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THE IMPACTS OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON OWNERSHIP OF HOUSEHOLD PROPERTY ASSETS IN NSUKKA AREA, SOUTHEASTERN NIGERIA

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Abstract: The study assessed through survey research design, using household survey questionnaire, the impact of rural-urban migration on ownership of household property assets among rural households in Nsukka Area of Enugu State, Southeastern Nigeria. 910 households drawn from 4 local government areas and 16 communities were covered in the research. SPSS was used to estimate the percentage contribution of migrants' fund to household property asset ownership while Asset index analytic technique was used to estimate the property asset ownership across the communities. The result showed that television set received the highest share of migrants' remittance with 28.55%. While refrigerator received the least with 1.15%. Across the communities, Anuka had the highest impact of migration on property asset ownership base with score of 2.72. It is recommended that government should develop public awareness programme on the need for migrants to always remember their source regions and not spend their money ostentatiously in the urban areas as this will go a long way in improving the wellbeing of rural dwellers in Nsukka area specifically and Southeastern Nigeria generally.

Keywords: property assets, impact, rural-urban, migration.

INTRODUCTION

Migration follows a variety of patterns which expresses migration on space dimension. They include, urban-urban; urban-rural; rural-rural and rural-urban. This research is centred on rural-urban migration. Rural-urban migration constitutes one of the currents of internal migration in Nigeria and elsewhere. It involves the movement of people from rural areas to urban areas on permanent or semi permanent basis (Eze 2015). This type of population movement is abundantly expressed in South-Eastern Nigeria of which Nsukka region is a salient part. It is a type of migratory movement in which the motive is not only to improve the movers livelihood opportunities and welfare, but also the livelihood improvements of those left behind in the rural area (Eze 2014). Rural-urban migration results from the search for perceived or real opportunities as a consequence of rural-urban inequality in wealth (Sorenson, 2004; Madu, 2006). This inequality and or urban bias in development according to

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research findings over the years results from overwhelming concentration of wealth, assets, purchasing capacity, economic activities, and Variety of services in the urban centres as well as continued neglect of rural areas (Todoaro, 1998, 1985; Ellis, 2003, 2005; and Timalsina, 2007). Nevertheless researches have shown that the determinants of or propensity of migration differ from place to place and among migrants over time. Scoones (1998) and Carney (1998) have each in their classification of livelihood strategies identified migration as a rural livelihood strategy; and according to Ajaero (2013), migration has been identified as a livelihood strategy utilized by the poor especially rural dwellers.

In Nsukka region, rural-urban migration is seen as a viable livelihood strategy and is highly encouraged because of the financial success believed to be associated with it. It is not strange in this region for some kindred to hold meetings to urge a youngman who stays on the village without any overt goal to move out like others and seek success elsewhere (Eze 2014). Some micro studies in some communities of the region as Okolo (2008) study in Eha-Alumona community show that migration increases the status symbol of a migrant's household. Parents or relatives do boast of their children or relatives living in one big city or the other. One does not usually expect a higher institution graduate to remain in the village since there is no economic opportunity for gainful employment for him there. He is expected to move out and look for means of livelihood in the urban area, not only to improve on his own wellbeing but the wellbeing of the family left behind.

