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Assessing the Migration Dynamics in the Context of Agriculture and Human Development in Nigeria

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Abstract. Migration presents challenges and opportunities for both origin and destination communities. It should be emphasized that much of the migration discourse has only focused on the origin more than the destination. Hence, the dramatic changes in the flow of migrants across international borders, as well as accelerating internal movements of rural migrants in the direction of the cities are practically reshaping our world. It is a truism that agriculture and human advancement are keys to addressing the fundamental causes of migration. According to (FAO, 2018), over half of the populace in the least developed countries will still live in rural areas in the year 2050. Three-quarters of the extreme poor base their livelihoods on agriculture or other rural activities. In the African continent, Eleven million young people will enter the labor market every year for the next ten years. Thus, agriculture can be categorized as the backbone of human subsistence and its stanchion for human existence surpasses any other area of endeavor. It provides employment to individuals and business support to organizations. However, despite its importance, there has been a continuous reduction in the number of people directly involved in agriculture, especially in developing countries. In Nigeria for example, the attraction to the city which is the ‘Pull factor’, white-collared jobs, price instability, income instability, herdsmen/farmer crisis, general insecurity, government intervention among others have reduced the number of people participating directly in agriculture. Economic issues such as deficit in trade, uncertain availability of food, generation of income, poverty reduction and creation of employment could be catered by the government by enacting pro-agricultural laws and providing incentives in various forms which includes provisions agricultural technology, tax reliefs, easy access to loans, security of lives and livestock, infrastructural development, irrigation trenches in desert areas, supply of fertilizers, control of usage of insecticides. Nigeria should come up with effective, pragmatic and workable agricultural plan and policy to harness the massive possibility of agricultural commercialization to fulfil the internal consumption demands and also for the purpose of export. There is also the need to process raw materials into finished products. For many smallholder farmers and herders, moving away from rural areas is an attractive opportunity to diversify livelihoods, escape slow-outbreak events which include climate change and degeneration of the environment, seek improved social services, and reunite with family members. This paper will interrogate instances of policies in receiving countries that empower the displaced and capitalize on opportunities that can arise from a global population shift. This research paper assesses the relationship between migration, human development, and agriculture and also raises and answers question on how we can enhance the development potential of migration in order to achieve zero hunger. Therefore, this paper concludes with the prospects and limitations of commercialization of agriculture and provides suggestions of ways for advancement using Nigeria as an example. It also seeks to suggest ways to make agriculture more vibrant and robust, which if attained, will reduce reliance on oil and gas as the predominantly sources of revenue generation.

Keywords: Agriculture; Migration; Hunger; Development; Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Over the centuries, migration has been a constant aspect of human evolution and development. Man is prone to movement from one place to another and this is induced by various reasons ranging from economic and social incentives, conflicts (political crisis/ instability, political persecution, war, etc.), natural disasters and its effect,

family reunification, education. The migration process begins when people choose to leave their home countries – either in light of the fact that their lives are not sheltered and they look for security abroad (constrained migration), or on the grounds that they search for better financial chances (economic migration) (De Haas, 2016:8). Globally, the continuous unequal allocation of infrastructure (social and economic) is a major reason for migration.

Braun (2004) believes that people naturally are inclined to pull towards the areas of prosperity and move from places where little is obtainable. Ravenstein (1889) also concluded that conditions not favorable to a people in one place will ‘push’ them out to external places where favorable conditions will ‘pull’ them. Perceived economic benefits in migration is a motivating factor, such (push factors) includes little or no employment opportunities, food shortages/hunger, uncertainty in political governance, armed conflicts and civil unrest, natural disasters, etc. while the factors that pull (pull factors) may include security and safety, availability of gainful employment, better educational facilities, good medical facilities etc (Piquet et al, 2011). Benefits to be derived from such movements is usually the dominant thoughts on the minds of migrant while little or thought is given to the adversities that may arise from migration (van Dalen et al (2005).

