

Original Research Article

EFFECT OF YOUTH RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON CHILD LABOUR USE IN RICE PRODUCTION IN AFIKPO SOUTH LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA OF EBONYI STATE Nigeria.

Abstract

Effect of youth “Rural-Urban Migration” on child labour use in rice production in Afikpo South Local Government Area of Ebonyi State was undertaken in this study. A total of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents were selected using multi-stage random sampling technique across the local government area. Data which comprised of information on the socioeconomic characteristics and the other relevant variables of interest were collected using a well structured questionnaire and personal interviews. The socioeconomic characteristics of the respondents, causes of Rural and Urban migration causes of Rural and Urban migration and major rice agronomic practices of which children are used to perform. Probit model was used to determine the relationship between rural – urban migration and child labour use. The major causes of youth migration were persecutions (23.2%), boredom of farming (20.8%), social amenities (16.6%), economic reasons (16.6%) and peer pressure (12.5%). The determinant factors to child labour use in farming were age of the child, educational level, household head’s health and cost of hired labour. The result of production activities in which child labour were used included bird scaring (25%), fertilizer application (16.6%), clearing (12.5%), and planting (12.5%). The recommendations proffered were provision of essential social amenities, industries in the rural areas, the need for modernization of agriculture to reduce youth urban drift, compulsory free education for all children and as well as government enacting laws to prohibit child labour in the society.

Keywords; Youth, Rural-Urban, Migration, Child Labour Use. Rice Production

Introduction

In 19th and early 20th century, The developed world have experienced diverse pattern of migration, chiefly rural-urban migration, of which industrialization, economic development and urbanization fueled by population increase were fingered to be the root (Baland *et al*, 2000). Nowadays, Rural-urban migration is a livelihood and survival strategy for many poor groups across the developing world, where a rural resident(s) move to an urban destination for a specific period of time and coming back to their origin (Temporary migrants) or start to reside in the

destination region in permanent basis (permanent migrants) for different reasons, which could be due to political, socio-economic and demographic reasons (Brette, 2002).

Rural-urban migration literature as observed by USAID, (2002) is mostly young people affairs irrespective of gender especially with increasing urbanization have different levels of skills of which low-skilled individuals usually move to the cities to find manual jobs, while educated workers usually move to cities for white collar jobs. In many developing countries, women particularly migrating for certain reasons such as marriage arrangements, divorce or family integration mainly migrate permanently, The economic opportunities in urban areas and low agricultural productivity lead to rural out-migration to urban and industrial sectors (Adepoju, 1977). The effect of rural-urban migration on the agriculture sector remained a controversial issue, since this phenomenon has both positive and depressing implications. The depressing aspect of migration as opined by Ebo, (2002) is the drain of production factors such as labor and capital (due to migration costs) from the rural sector and whilst the upbeat is the inflow of remittances from migrants for production investments (Dixon, 2005). The depleting of the labour force constitutes a great burden to attainment of food sufficiency of mostly African countries where migration is a common place as aged farmers are enthroned with herculean task of feeding the non agricultural population without a significant improvement in the tool used and in the method of farming (Ashasire, 1997). Nevertheless, these aged farmers are often resource poor to hire labour and as well physically weak to handle drudgeries associated with manual farming, consequently low productivity ensue. This scenario translates into a marked increase in rural child labour in agriculture (Basu and Homa, 2009).

Child labour according to International Labour Organization (ILO) refers to engagement of children below 18 years in work or employed on regular basis with the aim of earning a

58 livelihood for themselves and family (Rigg, 2003).The effect of child labour is enormous and
59 according to International Labour Organization (ILO), (2006) child labour dispossesses children
60 of their childhood's potentials, dignity and detrimental to their physical and mental
61 developments. Nevertheless, in spite of the hazards associated with child labour, yet this labour
62 class is sustained and reinforced in many agrarian society as an appropriate for training of the
63 child in order to grow up as hardworking and productive member of the society (Basu and
64 Homa, 2009).