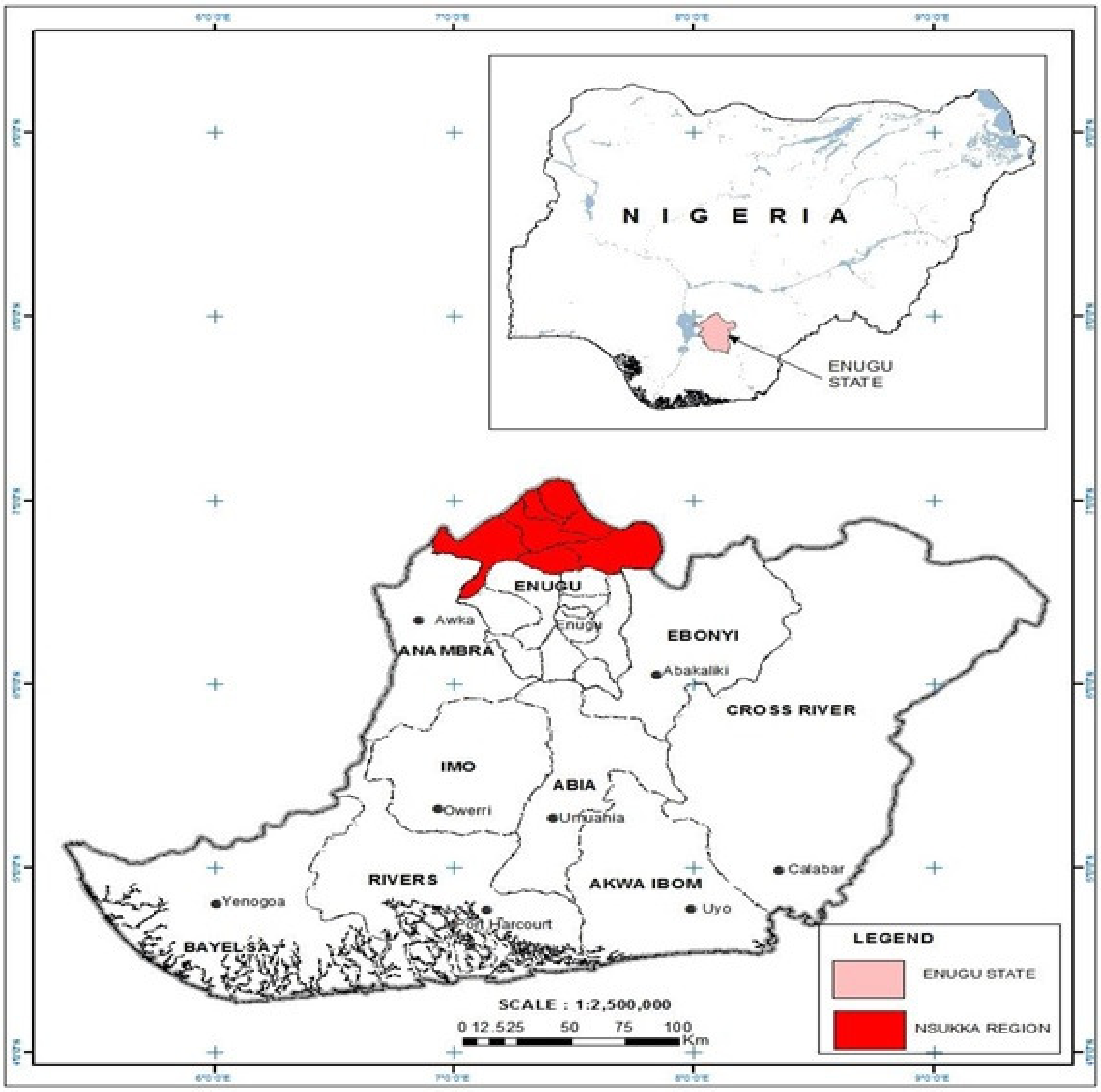
The direction of the socio-economic links between rural and urban areas in the rural-urban migration process- so called the cost-benefit calculation between the sources and destination of migrants has been an issue of debate. Some have argued that rural-urban migration rob villagers of human and material resources while the alternate school argue that surplus cash from urban areas in terms of remittances help in the development of social and infrastructural amenities in the rural areas. They argue that each current of migration is associated with a contemporary counter current in forms of rural development including family support (Fadayomi, 1988).

This paper therefore seeks to identify and assess the impact of rural-urban migration on ownership of household property assets among rural households in Nsukka area of Enugu state, southeastern Nigeria.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Area

The study area, Nsukka Area is situated in Enugu state, southeastern Nigeria. The land surface of the Area lies between latitudes 6°30' and 7°6' north and longitudes 6°54' and 7°54'' and covers a total land area of 3,402 square kilometers (fig. 1). It is located on the northern part of southeastern Nigeria and comprises seven (7) local government areas namely: Igbo-Etiti, Igbo-Eze north, Igbo-Eze South, Isi-Uzo, Nsukka, Uzo-Uwani and Udenu. Nsukka Area is chosen for this study because it exhibits as part of the variables homogenous socio-economic and cultural characteristics and falls within the same agro-climatic and other geography conditions. It is equally highly prone to rural-urban migrations.



