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## Exploring the effect of rural-urban migration among youths in Abuja municipal area council (AMAC), FCT, Abuja

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### Abstract

The study accessed rural-urban migration among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC), FCT, Abuja. The research was carried out in Abuja Municipal Area Council. The study was guided by objectives. A descriptive research design was used in this study. The youths in the research area were chosen using a purposeful sampling method. Multistage approaches were used to sample eight (8) ADP blocks. Gwarimpa, Garki, Gui, Gwagwa, Karu, Karshi, Nyanya, and Kabusa were the blocks chosen for the research. To make 32 cells, four cells were chosen from each of the eight blocks. In addition, 3 farmers were chosen from 31 cells and 4 from the remaining 32 cells, for a total of 97 farmers. A systematic questionnaire was used to obtain primary data. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. 45.3% represent those Searching for white collar jobs, and skill acquisition 22.7% were among top causes of rural urban migration. Reduction in Labour due to migration was found to be high 55.7%. Provision of Infrastructure, at 82.5% was the top and major strategy identified in reducing youth rural urban migration among sampled respondents. In the course of agricultural rural development strategic planning, the study recommended supportive strategic planning at the policy level, by mainstreaming migration into national policy to: systematically address the linkages between youth employment promotion and rural labor promotion, rural infrastructural deficit, rural skill acquisition and training.

**Keywords:** Rural-urban, migration, youths, Abuja, area council

### Introduction

Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, with a population of 198 million people (NPC, 2018) [9]. The population, like most of Sub-Saharan Africa, is extremely young, with 55 Nigerians under the age of 20 and 28 between the ages of 20 and 40. (World Bank, 2016) [14]. In the previous two decades, Nigeria has experienced rapid urbanization. Between 1990 and 2014, the urban population grew at a high rate of 4.5% per year, while the rural population grew at a slower rate of 1.4% per year (Egboduku *et al.* 2021) [4].

According to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (2014) [13], the country will have the third largest absolute increase in its urban population by 2050, which will be three times its current population. Rural-urban migration has been a main driver of Nigeria's rapid urbanization as a result of demographic strain on natural resources in rural areas and larger potential wages and economic opportunities in metropolitan areas (World Bank, 2016) [14]. People in rural areas have been encouraged to move to cities by "push" factors such as declining agricultural incomes due to an overvalued exchange rate and high levels of conflict in the northern and central regions. Individuals who relocate from one geographical place to another, whether temporarily or permanently, are referred to as migrants (Oginni, 2019; Egboduku *et al.* 2021) [10, 4]. Migration may have an impact on individuals or families with certain economic, social, educational, and demographic characteristics (Alarima, 2018) [2]. Initially, migration was seen as a natural process of transferring surplus labor from rural to urban industrial sectors, with migrants obtaining well-paying jobs in cities and returning remittances to their families, so improving the welfare of those left behind in rural areas (Alarima, 2018) [2]. Rural-urban migration has strained job growth and infrastructure in both developing and developed sections of the country up until now. Rural-urban migration is characterized as a temporary or permanent movement of youth from one geographical place to another (Adewale, 2015) [1].

Young people travel from rural to urban locations for a variety of reasons. As a result of the need to flee violence, traffic, political instability, and real persecution, youth migrate from one location to another (Fadayomi, 2018)<sup>[5]</sup>.

Youths make up over 60% of the population of Nigeria, and their significance to national development cannot be overstated (Sennuga *et al.* 2021; Omabuwa *et al.* 2022)<sup>[12, 11]</sup>. Youth migration is frequent in Nigeria, especially from rural to urban areas, as the government ignores rural areas despite their contribution to the country's economic progress. Migration is either by force or choice i.e., involuntary or voluntary. Voluntary migration can be caused by the following.

1. Poor housing condition
2. Poor education opportunity
3. Inadequate infrastructure. e.g., road, water etc.
4. No better job opportunities
5. Problem of rural land tenure and inheritance pattern etc

Ethno-religious crises, conflicts and wars, political strikes, and other factors can all lead to involuntary migration. Although discriminatory government policies in favor of urban development, such as income inequality, employment, and other socio-economic amenities, are blamed for some of the causes of youth movement from rural to urban areas. Kanu and Ukonze (2018)<sup>[8]</sup> summarized the major causes of rural-urban migration in Nigeria.

