



## Exploring the Economic and Social Impacts of Rural-Urban Migration of Youths in Abuja, Nigeria

Samson Olayemi Sennuga<sup>1</sup>, Joseph Bamidele<sup>2</sup>, Adebisi Olateju Omole<sup>1</sup>,  
Bankole Osho-Lagunju<sup>1</sup>, Mary E. Iheonu<sup>1</sup> and Mary Adanna Chinwuba<sup>3</sup>

1. Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Sociology, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Abuja, FCT, P.M.B. 117, Abuja, Nigeria
2. Faculty of Business and Law, University of Northampton, Waterside Campus, University Drive, Northampton NN1 5PH, United Kingdom
3. Department of Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, University of Abuja, FCT, P.M.B. 117, Abuja, Nigeria

### Abstract:

The primary driver of urban unemployment and population pressure in an emerging nation like Nigeria is the phenomena of rural-urban migration, which is primarily sparked by rural "push" forces and urban "pull" factors. This circumstance also has an impact on the healthy growth of rural and urban communities. Despite this, little research is done to assess how it would affect urban residents' quality of life and rural livelihood. To this end, this study is mainly concerned with exploring the economic and social impacts of rural-urban migration of youths, determine the socio-economic characteristics of rural-urban migrant youths in the study area, assessing the impact of rural-urban migrant youths particularly on economic aspects (employment, cost of living, urban informal sectors) in the study area, investigate the impact of in-migration of youths particularly on social services (education, housing, health and other social facilities) in the study area, and investigate the push and pull factor that influence rural-urban migration in Abuja. Questionnaires were given to 210 rural-urban young people who were chosen at random to learn about the issues. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the participant-provided data. Youth from rural and urban migration move to cities in quest of work and to use city services and amenities. Youth migrants have put pressure on the socioeconomic as well as environmental conditions and characteristics of the study region because of the ongoing outflow of rural migrants seeking out urban basic utilities. Because of the high incidence of rural-to-urban migration, Abuja now faces issues such a housing shortage, unemployment, rising cost of living, limited access to social services, an increase in crime, the growth of urban informal sectors, and other challenges.

*Keywords: Youths, rural-urban migration, pull factors, push factors*

### INTRODUCTION

Migration is a demographic phenomenon that involves both temporary and permanent movement of individuals from one geographical area to another. People's economic assessments of their living conditions, sociological circumstances, geographical limitations, and cultural and historical aspects are all included. According to a UNDP (2009), there are 740 million more individuals migrating internally than internationally, which totals 214 million migrant persons worldwide. Rural to urban migration is a comparatively old and widespread global phenomena among internal migrants. However, it has recently grown in importance at the international, regional, and national levels (Sennuga, et al., 2023). People have been moving from rural to urban regions as a result of the unprecedented levels of urbanization present in the majority of emerging countries, which has led to the development of slums and informal settlements. These areas

frequently face developmental obstacles such as the spread of pandemic illnesses like cholera and dysentery, the availability of contaminated water, instability, subpar infrastructures, and subpar service delivery. Furthermore, this idea has connections to issues like pollution, traffic, and crime. According to Mutandwa (2011), rural to urban migration is occasionally viewed as a crucial economic option for rural adolescents, who tend to live in impoverished rural areas in developing countries.

Throughout Nigeria's migration history, the multifaceted phenomena of the country's political, economic, social, and environmental conditions and circumstances, including drought, war, political unrest, forced migrations, and poverty, have caused internal migratory flows in Nigeria during the past few decades to be forced. Small farm plots that are insufficient to feed a family have caused a spike in migration in all regions of Nigeria in recent years (Angelica et al., 2023). Although having possession of a farmland is a constitutional right for country village residents, it has grown more challenging to fulfil this right for the younger generation due to the increasing shortage of land. Particularly in the highlands of Nigeria, where population concentrations have increased significantly. The paucity of farmland in Nigeria's highlands, along with a lack of non-farm work alternatives in rural areas, has pushed youngsters away from livelihoods in agriculture and rural villages. On the other hand, youth migration to cities and towns in search of much better livelihoods, which actually offer better education, technology, and additional basic social services than rural areas, exacerbates the current issue by adding to urban unemployment and underemployment, putting more strain on inadequate housing resources, and increasing social and psychological stresses among the urban population, such as poverty, destitution, prostitution, begging, and clinging to life (Haruna et al., 2023).

Poverty has the greatest impact on Nigerian youth, who make up 71 percent of the total population under 30 and 45 percent of the populace under 15. According to Adamnesh, Linda and Benjamin (2014), poverty in Nigeria is characterized by a lack of access to land, a limitation of productive assets, a lack of income, a lack of food, marginalization, a lack of access to essential services like health care and education, and an inability to find job. The impoverished in rural Nigeria have recourse to migration as a means of escaping poverty. It frequently involves danger, has minimal short-term profits, could end in disaster, and exposing migrants to being exploited, arduous labour, and abuse. However, it is frequently the only viable option for investment and the only chance that some of the rural poor have to improve their lives (Ojo et al., 2022).

The majority of the nation's governmental, commercial, and industrial facilities are located in Abuja, the capital city of Nigeria. These opportunities offered a chance to draw a lot of migrants, especially young people. About 48% of the city's people, according to the 2007 Population and Housing Census, were immigrants (Dokubo et al., 2023). The city is also one of the urban areas with the fastest growth rates in the globe. The population has grown by almost three times since 1970. However, the urban area's spatial expansion has been far more significant. Over the past few decades, Abuja has grown both physically and populated. The population of the city, which had roughly 500,000 persons in 2000, was reported to be somewhat over three million in 2011 (CSA, 2011). While the declining death rate has led to the surge in population, the quick speed of rural-to-urban migration has also played a significant role.

