



Effect of Youth Rural-urban Migration on Child Labour Use in Rice Production in Afikpo South Local Government Area of Ebonyi State Nigeria

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between all authors. Author USI designed the study, wrote the protocol and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author EE managed the literature searches, analyses of the study performed the spectroscopy analysis. Author CL managed the experimental process and author WII identified the species of plant. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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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 and major rice agronomic practices on which children are used to perform. Probit model was used to determine the relationship between rural – urban migration and child labour

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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 results 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.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 19th and early 20th century, the developed world had experienced diverse pattern of migration and chiefly was rural-urban migration. This migration pattern was fundamentally due to industrialization, economic development and urbanization fueled by population increases [1]. Nowadays, Rural-urban migration is a livelihood and survival strategy for many poor rural resident (s) across the developing world for a specific period of time and come back to their origin (Temporary migrants) or decides to reside in the destination area in permanent basis (permanent migrants) for different reasons; political, socio-economic and demographic [2].

Rural-urban migration literature as observed by [3,4,5] is mostly young people affairs irrespective of gender especially with increasing urbanization. These migrants 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. The motives behind migration differ among individuals. The economic opportunities in urban areas and low agricultural productivity are often cited among literatures to be the primary drive behind rural out-migration to urban and industrial sectors [6,7]. Nevertheless, many a times women often migrate for certain reasons, including marriage arrangements, divorce or family integration [3,8].

The effect of rural-urban migration on the agricultural sector remained a controversial issue since this phenomenon has both positive and depressing implications. The dismal aspect of migration as opined by [8] 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 and

consumption [9]. The depleting of the labour force from rural areas the heart bit of agriculture especially in Sub Saharan Africa constitutes a great burden to attainment of food sufficiency 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 [10]. 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 remarkable increase in rural child labour in agriculture [7].

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 livelihood for themselves and family [11]. The effect of child labour is enormous and according to International Labour Organization [12], child labour dispossesses children of their childhood's potentials, dignity and detrimental to their physical and mental developments. Nevertheless, in spite of the hazards associated with child labour, yet this labour class is sustained and reinforced in many agrarian society as appropriate measure for training of the child in order to grow up as hardworking and productive member of the society [7,13].

Evidences are bound of the magnitude and spread of child labour in agriculture among developing countries as workers in their parent's farm, work on local farm, part-time to earn extra income and work out of economic necessity. For instance Association of farm Workers Opportunity Program [14] reported that sixty percent of all child labourers worldwide between the ages of 5 and 7 work in agriculture. Similarly, a recent survey on use of child labour in Nigeria, indicated that about 56% children workers

particularly in rural areas are engaged in agricultural sector [15,16]. Although, children when working with parents/ guardians, they are under close supervision but when engaged for economic necessity, they are exposed to varied occupational hazards, long hours of work and with very meagre pay [17,18]. Studies show that the 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 [14,19] In the study area, rice production is the most prominent of all agricultural crop production in terms of area of land cultivated, income and employment generation as the area is blessed with rich and diverse rice ecologies, as result there abound rice milling and marketing businesses. In those rice ventures, several studies disclosed that the roles of children as labourers in executing certain functions are very much acknowledged [20,21].

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 [11]. 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 relationships between rural-urban migration and child labour characteristics?

What are the causes of rural-urban migration?

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

Specifically, the objectives are to:

- (i) Describe the socioeconomic and characteristics of the children.
- (ii) Determine the relationship between rural – urban migration and child labour use in the study area.
- (iii) Identify the causes of youth rural-urban migration
- (iv) Identify the major rice agronomic practices of which children are used to perform.

2. 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°32' and 05°27' North of equator and longitude 07°33' and 06°29' East of Greenwich meridian. The temperature ranges from 23°C - 32°C with average annual rainfall ranges of 1750 mm – 2250 mm. Afikpo South Local Government Area has a population of about 157,072 people [22] and 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 information was collected from textbooks journals periodicals published and unpublished thesis. The objectives I, III and V were captured using inferential statistics such as percentages and frequency distribution table. Objective III was captured using probit model analysis.

2.1 Model Specification

The probit model is specified thus:

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

And that

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

$$Y_i = 0 \text{ otherwise}$$

Where X_1, X_2, X_3 = respondents vector of random variables β represents a vector of unknown parameters, and V represents a random disturbance term. According to [23], probit model constrains the estimate probabilities to be between 0 and 1 and relaxes the constraints that the effect of the independent variable is constant values of the dependent variables this is normally experienced with the linear.

Probability model (L P M) the probit model assumes that while we only observe the values of 0 and 1 for the variable y , there is a latent unobserved continues variables that determines the value of y . the other advantage of the probit model include believable error term distribution as well as realistic probabilities [5].