### **The impact of youth migration from the countryside to the city**

Migration of youths from Rural to Urban led to reduction in agricultural output. This occurred due to the fact that 70% of labour force in agriculture is being contributed by youths. This negative effect on agricultural output has its multiple effects in the following areas:

1. Low gross domestic product for the nation.
2. Low income and standard of living in the study area
3. Under development
4. Food insecurity.

Other effects of Rural-urban migration resulted to overstretching of social amenities which causes spreading of diseases, drainage blockade (Flooding, pollution etc.). According to Kanu and Ukonze (2018)<sup>[8]</sup>, the continuous migration of rural people to urban areas has resulted in a slew of social, economic, environmental, physical, and other issues, including urban congestion, which has led to communicable disease outbreaks and overstretched social amenities such as electricity, health care, and education. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to access the causes of rural-urban migration among youths in Abuja Municipal Area Council, FCT.

The specific objectives of this study are to:

1. Describe the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents.
2. Investigate the causes of rural urban migration in the study area.
3. Ascertain the perceived rate of reduction in labour force due to migration
4. Identify possible solution in the cause of rural-urban migration.

### **Materials and Methods**

The Abuja Municipal Area Council is one of the Federal

Capital Territory's six (6) area councils. It is the most developed among the six area councils. It has 12 political wards with a population density of 1,236 million people and a land mass of 1.769 square kilometer (km<sup>2</sup>). Source: Abuja Geographical Information System, 2012. Each of the political ward represents ADP block.

### **Sampling techniques and sample size**

A multi-staged sampling technique was employed in the selection of the respondents (youth) using eight (8) ADP blocks. The blocks selected for the study were Gwarimpa, Garki, Gui, Gwagwa, Karu, Karshi, Nyanya and Kabusa. The initial stage involved the random selection of 4 cells from each of the 8 blocks to give 32 cells. The second stage involved the random selection of 3 farmers selected from 31 cells and 4 from the last 32 cell, bringing the overall number of the sampled farmers to 97.

### **Method of data collection**

Primary data was obtained using well-structured questionnaires that were given to 97 youth in the research area. The information obtained includes socio-economic characteristics of the respondents, such as age in years, sex, household size, education level, and marital status, among other things. Data on the causes of rural-to-urban migration in the research area was also obtained. In addition, respondents were asked about their perceptions on the effects of rural-urban migration. Data on possible remedies to the problem of rural-urban migration was also gathered.

### **Data analysis**

The information gathered for the study was examined using descriptive statistics like frequency and percentages. The data was processed and descriptive statistics were utilized to present the results using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 24. By explaining the relationship between the variables in a sample or population, descriptive statistics were used to summarize data in an ordered manner.

## **Results and Discussions**

### **1.1 Socio-economic Characteristics of Respondents**

The demographic characteristics of youth in the research region are shown in Table 1. In the table, respondents' gender, age, occupation, marital status, family size, reading level, and farming experience were all provided. The chart also shows that the bulk of the kids (about 71 percent, or 69 respondents) were male, while the rest (around 28.8%, or 28 respondents) were female. Although females also participated in the movement, this data implies that there were more male youth in the research area. Similarly, the family size of the respondents shows that 42.2 percent, or 40 respondents, have a family size of 1 to 5 people, while the remainder 40.2, 13.1, 3.1, and 2.1 percent, or 39, 3 respondents, have a family size of 1 to 5 people. 40.2, 13.1, 3.1 and 2.1% constituting 39, 3 and 2 respondents have family size of between 16 and 20, 6 and 10, 11 and 15 and 16 and 20 persons respectively. The marital status of the respondents is also revealed by the results in table 1.1. In the research area, 44.3% of the young were married, while 36.1% were single, 16 were divorced, and 1.1 were widowed. The impact of marital status on agricultural output can be explained in terms of agricultural family labor supply. Where the household head is married, and vice

versa, family labor would be more prevalent.

