International Journal of Economic Research

ISSN : 0972-9380

available at http: www.serialsjournal.com

© Serials Publications Pvt. Ltd.

Volume 14 • Number 3 • 2017

Migration Motivation, Migrant Characteristics and Migration Outcomes in Nigeria: Evidence from survey Data

Chukwuma Agu[1], Anthony Orji[2] and Vincent Onodugo[3]

[1] *Institute of Development Studies, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Email: chukwuma.agu@unn.edu.ng*
[2] *Department of Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka, Email: anthony.orji@unn.edu.ng*
[3] *Department of Management, University of Nigeria, Enugu Campus, Email: vincent.onodugo@unn.edu.ng*

Abstract: There are many preconceived notions about what drives international migration and how it affects development. Migration from rural areas to cities within and outside, is increasingly becoming rampart in Nigeria. On the surface, it seems obvious that individuals migrate from the countryside to the urban areas and to overseas to earn cash. While migration is indeed partially motivated by the desire for economic mobility and the need to support families at home, the desire for personal development is also a substantial motivator. Incorporating non-economic incentives into existing models could enable scholars to approach migration from an alternative and more holistic standpoint that differs from pure economic considerations. This paper has therefore argued and summarized current thinking on international migration and its motivations. It has also offered some policy options concerning international migration. In particular, the study uses data from the Nigerian Migration Survey by the World Bank for empirical analysis and the findings call for additional examination of non-economic motivations for better understanding of migration choices and patterns. The study therefore concludes that although economic incentives are important, they do not fully explain migration decisions among Nigerian migrants. Non-economic considerations are also important.

Keywords: Migration Motivation, Migrant Characteristics, Migration Outcomes, Survey Data

JEL Classification: F22; F24; O15; R23

INTRODUCTION

International migration studies have become important subjects of discourse in economic development literature of many less developed countries. In view of the recent trends in globalization, international

migration has become a great force to reckon with. This is evidenced by the fact that the number of international migrants, or people residing in countries other than their countries of birth, has increased over the past 45 years, from an estimated 76 million in 1965 to 175 million in 2002, and to over 200 million in 2013 (World Bank, 2014). According to Ozden and Schiff, (2006), international migrants include millions of educated and semi-educated people from countries in which human capital is relatively scarce. Thus, international migration raises concerns and hopes for the less developed countries from which international migrants come.

Theoretically, the motivation for migration has been a source of contention in the literature. This is because the World bank and several authors have argued that the motivation for migration may be described as a combination of social, ethnic, and politically, related push and pull factors. Ozden and Schiff, (2006) suggest that many international migrants embark on migration because it leads to significant flows of relatively low skilled workers whose productivity and wages are far higher abroad than at home. International migration also produces other benefits. The most tangible of these are remittances, the income that migrants send home. The World Bank (2013), also argues that labour migration is becoming the leading motive for migration of migrants in Central and Eastern European and Central Asian countries. This labour migration has been generally understood to be driven by differences in returns to labour, or expected returns, across. Some models of migration emphasize that migration streams emanate from wage differentials across markets or countries that arise from heterogeneous degrees of labour tightness. However, Harris and Todaro (1970) stress that migration is driven by expected rather than actual change in wage differentials. Though, their model was built to understand and explain internal migration in less-developed countries, their approach of explicitly modelling expected wage differentials has been widely generalized in formal explanations of international migration because it reflects the uncertainty that migrants will be able to successfully locate better paying jobs in another location.

Analyzing Todaro and Harris model, Bauer and Zimmermann (1999) argued that the predictions made by that economic model have had mixed results in predicting and explaining migration across different countries. These authors also show that wage and employment differentials were statistically significant motivations of migration in the expected direction only about half the time. At other times, these differentials seemed to produce the opposite of the expected outcome. The table below shows some of the reasons or motivations for migration as identified by World Bank (2013).

Table 1
Motivations for Migration

	Push Factors	*Pull Factors*
Economic and demographic	Poverty Unemployment Low wages High fertility rates Lack of basic health and education	Prospects of higher wages Potential for improved standard of living Personal or professional development
Political	Conflict, insecurity, violence Poor governance CorruptionHuman rights abuses	Safety and securityPolitical freedom
Social and cultural	Discrimination based on ethnicity, gender, religion and the like.	Family reunification Ethnic (diaspora migration) homeland freedom discrimination.

Source: World Bank (2013)