The implicit form of the model is

$$Y = f(X_1X_2X_3X_4X_5 + ei) \quad (1)$$

Y = Tendency to use Child labour or not

X_1 = Level of education (years)

X_2 = Occupation of the parents (dummy)

X_3 = Relationship between child and household head (dummy)

X_4 = Age of the child (years)

X_6 =Poverty level of parents (living below \$ 1 daily)

X_7 = Household health condition (dummy)

ei = Error term

3. RESULTS

Table 2 shows that 33.3% of the respondents were within the age bracket of 15-18 years, while the least (16.6%) were of age bracket of <6 years. Most (87.5%) of the respondents were educated, while only 12.5% of the respondents had no formal education. High cost of hired labour accounted about 75% of the total respondents, while low cost, 25% as presented in Table 2. Most (66.6%) of the respondents were members of the organization, while only 33.4% were non members. Most (58.3%) of the respondents complained of ill health, while only 41.6% did not. Table 2 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 3 were social interaction, persecution, boredom, economic reasons and peer pressure.

Table 1. Description of the variables

Age of the child	It is the age of the child measured in years. It concerned with how old the child had been from the birth to the time of interview. The older children are expected to work in farm especially among poor resource house hold. It is expected that the use of child as labourer would be positively correlated with the age of the child
Level of education	This is the number of years an individual child actually spent in formal education. For instance a child attended primary school and completed secondary school, the number of the years takenfor the two levels will be summed up. Child labour is negatively related to the level of education al attainment.
Occupation of the parents	The source of livelihood of parents of the child affects the chances of engaging the child into labour. Hence, the career of the parents is positively correlated to child labour use
Household heads' health condition	Health is a state of complete physical, mental and inotional of an individual, not merely absence of diseases or infinity. Therefore, the poor state of the house hold head's health is positively correlated to use of child labour.
Poverty level of parents	Poverty is when somebody lives below \$1 per day. Poverty is usually associated with low per capital income and saving rate. Therefore, poverty of household head has positive association with child labour use
Relationship between child household need	The relationship between household head and child affects the use of the child for agricultural production. Household head that has blood relationship with the child, often do not use them for labour, vice-versa.

The coefficients of the household size, household health and age of house hold as contain in Table 4 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 5, 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%).

4. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Adolescent children dominated the study as shown in Table 2 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 [24]. 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 [14] 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 2 is occasioned by urban drift of able bodied youths, hence leaving farming activities for old men, women and children [25]. A large number of the respondents were members of one type of organization or the order. [26] 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. [27] observed that ill health reduces the quality of labour input as well as resource underutilization. Poverty according to [24] is inability of someone to earn one dollar

(N340) per day. Studies show that poorer household heads often use their children for most agricultural activities in situation of high cost of hired labour [28,16].

Furthermore, impoverished households often use their children as source of hired labour in order to generate income to argument the family meager resources [29]. Generally, in traditional Africa agricultural setting, household heads use children in order to acculturate into them farming skills for future use [30,21].

Table 2. 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 N240	20	16.6%
N240 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 3 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 [8]. 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 [31]. 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 [32,33].

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 [4]. 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.

Table 3. 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

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 [23] may have accounted for the coefficient of the household size direct relationship with child labour use as contain in Table 4. Furthermore, statistical test of household educational level coefficient had direct relationship with the dependent variable and concurred with the finding of [34] 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 4 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 [3,35]. 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 [21,36]. In attestation to the above statement, [3] 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.

Table 4. Youth rural – urban migration and child labour use in the 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 Square	(19) = 79.29
Prob> Chi Square	= 0.3489
Pseudo R ²	= 0 0052
Log likelihood	= -59.901248

*, ** and *** imp|1PS significance at 10%, 5% and 1% respectively

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 [37]. Finally, household head's health status was positive and concurred with [38], 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 5. 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 [25] 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.

Table 5. 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

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

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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APPENDIX

Questionnaire "Effect of Youth Rural-Urban Migration on Child Labour Use in Rice (*Oryza sativa*) Production In Afikpo South Local Government Area Of Ebonyi State, Nigeria.

Section A

Socioeconomic characteristics of farmers

1. Sex - (A) Male (B) Female
2. Age of child
3. Level of Education (A) No formal (B) Primary (C) Secondary (D) Tertiary
4. Household Head's health healthy sick
5. Poverty Level of household head (a) living above \$1 (378)/ day (b) Living below \$1 (378)/ day
6. Membership of any organization (a) Yes (b) No
7. Relationship between household and child (a) biological son (b) maid
(c) servant (d) uncle/ cousin
8. Occupation of the parents (A) Farming (b) civil servant (c) business
(d) artisan

MAJOR RICE AGRONOMIC PRACTICES IN WHICH CHILDREN ARE USED TO PERFORM

ITEMS	GENDER	
	MALE	FEMALE
1. Clearing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Bird Scaring	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Nursery Making	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Planting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Fertilizer Application	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Weeding	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Rice Threshing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Parboiling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Land Preparation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Harvesting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Reasons for youth rural-urban migration

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|----|--------------------------|
| 1. To take care of my need | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Economic Gains | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. For personal interest | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. As a means of livelihood | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Alternative for schooling | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6. For leisure | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. To supplement parent's income | Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> | No | <input type="checkbox"/> |

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