reported that communal labour has become more difficult because there are no youths to do the difficult jobs. The lamentations narrated above by the elders give clue as to the suffering of aged people left behind in the rural areas as a result of the movement of the youths who troop out to the urban centres.

Makinwa's study cited above is part of the economic hardships on the people. Another kind of the economic problem is the monetization of communal services formerly rendered free of charge to the elders. The few youths who stay behind charge exorbitantly to render the services. They add insult to injury by taunting the elders who complain to recall their children in the cities to come home and do the job for them. They see this as an opportunity to compensate themselves for inability to migrate to the city.

In addition to the economic consequences, there are socio-cultural ones. Among them is the detachment from their roots, of children of migrants born and brought up away from their ancestral homes who learn the languages and cultures of their host communities rather than their own. Most Igbo children born in Lagos, Ibadan and other Yoruba communities speak Yoruba fluently but can hardly speak Igbo, just as Igbo children born in Kaduna, Kano and other Hausa states speak Hausa. Such children are in no position to imbibe the lore of their home communities. Much of their native vocabulary is lost to them as certain objects, foods, plants, animals, local expressions are not known by the children of the migrants. Also festivals of their people are not known by the children like the Igbo transnational *Ahajioku* (new yam) festival, recreation like masquerade shows and wrestling contests in the village squares, communal worships at the village shrines which entail commensal feasting, folklore, and moon-light story telling. Again kinship solidarity which existed among the villagers is lost to the children born and brought up outside as they do not know who are their kin, let alone build up solidarity with them. Marriages which were arranged by parents who knew the backgrounds of prospective spouses are now contracted by the youths themselves who meet themselves in school or workplaces.

To elaborate more on the negative impact of migration on the rural dwellers, Udo (2001) said that migration is mostly selective in age and sex, common among persons aged 15 – 35 and often involves more males. Anele (2003) supported this by saying that rural – urban migration is selective of the young, the educated, the innovative and the energetic or able-bodied, leaving behind the apathetic, the retired and the tired, the illiterate and the insane. Ekejiuba corroborated this by saying that labour migration has resulted in outmigration of able-bodied young menfolk, leaving the women behind in the rural areas to carry out the responsibility of both men and women and feeding the urban populace. Usually, in a family of boys and girls, it is the boys that go out, and for married people the men go out, leaving their wives in the village. Food consumed in the urban centres comes from the rural areas. Ukundu (1973) argues that migration of men to industrial centres has placed the burden of agricultural production upon women and children, and

this has led to a serious decline in food production. Ukundu again (1986) observes that Nigerian agricultural output has been facing a crisis as a result of rural – urban drift.

Umoh (2001) further noted that the departure of persons in the age-group of 15-35 known to be very productive constitutes a loss of man-power on the economy of the region. The age-group who are often better trained workers represents a loss of human capital that was formed at local expense. As the young and potentially better qualified members of the labour force are drawn away, the workforce left behind tends to be relatively older, less educated and less adaptable to new technologies and production methods. And so rural communities that lose their more skilled and innovative members may be less efficient less adaptable and ultimately less able to maintain the aged and the children who remain behind. In that case, living standard is bound to fall.

Specific examples of the harm the absence of able-bodied young men can do are to impair the performance of jobs demanding physical power such as tilling the soil to make yam and cassava mounds, roofing of houses, and pounding of oil-palm fruit for oil-palm production, and even climbing the oil-palm trees to cut down the fruit or tap palm wine.

The loss of able-bodied young men to the cities also weakens civil and traditional authorities, as the young men to enforce traditional norms are not there. In the past, children who disobeyed their parents were thoroughly disciplined by other young men who would parade them in the village, putting mockery necklaces made of snail shells on their necks, and wicked ants on their heads, while local music is played for them to dance, with occasional whips on their backs. A thief would also be made to go round the village, carrying what he stole on his head and dancing to the music played to him, a girl who involved herself in immoral act would be severely beaten with cane and made caricature of in the village. A married woman involved in extra-marital affairs would be made to appease her husband and the gods of the land in a cleansing ceremony before the elders to which she provides a chicken or ram as the case may be depending on what the elders impose. Some tubers of yam, a keg of palm-wine and other local delicacies would also accompany the above.

It would appear that the impact of rural-urban migration is all negative on the rural dwellers. That is not so there are some positive sides, as well. Umoh listed a number of them, one of which is monetary remittances by migrants to their home districts. Ozden and Schiff (2006) say that remittances in developing countries have increased steadily in the past three decades, and according to World Bank are expected to total about US \$67 billion in the coming years. It is also said that remittances serve as the largest single source of foreign exchange in developing countries, as in 2004, sub-Saharan Africa received an estimated US \$7.3 billion in inward remittances with Nigeria accounting for US \$2.3 billion.