Rural urban migration has been the subject of numerous research (Mutandwa, 2011; Benebeberu, 2012). The majority of these studies concentrate on the results of migration as seen from two angles. While migration is an essential component of boosting the economy, balancing

tendencies, encouraging industrialization, enhancing income distribution, and incorporating innovations in agriculture, generalize that migration is a fundamental human right guaranteeing selecting one's destination to improve welfare and economic well-being. On the other hand, migration causes excessive urbanization, unemployment, income inequalities, ecological stress, and population mal-distribution. Generally speaking, migration from rural to urban has a number of effects on both the destination and the origin places' economies, societies, cultures, and demographics (Achukwu et al., 2023).

It is clear that the primary "pulling" factors behind the migration of significant populations from rural to urban regions are the relative advancements in various services and greater quality of life in urban areas as compared to rural areas. The rate of urbanization, or the tide of rural-to-urban migration, which is sparked by "push" forces in rural regions, is invariably faster than the capacity of new job openings and the availability of housing and other social services and amenities (Adeyemi et al., 2023). Widespread urban unemployment, cramped housing, and a severe absence of amenities for the public are some of its repercussions. Due to its proximity to one of Africa's biggest open markets, Abuja has emerged to be one of the most popular attractions for rural-urban migrants. Because of this, the city's population of migrants increased from 776,298 in 2006 (CSA, 2011) to 1,405,201 in 2016 (World Bank, 2016). It means that there should be certain actions taken to lower the rate of migration to the city, which is currently too high. Therefore, the specific objectives of the study are to:

- determine the socio-economic characteristics of rural-urban migrant youths in the study area.
- assess the impact of rural-urban migrant youths particularly on economic aspects (employment, cost of living, urban informal sectors) in the study area
- investigate the impact of in-migration of youths particularly on social services (education, housing, health and other social facilities) in the study area.
- investigate the push and pull factor that influence rural-urban migration in Abuja.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Definitions and Basic Concepts**

Migration is only a process of a person moving from one place to another, according to theory. Interregional (among countries), intracontinental (between countries on the same continent), and intercontinental (between continents) scales are typically used (National Geographic Society, 2012). But migration's nature and its causes are complicated, and there isn't a consensus among academics regarding their causes. Researchers within the same subject as well as those from distinct disciplines have disagreements concerning the various factors that cause migration (Timalsina, 2011). As a result, concepts and methods for categorizing migration are additional crucial elements of migration research.

Rural to urban migration, or the movement of individuals from the countryside to cities in pursuit of opportunities, has been one of the most prominent trends in migration (National Geographic Society, 2012; Genzeb, 2022). Additionally, the usual kinds of rural-urban migration include step migration (village-town-city), circulatory (village-city-village), seasonal (migration linked to cyclical labour demand), and chain migration (where migrants follow their forebears and are helped by them in establishing an urban area) (National Geographic Society, 2012).

## **Review of Relevant Migration Theories and Models**

### ***Ravenstein's Law of Migration:***

To demonstrate patterns in the extent and course of migration as well as shed light on migration movements in connection with opportunities and constraints, Ernest Ravenstein presented his "Laws of Migration" to the Royal Statistical Society as early as 1885. Improved external financial possibilities were the main driving force behind migration, according to Ravenstein's laws, which also pointed out that migration takes place in stages rather than in one long move, that population movements are bilateral, and that migration differentials (gender, social class, age, etc.) have an impact on people's mobility.

### ***The Push and Pull Factors Approach of Rural-Urban Migration:***

In accordance with the theories in which he divided the forces influencing migrants' perception into push and pull components, (Lee, 1966) developed a generic paradigm into which many different types of spatial movement can be placed (Acharya and Cervatus, 2009; Angelica et al., 2023). While the latter are favourable elements that lure migrants to destination locations in the hope of raising their standard of living, the former are negative aspects that tend to compel migrants to migrate away from origin areas.

According to Lee (1966), all migration-related factors fall into one of the following groups:

1. Factors associated with the areas of origin (Push factors)
2. Factors associated with the areas of destination (Pull factors)
3. Personal factors.

Lee asserts that push factors may outweigh pull elements in importance. Although there are push and pull variables that can cause migration, according to Lee, the predominant driving force behind migration is a blend of push and pull factors, intricately linked to the points of origin and destination being controlled by personal characteristics. The choice of whether to migrate or not can be influenced by a person's particular feelings, knowledge, and intelligence (Lee, 1966; Maisule et al. 2023).

## **The Nature of Rural-Urban Migration in Nigeria**

Both the advantages and disadvantages of migration are revealed by studies conducted in Nigeria. On the plus side, migration helps to meet the labour needs of receiving regions, brings skills home, and is crucial in increasing household income and diversifying sources of it. According to several academics studying the impact of rural-to-urban migration, the move results in an increase in population that puts strain on urban social services in the host environment and a scarcity of farm labour that places responsibility on the individual who stayed behind (National Geographic Society, 2012; Genzeb, 2022).

## **Impacts of Rural-Urban Migration**

### ***Economic Impact:***

The main goal of migration has frequently been economic gain. A significant asset that might be transferred to rural areas (home region or village) in the form of capital, technology, learning awareness, knowledge, trade, commodities or services, etc., is the economic benefit attained by rural migrants from the cities. According to UNESCO (2017), the benefits of migration include the influx of capital and information, as well as investments in stores and transportation, which can help make agriculture more profitable. Migrants work in all industries, primarily in the service and unorganized sectors. They primarily work in tasks which are difficult, unclean, as well

as hazardous and dangerous and are undesirable to the urban populace because they are too challenging or degrading.

