

THE ROLE OF MIGRATION IN HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT ESPECIALLY IN NIGERIA: A REVIEW OF EVIDENCE

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ABSTRACT

The issue of the role of migration in human capital development is descriptively examined in this write-up. Human capital refers to the quality of population expressed in terms of education, skills and health and developed through investment in education and training. The people involved in migration are migrants and the money they remit home is referred to as remittances. Apart from the direct involvement of these migrants in education related projects and education and training of children and relatives left behind in the home regions as this paper affirm, the expenditures of money remitted home from the migrants by families left behind are essentially on education food purchase and health issues, thus advancing the course of human capital development. It is therefore recommended that government find a way of noticing, recognizing and encouraging the efforts of migrants so as to spur further positive action in this regard.

KEYWORDS: Role, Migration, Human capital, Development.

INTRODUCTION

Migration both internal and international is a common feature of both developing and developed countries. It is an inevitable part of human existence and has a long history; however, its pattern has changed considerably overtime, from the search for space especially in the middle ages, to that of congestion in large cities in the modern age (Nwajiuba, 2005, Eze 2016). It is equally noted that migrant remittances are becoming critically salient in the livelihoods of receiving households besides being recognized as agent of regional and national development. A lot of debates has gone on the cost-benefit calculation of migration especially the rural-urban variant, some strongly believe that rural-urban migration rob villagers of human and material resources while others argue forcibly that remittances in cash and kind from urban areas aid development of social and infrastructural facilities in the rural source regions. This paper rallies with this later opinion. In spite of these divergent arguments, people continue to move, in part because they have always moved; migration has long been a strategy to reduce risks by diversifying income sources (Eze 2011)

These two positions by stakeholders, however explain the rural urban linkage in migration in most developing countries. Although internal migration dynamics in Nigeria can be explained from these assertions, the emerging issues suggest a more holistic understanding on these complex inter-relationships between the place of origin and destination

In this view, the construct of the linkage may be viewed as the individual migrant contribution to support individuals left behind as well as the development of the community, the emergence of village associations in supporting individuals (either migrants in place of destination or community members in place of origin) and also in the development of their community. Generally, there is a fairly strong consensus on the uses of migrant remittances regardless of the country (Russell 1980, 1995, Massey and Basem, 1992). According to Asogwa (2012), for the most part, migrant remittances are used for daily expenses such as food, clothing and healthcare. Funds are also spent on building or improving house, buying of land and consumer goods (example television). It is equally utilized essentially for the payment of school fees of those left behind in village either of children or siblings. Since migrants' remittances are used to fund education, besides food and health care, migration is therefore of paramount importance to human capital development. Much research has been done generally on the issue of migration and development in the source region of migrant in Nigeria but scarcely do one see any singling out its impact on human capital development only. This has created a gaping research gap which this paper assays to start the process of filling by creating this awareness which one hope will draw interest among researchers to wade in. The trust of this paper therefore is to examine how migration contributes to human capital development against the backdrop of the present situation in the developing countries and Nigeria in particular where many school age children are out of school as result of lack of funds or sponsors. The rest of this paper is broken into five parts. The first part deals with conceptual framework. Second part on theoretical framework, the third on migrant remittances in human capital development generally, the fourth part on evidences from Nigeria while fifth part concludes.

Conceptual framework

Human capital refers to the quality of the population expressed in terms of education, skills and health. Increase in human capital is achieved through investment in education and training as well by the skills acquired through pursuing one or more occupations (MC Alsan 2002). From wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. Human capital is seen as a stock of competences, knowledge and personality attributes embodied in the ability to perform labour so as to produce economic value. It is the attributes gained by a worker through education and experience. According to HUSZ (1998), human capital is "the time, experience, knowledge and abilities of an individual household or a generation, which can be used in the production process. Odimeguru (2005), saw human capital as human capability, and productivity engendered through knowledge and skills acquired from education, training and experience, and facilitated by an enabling environment. He stresses that human capital has four cardinal aspects namely: education system, health, social services and good governance, but Agbe (2010), emphasized that education still remained at the hub of the wheel since none of those aspects can improve without quality education of the nations citizens.

