

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF AGRICULTURE & DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

VOL. 3 NO. 1 | 2018

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL



OF

AGRICULTURE & DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

VOL. 3 NO. 1 | 2018

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**CAUSES AND PERCEIVED SOCIO – ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF RURAL  
– RURAL MIGRATION ON LIVELIHOOD OF SELECTED COMMUNITIES IN  
MOKWA AREA OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

*The diversity of the ecological features, the varying local resources and location of agricultural activities in rural areas serves the major pull factors for migration directed towards rural areas. The study assessed the causes and perceived socio - economic implications of rural - rural migration on the livelihood of selected communities of Mokwa area of Niger State, Nigeria. A multi stage random sampling technique was employed to select 120 migrant farmers and non - migrants used for the study. The interview schedule was used to elicit information for the study. The responses were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and mean scores. The results revealed that rural - rural migration is mostly undertaken by young adults within the age range of 30 - 50 years and with low level of education. Environmental degradation factors such as infertile land (41.56%), incidences of flood (23.37%) and inadequate cultivable land (15.58%) were the major push factors causing rural out migration. While availability of cultivable fertile land (56.94%) was the major pull factor that attract migrants to the study area. The perceived socio-economic implications of the influx of migrants to the study area were increased rate of crime ( $\bar{X}$ = 4.19), increased political unrest ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.79), high level of sexual promiscuity ( $\bar{X}$  = 3.64), introduction of new diseases ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.31), and increased level of agricultural production ( $\bar{X}$ = 3.27). The major problems encountered by the migrants in the study area were inaccessibility to infrastructural facilities (28.57%), insecurity (25.28%) and difficulty in land acquisition (20.88%). The study recommended that there is need to strengthen awareness campaigns and redirection of policies that can check poor land utilization and unsustainable agricultural practices in rural areas to curb the menace of out migration.*

**Key Words:** Migration, Livelihood, Push – pull factors, Rural areas, Social implications.

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**Introduction**

The bane for struggles over the inestimable value for land and its resources overtime have culminated to the present day tension on the land which have resulted to inevitable movement of people from one area to another. In many poor countries rural –rural migration still dominates with individuals moving from poorer regions to richer regions. This is common where the land for sustenance is degraded hence, they move to earn a living for themselves and their families (Deshinkar and Grimm, 2005).

Migration is a routine livelihood strategy of poor households through which extra cash are earned to meet up with contingencies. As such rural –rural migration has provided a viable alternative to rural –urban migration because of the diversity of the ecological features, the varying local resources and location of agricultural activities in rural areas serves as a major pull factors for migration directed to rural areas. Hence, many migrants take advantage of resources such as fertile lands which offer employment in farming in order to earn a living and empower themselves economically. Farmers who do not have enough farm lands or whose farm lands have been exhausted of nutrients and not yielding to expected output embark on migration from one rural community to the other to acquire more and better farm land to practice agriculture so as to earn a living (Adepoju, 2000; Nwankwo *et al.*, 2005).

Rural –rural migration is the least regulated of all kinds of migration on and is mostly undertaken by poor groups with little education and other assets, as it requires lower investment (Deshinkar and Grimm, 2005). Situations of surplus labour arising from

scarcity of cultivated land, inequitable land distribution, low agricultural productivity, high population density that are encountered in fragile environment cumulatively serve as major factors that leads to frequent out migration, other causes include incidences of water logging, land fragmentation and river bank erosion (Deshinkar and Grimm, 2005). Some economic reasons that influence migration are unemployment, low wage levels, poverty and malnutrition (Andrew, 1993; Castles, 2000). The increasing environmental degradation of developing countries that resulted to soil degradation, deforestation, flooding and watershed destruction continues to threaten living standards of rural areas, exacerbate rural poverty and consequently stimulate out migration from one rural area to another (Bilsborrow, 2003).