65 Evidences are bound of the magnitude and spread of child labour in agriculture among
66 developing countries as workers in their parent's farm, work on local farm, part-time to earn
67 extra income and work out of economic necessity. For instance Association of farm Workers
68 Opportunity Program (AFWOP) (2007) reported that sixty percent of all child labourers
69 worldwide between the ages of 5 and 7 work in agriculture. Similarly, a recent survey on use of
70 child labour in Nigeria, indicated that about 56% children workers particularly in rural areas are
71 engage in agricultural sector (Ukeji, 2003). In the study area, rice production is the most
72 prominent of all agricultural crop production in terms of area of land cultivated, income and
73 employment generation as the area is blessed with rich and diverse rice ecologies, as result there
74 abound rice milling and marketing businesses. In those rice ventures, several studies disclosed
75 that the roles of children as labourers in executing certain functions are very much acknowledged
76 (ILO, 2006).

77 Although, children when working with parents/ guardians, they are under close
78 supervision but when engaged for economic necessity, they are exposed to varied occupational
79 hazards and long hours of work with very meagre pay (Okorie, 2006). Studies show that the
80 children are exposed to many occupational hazards including chronic bronchitis and tuberculosis

from cigarette, tetanus and skin diseases from picking rag, unwanted pregnancies, brutality and molestation snake bites and vehicular accidents (Archana, 2000) Traditionally, migration studies were devoted on investigating frequency, patterns and flows, distance and typologies of people's mobility and their assimilations in host societies. Recent explorations however have begun to venture in studying the effect of migration as relates to agricultural labour supply (Rigg 2003). It is based on these premises that this work was designed in order to investigate and answer the following research questions;

What are the socioeconomic characteristics of the children?

What are the causes of rural- urban migration?

What are the relationships between rural-urban migration and child labour characteristics?

What are the rice agronomic practices in which children are used to perform?

Specifically, the objectives are to:

(i) identify the causes of youth rural-urban migration

(ii) determine the relationship between rural – urban migration and child labour use in the study area.

(iii) describe the socioeconomic and characteristics of the children.

(iv) identify the major rice agronomic practices of which children are used to perform.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Afikpo South Local Government Area of Ebonyi State. Afikpo South Local Government Area comprises of communities and villages. Afikpo South Local Government Area is located between latitude $06^{\circ}32'$ and $05^{\circ}27'$ North of equator and longitude $07^{\circ}33'$ and $06^{\circ}29'$ East of Greenwich meridian. The temperature ranges from 23°C - 32°C with average annual rainfall ranges of 1750mm - 2250mm. Afikpo South Local

Government Area has a population of about one hundred and fifty seven thousand and seventy two (157,072) people (NPC, 2006) and land area of three hundred and seventy eight (378) km². It is bounded in the east by Ereyi Local Government Area of Cross River State, in the west by Ivo Local Government Area of Ebonyi State, in the south by Ohafia Local Government Area of Abia State, and bounded in the North by Afikpo North. Afikpo south Local Government Area inhabitants are agrarians and engage in other economic activities including; hunting; petty trading, and civil service.

Multi-stage random sampling technique was used to select communities and respondents. In the first stage, five communities were selected out of eight communities that made up the local government. Secondly, two villages were selected from each of the sampled communities, bringing to a total of ten villages. In stage III, twelve children from rice farming house hold were selected from each of ten villages. This brought to a total of 120 respondents for detailed study.

Structured questionnaire and personal interview were administered to the children labourers in order to illicit information on their socio-economic characteristics and farm activities in which children are being used for. Secondary data was collected from textbooks journals periodicals published and unpublished thesis. The objectives I, III and V were captured using infrencial statistics such as percentages and frequency distribution table. Objective III was captured using probit model analysis.

