

PATTERNS OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION AMONG RURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN EDO STATE, NIGERIA

OBLICI MEĐUNARODNE MIGRACIJE MEĐU RURALNIM KUĆANSTVIMA U SAVEZNOJ DRŽAVI EDO, NIGERIJA

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This article examines the pattern of international migration among rural households in Edo State, Nigeria. The empirical results are based on a quantitative and qualitative survey of 240 household heads. The findings show that some household heads sourced information with special reference to international migration. This information assisted them in guiding intending migrants from their households on how to go about leaving the country in search of a better life. The information sourced was majorly centred on visa processing and obtaining residency/work permits and job opportunities. Family and friends, the Internet and travel agencies were among various channels where household heads got information to guide their international migration decisions. Migrants from rural households left the country through legal and illegal means. A key factor in their choice of destination country was the presence of either family members or friends, while plans and arrangements for migrants' departure from the country were largely facilitated by household heads and migrants themselves. Irrespective of the quest of many migrants to leave Nigeria, some sought greener pastures in some African countries. Libya turned out to be the first destination of most migrants from where they later migrated to other countries of choice majorly in Europe.

KEY WORDS: international migration, migration patterns, migration information, migration decisions, Nigeria, Europe

Ovaj članak ispituje obrazac međunarodne migracije među ruralnim kućanstvima u državi Edo u Nigeriji. Empirijski rezultati temelje se na kvantitativnom i kvalitativnom istraživanju 240 nositelja kućanstva. Rezultati su pokazali da su neki nositelji kućanstva došli do informacija s posebnim osvrtom na međunarodne migracije. Te su im informacije pomogle u usmjeravanju potencijalnih migranata iz njihovih kućanstava kako da napuste zemlju u potrazi za boljim životom. Izvori informacija uglavnom su bili usmjereni na obradu viza i dobivanje boravišnih/

radnih dozvola i mogućnosti zapošljavanja. Obitelj i prijatelji, internet i putničke agencije bili su među raznim kanalima putem kojih su nositelji kućanstva dobivale informacije koje su im pomogle pri donošenju odluka o međunarodnoj migraciji. Migranti iz seoskih kućanstava napuštali su zemlju legalnim i ilegalnim putem. Ključni čimbenik u odabiru zemlje odredišta bila je prisutnost članova obitelji ili prijatelja, dok su planove i dogovore za odlazak migranata iz zemlje uvelike omogućili nositelji kućanstva i sami migranti. Bez obzira na želju mnogih migranata da napuste Nigeriju, neki su potražili zelenije pašnjake u nekim afričkim zemljama. Pokazalo se da je Libija bila prvo odredište većine migranata odakle su kasnije migrirali u druge zemlje po izboru, uglavnom u Europi.

KLJUČNE RIJEČI: međunarodna migracija, migracijski obrasci, informacije o migraciji, odluke o migraciji, Nigerija, Europa

INTRODUCTION

Migration, which is the movement of people over defined space and time, is a phenomenon that has been part of humans from the creation. Humans have been on the move in quest of overcoming the earth, so to speak, and exploiting existing resources and socio-economic opportunities for the well-being of humans (IKWUYATUM, 2016). The International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) (2012) described international migration to be a process of moving across borders. To buttress this point, Adetunji (2014) also defined international migration as the movement of individuals across national boundaries. International migration is naturally complex. It can affect a nation-state politically, culturally and socio-economically by bringing either strength or weakness. In other words, international migration can bring both progress and decline in the socio-economic development of a nation-state (FAYOMI, 2013).

International migration manifests itself in diverse dimensions and researchers uncover new and different classes of its manifestations as they get intrigued by the topic. This reveals that international migration is a subject that keeps on emerging in various ways as the world and various nation-states in the international system change socio-economically and geopolitically (WICKRAMASINGHE, WIMALARANTANA, 2016). According to Jennissen (2004), there are various types and kinds of international migration. These are as highlighted below.

1. **International labour migration** is defined as the movement of persons from their home nation to another nation for the purpose of employment. This kind of international migration can also be influenced by nation-state bilateral relations (SANDER ET AL., 2013). Labour migration involves migrants (skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled) seeking job opportunities in different destination states (JENNISSEN, 2004). Labour migration can also involve voluntary migrants for the sole purpose of working or getting a comfortable

job. This is mostly more of a personal gain and is indirectly profitable to the receiving states. Simply put, international labour migration is the transfer of skills from one nation-state to another.

