Migrants and the rural economy: A case study in selected communities of Oyo State of Nigeria

ADENIYI OSUNTOGUN

Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Ife, Ile-Ife, Nigeria

Abstract

This paper focusses on rural-rural migration in six selected communities of Oyo State. The identification of migration streams, the sequences and composition of migrants, their farming activities, and the relationship between the migrants and the landowners are analysed. The analysis confirms Ravenstein's hypothesis that most migrations occur over short distances and that economic considerations constitute the single most important reason why people migrate. The study of the migration paths indicated that less than half of our respondents were at the zero stage of migration. Correlation analysis showed significant positive association between the ages of the migrants and their duration of stay in the survey area.

The study showed that the flow of population from one rural area to another was beset by a number of problems such as the insecurity of tenure of the migrants and the relation between the landowners and the migrant farmers. The paper advocates the formulation and implementation of policies, such as the Land Use Decree, which could ensure that migrants have security of tenure and are provided with necessary financial and technical support which will enable them to cultivate larger holders and adopt modern practices.

Introduction

Even though there is an ever-growing literature on internal migration in Nigeria few of the studies (Olusanya, 1976, Agboola, 1976, Berry. 1974, and Udo, 1975) have focussed on rural-rural migration. Until recently, most of the studies have centred on rural-urban migration and its implications for development. The need for rural planning in the country calls for more emphasis on the study of the rural-rural migrants. This study aims at focussing attention on this neglected aspect of internal migration in Nigeria. In this paper, the identification of migration streams, the sequences and composition of migrants, their farming activities, as well as, the relationship between the migrants and the landowners are analysed.

The data used in this study were collected during a survey that was carried out between July and September, 1975 in six villages in Ibadan District of Oyo State. The villages included Akinyele, Alabata, Erunmu, Oyedeji, Ajia and Gbedun. The rationale behind the choice of these villages is that they represent the major agricultural producing areas of the District. Although the total population of the migrants in the villages selected was unknown yet the information provided by the Divisional Agricultural Officer was very helpful in the selection of both our sample of respondents as well as the villages of study. In all, a random sample of one hundred and eight migrants were interviewed in the six villages. They were made up of 15 from Akinyele village, 20 from Alabata, 28

from Erunmu, 20 from Oyedeji, 10 from Ajia and 15 from Gbedun village. The selection of the sample was limited to migrants who were non-indigenes of the former Western State of Nigeria. This was done principlally in order to focus attention on inter-state rural-rural migration in the area of study*

II. Theoretical issues

Some of the major theoretical issues which had engaged the attention of many students of migration centre on the patterns, streams and motives for migrating. The role of distance and intervening opportunities have received considerable attention in the literature on migration. Ravenstein (1885) in his "Laws of Migration" postulates that most migrations occur over a short distance and that migrants enumerated in a given centre of absorption will grow less as the distance from the centre increases. He also comments that each main current of migration produces a compensating counter-current.

— The generalisation made by Ravenstein has been confirmed by empirical work that were carried out in many parts of the world. Prominent among these are the work of Zipf (1946) and Stouffer (1940). Zipf has tried to explain urban-urban migration by the principle of least effort. According to him, the number of migrants from one city to another is a function of the distance separating the cities, since the effort required to cover greater distances would increase with the distance. His formula, which took into consideration the population of both the source region and the destination of the migrants, has been tested in a number of studies and it upholds the law of Ravenstein.

Stouffer's contribution featured the concept of intervening opportunities. He was of the opinion that physical distance was not in itself an important factor as compared with the number of opportunities available to the migrants. According to him, the number of migrants going a given distance is directly proportional to the number of opportunities at that distance and inversely proportional to the number of intervening opportunities.

As for the motivation for migration, the "push" and "pull" model has been formulated and elaborated upon of all types of movements. According to Lee (1969), the reason for migration can be analysed in terms of some factors that "push" or "pull" a potential migrant. The "push" factor stresses the deteriorating socio-economic conditions in an area which force people to move out of the place. The "pull" factor on the other hand emphasizes the attraction offered by the opportunities and prosperity in a place. Levy and Wadyck (1974) regard migration as an investment decision. The postulate that the probability that an individual will migrate from a specific origin to a specific destination is a function of characteristics which reflect the average costs and benefits of the origin and destination regions and the distance between them.