Migration is a feature of globalization; it has helped form the societies we have today. Ideas, inventions, developments, cultural interchange are made through the movement of people from one point to another. The rapid and liberal dissemination of information has creates a lucid visuals of the disparities and inequalities between regions in terms of development, thus providing the basis for migration to another country as an augmentation to human development choices available to people in all material respects (www.un-am 2009). Migration is both internal (rural-urban migration) and external (from one country to another). These movements are an essential aspect of the structural transformation of an economy and, come with its attendant opportunities and challenges. The remittances sent home by migrants have impacts significantly, in a positive way on the economy power of the receiving families. The down side however is the fact that the most vibrant, skilled and dynamic members of the society are often loss to migration especially with the various differentiated immigration policies, promoting certain kind migrants, by destination countries and this can have a negative impact on the society in general and agriculture in particular. When migration is done in a manner that is safe, properly in an orderly fashion and regular, it adds to sustaining development and enhances the growth in the economic, while concurrently, exodus of people, both inside and beyond borders, bring to the fore difficulties for the places of origin, the transit point and the final destination (FAO, IFAD, IOM, WFP, 2018)

This paper will seek to highlight the impact of migration on agriculture and human development using Nigeria as a case study. It will also discuss the possibility of commercialisation of agriculture in Nigeria to the point of being a major foreign exchange earner as well as sufficient food production for the Nigerian population. It will seek to provide suggestions on ways to make agricultural practice in Nigeria more vibrant and dependable

Agriculture in Nigeria

Nigeria also has an agricultural based economy outside oil and gas industry. Approximately 70 per cent of Nigerians indulge in one form of agriculture or another, these are mainly smallholder farmers and scattered using simple farming tools with focused on subsistence farming (FAO, 2008) and according to the NBS (2010); it provides employment for about 30 per cent of the population, even though as recent as 2017, the ILO estimated that agriculture in Nigeria employs 27.90 per cent (ILOSTAT 2017). Agriculture contributed 22.32 per cent to the GDP of Nigeria in 2017 (statista.com).

According to El-Rufai (2011), above 90 percent of produced in agriculture is rain-sourced in a nation of about 924,000 sq. kilometres of land area mass with about 82 million hectares of a total 91 million hectares found to be arable. Nigeria’s agricultural economy is blessed with an enormous proportion of both the agrarian belt and populace, a typical characteristic of developing countries (Akande, 2002). Agriculture is majorly concentrated in the rural areas and it is the occupation of about four-fifth of the rural populace (Olatunbosun, 1975:10).

Development and growth in most developing nations is usually the intermingling of agriculture with other sectors of the economy. Eyo (2008) and Omotor et al (2009) opined that it can be presumed that agriculture is the principal

determinants of attaining economic advancement and if the poverty war can be victorious or end in defeat. The importance ascribed to agriculture, motivated successive governments in Nigeria to initiate various policies and programmes to boost agricultural activities and enhances its general contribution to the nation's economy, the success however has been moderate. These programs included National Acceleration of Food Production (NAFP), River Basin Development Authority (RBDA), Operation Feed the Nation (OFN), National Seed Multiplication Scheme, Agro-Service Centres, Agricultural Development Projects (ADP). An Agricultural Credit Scheme was created to provide finances for agricultural development while research institutions were also set-up to draft and operate research initiatives with the objective of improvements in food production. Even with these initiative, the total Capital Allocation to Agriculture by the governments (Federal and States), receded to 7.1 per cent (Omotor et al 2009, Osakwe and Ojo, 1986).

Furthermore, the overriding effects of dependence on oil, led to declining focus on agricultural ventures. The agricultural sector experienced slow growth and created challenges like insufficient food for the populace, prevalent hunger, and meagre raw materials for the industries, continuous soaring food prices, and food importation by the government. This in turn led to increase in inflation rate, immense community debt, disequilibrium in balance of payment, low participation in agriculture due to low income generated, low human development in rural area, rural unemployment and migration to seek greener pastures.

Situation Analysis: Agriculture and Migration in Nigeria

The decision to migrate may involve contextual factor which is a typical reflection of the corresponding strength of local economies and act as push factors in encouraging migration for displaced persons (Katz and Stark, 1986). Migration within and cross border has seen various attempts of government to stem the tide without much success. Movements from rural to urban centres and across borders has continued unabated and the contribution of agriculture to this situation is that of low production and low earnings for farmers, this problem has witnessed a gradual drift from agriculture to sectors other than agricultural occupations in other climes (Nwosu 1979; Makinwa, 1975 and 1988). According to the ILO (2017), Nigeria's agricultural employment dropped from 48.60 per cent in 2007 to 27.90 per cent in just 10 years.