It is also observed that in most poor households in developing countries foreign remittances by migrants enable higher levels of consumption by relaxing a binding budget constraint. Cash receipts from migrants to their relatives enable households to maintain consumption levels which would not have otherwise been possible. From development viewpoint, remittances can assist in reducing poverty and narrowing levels of income inequality. Remittances can also support a variety of investments in the recipient households such as in education and health for the members of the households.

Migrants provide income and material goods and put up structures which their home villages would otherwise not have. These permit greater material comforts, for example residential buildings, boreholes, civic centres, cottage industries, roads, schools etc. Migrants usually form town unions whose objective is to transmit some of the urban civilization to their rural areas.

The migrant's home visits also serve as channels of cultural diffusion, thereby bringing about social change in their rural areas. Besides, in areas where there is shortage of land for cultivation with consequent unemployment, the loss of some able-bodied men to the cities leads to a fuller utilization of available man-power, rather than labour shortage. Above all, most return migrants bring lasting changes and development to their home districts. These include the introduction of new skills, crops, leadership and capital.

Research Questions

Some research questions are formulated to guide the study:

- i. To what extent does rural- urban migration occur in the study area, Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene?
- ii. What are the factors that influence rural- urban migration in Umuneke and Ojebe Ogene?
- iii. What are the consequence of rural- urban migration in Umuneke and Ojebe- Ogene?
- iv. What are the strategies for combating rural- urban migration in Umuneke and Ojete- Ogene?

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to examine the impact of rural-urban migration in Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene and the strategies to overcome it in order to stem the tide of the phenomenon. Specific objectives include:

- i. To determine the extent to which rural-urban migration occurs in Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene.
- ii. To identify the factors that influences this rural-urban migration.
- iii. To find out the consequences of rural-urban migration in Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene.
- iv. To determine the strategies that can be used to overcome rural-urban migration in Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene.

Review of Theories

A couple of migration theories are summarized on which the study is anchored. One of them is Ravenstein's laws of migration which include, among others the migration – distance hypothesis which stipulates that migration is inversely related to distance. That is, that migration occurs more over short distances than longer ones. People can migrate more easily from villages to nearby cities than from one country to another. Again Ravenstein postulates that migration occurs in stages. A person migrating overseas will first move from his village to a nearby city like Enugu then to Lagos before moving to London or New York. He also says that urban dwellers migrate less than rural dwellers. Again economic motives are the dominant causes of migration.

Another is Lee's push-and-pull theory which says that there are factors which push an individual from one point and factors which pull him to another. A school leaver would like to escape from the tedium of village life to the exciting one of the city.

The "bright lights" theory of Gulliver and Mitchell resembles Lee's push-and-pull theory. Employment opportunities as a revenues collector, telephone operator, typist, railway clerk, as well as social amenities like electricity, pipe-borne water, telephone services and other facilities in the city are the 'bright lights' that attract young people from the rural areas to the urban.

The political economy theory is one which talks about how the ruling political class determines the economic system. Britain, on colonizing Nigeria transformed the country from the subsistence agriculture to commercial agriculture. Instead of yams, cassava, palm-oil produced for family use etc, the colonial masters compelled the people to produce palm-oil and palm-kernel, rubber, cotton, groundnuts etc, on a large scale for transportation to overseas as raw materials for their manufacturing industries. The raw material produced were bought by the colonial masters from the villagers for paltry sums of money and sold at very high prices in the world markets. The surplus thus expropriated was used to set up urban centres which now attracted the youths from the villages to urban centres.

Methodology

The methodology used is the survey research design which is the type of survey where data are collected from a large number of subjects or respondents at one point in time.

Area of Study

The area of study is the eight communities, of Umuneke namely Abia, Udi, Obinagu, Umuabi, Umuaga, Nachi, Amokwe and Agbudu, as well as the seven communities of Ojebe-Ogene namely Ebe, Abor, Ukana Awhum, Okpatu, Umulumbe and Umuoka all in Udi Local Government Area. All are rural communities.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Eight hundred and forty-three respondents selected using multi-stage sampling techniques. First, the cluster sampling technique was applied, using the communities as clusters. The proportional sampling technique was then used to select from each community in proportion to their populations, four hundred and thirty-two (432) coming from Umuneke and three hundred and thirty-five (335) from Ojebe-Ogene.

Instruments and Method of Data Collection

The questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection copies of which were distributed to the respondents through the assistance of some students from the various communities. It was very good to find assistants from their various or nearby communities as this helped to minimize suspicious from the villagers.