3.5 Model Specification

The probit model is specified thus:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \times I_i + \beta_2 \times 2_i + \beta \times K_i \quad V_i$$

And that

$$Y_i = 1 \text{ if } y > 0$$

129 $Y_i = 0$ otherwise

130 Where X_1, X_2, X_3 = respondents vector of random variables β represents a vector of unknown
 131 parameters, and V represents a random disturbance term. According to Shukla, and Ali,
 132 (2006), probit model constrains the estimate probabilities to be between 0 and 1 and
 133 relaxes the constraints that the effect of the independent variable is constant values of the
 134 dependent variables this is normally experienced with the linear.
 135 Probability model (L P M) the probit model assumes that while we only observe the

136 values of 0 and 1 for the variable y , there is a latent unobserved continues variables that
 137 determines the value of y . the other advantage of the probit model include believable error term
 138 distribution as well as realistic probabilities (Nagler, 1994).

139 The implicit form of the model is

140 $Y = f(X_1 X_2 X_3 X_4 X_5 + e_i) \dots \dots \dots (1)$

141 Y = Child labour use

142 X_1 = Level of education (years)

143 X_2 = Occupation of the parents (dummy)

144 X_3 = Relationship between child and household head (dummy)

145 X_4 = Age of the child (years)

146 X_6 = Poverty level of parents (dummy)

147 X_7 = Household health condition (dummy)

148 e_i = Error term

149

150 **Results**

151 Table 1 shows that 33.3% of the respondents were within the age bracket of 15-18 years, while
 152 the least (16.6%) were of age bracket of <6 years. Most (87.5%) of the respondents were
 153 educated, while only 12.5% of the respondents had no formal education. High cost of hired
 154 labour accounted about 75% of the total respondents, while low cost, 25% as presented in table
 155 1. Most (66.6%) of the respondents were members of the organization, while only 33.4%
 156 were non members. Most (58.3%) of the respondents complained of ill health, while only 41.6%

did not. Table 1 showcased that among the respondents, 16.6% were living below poverty level, while 83.3% lived above poverty level. The table 1 indicated that male servant (29%) were more engaged in certain rice production activities, followed by maid (25%), while least was biological daughters who accounted about 8.5% of the total respondents.

The causes of youth urban – rural migration (in descending order) as contain in Table 2 were social interaction, persecution, boredom, economic reasons and peer pressure

The coefficients of the household size, household health and age of house hold as contain in Table 3 were positive and significant at 1% alpha level respectively. The coefficients of house hold poverty level and costs of hired labour had direct relationship with use of child labour and significant as 5% risk level, while the coefficient of level of education of the house hold was significant at 10% probability level

The items under consideration as indicated in Table 4, bird scaring (25%) was the highest, followed by fertilizer application (16.6%%), while the least (2.5%) was land preparation. The others included clearing (12.5%), planting (12.5%), nursery making (8.3%), weeding (3.3%), threshing (3.3%), parboiling (3.3%), transportation (2.5%) and land preparation (2.5%).

Discussion

Adolescent children dominated the study as shown in Table 1 and it is expected that this age class has fairly physical and mental abilities required to cope with manual nature of our traditional farming, hence may engage into economic job related activities in order to augment the meagre resources of the parents , particularly poor resource ones (Nwaru, 2004).The level of Educational attainments by the respondents were high in line with *a priori* expectation and this can be linked to the recent free education from primary one (1) to junior secondary by the government of Ebonyi State of Nigeria. Education according to enhances the innovation and decision making ability of individuals. The high cost of hired labour as reported in Table 1 is

occasioned by urban drift of able bodied youths, hence leaving farming activities for old men, women and children (Ume, *et al*, 2013). A large number of the respondents were members of one type of organization or the order. Eze and Akpa, (2010) observed that cooperative members exchange labours in order to curtail minimally child labour used by members in their farms. Furthermore, through cooperative educational programme on child labour and consequent exposure of the ills, members could jettison the idea.

A substantial number of the respondents complained of ill health of ill-health or the other which could impair his/her capacity to accomplish certain farm tasks. Padhi, (2004) observed that ill health reduces the quality of labour input as well as resource underutilization. Poverty according to Nwaru, (2004) is inability of someone to earn one dollar (~~₦~~340) per day. Studies show that poorer household heads often use their children for most agricultural activities in situation of high cost of hired labour (Ukeji, , 2003).