**Table 1.1:** Socio-Economic Characteristics of Respondent

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	69	71.1
Female	28	28.8
<b>Age years</b>		
12-20	8	8.2
21-30	46	46.4
31-40	22	22.7
41-50	11	11.3
51-60	10	10.3
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	35	36.1
Married	43	44.3
Divorced	16	16.5
Widow/widower	1	1.0
<b>Education</b>		
Non formal	1	1.0
Primary	30	30.9
Secondary	56	57.7
Tertiary	10	10.3
<b>Household size</b>		
1-5	40	41.2
6-10	39	40.2
11-15	13	13.4
16-20	3	3.1
<b>Farm size</b>		
<2	40	42.2
2-4	39	40.2
5-7	14	13.4
8-10	3	2.1
10-11	1	1.0
<b>Farming Experience</b>		
1-5	35	36.1
6-10	38	39.1
11-15	21	21.6
16-20	3	3.1
<b>Occupation</b>		
Farming	45	46.4
Trading	27	27.8
Civil service	9	9.3
Farming and Civil Service	11	11.3
Farming and Trading	5	5.2

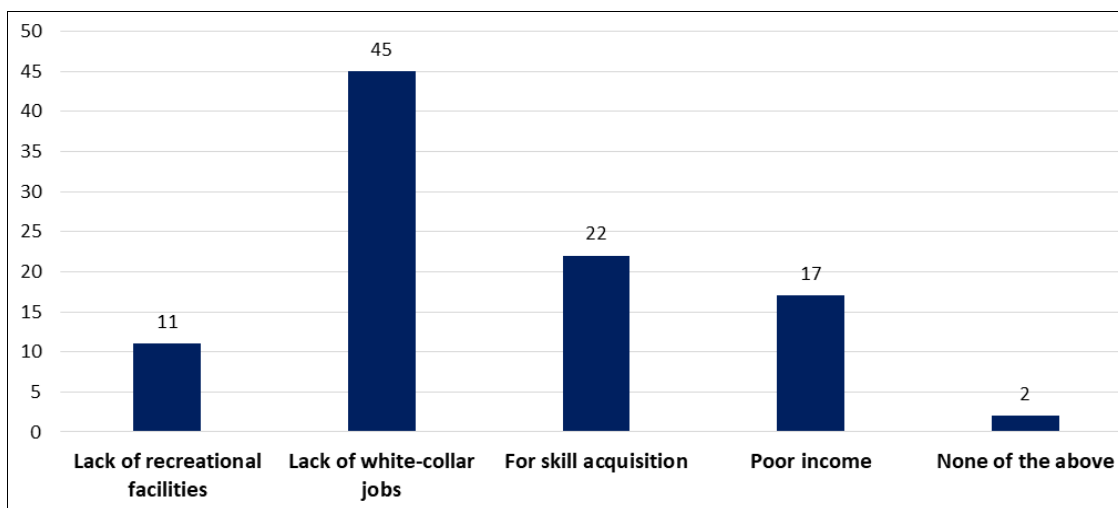
Source: Field survey, (2021)

According to Aromolaran *et al.* (2021) [3], there is a positive relationship between education and youth migration. The majority of the respondents 57.7% had secondary school education; 30.9% had at least primary school education; and only 1% of the respondents (1 respondent) had no formal education. Those with a tertiary education made up the remaining 10.3%, which drew ten responses. The implication of this is that, there is every likelihood that there will be massive rural urban migration in the study area as educated youth tend to migrate more than those not educated, because education is one of the most essential variables determining youth's ability to comprehend current policies, programs, and innovations. All things being equal, education affects productivity through effective resource usage, allocation, and choice of inputs for productive activities.

The table also shows that the majority, 39.1%, or 38 respondents, had farming experience suggesting an average of 6 to 10 years, while 36.1%, or 35 respondents, had between 1 and 5 years, as well as 21.6%, or 21 respondents, and 3.1, or three respondents. This suggests that the majority of the youth in the research region have less years of agricultural experience, implying that the respondents lack adequate knowledge and experience in the activities they engage in, which could be a contributing factor to rural-urban migration. This finding agrees with the findings of FOA, (2016) [6] that the causes of rural urban migration by the youth is not far-fetched from the fact that they do not have much experience in their activities in the rural areas as a result some underlining factors from inadequate exposure to basic technicalities and applications in carrying out operations.

The majority of the 40 respondents had a land holding of less than 2 hectares, with about 40.2% cultivating between 2 and 4 hectares, 13.4% cultivating between 5-7 hectares, and only about 2.1% with three respondents each cultivating between 8 and 10 hectares, and only 1.0% with one respondent having a farm size of 10-11 hectares. According to the findings, the majority of the youths in the research region are more interested in small-scale production.

