Chapter 9
The Influence of Migration and Crime on Development in Lagos, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Considering the implications of population movements for places of origin and destinations, migration has garnered significant interest in recent scholarship. To advance this objective, this chapter examines the influence of migration and crime on development in Lagos, Nigeria. The study used both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect data from 310 respondents. Data were analysed. Results show that 84.4% of Hausa, Yoruba (76%), others (73.3%) and Igbo (57.8%), planned their migration to Lagos. Overall, 95.8% of the respondents acknowledged that they had no assurances of jobs before migrating to Lagos. As frustration develops, some migrants embrace crime and endanger development. The study concluded that if development is inclusive, migration will be naturally controlled as individuals will remain in their places of origin rather than constituting nuisance to development in Lagos. It therefore suggests that government should control crime so that the people can see the possible constructive interactions between migration and development.

INTRODUCTION

As civilisation deepens, technology alters the direction of human occupation. In this connection, the branching out of some rural dwellers into non-crop income-generating activities has been identified as a critical livelihood strategy for rural households, particularly in Africa (Barret et al., 2001). Individuals pursue diversification as a livelihood strategy for two overarching considerations: necessity and choice (Ellis, 2000). Migration is one diversification strategy by which the mobility of rural dwellers is often explained as the outcome of push and/or pull factors (Bigsten, 1996). While push factors refer to factors that induce desperation and trigger involuntary migration (land scarcity), pull factors refer to those that trigger proactive, voluntary migration (high urban wages) (Bigsten, 1996). Since a developed urban centre may provide employment opportunities for supplementing farm income (Bilsborrow et al., 1987), rural dwellers may be pulled to the areas of prosperity and pushed from areas of decline (Braunvan, 2004).

In 1950, less than one third of the human race were living in cities (Kante, 2004), but the world's population is projected to add 2.5 billion people to the urban population by 2050, with nearly 90 per cent of the increase concentrated in Asia and Africa (UN Population Division, 2014). Most indicators of welfare or human resource development, such as consumption levels, mortality rates and educational attainment, show that big city dwellers (for example, in Lagos) have a considerable advantage over their rural counterparts (Jones, 2002, p. 121). On the whole, urban life represents the dream of formal employment, less social restrictions and diversified opportunities, while the rural areas provide limited employment outside agriculture, insecure income and inadequate infrastructure (Bookaye-Yiadom, 2008). Although internal migration involves diverse forms; rural to urban migration is the most significant (Olajuyin, 2002). Thus, for many years, this type was viewed favourably in the development literature.

Given the significant disparities between Nigeria's rural and urban sectors, the foregoing scenario might be one of the very basic attractions for prospective migrants to Lagos with its unclear implications for criminal acts. It is against this background that this chapter commits itself to a fourfold focus. First, it aims at exploring the reasons underlying migration, second, establishes the linkage between migration and criminality, third, studies how population movements affect crime rates and development, and finally, examines how migration can be disconnected from crime to promote the development of Lagos.

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