Sometimes human capital is interchangeably used as manpower or even labour force. The word manpower as cited in Eze (2017) refers to human resources which are used in the economic development of any nation, and this is the major tool needed for economic advancement, that is the

creation of wealth/alleviation of poverty. Despite the availability of other resources for economic development, if the necessary manpower needed for transforming these resources into satisfying human wants are not available, such resources are useless and this affects the economic development of the area or region concerned. It then implies that any country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and to utilize them effectively in the economic development of their nation, they will be unable to develop anything else (Eze 2017).

The manpower/ human capital availability and quality varies across space and time in terms of numbers and skills. This implies that some classes of people are a better or higher order resources than others and expected to have a higher economic development (Todaro 1994). This can largely account for the varying levels of social economic and technological development across the different regions of the world.

Manpower or human capital development is seen as the resourcefulness of person(s) through the acquisition of skills education and experience which are necessary ingredients for a country to develop economically, socially, politically and otherwise, it is associated with investment in man and his development as creative and productive resources (Anugwom 2010). Gerald (1964) as cited by Anugwom (2010), defined human capital development as the process of acquiring and increasing the number of persons who have the skills, education and experience which are critical for the economic and political development of a country. It includes investments by society in education, investment by employers in training as well as investment by individuals in time and money in their development (Okunrotifa, 1983).

THE MIGRATION CONCEPT:

The concept or term migration has been defined severally by several authors each leaning more on their special areas of interest, however this paper adopts the definition that migration refers to any form of mobility of people which involve permanent or semi-permanent change of usual place of residence and activity space of an individual over across and administrative boundary (Hossain 2001; United Nations, 2002, National Geographic 2005). There are many variants of migration but we shall look at the variant based on scale of movements, migration may be internal (domestic) or external (international). Internal migration describes change of residence within a region, state or country while external or international migration involves a change of residence to a different country. Within the internal migration variant we have Rural-Rural; Rural-Urban; Urban-Urban and Urban-Rural migration.

The determinants of migration even though diverse, may all be subsumed into push factors (reason for leaving an area) and pull factors (reasons for moving into an area). These factors may also be social, political, economic, environmental and cultural in nature (Eze 2014). Migration is generally seen as a rational man's response to socio economic differential between place of origin and destination. The rural-urban migration pattern which is a variant of internal migration process, rampant in developing

countries including Nigeria is said to result from the search for perceived or real opportunities resulting from rural-urban inequality in wealth. This inequality and/or urban bias in development according to research findings over the years result from over whelming concentration of wealth, assets, purchasing capacity, economic activities and variety of services in the urban centres as well as continued neglect of rural areas (Ellis, 2000, Madu, 2006, Eze 2019).

Migration is generally acknowledged to be a household decision and a strategy to diversify income, minimize risk, cope with economic crises and improve livelihood and welfare (Kiiru 2010, Asogwa 2012). According to Asa (2007) and Samal (2006) migrant remittances are positive outcomes of migration and are the portion of the migrant workers earnings or available income sent to their families back home. HSU(ND) defines remittance as the money sent by migrant workers to their relatives and communities back home. Adams (1991) adopts an inclusive definition which this paper equally succumbs to, defining migrants' remittance as money and goods that are transmitted to the households back home by people working away from their communities of origin. Among the uses of remittance by households include school fees payment, health care and food purchase – variables which are integral to human capital development even though Education proxied by school fee payment occupies the hub of the wheel. Thus, this paper examines the ways migration proxied/represented by migrant remittances contribute to human capital development generally and especially in Nigeria.

THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

Generally, a greater percentage of migration theories gravitates towards the economic theories which are used to explain the economic motive of migration especially between rural and urban areas. The economic theories of migration view migrants as rationally optimizing the costs and benefits of their decision to migrate. According to MEDOLA (2006), traditionally much of the economic literature on migration has followed the neoclassical framework of the Todaro's model. According to Todaro, each potential risk- neutral migrant decides whether or not to move typically from rural areas on the basis of income maximization objective and therefore of wage differentials between origin and destination (medola, 2006).