Methods of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (frequency tables and percentages) were used to analyze the research questions.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene communities, the focus of this work had their fair share of rural-urban migration. In one of our objectives on the extent of migration, it was discovered that the extent of migration from these villages was very high.

Table 1: Distribution of the Views of Respondents on the Extent of Out-migration from Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene.

S/N	Extent	Umuneke		Ojebe-Ogene	
		No. of Respondents	%	No. of Respondents	%
1	Very high	168	38.9	142	42.38
2	High	182	42.1	103	30.74
3	Low	47	10.9	58	17.3
4	Very low	35	8.1	32	9.55
	Total	432	100	335	100

Source: Researcher’s field work

From the above table, a large number of respondents 168 (38.9%) from Umuneke, and 142 (42.38%) from Ojebe-Ogene respectively said that outmigration from both clans is very high. An even larger number from both Umuneke 182 (42.%) and 103 (30.74%) from Ojebe-Ogene confirmed that the extent of migration is high. A relatively small number from Umuneke 47 (10.9%) and is (17.3%) from Ojebe-Ogene said that the extent of migration is low. And even smaller number from Umuneke 35 (8.1%) and 32 (9.55%) from Ojebe-Ogene said that the extent of migration is low.

As for the reasons for migration, three major reasons namely lack of employment opportunities, poor infrastructure facilities and lack of educational institutions and two minor ones namely to join his husband or wife, and to escape punishment for crime or inferior status of caste.

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents Views on the Reasons for Rural-Urban migration.

S/N	Reasons	Umuneke		Ojebe-Ogene	
		No. of Respondents	%	No. of Respondents	%
1	Lack of employment opportunities	225	52.0	182	54.32
2	Poor infrastructural facilities	98	22.69	79	23.59
3	Lack of educational institution	75	17.35	47	14.02
4	To join husband and wife	22	5.09	19	5.67
5	To escape punishment or inferior status	12	2.77	8	2.38
	Total	432	100	335	100

Source: Researcher’s field work

The table above shows that 225 (52.0%) from Umuneke and 182 (54.32%) from Ojebe – Ogene identified lack of employment opportunities as reason for migration, 98 (22.69%) from Umuneke and 79 (23.59%) from Ojebe-Ogene gave the reason of poor infrastructural facilities, while 75 (17.35%) from Umuneke and 47 (14.02%) from Ojebe-Ogene said that lack of educational institutions is a major reason for rural-urban migration. Two minor reasons were given for rural-urban migration. One is that migrants move to join husband or wife 22 (5.09%) from Umuneke and 19 (5.67%) from Ojebe-Ogene. The other is that migrants move to escape punishment or inferior status 12 (2.77%) from Umuneke and 8 (2.38%) from Ojebe-Ogene.

The consequences of migration are hereby considered. There are three major consequences-economic consequences, socio-cultural consequences and erosion of kinship solidarity. As for the economic consequences, shortage of labour services, high cost of labour services, and elderly people having to continue to work on their farms are the major ones while the shortage of food supply, low standard of living and slow economic development are the other ones.

Table 3: Economic Consequences of Migration.

S/N	Economic Consequences	Umuneke		Ojebe-Ogene	
		No. Respondents	of %	No. Respondents	of %
1	Shortage of labour	98	22.68	84	25.07
2	High cost of labour	103	23.84	97	28.95
3	Elders working on farms	75	17.36	69	20.09
4	Shortage of food supply	68	15.75	31	9.25
5	Low standard of living	51	11.80	28	8.35
	Slow economic development	37	8.56	26	7.75
	Total	432	100	335	100

Source: Researcher’s field work

The table above shows that shortage of labour 98 (22.68%) from Umunneke, 84 (25.07%) from Ojebe-Ogene high cost of labour 103 (23.84%) from Umuneke and 97 (28.95%) from Ojebe Ogene elders continuing work on farms 75 (17.36%) from Umuneke and 69 (20.59%) from Ojebe-Ogene are the major consequences while shortage of food supply 68 (15.74%) from Umuneke and 31 (9.25%) from Ojebe-Ogene; low standard of living 51 (11.80%) from Umuneke and 28 (8.35%) from Ojebe-Ogene; slow economic development 37 (8.56%) from Umuneke and 26(7.75%) from Ojebe-Ogene are the minor ones. As for socio-cultural consequences, the major ones are the disruption of village-square wrestling contests, decline of masquerade activities, decline of communal worships at village shrines, decline of cultural festivals like new yam, decline of moonlight storytelling and cultural dances.

Table 4: Socio-cultural Consequences of Rural-Urban Migration.