***Demographic Impacts:***

Population density across both receiving and sending regions is significantly influenced by migration. Because the vast majority of migrants are males and females in the reproductive age range, National Geographic Society (2012) noted that a surge in migration is anticipated to slow the expansion of the rural population while allowing the urban population to rise. Consequently, older age groups with lower reproduction rates may predominate in the sending rural areas. According to Mendola (2012), migration driven by population growth becomes sex- and age-selective. Since the migrants are younger than the local population at their destination, the urban area's population structure will be revitalized. Furthermore, several researches showed that the age selectivity of rural-urban migration brings more young adults to cities, which subsequently in turn boosts the crude birth rate in cities and urban areas. The age structure of the urban population in Africa is more favourable to high fertility since non-contraceptive countries tend to have age selectivity in city ward movement (UNESCO, 2017).

***Impacts on Providing Urban Basic Facilities:***

Migration affects urban basic services in a variety of ways, in addition to its effects on demographic and economic factors. Among the many effects of migration in urban areas, overcrowding and congestion, the burden on urban social services, rising food prices, and deteriorating air and water diseases are significant. The increase in squatter colonies in the major metropolitan centres is likely the most obvious effect of the rising urban population. Costs of living and rules makes it difficult for migrants to rent homes in cities force them to go to sub-urban areas where there are an overall absence of social services and police protection (Mendola, 2012).

***Impact of Expansion of Urban Informal Sectors:***

According to Deshingkar and Grimm (2005), the bulk of migrant workers find employment in the urban informal sector, which results in low productivity and little opportunities to escape poverty. But there is also substantial proof that migrants can get above poverty even if they stay in the unofficial economy. The vast majority of the newcomers to the urban labour force appeared to launch their own firms and create their own jobs. Other immigrants worked as day labourers, barbers, mechanics, carpenters, maids, personal assistants, and artisans (McCatty, 2004).

Their primary motivation for working in the informal sector is to make advantage of the limited talents they do possess to generate sufficient revenue to support their daily needs. As previously indicated, urban informal sector operations can be labor-intensive, requiring the labour of every household member who is able to work. The main motivation for participating in the informal sector is to use what limited skills they have to earn enough money to sustain their daily lives (Acharya and Cervatus, 2009). The majority of employees entering the urban informal sector are current rural migrants who are incapable to find jobs in the formal sector. Since it offers chances to those that have been unable to find job in the official sector, the informal sector is linked to the latter. Because it reduces the likelihood that a person will be unemployed once they migrate to the cities, rural-urban mobility is therefore considered as a factor of the rise of the informal sector (McCatty, 2004; Haruna et al., 2023).

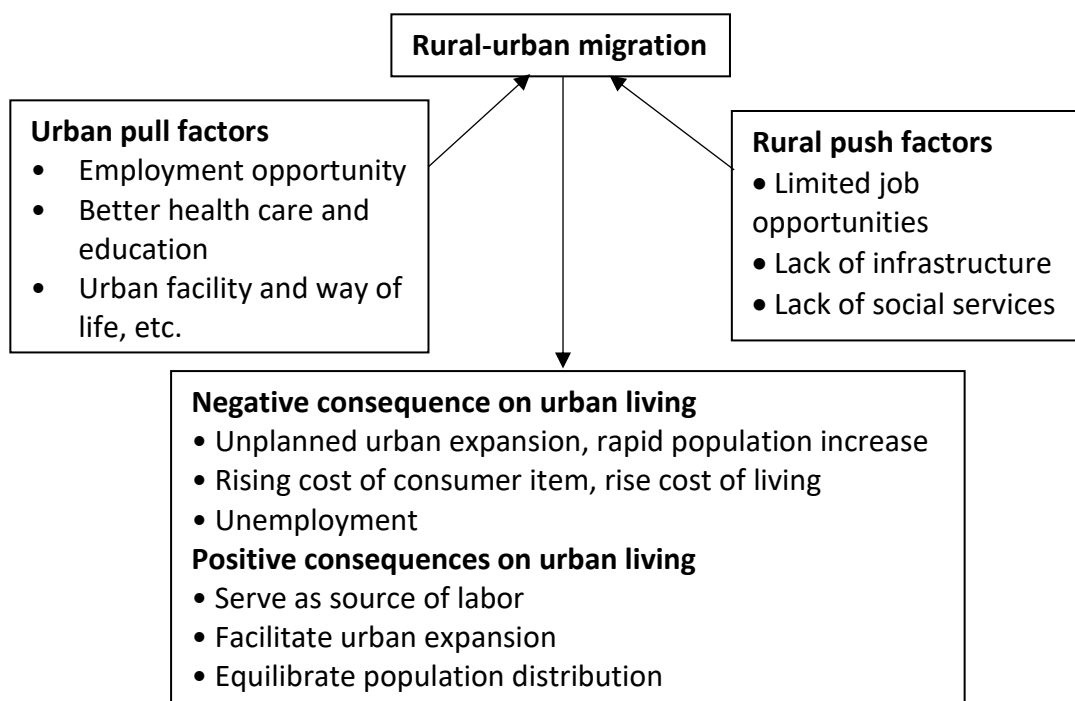
**Impacts on the Rise of Urban Population:**

Increased urban population due to rural-urban migration leads to unplanned urban growth with inadequate social services such housing, electricity, water supply, proper sewage system, road networks, and transportation system. Population growth brought on by rural-to-urban migration undoubtedly strains already-stagnant public services. The demand for health care and education has been particularly high, resulting in overcrowded classrooms in metropolitan regions. The increase in squatter colonies in major metropolitan centres is likely the most obvious effect of the rising urban population. In general, rising urban populations have also resulted in rising urban problems. It is also difficult for the urban administration to have proper record of urban residents (Ekele et al., 2023).