This theory by Todaro has been discredited badly on account of its inability to give a holistic and sustainable explanation to the migration process. This paper is therefore based on the new economics of labour migration (NELM) concept which captures the necessary variables on which the study is anchored and equally gives a more comprehensive explanation to the migration process. A trade mark of this theory borders on the perspective that migration is not driven by labour market imperfections, but by a variety of market failures including missing or incomplete capital and insurance market. A further novelty of this approach is that migration decisions are viewed as taking place within a larger context than the dormain of isolated individuals, typically the households or families. Also, the adverse economic position of households at community levels (the "relative deprivation") influences the households behaviour with respect to migration (Stark Oded; J. Edward Taylor and Shiomo Yizahaki 1986, Stark and Taylor, 1997). The NELM approach conceives migration as a family strategy whereby

migrants and resident household members act collectively not only to maximize income, but also to minimize risks, diversify income earnings and loosen financial constraints through remittance (Taylor, 1996). Migrants and household members at origin Maintain connection of family loyalty, exchange of transfers and parental asset pooling (Stark and levbhari, 1982). It follows that in the NELM approach, migration is conceived in terms of risk management, income diversification and alleviation of liquidity constraints at household levels (Medola, 2006). This approach is therefore suitable as a framework for this study since it addresses more comprehensively the impact of migration especially the rural-urban pattern.

MIGRATION AND HUMAN CAPITAL DEVELOPMENT

FACTS AND EVIDENCES: GENERAL

Citing FAO(2006), Eze (2014) maintain that in last 50 years, tremendous and significant increase in rural out-migration has led to the loss of about 800 million migrants from the rural areas. It is still expected that many developing countries such as Nigeria will continue to witness an exodus of the youngest and the most productive segment of the rural labour force from the rural areas in search of sustainable livelihood (Ajaero, 2013).

Examining the effect of this rural out-migration on the sustainability of the livelihood of the rural people, studies have revealed that remittance from migrants generally exert a strong impact on poverty reduction at the source area by increasing their purchasing power for food, education, health among others (IOM, 2005; IMF, 2005; Nimi and Ozden 2006; World bank 2007, Eze 2014). Remittances sent home to developing countries from international migrants increased in 2002 by 17.3%, totaling USD 149.4 billion (Eze 2014).

Estimate by the world bank (2006) and zoomers and van Nearsen (2006), showed that these remittances amounted to about 137,000 million dollars and benefit some 500 million people or 8 percent of the world population. Most importantly, it is established that the amount of money remitted by migrants is greater than the official development aid using data from 74 low and middle income developing countries.

Among many studies, Adams (2006), in a study in Latin America, reported that remittance receiving households in Guatemala exhibit a probability of spending more on housing, Education and health than non remittance receiving households. Since remittances are invested on health and Education besides others, at the household level, it means that migration contributes to national human capital development in Guatemala. Result of a study by Lachaud (1999) revealed that Zimbabwe families where household portfolios were diversified as a consequence of migration tend to have higher level of educational attainment compared to household without migrants. Rapoport and Docquier (2006) noted that remittances are used to repay loans taken to finance migration or education in Bangladesh, migrants receiving households spend a large portion of their income on consumption including children's education and Medicare (De Bruju and Kuddus, 2005; siddiqui and Abrar 2003).

In El Salvador, it is found that remittances have a large effect than other types of income on school retention, regardless of parents levels of schooling (Cox and Urela, 2003). Moreover, remittances are linked with higher spending on education and health care. McKenzie (2006) as cited by Asogwa (2012) emphasize that money transfer is not the only positive outcome of migration, he added that it also leads to knowledge transfer and change in attitudes of migrants family.

Findings in south Africa indicate that children from remittance receiving household are much more likely to be enrolled in school than their counter parts from other households (Lu and Treiman, 2007; Mansuri, 2007). A study in Mexico found that the effect of remittance depends largely on the gender of the household head, and that remittances are more likely to be invested in education if they are sent by migrants fathers to mothers (Malone, 2007). Similarly, study had shown that women remittance recipients tend to invest more than men in human capital particularly in health and education (INSTRAW and IOM, 2007).