The flow of migrants towards the rural areas has positively stimulated economic development of the host communities through increase in labour supply. Migration has led to increased commercialization in the receiving areas through supply of labour that result to increase in large scale agricultural production (Ngozi, 2005). In addition, migrants a times bring in new skills, funds, information about markets, new technologies and different values to the receiving areas (Deshinkar and Grimm, 2005). However, Salihu (2004) observed that inadequacy of cultivable lands in the extreme Northern Nigeria which forces people to migrate has led to high rate of population increase and brought unprecedented attack on the Labozhi –Tyabo gallery forest with associated environmental deterioration.

The environmental deterioration for example, the inherent desert conditions of the extreme northern states of Nigeria that often resulted to droughts and consequently crop failure coupled with the favourable climatic conditions of the areas with vast fertile lands, which is yet to be cultivated that makes it agriculturally prosperous may be attributed to the pull factors that motivate the movement of energetic men and women from one agricultural prosperous areas to another (Tyabo *et al.*, 2010). Considering the high level of migrants to the study area, it is important to know the causal factors and the effects of this incidence on the host communities. This will help in enhancing development planning to boost agricultural production, how to improve on the socio economic activities of both the migrants and non-migrants and efforts to reduce the negative consequences associated with this phenomenon on the communities at large. It is on the basis of the forgoing, the research is initiated to assess the causes and perceived socio – economic implications of rural-rural migration in selected communities of Mokwa Area of Niger State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. describe the major socio-economic characteristics of respondents in the study area;
2. examine the migrants view on the reasons (Push factors) for migration from their communities;
3. assess the reasons of migrants' settlement (relocation) (Pull factors) to the study area and
4. examine the perception of the respondents on the socio-economic implications of rural-rural migration in the study area.
5. examine the problems encountered by migrants in the study area.

#### **Methodology**

The study was conducted in Mokwa Local Government area of Niger State, Nigeria. It is located between longitude 5°00' to 5°50' East of Greenwich Meridian and Latitude 9°00' to 10°39' north of equator (Salihu, 2004). The Local Government lies within the middle belt of the country (Nigeria) and has a guinea savannah type of vegetation with a population of 244, 937 (National Population Commission, 2006). The study area has different kinds of soil ranging from reddish brown sandy soil, sandy loam, clay loam and clay soil. In order to achieve the study objectives, multiple sampling technique was employed. This involves purposeful selection of two (2) districts (Takuma and Kudu districts) out of the four (4) districts of the Local Government. This was done due to high concentration of migrants in these areas. Simple random sampling techniques was used to select three (3) villages from each district and snow ball or chain sampling techniques was used to identify

respondents (migrants and farmers) from each group were interviewed. A total of 120 migrants and non –migrants were randomly selected based on the proportion of the population of the respondents in the selected villages for the study. Interview schedule was used to elicit data from the respondents. The responses were analyzed using frequency counts, percentages and mean score. A 5 points Likert rating scale of Strongly agree (SA = 5), Agree (A= 4), Undecided (U=3), Disagree (DA =2) and Strongly disagree (SD= 1) were used to rank the statements bordering on the perception of the respondents on the socio-economic implications of rural-rural migration in the study area. This was further used to classify the perception responses as either “Favourable” with mean scores greater than or equal to three ( ≥ 3.0) or “Unfavourable” with mean scores below three (< 3.0) .

#### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**Age:** The age of migrants and non –migrants' household heads as presented in Table1 depicts that majority (92%) of the sampled migrants were in the age range of 30 – 50 years. The mean age was 42.23 years. This implies that rural – rural migration was mostly engaged by young adults that are capable of undertaken the vigorous farming activities which is labour demanding. This can be supported by the report of Ngozi (2005), that rural – rural migration is undertaken by young adults.

#### **Level of education of respondents**

The results in Table 1 shows that slightly above half (56.70%) of the respondents had one form of western education or the other, although at low level. However, most of them lacked western education. This implies that rural – rural migration is mostly undertaken poorer people with little education (Deshinkar and Grimm, 2005).