** The field survey of this study was conducted before the former Western State was split into three states of Oyo, Ogun and Ondo.*

Expressed in more practical terms, this theory emphasizes that the individual will only move if the expected benefits of migration exceed the cost of moving. Some of the empirical work which had been carried out on the subject indicate that the cost of moving includes transportation costs, costs of job search, the income the migrant could have earned if he did not move, opportunities at alternative destination and psychic costs like reluctance to leave familiar surroundings.

The above brief exploration into the theoretical basis gives us some insight into the motivations for and the nature of migration. It also provides a framework for the analysis of our data. In the section that follows the patter of migration in our survey area is analysed.

III. Analysis of results

Migration stream

The identification of migration streams to the area of study is attempted on state basis. Table 1 shows the distribution of migrants by state of origin. Over 43 percent of the migrants originated from Bendel State, 18.5 percent came from Kwara State, 12.0 percent came from Anambra State, while 10.2 percent originated from Imo State.

One striking observation that could be made from the analysis relates to the relationship between distance and the level of migration. From the table, our analysis confirms Ravenstein's hypothesis that most migrations occur over short distances. Sixty two percent of the migrants that were interviewed in the course of this study originated from Bendel and Kwara States. Of the seven States from which migrants came, these

TABLE 1: STATES OF ORIGIN OF MIGRANT FARMERS IN SIX SELECTED VILLAGES OF IBADAN DISTRICT

State	Number of migrants	Percentage of total
Bendel	47	43.5
Kwara	20	18.5
Cross River	12	11.1
Imo	11	10.2
Anambra	13	12.0
Kano	3	2.8
Kaduna	2	1.9
Total	108	100.0

Source: Field Survey

two states are the nearest to the area of study and they also shared common borders with the former Western State. It is also important to note the decline in the proportion of migrants with increasing distance from destinations. Thus migrants from both Kano and Kaduna States accounted for less than 5 per cent of the total migrants.

Motivation for migration

According to Ravenstein (1885), the desire inherent in most men to "better" themselves in material respects constitutes the most important reason why people migrate. Our study confirms the fact that economic considerations constitute the single most important reason why people migrate. About 66 percent of the 108 migrants that were interviewed in the course of this study migrated for reasons which can be considered to be economic. Of these, 42.6 percent left home purposely in search of farm land which they could put to both cash crop and food crop production while 23.2 per cent migrated because of the desire to obtain capital for trade (see Table II). Other reasons why people migrate include sociological and psychological factors. About 4 percent of our respondents left home in order to meet townsmen while 3.7 percent migrated in order to avoid enemies.

Migration sequence and duration of stay

A study of the migration paths of the respondents will give an idea of the stages of their migration as well as the number of destinations in which they have settled before their arrival at the area of study. According to Table III, 38.9 percent of the migrant farmers came directly to the place of interview and have lived in no other place since. Almost 51 percent had been to one destination apart from the one in which they were interviewed while 0.9 to 9.3 percent had been to two to three other destinations previously. The fact that over 50 percent of the migrants have been to one or more places other than the place in which they were interviewed is an indication of the quality of intervening opportunities in the various destinations. Usually, a migrant will continue to move until he reaches the destination which presents the maximum opportunities. When such a location is reached the migrant tends to be more settled.

The analysis of our data indicates that Alabata Village had the highest proportion of migrants who were in the zero stage of migration (60 per cent).* This was followed by Akinyele village (52.7 percent). The proportion of migrants who were at the zero stage of migration in Erunmu, Oyedeji, Ajia and Gbedun were 39.3, 35.0, 10.0 and 26.7 per cent respectively. The only migrant who was at the third stage of migration was recorded in Gbedun village.

An analysis of the duration of stay of the migrants shows that over 54 percent of them had stayed in the villages of study for between 6 to 15 years while 2.7 percent had stayed for more than 20 years in the survey area (see Table IV).