While assessing school enrolment and attendance in Mexico, it was found that children from migrant household are more likely to attend school, have higher completed grades and overall better progress than children from non-migrant households (Hanson and Woodruff, 2003, quoted in Ozolen and Schiff, 2007). Data on rural Pakistan reveal that children in migrant household are not only likely to attend school, they are also likely to stay in school in the range in which school dropout rates peak and to have higher completed grades in their age cohort (Mansuri, 2007). Researchers have also found that the health and education status of children belonging to migrants households tend to improve with remittances. From these empirical evidences so far, it is clear that in the developing world migration occupies a prime position in advancing the course of human capital development and by extension socioeconomic health and growth of their economies.

EVIDENCES FROM NIGERIA

Existing migration surveys in Nigeria show that there is substantial reverse flow of resources from migrants to their rural source regions. Migrants in the city form village, town or clan unions so called Home town association (HTAs) whose main objective is to transmit some of the urban civilization to their rural areas so as to enhance their level of development. This is usually in the form of fund raising ceremonies to embark on development projects of which education and health related projects are salient among others. There is equally direct investment in education, health and agriculture and various types of financial support for members of extended families to offset school fee payment and hospital bills.

It is maintained according to Eze (2014), that migrants provide income and material goods which their home villages would otherwise not have, thus permitting greater expenditure on education and other social needs. Citing, Adepoju in his study of urban migrants in Oshogbo in western Nigeria, he maintained that the money sent home by migrants are used for the maintenance of home household in

area of feeding and education of children and relatives among others. In a study in Samaru-kataf villages of Kaduna state as cited in Eze (2014), money remitted by migrants are used among others, in helping relatives in their Education and health care.

In a study carried out in foron district of the Jos Plateau, Eze (2016) reported that when out-migrants were distributed by their contribution to family since leaving home, 58.79% of them were found to have been involved in the training of children/relatives in school and other areas while 30 percent of migrant households used their remitted money for school fee payment and 67.47 percent used their remitted money for health care and food stuffs.

In Eze(2014) study, in Nsukka region of Enugu state, southeastern Nigeria, it was found that migrant households spent the highest proportion of remitted money for purchase of food stuffs (50.3%), followed by payment of school fees (35.3%) and health care (23.1%) among others. The out-migrants were equally found to be involved in such community development projects as scholarship funding, library and agricultural projects. Also Ozor(2016) reported in his study in Nkanu West Local Government Area of Enugu state that migrants were involved in provision of community infrastructure eg. Schools, hospitals, etc and provision of educational programs e.g scholarship aids/grants.

We can go on and on, but the fact is that in different area and regions of Nigeria, migration is found to be of worthwhile essence and invaluable to human capital development proxied by investment of remitted monies on food, education and health by migrants households in the source regions. Thus, in developing countries and especially in Nigeria migration's role in human capital development need no overstressing.

CONCLUSION

It is acknowledged and recognized that human capital development is pivotal to the socioeconomic health and growth of any nation. Since man power/human capital derives from the entire population, it follows that human capital or man power cannot be higher in quality and/or quantity than the population of the country from where it is derived. Despite the availability of other resources for economic development, if the necessary human capital needed for transforming these resources into satisfying human wants are not available, such resources are useless and this affects the economic development of the area or region concerned. It then implies that any country which is unable to develop the skills and knowledge of its people and utilize them effectively in the economic development of their nation, they will be unable to develop anything else.

This paper is vehemently affirming that human migration of both international and internal nature play a salient role in human capital development. This is evident from the usage of remittances sent home to families and households left behind in the source regions. This is equally evident from the involvement of the migrant themselves in community development projects related to education

matters such as school building projects, scholarship funds, library projects and even projects related to Agriculture among others.

The migrant households equally use remitted monies in school fee payments, health issues and food purchases. This pattern of remittances expenditure occupies prime positions in many places and regions in Nigeria and the other developing countries generally. This paper therefore concludes by striking agreement with the confirmed view that migration increases the purchasing power of migrant households for food, education and health inter lia and so by this forwards the course of human capital development for effective socioeconomic growth of developing countries especially Nigeria.

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