Furthermore, impoverished households often use their children as source of hired labour in order to generate income to argument the family meager resources (Thomas, 2008). Generally, in traditional Africa agricultural setting, household heads use children in order to acculturate into them farming skills for future use (ILO, 2006; Bhukuth, (2008).

Table 2 showed that the presence of essential amenities in the urban areas attracted some people respondents to the cities. Social amenities according to literatures could afford not only necessary comfort to people but business opportunities to improve on their livelihood (Eboh, 2002). These amenities include electricity, pipe borne water, better schools, hospitals and other recreational activities.

Furthermore, boredom in farming including farming is full of risks and uncertainties, problem of climate change, lots of farm drudgery, high capital outlay, and problem of land acquisition as discouraging and in effect compelled lots of people particularly youths to jettison the profession and migrate to urban areas for better livelihood (Sayad, 2004). In addition, economic reason was reported by the sampled population as a reason for urban migration as showed in the table above. The urban areas are sites of government agencies and industries hence, have more job opportunities couple with higher wages for better living. Also, reasonable populations of the respondents were lured into cities by influence of peer pressure. The remittances that families of the peer groups enjoy in rural areas propelled many rural youths into urban migration to achieve the same feat (Humbert, 2009)

More so, persecutions was among the reasons tabled by the respondents for migrating to the urban areas to seek refuge for their precious. Persecutions could be detrimental to ones wellbeing and economic security and could be political, religious and traditional rites (Emerson, *et al.*, 2011). Finally, social interactions and exposure with people that could connect them to greater class, has forced many respondents into moving to cities were they are assorted. The dependence and usefulness of larger household size irrespective of their age structure especially by destitute households in the farm as work force according to Yacouba, *et al* 2008) may have accounted for the coefficient of the household size direct relationship with child labour use as contain in Table 3. Furthermore, statistical test of household educational level coefficient had direct relationship with the dependent variable and concurred with the finding of Ume and Okoye, (2009) on child labour in rice production in Anambra Agricultural Zone of Anambara State, Nigeria. They opined that educated people are always cautious on the health hazards and as well as legal implication of indulging children into work.

Moreso, cost of hired labour as shown in Table 3 was positively signed in line with a priori expectation and connotes that the higher the cost of labour, the more likelihood economic disadvantaged families coercion their children into farm work in order to curtail minimally cost of production (Beverly, 2009)). In addition, the coefficient of level of poverty of household head had direct relationship with child labour use. This implies that monetary deprived household coercion their children into economic labour in order to augment their meager resources for family upkeep (ILO, 2008). In attestation to the above statement, Bunch and Verner, (2001) in their study on relationship between poverty and child labour in Ghana concluded that children from poorer households are almost four times likely to be engaged in harmful (Human capacity inflicting child labour) than those children from wealthy households.

Also, age of the household head coefficient was found to be positive and which implied that as the household head advances in age, the tendency for his/her children being engaged in farm work increases. The aforementioned statement is more allied to poorer household. Nevertheless, old age is often associated with reduced energy and optimism necessary in farming hence, household heads that falls into this category, often supplement his/her labour with children labour for meaningful production to be realised in the farm (Kareem, 2008). Finally, household head's health status was positive and concur with Shukla and Ali (2006), who opined that ill health undermines agricultural productivity and income generation efforts of individuals, through reduced healthy and quality of labour inputs, reduced economic output and resource under-utilization.

In bird scaring, hired labour is seldom used but children labour as indicated in Table 4. This is because bird scaring is less tedious, long working hour of at least 12 hours and with low wage compare to other rice production activities. This finding is synonymous with Ume and

Okoye, (2009) on child labour in Anambra Zone of Anambra State. Fertilizer application in rice production is the second most production activities in which child labour is being used. This exercise is less tedious as broadcasting method of fertilizer application is often used. Land preparation was the least production activities in which children was being used for, since the practice is very tedious and requires the services of able bodied youths, of which children are seldom used for this exercise.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results, the following major conclusions were deduced

Most of the respondents were young and moderately educated.