#### **Occupation of the respondents**

The results in Table 1 also revealed that 44.83% and 55.84% of migrants and non – migrants have respectively taking farming as their occupation. However, a total sum of 55.20% of the migrants are engaged in other non – farm activities ranging from trading/business, crafts work, masonry, labourers and other activities such as blacksmith, wood calving, fishing and Quranic teaching. This implies that, apart from farming that constitute the major occupation, most of the migrants are involved in non – farm activities to diversify their sources of livelihood and gain additional income to support themselves and their families (Deshinkar, 2005).



**Table 1: Socio-economic characteristics of the respondents (n=60)**

Characteristics	Migrant farmers		Non-migrant farmers	
	Frequency	percentage	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age (years)</b>				
30 – 40	31	51.67	37	61.66
41 – 50	24	40.00	16	26.67
51 – 55	3	5.00	3	5.00
Above 55	2	3.33	4	6.67
	= 42.23		= 38.23	
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Educational background</b>				
Quranic	24	40	20	33.33
Adult	11	18.33	9	15.00
Primary	15	25	10	16.67
Secondary	7	11.67	13	21.67
Tertiary	1	1.67	8	13.33
None of the above <sup>LD</sup>	2	3.33	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Occupation</b>				
Farming	39	44.83	43	55.84
Trading/business	9	10.35	5	6.49
Craft work	7	8.10	6	7.79
Labourer	18	20.69	13	16.88
Masonry	3	3.45	3	3.89
Others	11	12.64	7	9.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>87*</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>77*</b>	<b>100</b>

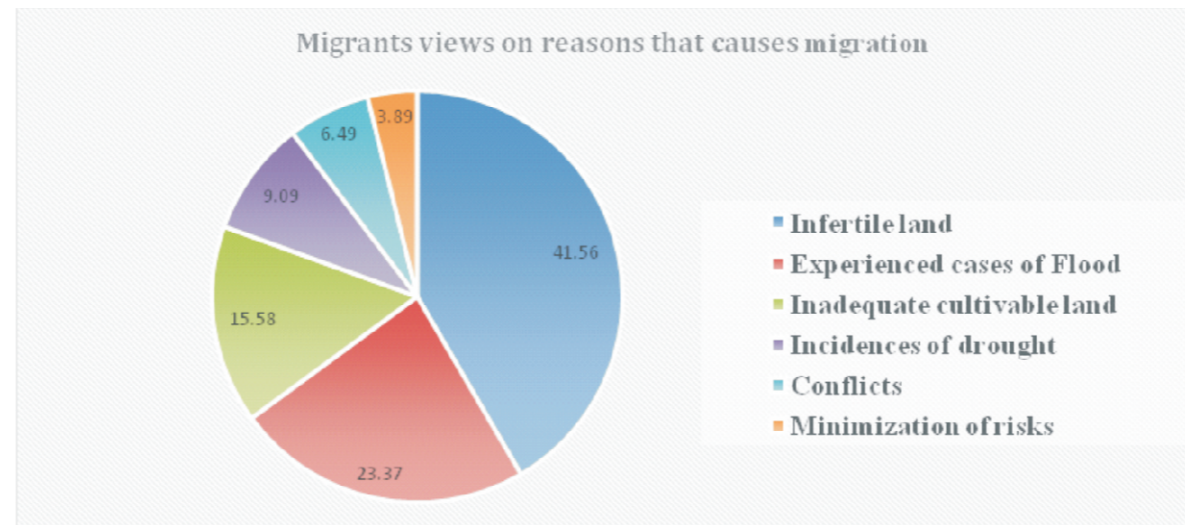
Source: Field survey, 2016.