**The zero stage of migration means that the village of study is the respondent's first stop after leaving home. The first stage of migration means that before coming to the village of study, the respondent had already settled in one other village, thus the village of study is the second domain after leaving home. For more details on stages of migration see Adepoju [1975].*

TABLE 2: REASONS GIVEN FOR MIGRATION BY A SAMPLE OF MIGRANT FARMERS IN IBADAN DISTRICT

Reasons	Percentage of respondents						
	Akinyele N = 15	Alabata N = 20	Erunmu N = 28	Oyedeji N = 20	Ajia N = 10	Gbedun N = 15	All villages N = 108
Came with parents	-		10.7	5.0	-		3.7
In search of farmland	33.3	15.0	39.3	50.0	50.0	80.0	42.6
To get capital for trade	40.0	25.0	14.4	30.0	30.0	6.7	23.2
To meet townsmen	-	-	-	5.0	-	-	0.9
To avoid enemies	6.7	-	-	10.0	10.0	-	3.7
For personal reasons	6.7	15.0	17.8	-	-	-	8.3
No response	13.3	45.0	17.8	-	10.0	13.3	17.6

Source: Field Survey

TABLE 3: NUMBER OF DESTINATIONS IN WHICH MIGRANTS HAVE LIVED

Number of destinations	Percentage of Respondents						
	Akinyele N = 15	Alabata N = 20	Erunmu N = 28	Oyedeji N = 20	Ajia N = 10	Gbedun N = 15	All villages N = 108
0 (no other destination)	52.7	60.0	39.3	35.0	10.0	26.7	38.9
1	34.0	35.0	50.0	65.0	70.0	61.3	50.9
2	13.3	5.0	10.7		20.0	6.0	9.3
3						6.0	0.9

Source: Field Survey

TABLE 4: DURATION OF STAY OF A SAMPLE OF MIGRANT FARMERS IN IBADAN DISTRICT

Period of Stay	Percentage of Respondents						
	Akinyele N = 15	Alabata N = 20	Erunmu N = 28	Oyedeji N = 20	Ajia N = 10	Gbedun N = 15	All villages N = 108
I was born here	13.3	10.0	10.7	5.0			7.4
1-5 years	40.0	40.0	35.7	15.0	30.0	40.0	33.3
6-10 years	46.7	35.0	46.4	65.0	60.0	46.6	49.1
11-15 years	-	5.0	7.2	5.0	10.0	6.7	5.6
16-20 years	-	5.0	-	5.0	-	6.7	2.7
Over 20 years	-	5.0	-	5.0	-		1.9

Source: Field Survey

Correlation analysis was applied to test the relationship between the length of period of stay and the ages of the respondents. The coefficients of determination was calculated to be 0.4526 and it was found to be significant at 1 percent significant level (see Table V). The result of the analysis indicates that there is significant positive association between the ages of the migrants and the length of period of stay in the study area.

This result can be explained by two main factors. Firstly, after a certain age, especially late twenties or early thirties, the rate of movement of a migrant peaks. In other words, the migrant becomes less willing to move about. (Adepoju, 1975, Essang and Mabawonku, 1974). Secondly, the longer a stranger stays in a community, the other things being equal, the more he gets used to that community and the greater the chances of his developing the willingness to stay in that community especially if his demand for profitable opportunities are satisfied.

TABLE 5: CORRELATION MATRIX OF SOME VARIABLE OF A SAMPLE OF MIGRANT FARMERS IN IBADAN DISTRICT

	Age	Length of stay	Farm size	Income
Age	1.0000			
	(.001)			
Length of stay	0.4526	1.0000		
	(.001)	(.001)		
Farm size	0.2392	0.1891	1.0000	
	(.006)	(.025)	(.001)	
Income	0.2704	0.4249	0.1704	1.0000
	(.002)	(.001)	(.039)	(.001)

Figures in brackets indicate the level of significance of the coefficients.

Farming activities of the migrants

Farming is the major occupation of the migrants that were interviewed in the course of this study. Probably due to the risks and uncertainties of farming, all of them also engaged in some other supportive occupations like petty trading, handicraft, tailoring and carpentry. Some food and cash crops were raised by the migrants. The cash crops were mainly cocoa and kolanut. On the average, 1.8 and 0.4 acres of cocoa and kolanut were raised respectively during the 1974 production year.

The food crops that were produced by the migrants included yam, maize, cassava, cocoyam, beans, plantain, orange and vegetables. The average acreage per respondent that was devoted to food crop production amounted to 1.2 acres in 1974. Some poultry, sheep, goats and pigs were also raised by the respondents. One important observation on the farming activities of the migrants relates to their specialization in the production of different food crops. For instance, it was noted that most of the migrants from Anambra, Imo, Cross River and Bendel States specialize in the production of yam, cassava and cocoyam while most of those from Kwara, Kano and Kaduna States engaged mainly in the production of maize and beans. This pattern reflects the predominant food crops in the migrants' various states of origin.