The major determinant factors to child labour use by the household heads were: household size, household health, and cost of hired labour. The major causes of youth migration were; persecutions, boredom of farming, social amenities, economic reasons. The rice production activities of which children were being use are: bird scaring, fertilizer application and paddy clearing.

Based on the results the following recommendations are proffered:

- (1) Compulsory free education for every child to reduce the chances of being used for labour.
- (2) Social mobilization through campaigns to provide information, raise awareness and change attitude of people towards child labour through exposing them to occupational hazards involved
- (3) Advocacy for the right of the child and enacting laws and policies aimed at eliminating all forms of child labour. The advocacy should monitor the progress of implementation and enforcement of the laws.

- 273 (4) Government should provide social amenities in the rural areas so as to reduce the
274 migration rate of the youths.
- 275 (5) Government should create employment for youths living in the rural areas.
- 276 (6) Transformation of traditional agriculture to modern agriculture: This will enable the
277 youth to engage in agriculture as the system will make farming interesting.
- 278 (7) Establishment of industries in the rural area that will absorb the youth working
279 population.
- 280 (8) Government and non-governmental bodies should make efforts to educate the masses on
281 the detrimental effect of rural-urban migration.
- 282 (9) Loans should be made available to the rural farmers and terms of agreement made in
283 simply language to them, this will help them purchase more land for cultivation and as
284 well as for labour payment.

285 **Table 1: Distribution of Respondents According to Socio-economic Characteristics**

Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Age		
< 6	20	16.6
7-10	25	20.8
11-14	35	29.1
15-18	40	33.3
Education		
No formal education	15	12.5%
Incomplete Primary Education	25	20.8%
Primary education	35	29.1%
Secondary Education	45	37.5%
Cost of Hired Labour		
High Cost	90	75

Low Cost	30	25
Membership of organization		
Yes	80	66.6%
None	40	33.4
Household Health		
Yes	50	41.6%
No	70	58.3%
Income		
Less than ₦240	20	16.6%
₦240 and above	100	83.3%
Relationship		
Biological son	15	12.5
Biological Daughter	10	8.5
Step son	15	12.5
Maid	30	25
Servant	35	29
Others (Cousin/Nephew)	15	12.5

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

Table 2: Causes of Rural-Urban Migration

Course of Attraction	Frequency	Percentage
Social Amenities	20	16.6%
Economic reasons	20	16.6%
Boredom of farming	25	20.8
Peer Pressure	15	12.5
Social Reason	12	10.0
Persecutions	28	23.2
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

291 **Table 3: relationship between youth rural – urban migration and child labour use in the**
 292 **study area.**

Variables	Parameters
Intercept	-4.568 (-4.271)***
Edu level	0.411 (3.005)*
Occupation	0.023 (0.435)
Poverty level	0.066 (2.538)**
Age	0.052 (4.727)***
Household size	0.432(3.054)***
Poverty	-0.248 (-1.085)
Household health	0.567 (2.239)***
Cost of hired labour	0.011 (2.006)**
Membership	-0.040 (-976)
Number of Obs	= 120
LR - Chi (19)	= 79.29
$\hat{P}rob> Chi$	= 0.3489
Pseudo R^2	= 0.0052
Log likelihood	= -59.901248

293 *, ** and *** _{impl}IPS significance at 10%, 5% and 1% respectively

Table 4: Distribution of Rice Production Activities in Relationship to Child Labour Use.

Item	Frequency	Percentage
Cleaning	15	12.25
Bird scaring	30	25
Nursery Making	10	8.3
Planting	15	12.5
Fertilizer Application	20	16.6
Weeding	4	3.3
Rice Threshing	4	3.3
Transportation	3	2.5
Parboiling	4	3.3
Land preparation	3	2.5
Harvesting	6	5
Total	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2015.

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