\*Multiple responses recorded

**Migrants' views on reasons that cause their migration out of their places of origin (Push factors).**

The result of pie chart (Figure 1) revealed that infertile land is the major reasons that influence migrants' movement from their places of origin. Other important reasons include incidences of flood (23.37%) and inadequate cultivable land (15.58%). The result implies that, rural out migration is mostly associated to environmental degradation factors. Hence, situations of surplus labour arising from scarcity of cultivable land, inequitable land

distribution, low agricultural productivity, high population density that are encountered in fragile environment cumulatively led to frequent out-migration to other rural areas (Deshinkar and Grimm, 2005).

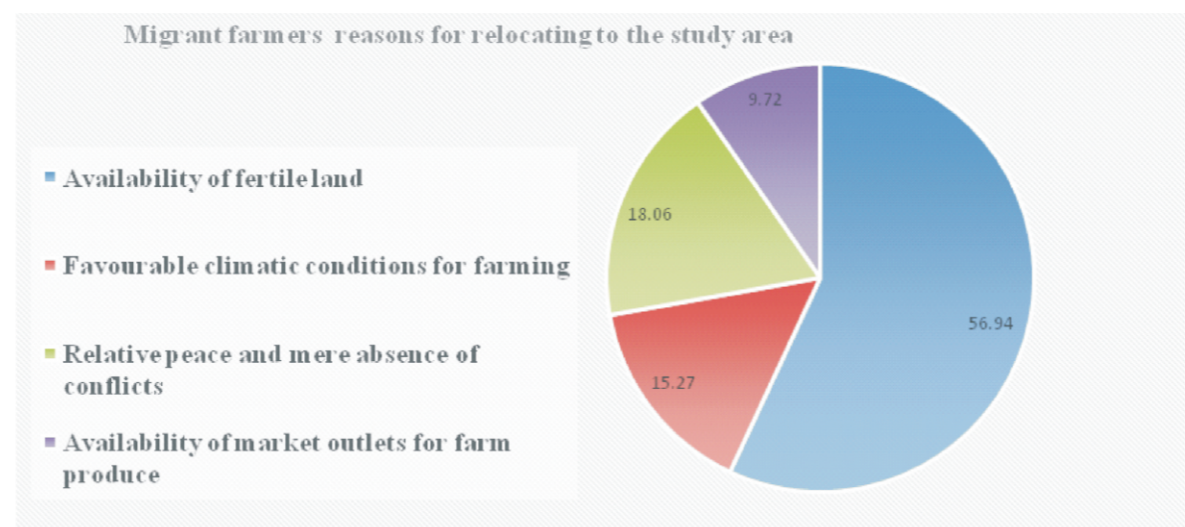


**Figure 1: Distribution of migrants' views on reasons that cause their migration**  
**Source: Field survey, 2016.**

**Migrants' reasons for relocating to the study area (Pull factors)**

The result in Figure 2 revealed that, more than half (56.94%) of the respondents indicated that availability of cultivable fertile land as their basic reasons for settling in the study area. Other important reasons that attract migrants to the study area include conditions of relative peace and mere absence of conflicts (18.06%) and favourable climatic conditions (15.27%). The result from the study implies that, majority of the migrants relocated to the study area because of the availability of the vast virgin fertile land, presence of peace and reliable

climatic conditions of the study area that will offer them better opportunities for more farm land, higher agricultural production and increased income which may translate to improve standards of living of migrants. This can be linked to the report of Nwankwo, Nnadozie, and Onubuogu (2005); Dshinkar and Grimm (2005) that farmers who do not have enough farm land or whose farm lands have been exhausted of nutrients embark on rural – rural migration in search for more productive arable land and where agricultural production offer more output and better income.