S/N	Socio-cultural Consequences	Umuneke		Ojebe-Ogene	
		No. Respondents	of %	No. Respondents	of %
1	Disruption of village wrestling contests	84	19.4	75	22.38
2	Decline of masquerade activities	76	17.13	64	19.10
3	Decline of communal worship at village shrines.	100	23.14	87	25.97
4	Decline of cultural festivals like new yam	64	14.8	52	15.52
5	Decline of moon-light storytelling and cultural dances	108	25	57	17.01
	Total	432	100	335	100

Source: Researcher’s field work

Table 4 above shows that the major socio-cultural consequences of rural-urban migration are the disruption of village-square wrestling contests 84(19.4%) respondents from Umuneke and 75(22.38%) respondents from Ojebe-Ogene; decline of masquerade activities 76(17.59%) respondents from Umuneke and 64(19.10%) respondents from Ojebe-Ogene; decline of communal worship at village shrines 100(23.14%) from Umuneke and 87(25.97%) from Ojebe-Ogene; decline of cultural festivals 64(14.8%) from Umuneke and 52(15.52%) from Ojebe-Ogene; decline of moonlight storytelling and cultural dances 108(25%) from Umuneke and 57(17.1%) from Ojebe-Ogene.

As for the consequence of erosion of kinship solidarity, respondents showed that migrants no longer render assistance to their home-based relations as before, that migrants children and those of home based relations hardly know themselves, that migrant’s children hardly know the language, customs and tradition of their people, that migrants’ children do not show traditional respect to elders other than their own parents.

Table 5: Erosion of Kinship Solidarity.

S/N		Umuneke		Ojebe-Ogene	
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	Kinship System Affected	No. of Respondents	%	No. of Respondents	%
1	Migrants no longer assist home-based relations	102	23.62	82	24.47
2	Migrants children and children at home hardly know themselves.	120	27.77	94	28.05
3	Migrants' children do not know the language customs etc of their people	112	25.92	74	22.09
4	Migrants' children do not pay traditional respect to home elders	98	22.69	85	25.37
	Total	432	100	335	100

Source: Researcher's field work

As for the strategies for overcoming rural-urban migration in Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene three major strategies were mentioned namely provision of amenities such as pipe-borne water, electricity etc in the rural areas, establishment of agro-allied industries to provide jobs for rural dwellers, and good educational institutions with qualified teachers.

Table 6: Strategies for Overcoming Rural-Urban Migration in Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene

S/N	Kinship System Affected	Umuneke		Ojebe-Ogene	
		No. of Respondents	%	No. of Respondents	%
1	Provision of amenities such as pipe-born water, electricity etc.	144	33.33	112	33.43
2	Establishment of agro-allied industries to provide jobs in rural areas.	200	46.29	150	44.77
3	Good educational institutions with qualified teachers.	88	20.37	73	21.79
	Total	432	100	335	100

Source: Researcher's field work

Table 6 above shows that 144 (33.33%) from Umuneke and 112 (33.43%) respondents from Ojebe-Ogene are of the opinion that provision of amenities such as pipe-born water, electricity etc. will stem the tide of rural-urban migration in the area. Also 200 (46.29%) respondents from Umuneke 150 (44.77%) from Ojebe-Ogene hold the view that establishment of agro-allied industries in the rural areas will have the same effect. It is also held by 88 (20.37%) respondents from Umuneke and 73(21.79%) from Ojebe-Ogene that good educational institution with qualified teachers will have the same effect.

Conclusion and Recommendation

It has been established not only that rural-urban migration does exist in Umuneke and Ojebe-Ogene, but also the extent is high that the factors that cause rural-urban migration in the area include lack of reasonable employment opportunities, as well as lack of amenities like electricity, pipe-borne water, health and recreational facilities. The consequences of rural-urban economic include shortage of youth to supply labour services, high cost of labour and elderly people having to work their own farms. Socio-cultural consequences include disruption of village activities like village-square wrestling, decline of masquerade activities, decline of cultural festivals like the new yam, dancing and moonlight story-telling. Erosion of kinship solidarity include migrants forgetting the people in the village, migrants' children and those of home-based relations not knowing themselves, and migrants' children not knowing the language, customs and traditions of their people.

And so it is strongly recommended that:

1. Government should give attention to the rural communities and establish employment opportunities in the form of agro-allied industries.
2. Also amenities like pipe-borne water, electricity, recreation and health facilities, as well as good educational facilities with qualified teachers should be provided.

3. Agriculture should be modernized by mechanization by providing tractors fertilizers, herbicides and insecticides, improved seedlings, agricultural extension staff to guide farmers, irrigation, and storage facilities for harvested crops, helping the farmers in the sale of crops by buying them up and arranging for their export.

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