Farmers are being evicted from their land as a result of unplanned urban growth, according to Alemante, Ansha and Waktola (2006). This exacerbates the lack of productivity and the inconvenience to families. When there are no jobs available, affected family members may elect to move to an urban area. As Alemante, et al. (2006) noted, increases in street crime, urban unemployment, and a bigger number of unskilled immigrants have a negative impact on the town's peace and security.

**Conceptual Framework**

The conceptual framework in Fig. 1.1 provides a concise, charted explanation of the causes and effects of rural-urban mobility. As it plainly shows, there are numerous rural push and urban pull variables for migration from rural to urban areas. The high rate of rural-urban movement in the recipients of migrants has a number of other implications. These pull and push dynamics encouraged young people to leave their hometowns and come to cities. Then they got involved in many unofficial business areas that have an impact on urban life. Migration from rural to urban areas benefits the target region as well. Migration from rural to urban areas has an impact on the social, economic, and demographic makeup of cities. However, this conceptual framework illustrates the ideal cause-effect relationship underlying rural-urban migration (Sati et al., 2023).



**Figure 1.1: Conceptual Framework**

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

### The Study Area

This study was conducted in Abuja, the federal capital of Nigeria and one of its Northern-Central states. It is located between Longitudes 6°45 and 7°45 East of Greenwich and Latitudes 8°25 and 8°25 North of the equator. The Federal Capital Territory has a total area of over 8,000 km<sup>2</sup>, a height of about 536 m above sea level, and a population of 776,298 according to the 2006 census. Four states around it on all sides: Kogi, Niger, Nasarawa, and Kaduna. Six district councils make up Abuja: Abaji, Bwari, Gwagwalada, Kuje, Kwali, and the Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). With a great deal of the northern Guinea Savannah Grassland and Middle Belt, it has a tropical southern forest climate. Due to its favourable environment, the National Capital has good agricultural land. The annual total amount of precipitation ranges from 1100 to 1600 millimetres. The dry season lasts from October to April and the wet season from April to October, with an average temperature of 29 degrees Celsius. Because of the area's elevated position and undulating landscape, the weather is moderated.

### Population of the Study and Research Design

The population of this study focuses on the young people of Abuja, Nigeria who have undergone rural-urban migration. It includes individuals aged between 15-35 years old who have migrated from rural areas to urban centers within Abuja. The age range is chosen to capture the demographic most likely to engage in such migration for educational, employment, or other opportunities. The study employed descriptive research design (Genzeb, 2022) in order to explore the economic and social impacts of rural-urban migration of youths in Abuja in their real-life settings.

### Sample Size and Sampling Techniques

A combination of simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques will be employed to select respondents. This dual approach allows for both statistical rigor and targeted inclusion of individuals with specific characteristics of interest, ensuring a well-rounded and insightful study on youths who have migrated from rural to urban areas in Abuja. As previously discussed, the research begins by dividing the urban areas of Abuja into clusters based on geographical (that is, the six Area Councils) and socio-economic criteria. These clusters serve as the primary units for sampling. To introduce an element of randomness and impartiality into the sample, simple random sampling will be used at this stage. This randomization process ensures that every cluster has an equal chance of being selected, reducing potential bias. Through the simple random sampling, the selected clusters will represent a diverse cross-section of urban areas within Abuja. This approach guarantees that the sample includes participants from various parts of the city, regardless of their size or prominence. Within each of the selected clusters, a purposive sampling approach will be employed to identify specific respondents who meet the study's criteria with a sample size of 210 youths in the study area. This purposive sampling is essential for targeting youths who have migrated from rural areas to urban areas in Abuja, as it ensures that the sample reflects the population of interest.

### Methods of Data Collection and Analysis

In order to accomplish the study's goals, this study utilized primary data that was acquired via the use of a structured questionnaire. The secondary data that aid in explaining where was gathered from a variety of sources in addition to the data that was gathered through questionnaires and personal observation. The study will benefit greatly from the information provided by the books on migration in the library, reports and other written data from the central statistics agency,

particularly the population and housing census statistics. The surveys were examined and presented using the descriptive statistics after the pertinent data had been gathered. Additionally, tabulation, graphs, and charts are used to illustrate the results. The validity and reliability of the surveys were investigated. With aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25 the data were analyzed and the descriptive statistics were used to present the results.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Socio-Economic Characteristics of Sample Respondents

Accordingly, the study's findings indicate that young male migrants make up the majority in Abuja. 61% of the participants were young boys, and 39% were young females (Table 1). It is also known that young women are more likely to migrate abroad than they are to move to the country's rural areas. While many children have engaged in the rural-urban movement, Clemens (2014) study indicated that young males and females from various ethnic groups make up the majority of migrants to Addis Ababa. According to the study's findings, which are consistent with the discussion above, the rate of migration was significantly higher for those who belonged to the age groups of (15-20) followed by (20-25) at about 52.69% and 33.33%, respectively (which indicates that youths, among others, are more migratory), and it was relatively lower for those under the age of 25 at 11.8% for 25-30 and at about 2.18% for the age group of 35 years and above (Table 1).

This study demonstrates that rural-urban migration occurs today at all educational levels. The findings indicate that 7.1% of migrants lack a high school diploma (53.4%), with 27.6% of them attending first-cycle primary school (grades 1-4) and 25.8% attending second-cycle primary school (grades 5-8). The remainder were tertiary level (college or university) students, with graduates making up 22.3% of migratory youths. 7.1% of urban-rural immigrant youths (grades 9-12) were enrolled in secondary school (Table 1). Considering the elevated rate of dropout at the conclusion of primary education courses and the substantial number of university and college graduates looking for work, this does not imply that the least educated are the most migratory; rather, it shows the overwhelming majority of primary school graduates. According to the majority of studies on rural-urban migration, those with comparatively higher levels of education had the largest propensity to move (Deshigkar and Grimm, 2005). However, CSA (1999) found that internal migrants in Nigeria made about 70% of the illiterate population.