The income generated from the sale of cash crops, amounted, on the average to ₦310 fo cocoa and ₦150 for kolanut per respondent in 1974. Table VI contains information on the average income realised on food crops by the migrant farmers during the 1974 production season. The highest income was realised from maize (₦17.2 per respondent) followed by yam (₦13.9 per respondent). The least income was realised from cocoyam (₦0.1 per respondent). An average income of ₦3.9 was realised from the sale of livestock during the production season under discussion.

TABLE 6: AVERAGE INCOME REALISED FROM FOOD CROPS BY A SAMPLE OF MIGRANTS IN IBADAN DISTRICT IN 1974

Type of Crop	Average Income per Respondent(₦)
Yam	13.9
Maize	17.2
Cassava	3.9
Cocoyam	0.1
Beans	3.4
Plantain	1.6
Oranges	2.2
Vegetables	2.7

Source: Field Survey

The main items of expenditure of the migrant farmers are labour costs, cost of fertilizer, livestock feeds and tree replanting. In 1974, an average of ₦28.2 per respondent was recorded for these expenditure items. Of these, labour charges accounted for about 20 per cent of the total expenditure.

Correlation analysis was applied to test the relationship between the gross farm income of the respondents and (a) the size of the farm that they operate and (b) their length of stay in the study area. The correlation coefficient between income and farm size was found to be 0.1704 while the one between income and length of stay was calculated to be 0.4249. Whereas the former coefficient was found not to be significant at 10 percent level, the latter, on the other hand, was found to be significant at 1 percent significant point.

The above analysis shows that there is positive association between gross farm income and (a) the size of the farm and (b) the length of stay of the migrants in the study area. These results are consistent with apriori expectation in the sense that one would expect a farmer that operates efficiently a large farm to realise higher income compared to his colleague that operates a relatively smaller farm. The farmer with a larger farm has a greater chance of enterprise combination than another with a relatively smaller farm.

Also, one would expect that the longer the length of stay of a migrant in a community, the more he becomes known within that community. Other things being equal the greater the chances of his acquiring productive resources, especially farmland and hence the greater the possibility of his generating more income from farming.

The hypothesis whether the longer the migrant stays in a community the greater the chances of his acquiring more farmland was tested by correlating the size of farm operated by the respondents and the duration of their stay in the study area. The coefficient was calculated to be 0.1891 and it was found to be significant at 25 percent significance level. The conclusion that can be drawn from this analysis is that even though the coefficient was found not to be highly significant, nonetheless, its positive sign is consistent with apriori expectations.

Landlord-migrant relationship

The relationship between the migrants and the landowners in our area of study was, to a large extent, influenced by the type of tenure arrangements entered into by the two parties. In the course of our investigation two major types of tenure arrangement were found to be common among the respondents. These were land acquisition through lease from landowning families and share cropping. Over 69 percent of the respondents were found to have farmland leased to them and were paying rent either in cash or kind or both while about 31 percent entered into sharecropping arrangements.

The sharecropping arrangements were in most cases unfavourable to the migrants especially with regards to the sharing of the farm proceeds. About 9 percent of our respondents were required to give one-third of farm proceeds to their landlords, 12 percent were expected to give out half of such proceeds while 80 percent reported that they were required

to give out two thirds of the harvest to their landlords. About 33 percent of the 108 migrants claimed that they made formal tenancy arrangements with their landlords. Of these, 37 percent reported that they were limited to the cultivation of food crops on the land that they were allocated. Sixty three percent claimed that they were in no way restricted as regards the type of crop they could raise. On the termination of the tenancy agreement, 2.8 percent of those that had formal tenancy claimed that the arrangement could be terminated if any part of the terms was violated without the landlord's prior approval while 5.6 percent claimed that they were specifically forbidden from erecting any building on the land. About 8 percent of the migrants explained that they stood a risk of losing their tenureship if the land allocated to them was not properly managed. However, all of them claimed that they stood good chances of having additional land from their landlords if the existing holdings were properly managed.

About 30 percent of the migrants claimed that they were required to sell their produce directly to their landlords while 70 percent reported that they were not obliged to sell to any specific person. Most of the migrant farmers (65 percent) claimed that under no circumstance must they transfer the use of farmland allocated to them to any person except the landlord.