Source: Administrative Map of Nigeria, 11th Edition, Office of the Surveyor General of the Federation.

Fig. 1: Map of South-Eastern Nigeria showing the Study Area

Sample Selection

In this study, four local government areas were purposely selected out of seven that make up the Area. The four local government areas are Igbo-Etiti, Isi-Uzo, Nsukka and Uzo-Uwani. The choice of these local government areas is based on their geographical locations in the Area and their varying levels of population concentration. Isi-Uzo and Uzo-Uwani local government areas are located respectively on extreme eastern and western low-lying, agriculturally rich areas, each having low population size and concentration, while Igbo-Etiti and Nsukka local government areas are located on the Plateau and partly on escarpment, not so favoured with fertile plains for settlement and agriculture like the first two, yet with heavy population concentration. Equally Isi-Uzo and Uzo-Uwani local government areas represent more rural environments while Igbo-Etiti and Nsukka local government areas represent more urban environments. The choice of these local government areas therefore duly reflects the character of the region.

Four communities are selected from each of the local government areas based on population size; thus two most populated communities and two least populated communities are chosen to reflect varying population concentration and sizes.

The sample size was statistically derived using Yaro’s method (Onwe, 1998).

The formula is thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{I+N(e)^2} \qquad - \quad - \quad - \quad - \quad - \quad - \qquad (1)$$

Where n = sample size

N = population size

e = level of significance or allowable error

I = a constant

Data Collection

The main source of primary data was the structured questionnaire while literature from the published source formed the source of secondary data. The questionnaires were administered to heads of individual households or their spouses. The questionnaires were used to gather information on property asset ownership and receipt of monetary remittances by rural households in Nsukka area. The total number of respondents was 910 which was got proportionately from the communities based on their population sizes.

Data Analysis

The estimation of the percentage contribution of monetary remittances to asset ownership was done using SPSS. Asset index analytic technique was used to estimate the impact of migration on property asset ownership across communities. According to Filmer and Scott (2008), Asset indices formula is as follows:

$$A_i = b_{ii}\ a_{ii} + b_2.a_{2i} + - \quad - \quad - \quad + b_k.a_{ki} - \quad - \qquad (2)$$

Where Ai is the asset index of household "I", a_{ii}, a_{zi}….. a_{ki}, are K indicators of asset ownership variables (such as radio, television, corrugated iron roofs), b1, b2 ---- bk, are weights to be used in aggregating the asset indicators into an index.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

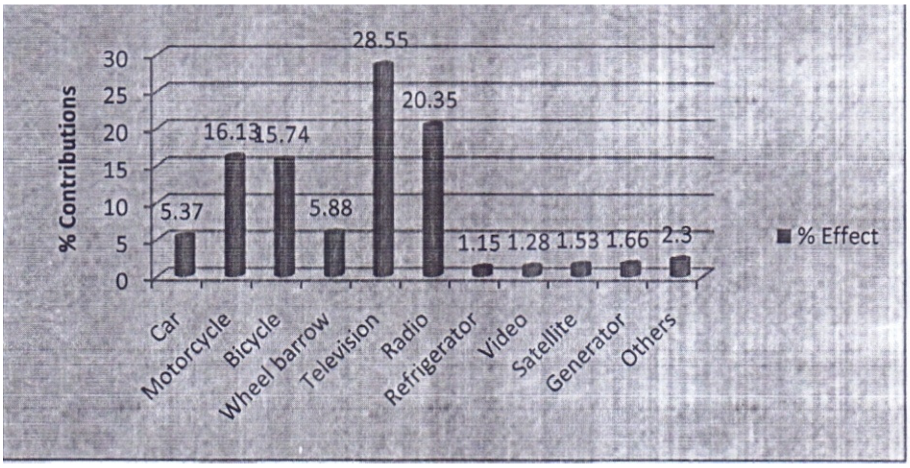
Impacts of rural-urban Migration on Rural Household Property Assets