The study's findings, which reveal that more than half (63.3%) of the migrants were single, 24.4% were married, and 12.3% were divorced at the time of their migration, lend credence to this theory. The survey confirms that most young people who moved from rural to urban areas got married there to share the responsibilities of life. In the city, nearly all of them got divorced after only a brief period of marriage, primarily as a result of women's pregnancies. Due to this reality, most divorced women end up becoming single mothers. Marital status has an impact on migration from rural to urban areas. According to many academic works, those who don't have any family responsibilities are typically more likely to migrate (Clemens, 2014; Mendola, 2012). According to Table 1, the majority of migrants (53.5%) currently make an average monthly salary of less than 12,000 naira. According to this, 17.5 and 26% of migrants, respectively, have monthly incomes of 12,001-25,000 and 25,001-45,000 naira. This could be as a result of their involvement in various formal, informal, and self-employed economic activities that allow them to earn an average monthly income.



In a rural location, land constitutes one of the most valuable resources. To guarantee the standard of living of rural people, a decent quality of cultivable land is required. A person's likelihood of moving is comparatively high if they lack access to land size and other productive assets. Along with the small size of rural farms, which is a result of the high family size to land ratio, the low quality and productivity of the land as a result of increasing pressure on it has caused division and fragmentation of operational holdings, which has pushed many rural youths to the cities in search of better employment opportunities.

**Table 1: Summary of Socio-economic characteristics of respondents (n = 210)**

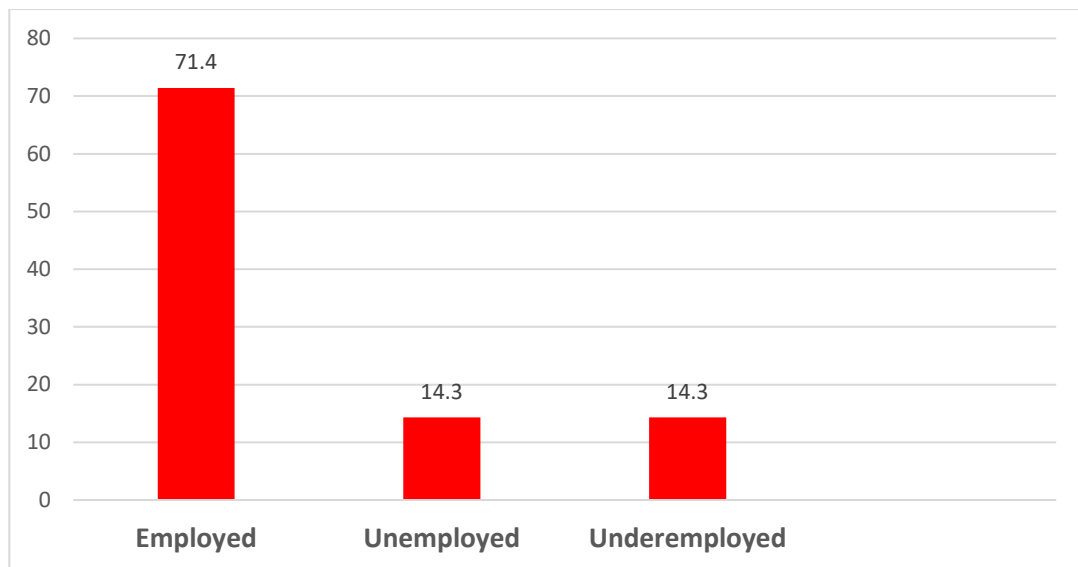
Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Respondents' age (years)</b>		
15-20	109	52.69
21-25	69	33.3
26-30	23	11.83
>30	9	2.18
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	111	61.0
Female	99	39.0
<b>Marital status</b>		
Single	131	63.3
Married	51	24.4
Divorced	28	12.3
<b>Level of Education</b>		
Illiterate	15	7.1
Grade 1-4	58	27.6
Grade 5-8	54	25.8
Grade 9-12	36	17.2
College or university	47	22.3
<b>Level of income</b>		
<12,000	107	53.5
12,001-25,000	35	17.5
25,001-45,000	52	26.0
Greater than 45000	16	3.0
<b>Farm size</b>		
< 1 hectare	129	70.93
1-2 hectare	53	19.76
>2 hectares	28	9.31

Source: Field survey, 2023

## Economic Status of Rural-Urban Migrant Youths

### **Employment:**

The results show that 71.4% of respondents had jobs. This shows that the employment rate for young rural-urban migrants in Abuja is relatively high. It is crucial to remember that 14.3% of people were unemployed and another 14.3% were in underemployment. These statistics show that some migrants struggle to find suitable employment prospects in urban areas. This finding is in line with a study by Adamnesh *et al.* (2014) that revealed rural-urban migrant teenagers frequently struggle to get formal job due to issues like insufficient abilities and educational credentials. These issues could lead to rural-urban migrant youth unemployment or underemployment rates to increase.