The drop in employment and income generation in agriculture is caused myriad of problems which includes utilization of mundane gadgets and equipment, low supply of financial aids or provision of accessible credit instrument, out-dated transportation grid, improper land due to tenure arrangement, the dilemma of pests and diseases, paucity of storage and processing facilities, dearth of education in agricultural and extension services, disinclining attitude towards agriculture occasioned by low financial returns (FAO, 2005). These has led to the abandonment of agricultural practices by qualified personnel with the sought for greener pastures outside the confines of their country of residence been preferred. The dearth in skilled agricultural employees inevitably creates a shortage of labour supply and increase cost of labour which has witnessed a recession in agricultural activities, fishing etc. (Olayide, 2009; Lewis, 2004; Osondu and Ibezim, 2001). Decline in food production consequently leads to hunger and an offshoot of hunger is migration for better life and personal economic prosperity.

Global warming also impact on agriculture and this can lead to food insecurity and hunger with migration as the effective survival strategy especially for the most disadvantage households that possesses few or little variable sources of livelihood, with no capital such as land, and characterised by low acquired skills. Even for a resilient household, migration represents one of a variety of adaptation measures (Warner and Afifi 2014).

Migration creates opportunities for monies to be sent back home by migrants. Remittances impacts greatly on the family back home, especially for the rural family to whom agriculture ceases to be an appropriate income earner. Such family rely on remittances to cushion their livelihood and progress. Also, many urban dwellers count on migrants for support to augment living expenses. Remittances thus represent a motivation for subsequent migrants. Remittances constitute an important income generator for many families in the face of economic decline, adverse environmental conditions, etc. Ideas and improved agricultural management techniques can also be described as part of remittances by migrants back home (DFID, 2004)

Migration represents a source of income for the family left behind as remittances are sent back home to help mitigate the effects of lesser hands on agriculture by migration. These remittances can also be used in part to invest in further agricultural development through land acquisition, purchase of machineries, fertilizers and also overcome shortages of labour occasioned by migration (Lacroix, 2011).

Migration reduces hunger by enhancing food security in households. This occurs through remittances sent back home which is used for daily expenditure which includes food purchase, especially in poor households. This in itself impacts positively on agriculture as it provides the mental strength for concentration on further development towards increased production and commercialisation rather than subsistence, since food is already being catered for. The monies from migration also impact on employment in agriculture as more investments are made, more workers will be required to perform roles affected by migration. Migration is able to improve, substantially, the productivity of farms in home/origin countries through the introduction of better equipment purchased from remittances or sent from the migrant overseas. Remittances provide not just farm inputs, it also aid mechanised farming with the use of tractors, feed choppers, tube-wells (Lacroix, 2011).

Policies in Receiving Country (an Example of Ghana up to 1960)

Policies in destination countries played an important role on Nigerian migrants. Ghana was a destination country for Nigerian farmers and other West Africans like Togo and Burkina Faso (Adepoju, 2005). Post-colonial Ghana enjoyed a relatively prosperous economy and attracted migrants from Nigeria. Mining and cocoa production was the 'pull factor' for Nigerians. The success of Nigerian migrants especially cocoa farmers, farm labourers, farm contractors etc. witnessed increased influx of Nigerians into Ghana. From 1931 and 1960, Nigerians constituted the largest single group of migrants in Ghana, rising from 54,700 in 1931 to 191,802 in 1960 (Cardinal, 1931; Olaniyi, 1969). This migration flow into Ghana was enabled by the president, who in the spirit of pan-Africanism allowed free movement into its borders by migrants to live and work (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2003). The policy of pan-Africanism during the Kwame Nkrumah regime propelled migrants of Nigerian descent to move to Ghana to settle and work. The deportation of Portuguese merchants led to rapid expansion of commercial engagement by the Nigerian migrants as many diversified from minor trading into cocoa brokers, importers/exporters and wholesalers; grinding mills and farming (Polly Hill, 1970).