Table 1: Percentage Shares of Migrant Fund to Household Property Assets Base

Household Assets	**Amount Sent by Migrant in the Last 12 Months**							
	1000-2000	3000-4000	5000 - 6000	7000-8000	9000-10000	11000+	**Total**	**% effects**
Car	6	11	6	6	0	13	**42**	**5.37**
Motorcycle	31	28	21	22	6	18	**126**	**16.13**
Bicycle	5	40	34	12	11	21	**123**	**15.74**
Wheel barrow	0	21	8	0	13	4	**46**	**5.88**
Television	11	14	36	24	22	116	**223**	**28.55**
Radio	31	24	38	12	1	53	**159**	**20.35**
Refrigerator	1	1	1	0	0	6	**9**	**1.15**
Video	3	2	0	3	1	1	**10**	**1.28**
Satellite	0	2	3	3	0	4	**12**	**1.53**
Generator	1	4	3	1	2	2	**13**	**1.66**
Others	1	2	2	1	1	11	**18**	**2.30**
Total	**90**	**149**	**152**	**84**	**57**	**249**	**781**	**100**

Source: SPSS estimate

The estimation in table 1 shows that television set received the highest share of migrant remittance, having total of 223, which made up 28.55% on the assets base of the household. Radio set received 20.35%, followed by motorcycle with 16.13% and bicycle also with 15.74% respectively. The result shows that wheel barrow and car receives 5.88% and 5.37% of the migrant fund respectively. While households‟ an item such as refrigerator, video and satellite receives less than 2% each, from the migrants" funds. In sum, the highest effects of migrant contribution in the study area go to ownership of television set, radio set, motorcycle and bicycle.



Source: Table 1

FIG 2: Effects of Migrants' Fund on Rural Household Property Assets

That television, radio sets, motorcycle and bicycle are in the top list among the property assets of rural households accruing from migrants' remittances is not surprising. These are basic assets for information reception, amusement and transportation in the rural areas of the region. The transportation elements equally help in moving economic goods including farm produce from remote areas to the market for sale. This implies that investments in household assets promote economic development. It equally contributes to emotional and psychological wellbeing and happiness of the rural households through listening to the radio and viewing of television sets. These all constitute evidences of improved livelihood quality. There are also other property assets as shown on the table which though do not occupy salient positions cumulatively impact positively on the quality of life of the rural households as cars, satellites connections, videos, generators, refrigerators and wheel barrows.

TABLE 2: Impact of rural-urban migration on ownership of rural household property assets across the communities

Community	Property Asset
Eha-Amufu	0.66
Ikem	0.67
Neke	0.66
Umualor	0.69
Nsukka	0.7
Eha-Alumona	0.66
Anuka	2.72
Ibagwa-Agu	0.66
Aku	0.66
Ukehe	0.67
Onyoghor	1.71
Ochima	0.66
Adani	0.86
Nimbo	0.71
Ojor	2.02
Nkume	0.66

Source: Researcher's Computation

Table 2 shows the estimated impacts of rural-urban migration on property assets of the rural households across the communities under study. From the table, it is shown that the impact varied across the communities with the highest impact of 2.72 recorded in Anuka, followed by Ojor 2.02 and Onyohor 1.71 while the rest are as shown. All these are in consonance with Eze (2014) confirmation of reverse flow of resources from urban destinations back to the rural origins of out-migrants for family support and livelihood improvement. This equally implies that the rural households would have been poorer without those remittances as they would have been denied of some of these property assets which contribute meaningfully to enhanced quality of life.

CONCLUSION

Migration studies are not only about movement but interconnectedness of place of origin and place of destination. One major link agency in this interconnection is Remittances in cash and goods which are usually meant for livelihood maintenance and improvement of households in the rural source regions. In Nsukka area, this study shows that migrants' funds (remittances) equally contribute to property asset ownership base which again adds positively to quality of life and poverty reduction. Seeing the ostensible contributions of migrants in this wise, it is recommended that government develop an awareness programme to urge urbanites to do more in remitting resources back home by reducing and/or eliminating any kind of ostentatious urban lifestyle. Taking this recommendation seriously should not only ensure improved wellbeing of rural households in Nsukka area in particular but the whole of Southeastern Nigeria.

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