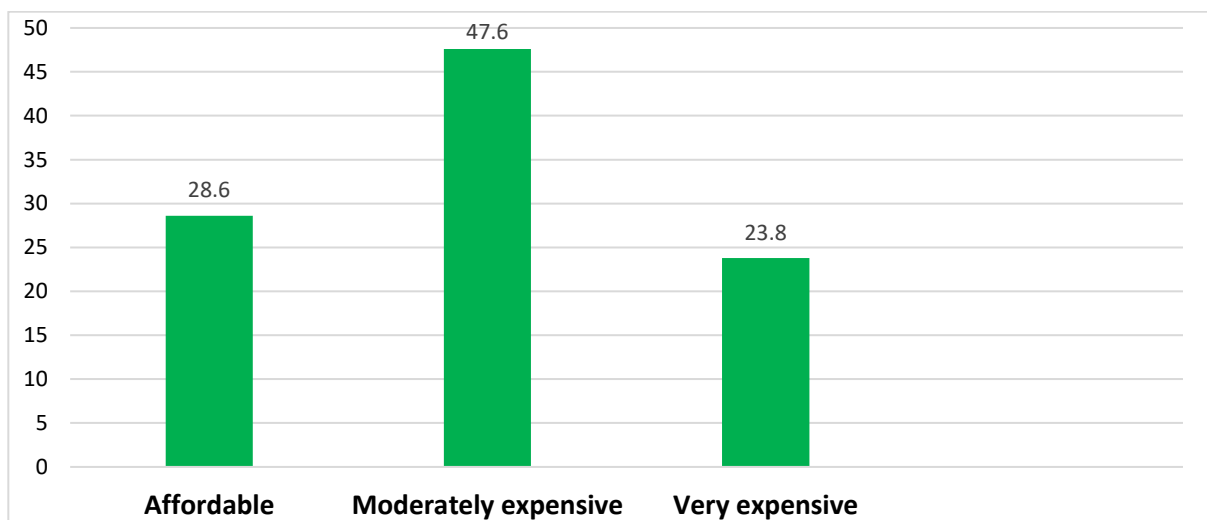


**Figure 1: Employment**

Source: Field survey, 2023

**Cost of Living:**

The outcome reveals that 28.6% of respondents indicated that their cost of living was affordable. However, a sizeable portion 47.6% said that the cost of living was moderate, and 23.8% said it was extremely expensive. These results are consistent with research on cost of living and urbanization. For instance, CSA. (2011) discovered that the cost of living is typically greater in metropolitan locations compared to rural ones. This study ascribed this to urban-related variables including increased housing costs and transit expenses, etc. Similar forces might be at work in Abuja, adding to the moderately high and extremely high cost of living those respondents noted.



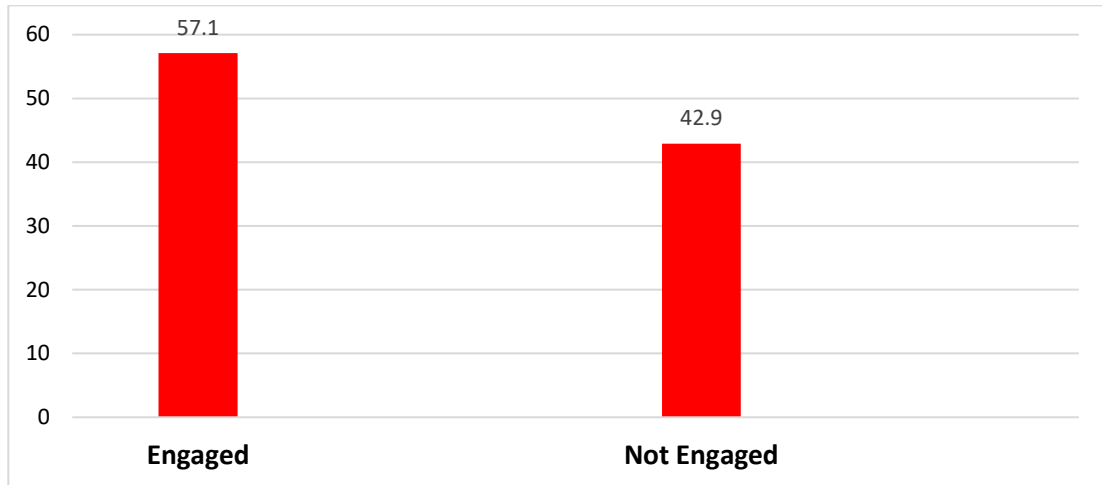
**Figure 2: Cost of Living**

Source: Field survey, 2023

**Urban Informal Sectors:**

According to the data, 57.1% of respondents actively participated in urban informal sectors such as street vending, small-scale trading, artisanal work, and other informal sectors. However, 42.9% of respondents did not work in these industries. This shows that a sizeable fraction of young rural-

to-urban migrants in Abuja engage in the informal economy, which can be a source of livelihood and income.