Pan-Africanism is described as the awareness of universality of Africanism against colonialism and any form of segregation. The premise is based on the assumption unity is imperative to progress with the intent for togetherness and improve all people of African origin (Frick, Janari, et al (2006). It is inclined to believe that black people and countries are related. The thrust is that Africans, both on the continent and in the diaspora, are same with a common destiny (Makalani, 2011). It is this principle that guided the policies of Ghana under Kwame Nkrumah which allowed mobility of agriculture and labour into the country from other African countries especially neighbouring West African states. Yoruba migrants in Ghana had the privilege to aid development of their towns with projects such as places of worship, educational facilities, royal residences, town halls and post-offices (Olaniyi, 2008).

Immigrant workers also contribute to the economy of destination countries in several ways. In Ghana for instance, migrants are integrated in labour markets in terms of employment, even though much of the employment seems to be demand driven. On a per capita basis, migrant's contribution to government's fiscal balance exceeds that of native born population. It is estimated that immigrant's overall contribution to Ghana's GDP is at 1.5 per cent (OECD/ILO, 2018).

Prospects and Limitations of Commercialisation of Agriculture

Commercialisation of agriculture is the production of agricultural crops for sale rather than just for consumption. It is a situation whereby agricultural enterprises rely increasingly on the market for economic disposal of produce and for the procurement of production inputs (Poulton, 2017). It is the continuous changing of combined farming systems by specialised programs for crop, cattle, aquaculture including poultry. It is an endogenous process that aids economic growth and urbanisation (Pingali and Rosegrant, 1995).

Govere et al (1999), described commercialisation of agriculture as the percentage of agricultural production that is traded which involves transmitting from subsistence-focused farming to market-oriented farming. It is assumed that households are able to generate greater income by producing high yield commodities which they take to the market and the returns partly used to finance household consumption items (Timmer, 1997).

Pinder and Wood (2003) defined it as the advancement and elevation of rewarding agricultural production and selling structure, in a manner that enhances the competitiveness agricultural products anywhere.

To Ali & Farooq (2003), commercialisation of agriculture means an increase in food access, rural household income as well as diversifies production; reduce the risk of shortfalls in food and income.

The process of increasing the proportion of agricultural production sold by farmers is how Pradhan et al (2010) described agriculture commercialisation.

From the descriptions and definitions, it can be deduced that commercialisation of agriculture means maximising every potential available in agricultural production for wealth creation, food security, human development etc. There are however, limitations of agriculture commercialisation and the following are some of such;

- Commercialisation leads to mono cropping thereby causing reduction in production of certain food crops. Moreover, the unending use of single cropping may lead to damage or reduction in soil quality and this may in turn enhance the growth of pests and disease-causing pathogens.
- Non availability of land and difficulty for new entrants. Agriculture commercialisation leads to shrinkage in the availability of land as existing commercial farmers seeks to expand their acreage under cultivation while there are new farmers who also want to acquire such lands thereby creating shortage of suitable land for agriculture. The situation will eventually lead to hiking of the price of lands, making it difficult for new entrants especially young farmers (Morton, 2017).
- Agriculture commercialisation tends to be more beneficial only to those farmers who have food security and access to other necessary inputs and income, while smallholders may face constraint.
- It may lead to unfavourable terms of contract farming. This is a situation where smallholders enter into contract with companies that buy and process their crops. Whether they make profit or loss is down to the terms of these contracts, it in essence means that smallholders take on both the risk and the benefits associated with commercial value chains
- Transformation of forests, and savannahs for use. The massive and continuous use of chemicals such as herbicides, insecticides, and fertilizers, which are accumulated in the ground, eventually causes pollution of arable land and usable water by escalating of stock in agricultural area. Damage to soil and essential soil nutrient such as zinc and boron being lost will occur in many agricultural lands due to extensive utilisation of manmade chemical fertilisers and fungicides (Wilson, 2000).
- It is expensive especially with the high costs associated with running it. Expenses such as fuel for machinery, maintenance and repair of machinery, purchase and application of pesticides and fertilisers (Moseley, 2011).
- Agriculture commercialisation places more emphasis on cash crops for profit than for food crops for human consumption
- It can create climate change by contributing anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gasses and the conversion of non-agricultural lands such as forests into agricultural use. It contributed around 20-25 per cent of global annual emissions in 2010 (Blanco, et al 2014, HLPE 2012).
- Another limitation of agriculture commercialisation is the fact that some crops like fruits and vegetables are perishable. It therefore cost more to preserve if it is not sold on time.