**Causes of Rural Urban Migration**



Source: Field survey, (2021)

**Fig 1:** Causes of Rural-urban youth Migration

Rural urban migration in study area as depicted from Fig 1. shows that, majority about 45.3% accounting for 43 respondents migrated for white collar jobs, 22.7% numbering 22 respondents each, migrated for skill acquisition. 17.5% numbering 17 respondents migrated as a result of low income; 2.1% of the respondents gave no reason whatsoever for migration. This finding agrees with the findings of *Yuguda et al., (2013)* that over, 70% of Nigerian youth migrate to the urban areas as a result of poor infrastructure, in search for white collar job, to acquire skills on the income.

**Perceived Rate of Reduction in Labour due to Migration of Youth**

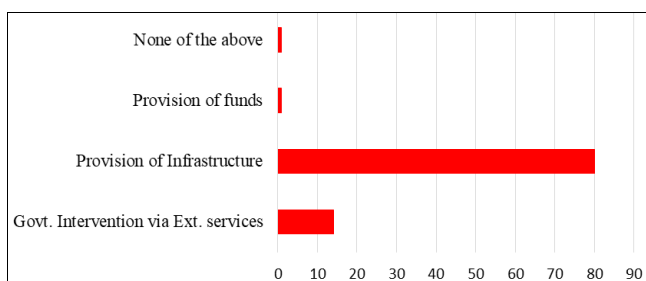
**Table 2:** Perceived rate of reduction in labour due to migration

Parameters	Frequency	Percentage
1-30 (moderate)	28	28.8
31-70 (high)	55	26.7
71-100 (very high)	12	12.4
Not at all	2	2.1

Source: Field survey, (2021)

Table 2. shows the rate of labour due to migration of youth, that, majority about 56.7% accounting for 55 respondents indicated that there was reduction in the rate of labour supply as a result of migration, 28.8% numbering 28 respondents indicated that reduction in the rate of labour supply was moderate, also, 12.4% of the respondents said rate of reduction in labour supply was very high. However, 2.1% of the respondents were indifferent as to whether or not there was any significant reduction in the rate of labour supply whatsoever for migration. This finding agrees with the findings of young, *Fadayomi (2013)* that rural urban migration significantly affects the rate supply of labour. This is because; youth are energetic and contribute immensely to the pool of labour supply on the farm.

**Strategies in Reducing Rural Urban Migration**



Source: Field survey, 2021

**Fig 2:** Strategies in Reducing Rural Urban Migration

**Strategies in Reducing Rural Urban Migration**

Fig 2 shows strategies for quelling rural urban migration, majority of respondents about 82.5% accounting for 80 respondents for provision of infrastructure and basic amenities in rural areas as a strategy for reducing rural urban migration, 14.4% numbering 14 respondents felt government intervention through extension services to youth will reduce the current rate of migration, only 1% of the respondents went for provision of fund for the youth as a strategy for reducing rural urban migration. Nevertheless, 1% of the respondents were indifferent to various strategies for reducing rural urban migration. In the findings of FAO

(2015) <sup>[6]</sup> in another research on strategies for reducing rural urban migration by youth; provision of monetary grants to youth for empowerment did not flatten their curve of migration to the city centres as anticipated. Rather, provision of infrastructure and basic amenities gave more inclusion and belongings to the youth in their environment and were more willing to remain in the rural areas.

**Conclusion**

Migration decisions are influenced by a range of fundamental causes, including the hunt for white collar work, skill acquisition, poor income, and other distant factors, according to the study. These found factors are very context-dependent and are influenced by individual and household characteristics. The core reasons of rural youth distress migration, its effects on agriculture and rural development in the places of origin, and its patterns vary by location. Finding long-term solutions to the reasons of rural-urban migration vary as well.

**Recommendations**

The following recommendations are provided in the topic area based on the findings in order to identify long-term solutions in the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC): Support policy-level strategic planning by mainstreaming migration into national policy to:

1. In the context of agricultural rural development strategic planning, thoroughly examine the linkages between youth employment promotion and rural labor promotion.
2. Adopt successful extension tactics in the study region for the supply of agricultural services and the creation of jobs.
3. Include rural youth's access to education and information in ARD policies and planning, as well as their specific needs and objectives.
4. Nurture and incubate rural youth's ability to contribute to rural development.

Governments, civil society organizations, the private sector, and development partners should develop policies and programs in rural areas to provide youth in AMAC with skill acquisition training, ensuring that migration and youth-related priorities are in line with the country's overall development vision and objectives in the study area.

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