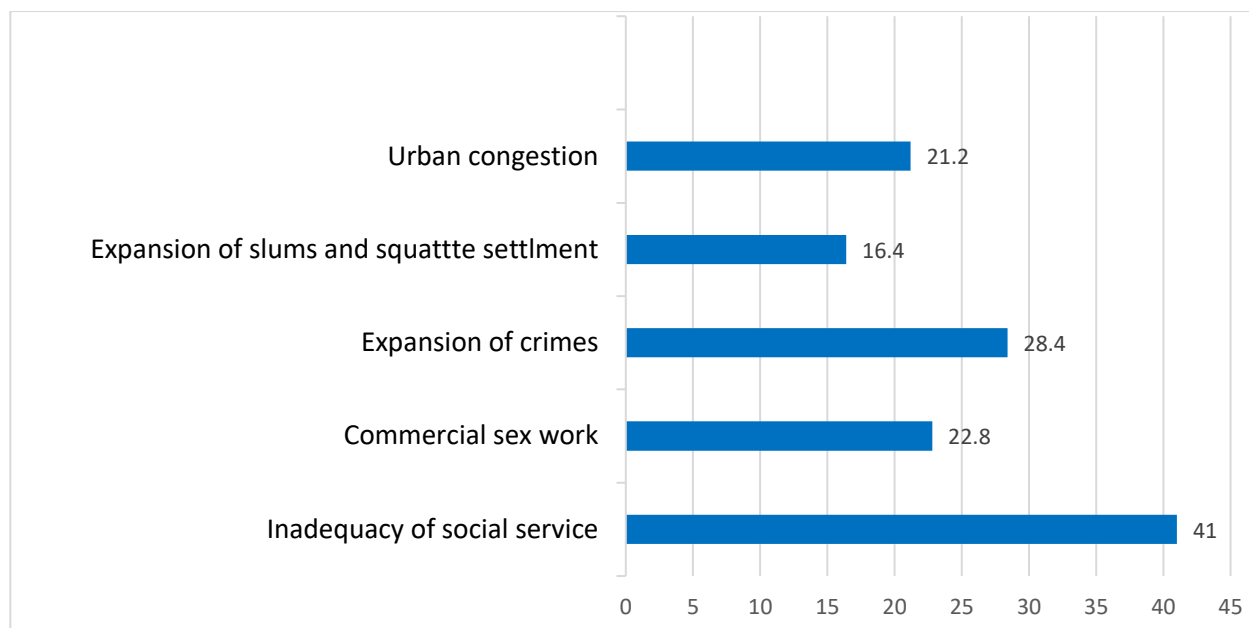


**Figure 3: Urban informal sectors**

Source: Field survey, 2023

### Impact on Social Conditions of Abuja

Transport and healthcare services made a strong statement about the inadequacies social services were. Transport and health services became unavailable in the sub-city as a result of the significant influx of migrants. The main issue in the sub-city (41%), which is caused by the massive influx of migrant adolescents, is the inadequacy of social services. An effort was undertaken to compile data on the issues encountered by urban households (non-migrants) in order to analyze the effects of migration on city life. As a result, issues including inadequate housing, inadequate social services like education and healthcare, rising costs of living, difficulty finding a job, and competition for jobs were used as measuring sticks for the effects of migration on urban life. Information gathered through key informants indicates that there are effects of migration that the general public must deal with. The urban population grows as a result of rural-urban migration. Rural-urban migration raises the population in cities, leading to unplanned urban growth and a lack of social services like education and healthcare. a suitable road network, sewer system, and transit system. It is then followed by expansion of crimes in the area (28.4%); it also contributed for expansion informal urban sectors like Commercial sex work (22.8%). Rural-urban migrant also contributed for urban congestion (21.2%). Results also depicts that rural-urban migrants are highly involved in crimes like robbery and most women are also commercial sex workers. The rest (16.4%) respondents believe that slums and squatter settlements are results of high rate of rural-urban migration



**Figure 4: Impact on Social Conditions of Abuja**  
Source: Field survey, 2023

### Push and Pull Factors

#### **Push Factors:**

With a high percentage of replies expressing concurrence or strong agreement (60 strongly agree, 80 agree), limited work opportunities appeared as the most significant push factor. The majority of respondents, as seen by the mean score of 3.71, believed that the lack of work possibilities in rural areas was a significant reason driving young people to move to urban areas. This result is consistent with previous research that highlights the significance of employment possibilities as a key factor in rural-urban migration (Mutandwa, 2011). He believed that the lack of job chances in rural areas frequently causes young people to migrate in pursuit of better employment prospects and higher earnings. Another significant push element was inadequate infrastructure. Table 2 shows that a sizable proportion of respondents acknowledged the role of infrastructure constraints, such as insufficient transportation, electricity, and water supply, in motivating rural youths to migrate. The frequencies (30 strongly agree, 50 agree) and mean score of 3.22 show this. Previous research has also emphasized how a lack of infrastructure affects people's decisions to migrate (Benebeberu, 2012).

It was determined that a lack of social services, such as healthcare, education, and public facilities, had a somewhat significant influence. The frequencies (20 strongly agree, 40 agree) and mean score of 2.95 indicate that a sizeable proportion of respondents believed that basic social services were lacking in rural areas, which led youngsters to seek out greater access to such programmes in urban settings. This outcome confirms research results that social service gaps are a major factor in encouraging rural-urban migration (Adamnesh, et al., 2014). Additional push factors that respondents noted but were not particularly included in the poll are included in the "others" category. These variables may have been less prevalent or had less of an effect than the push factors indicated because of the frequencies (10 strongly agree, 20 agree) and lower mean score of 2.18. These findings suggest a wide range of additional factors that affect rural-urban migration, but their overall influence appears to be less significant than the aforementioned push factors. Individual circumstances, dreams, or cultural and social influences that affect migration decisions are only a few of the many possible variables.

**Table 2: Push factors that prompt migration decisions (n=210)**

Push factors	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Mean scores	Rank order
Limited job opportunities	60	80	40	25	5	3.71	1 <sup>st</sup>
Inadequate infrastructure	30	20	60	55	15	3.22	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Lack of social services	20	40	80	55	15	2.95	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Others	10	20	40	60	80	2.18	4 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field survey, 2023

### **Pull Factors:**

According to Table 3, 70 respondents and 60 of them strongly agreed with the statement that a higher standard of life is a draw factor. The computed average score for this component is 3.81. These findings imply that a sizable proportion of respondents understood the possibility for higher standards of living in cities, including access to better housing, infrastructure, facilities, and general quality of life. Young people from rural areas may move to metropolitan areas in search of a higher standard of living (CSA, 2011). Table 3 shows that 80 respondents and 50 respondents strongly agreed with the proposition that higher career prospects are a pull factor. This factor's average rating is 3.71. These findings imply that a sizable proportion of respondents were aware of the allure of better economic prospects in cities, which encouraged young people from rural areas to migrate. Many people want to migrate to urban regions because they provide a variety of work options and the possibility of a greater income (Adamnesh *et al.*, 2014).