There are great potentials situated in the practice of agriculture commercialisation that can be harness for human development and prosperity. The under listed represents some of these potentials;

- Rapid demand growth. There will be a growth in demand for agricultural produces due to; expediting rates of increase in income, huge population expansion rates and fast urbanisation, opportunities in import substitution that will occur as a result of large growing exports, new markets for biofuels and, the growing demand for food in many countries especially developing ones
- Increase earnings. Commercialisation raises income earned in agriculture and this in turn improves food security, nutritional status and general welfare. (von Braun et al.,1994).
- New technologies will be introduced. Improved technologies such as conservation tillage and integrated soil fertility management and improved varieties of crops (biotechnology and transgenic crop varieties could). Technological improvement on communication with the use of cellular telephones to link farmers and traders, to source demand/supply and for technical information (Binswanger-Mkhize, et al, 2011)
- Commercialisation of agriculture will boost food sufficiency by improving production through the use of mechanized farm tools. Food sufficiency will therefore reduce or decrease hunger
- Commercialisation of agriculture also has the potentials for enhanced production of new crops through family level harmonies and regional spillover effects, ensuring improvements also in food security (Govere and Jayne, 2003).
- It will also create employment with an increase participation in agriculture
- An improved business climate. It will engender investments in basic infrastructure and institutional reforms which will reduce administrative burdens on businesses and combat corruption. Rural populations will be able to participate in their own development and defend their interest(Binswanger-Mkhize et al, 2011)
- It will lead to standardisation of processes by improving the processing and packaging of agricultural products, it also improves the shelf life, thus reducing waste and enhancing price value of farm products (Akande, 2006).
- It is a bridge builder, connecting smallholder holder farmers with domestic and international market chains (von Braun, 2005).

According to Binswanger-Mkhize et al, (2011), to have a vibrant and robust agricultural industry, the following actions are required:

- Increase in public investments in agriculture. The government needs to increase its investment in agriculture by providing the necessary amenities such as irrigation channels, roads, rail, energy and overall logistics, especially port infrastructure that will enable agriculture thrive. Investments in agriculture education and research needs to be prioritised. The nation's agricultural research institutes and organisations should be well funded. Increased funding for agricultural education will provide the technical manpower that modern agriculture and value chain needs; and also instil in farmers the basic skills to access and master production technologies.
- Governance and reform in public sector. An upgrade in capacities and skills is important especially in areas such as marketing and business development services. Partnerships between the public and private sector should be pursued and existing ones enhanced. Coordination of services and investments must be accorded importance and high level political leadership should be committed to regional agriculture development.
- Institutions that will enhance market performance, making it more efficient and reduce associated risk should be put in place. Investments in agriculture are determined by market perception; therefore making the markets work better will aid improvement in agriculture.
- The private sector is important in agriculture development in Nigeria. Incentives like tax reliefs etc. should be made a policy to induce private investment. The business climate is important for private-sector input suppliers and agro-processing companies.
- Nigerian government need to work with other members of ECOWAS to implement regional agreements and remove some major impediments to regional trade, including banning arbitrary export restrictions, streamlining border logistics, and harmonising standards and regulations.

Some other ways to make agriculture more vibrant in Nigeria includes;

- Making food storage a top priority of the government. Farms should be made to have storage facilities.
- Youths should engaged more in farming with such incentives as start-up capitals
- Banks should be encourage to give more agricultural inclined credits, especially but not limited to export inclined farming
- There should be development of linkages between stakeholders and access to market
- Market information system should be strengthened. Access to vital should be readily available and accessible.
- Smallholders and agribusiness enterprise should be linked through creation of best practicable models of contract farming.
- There should be a strong quality control and linking of value added production with the market.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it is noteworthy that migration and agriculture have such a balance in benefits to each other in the sense that what is lost to migration by agriculture is gained through severally other factors such as remittances, technological transfer, improve technical abilities, directly from such migration. The commercialisation of agriculture, though with its inherent limits, portends more benefit in practice and the limitations can be phase out through researches, better practices etc. Agriculture commercialisation needs to be strongly backed by various governments especially in Nigeria to enhance human development, generate employment and greater GDP

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