**Figure 2: Distribution of migrant farmers according to reasons for relocating to the study area**  
**Source: Field survey, 2016.**

Perception of respondents on the socio-economic implications of rural-rural migration on the livelihood of respondents. The result in Table 3 shows the distribution of the mean scores and standard deviation of the pooled respondents' perception on the socio-economic implications of rural-rural migration on the study area. The result shows that the respondents expressed favourable perception towards seven (7) out of nine (9) statements bordering on socio-economic implications of rural-rural migration in the study

the study area. On the bases of classification, the statements in Table 3 that elicited the major perception include: influx of migrants have led to increased rate of crime ( $\bar{X} = 4.19$ ), political unrest has increased as result of coming of migrants ( $\bar{X} = 3.79$ ) level of sexual promiscuity have increased ( $\bar{X}=3.64$ ) influx of migrants has led to introduction of new diseases( $\bar{X}=3.31$ ) and influx of migrants have led to increased agricultural production in the area ( $\bar{X}=3.27$ )

**Table 2: Perception of respondents on the socio-economic implications of rural-rural migration on the livelihood of respondents (n=120).**

Perception on socio-economic implications of rural-rural migration	Mean(Std)	Rank
Influx of migrants has led to increased rate of crime	4.1917(1.0457)*	1 <sup>st</sup>
Political unrest has increased as result of coming of migrants	3.7917(1.1515)*	2 <sup>nd</sup>
The level of sexual promiscuity has increased due to influx of migrants	3.6417(1.1435)*	3 <sup>rd</sup>
The influx of migrants has led to introduction of new diseases	3.3083(1.2353)*	4 <sup>th</sup>
Influx of migrants has increased introduction of agricultural innovation	2.8667(1.3217)	7 <sup>th</sup>
Influx of migrants has increased marketing activities in the area	3.2417(1.3221)*	6 <sup>th</sup>
Influx of migrants has led to increased supply of farm labour	3.2417(1.3221)*	6 <sup>th</sup>
Influx of migrants has increased provision of planting materials	2.3250(1.2513)	8 <sup>th</sup>
Influx of migrants has led to increased agricultural production in the area	3.2667(1.3580)*	5 <sup>th</sup>
Influx of migrants has reduced agricultural production in the area	2.2167(1.2035)	9 <sup>th</sup>

\*Favourable perception with mean scores ( 3.0).

Source: Field survey, 2016.

**Problems encountered by migrants in the study area**

The result in Table 3 revealed that difficulty in land acquisition (51.67%), inaccessibility to infrastructural facilities (43.33%) and insecurity (38.33%) are the most likely problems encountered by migrants in the study area. Other includes problem of accommodation (21.66%) and harassment

(11.67%). The findings in this result confirms the assertion of Deshinkar and Grimm (2005) that rural – rural migrant farmers travel and live under difficult conditions, and faced major problems like inadequate medical assistance, scarcity of water, poor sanitation, insecurity, theft, abuse, lack of accommodation, difficulty in land acquisition and harassment.

**Table 3: Distribution of problems encountered by migrants in the study area (n= 60)**

Problems	Frequency*	Percentage
Inaccessibility to infrastructural facilities	26	43.33
Difficulty in land acquisition	19	51.67
Insecurity	23	38.33
Harassment	7	11.67
Problem of accommodation	13	21.66
No problem encountered	3	5.03
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	

\* Multiple responses recorded.

Source: Field survey, 2016.

### Conclusion and recommendation

From the findings of the study, rural – rural migration is mostly undertaken by young adults within the age range of 30 – 50 years with low level of education. Rural out migration is mostly associated to environmental degradation factors such as infertile land, incidences of flood, inadequate cultivable land and drought. Availability of cultivable fertile land, conditions of relative peace, absence of conflicts and favourable climatic conditions were the basic reasons for migrants' relocation to the study area. The major social implications of influx of migrants to the study area were increased rate of crime, political unrest, increased level of sexual promiscuity, introduction of new diseases and increased level of agricultural production. To avert environmental degradation, there is need to strengthen awareness campaigns and redirection of policies that can check poor land utilization and unsustainable agricultural practices in rural areas to curb the menace of out migration. Establishment of a joint committee comprising of migrants and non-migrants will not only enhance the social relationship between the two groups but will also reduce some of the social problems encountered by the communities.

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