Table 3 shows that 40 respondents strongly agreed, 60 agreed and 70 remained neutral with the statement regarding the quality of education as a pull factor for rural-urban migration. The mean score for this pull factor is calculated as 3.57. This shows that a sizable proportion of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the quality of education is a desirable feature that entices youth to migrate from rural areas to urban centres. Youths in urban regions that have access to greater educational opportunities may be able to gain important knowledge and skills that will improve their prospects in the future (Benebeberu, 2012). Access to healthcare is ranked fourth among the pull factors in Table 3 with a mean score of 3.33. These findings suggest that while some respondents acknowledged the importance of access to healthcare as a pull factor, a significant number remained neutral or disagreed. However, this indicates that while access to health care is still considered relevant, its influence may be relatively lower compared to other pull factors. Nonetheless, availability of better healthcare services in urban areas can be appealing factor for rural youths concerned about their well-being (Mutandwa, 2011).

Cultural opportunities rank fifth among the pull factors in Table 3 with a mean score of 3.05. These results imply that while a considerable proportion of respondents were neutral or disagreed, others acknowledged the draw of cultural activities in urban regions. Depending on personal preferences and priorities, the impact of cultural variables on migration decisions can vary (UNDP, 2009). A dynamic lifestyle and other cultural aspects, such as having access of a variety of social activities, may appeal to some people but may not be the main factors driving migration from rural to urban areas (Birhane, 2011).

**Table 3: Pull factors that prompt migration decisions (n=210)**

Pull factors	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)	Mean scores	Rank order
Quality of education	40	60	70	30	10	3.57	3 <sup>rd</sup>
Better job prospects	50	80	40	20	20	3.71	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Access to healthcare	30	40	90	40	10	3.33	4 <sup>th</sup>
Improved standard of living	60	70	60	10	10	3.81	1 <sup>st</sup>
Cultural opportunities	20	30	80	50	30	3.05	5 <sup>th</sup>

Source: Field survey, 2023

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study used a case study from the Abuja to demonstrate the socioeconomic effects of rural-to-urban migration on the social and economic conditions of urban households. Migration between rural and urban areas strains urban essential services like transportation, housing, and health care. According to the report, the majority of migrant youths are young (between 15 and 20 years old), have only completed grades 1 through 4 of primary school, and are single. It also notes that university and college graduates who are migrating due to unemployment in their home countries are also among the migrants. Youth from rural and urban migration are involved in illegal street trade, which has a negative impact on non-migrant urban inhabitants' quality of life. The issue of unemployment has been made worse by the continual influx of migrants into the Abuja, which produces too much labour. The main issues brought on by rural-urban migration are an increase in street children, an increase in commercial sex workers, an increase in criminality, and an expansion of urban informal sectors. Urban residents are particularly impacted by migration since rising food prices and job competition lead to jobs with poor pay. Cities' population densities are significantly influenced by migration. The influx of rural migrants into cities causes an unforeseen rise in population and a demand for urban resources including jobs, health care, and transportation.

In general, migrant youth enjoy better living conditions in cities than they do in rural areas, and they work hard to do so. According to the study, most migrant adolescents have fair expectations when they leave their village, and they are now typically satisfied and enjoy an enhanced level of living in urban regions. Nevertheless, despite challenges in the town, the housing issue, a lack of employment possibilities and sufficient consumption items, growing costs of living, insufficient social services, and other issues remain key issues for migrants today. However, the majority of migrants do not intend to or have any plans to go back to where they were born because they prefer to believe that things would get better. Some people, nevertheless, have intentions to relocate to other cities. Additionally, as more and more rural-urban migrants enter this city, there will soon come a point of diminishing returns where the towns will no longer be able to provide even the most basic social services to the registered citizens owing to the demand of the migrants.

According to this study's findings, rural-to-urban migration raises the urban population, leading to unplanned urban growth with a lack of social amenities like adequate health care, an effective sewerage system, road networks, and a transportation system. Transport and healthcare services

made a strong statement about how inadequate social services were. Transportation and health services become inaccessible in the sub-city as a result of the significant influx of migrants. Regarding the impact of rural-to-urban migration on urban households, it contributes to sub-city poverty, unemployment, and an increase in crime. The impact of rural-urban migration on urban demographics also shows that urban residents' issues are brought on by the city's rapid population growth, which is then greatly exacerbated by rural-urban movement. The study also discovered that movement from rural to urban areas contributes to the rise of urban squatters, uncontrolled urban growth, and poor environmental management. It implies that migration from rural to urban areas contributes to environmental contamination in urban areas.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

- The country's goal to reduce poverty views rural-urban migration as an unwanted occurrence. Rural-urban migration can, however, be a positive phenomenon and should be taken into account when developing a strategy to fight poverty. The plan should be created to maximise the positive effects of migration and minimise any negative effects.
- Rural-urban migration makes it easier for agriculture and industrial development to be linked, especially when it comes to shifting labour from less productive to more productive sectors. Migration from rural to urban areas is a method of structural change that promotes economic expansion. In this regard, the growth of labor-intensive industries and the strong performance of the urban economy help to strengthen the connections between rural and urban areas. As a result, policies for both urban and rural development should be consistent and supportive of one another. Additionally, migration policies ought to become ingrained in the nation's macroeconomic strategy.
- To lower the degree of open and covert unemployment as well as the chronic poverty in rural areas, the government and the private sector should promote employment possibilities in both the rural and metropolitan economies. In this sense, the government should establish infrastructure that will support private sector growth in rural areas and ensure that rural youth have access to jobs.
- To give rural youngsters raised the necessary skills to work in the agricultural industries, education strategies should include agricultural components. Rural-urban migration has greatly decreased as more rural youth participate in agricultural activities, and increased agricultural production leads to stability in the cost of consumer goods in towns and cities.
- With many young migrants from rural to urban areas of the country, Abuja transforms into a melting pot. To raise rural-urban migrant youths, decentralized urban development in regional states should be implemented. In addition, it allows rural youngsters to find employment in their communities and lessens the massive migration of migratory youths into Abuja.

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