As regards the adjustment in rent or "Ishakole", 12 percent of the respondents claimed that the rent they paid varied seasonally with yield while about 2 percent reported that except in cases of severe loss in crop yield like drought, they were required to turn in an average of 10-15 tubers of yam per crop season. Some of the migrant (25 percent) reported that their tenancy agreements contained provisions which required them to clear the farms of their landlords at the beginning of each crop season.

VI. Summary and conclusion

This paper has been concerned with the study of rural-rural migration in six villages of Ibadan District in Oyo State. Particular attention has been paid to the identification of migration streams, the motivation for migration, the migration sequence, the farming activities of the migrants and the relationship between the migrants and the landowners. The analysis confirms Ravestein's hypothesis that most migrations occur over short distances and that economic considerations constitute the single most important reason why people migrate. The study of the migration paths indicate that less than half of our respondents were at the zero stage of migration. Further analysis indicate significant positive association between the ages of the migrants and their duration of stay in the survey area. It was discovered that farming was the major activity of the migrants. The main cash crops that they produced were cocoa and kola, while yam, maize, cassava, cocoyam, beans, plantain, oranges and vegetables were the main food crops raised. A study of the landlord-migrant relationship indicates that leasehold and sharecropping were the main types of tenure arrangements among the respondents and that in most cases the sharecropping arrangements were unfavourable to the migrants especially with regards to the sharing of farm proceeds.

This study has indicated that the flow of population from one rural area to another is beset by a number of problems. One of these centres on the insecurity of tenure of the migrants and the relation between the landowners and the migrant farmers. Our analysis has shown that, in most cases, the tenure arrangements were unfavourable to the migrants.

In spite of these shortcomings, however, rural-rural migration has a number of positive effects on the stimulation of economic development. The supply of labour particularly, in areas which are noted for increasing shortage of rural labour is a case in point. Also, the landlords realise considerable income from the rents paid by the migrants.

The resourcefulness and energy of migrants are considerable and must be utilised to increase agricultural production. This could be done by formulating policies such as the recently promulgated Land Use Decree, which could ensure that migrants have security of tenure and are provided with necessary financial and technical support which will enable them to cultivate larger holdings and adopt modern practices.

References

Adepoju, A. 1975. Migration, Economic Opportunities and Occupational Mobility: A Case Study in Western Nigeria. *Department of Economics Seminar Paper,* University of Ife. 27 pp.

Agboola, S. A. 1976. Migrant Farmers of the Eastern Cocoa Zone: Migration Pattern. *In* Adepoju, A. (Ed.) *Internal Migration in Nigeria.* Department of Demography and Social Statistics, University of Ife. p 88-103.

Berry, S. 1974. The Concept of Innovation and the History of Cocoa Farming in Western Nigeria. *J. African Hist., 15*(1): 83-95.

Essang, S. M. and Mabawonku, A. F. 1974. Determinants and Implications of Rural-Urban Migration: A Case Study of Selected Communities in Western Nigeria. *Rural Development Paper No. 10.* Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. 49 pp.

Lee, E. S. 1969. A Theory of Migration. *In* Jackson, J. A. (Ed.). Migration Cambridge University Press. p282-297.

Levy, M. B. and Wadyck. 1974. What is the Opportunity Cost of Moving? Reconsideration of the Effects of Distance on Migration. *Economic Development and Cultural Change, 22*(2): 198-214.

Olusanya, P. O. 1976. Migration and the Development of Absentee Farming in the Forest Zone of Southwest Nigeria. *In* Adepoju, A. (Ed.). *Internal Migration in Nigeria.* Department of Demography and Social Statistics, University of Ife, p148-163.

Ravenstein, E. G. 1885. The Laws of Migration. *J. Roy. Stat. Soc. 48*(2): 167-227.

Stouffer, S. A. 1940. Intervening Opportunities: A Theory Relating Mobility and Distance. *Amer Sociological Rev. 5* 845-867.

Udo, R. K. 1975. Migrant Tenant Farmers of Nigeria. African Univeristy Press. 154pp.

Zipf, G. K. 1946. The P1P2/D Hypothesis: On the Intercity Movement of Persons. *Amer Sociological Rev., 11*: 677-686.