2. **International return migration** occurs when a migrant retires back home to his/her nation-state of origin after leaving the home nation-state for another for quite some time or a long time. Sometimes migrants go to various destinations to secure better living conditions and later, return back home to start a business or permanently return to live after studies. It can also be explained as the relocating of migrants back to their respective countries.
3. **International chain migration** is described as movements where various individuals migrate out of their home countries with the sole aim of joining their family members abroad. This type of international migration can also be referred to as reunification. This involves invitations from family members and friends to the destinations individuals wish to arrive at.
4. **International asylum migration** involves asylum seekers (individuals) that seek refuge in a destination nation-state due to frustration and push factors surrounding them in their home countries. They describe themselves as requiring help and refuge. This is also described as forced migration. This type of international migration includes mostly refugees, internally displaced persons and others who claim refugee status.

According to Wickramasinghe and Wimalarantana (2016), international migration is grouped into three (3) types based on the factors that influence it. These are the following:

1. **International economic migration** is related to job seekers and is associated to other economic-related reasons. In this type of international migration, the migrant's sole purpose is to apply his/her skill in exchange for money. These migrants can also have the intention of improving his/her standard of

living through better job opportunities in their destination countries.

2. **International environmental migration** is influenced by push and pull factors such as desert nature in the home nation-state, rise in sea levels, and drought among other factors while the pull factor is perceived as multiple opportunities in that region such as a serene environment in the destination state.
3. **International political migration** is also influenced by political push factors in the home nation-state; such factors may be civil wars, corruption among leaders, political discrimination, and tribalism to mention a few.

Africans migrate within and outside the continent and the number continues to grow daily. Between 2015 and 2017, for example, the number of African international migrants living within the region jumped from 16 million to around 19 million (IOM, 2017a; McAULIFFE, KITIMBO, 2018). Within the same period, there was only a moderate increase in the number of Africans moving outside the continent, from around 16 million to 17 million (IOM, 2017a; McAULIFFE, KITIMBO, 2018). African migrants account for only 14% of the global migrant population: significantly less than migrants from Asia, which account for 41%, or Europe, which account for 24% (NAIDOO, 2019).

In Nigeria, as in most developing countries of the world, both internal and international migration has become a major issue influencing government policies and programmes. Nigeria presently occupies an important position within the West African sub-region as a country of origin, transit and destination of migrants (NBS, 2014). Due to Nigeria's position as the most populous and ethnically diverse country in sub-Saharan Africa, migration in Nigeria manifests in multiple and diverse forms in terms of its nature, causes and effects (AGYEMAN, SETRANA, 2014). Among numerous reasons behind migration, an elevated unemployment rate, increased susceptibility to working poverty and lack of good quality job opportunities are key factors shaping most Nigerians' decisions to mi-

grate overseas (ILO, 2016) with the strong belief that countries in Europe and America have superb opportunities concerning employment, education and training, and sociocultural identification. Suffice it to say that much of the emigrating population in Nigeria has their base in rural areas.

In Nigeria, the bulk of agricultural production takes place in rural areas. This is because these areas have more resources such as land, water and fertile soil to support agricultural activities. To this end, most of the rural population depends on agriculture-related activities for their livelihood. Farm households produce over 70% of the agricultural output of Nigeria in their characteristic small-sized plots (ASOGWA, AGBO, 2013). These households collectively form an important foundation upon which the nation's agricultural economy rests. Farming households not only provide employment and food for the country's teeming population, but they also provide a more equitable basis for the distribution of income as well as an effective demand structure for other sectors of the economy (DORNER, 2010; BRAVA-URETA, EVENSON, 2011). However, small-scale farmers whose livelihoods are dependent on agricultural activities remain poor because of low productivity (CSO, 2000; CHIKOPELA, 2014). Apart from low productivity, various factors such as global economic meltdown, the negative effect of access to natural resources and environmental deterioration, climate change, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, population growth, the negative effect of trade liberalization, adverse effect of globalization among others have been adduced to rural poverty (OSAWA, 2013).

Based on the foregoing, an understanding of the underlying complex interrelationship of persistent vulnerabilities of rural households and migration decisions could help inform policies targeted at reducing poverty, especially in rural marginalised areas. Hence, this study was conducted to ascertain the patterns of international migration among rural households in Edo State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to ascertain: (i) rural households' information sources on international migration decisions, (ii) step-

wise processes involved in migrants' departure from the country, (iii) migrants' first destination country and destination country, (iv) migrants' length of stay in the first destination country and destination country.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

The study was carried out in Edo State, Nigeria from November 2018 to June 2019. The state was created on 27 August, 1991, out of the defunct Bendel State. Edo State lies between longitude 06°04'E and 06°43'E, latitude 05°44'N and 07°34'N. It is bordered in the south by Delta State, in the west by Ondo State, in the north by Kogi State and in the east by Kogi and Anambra States. It occupies a land area of about 19,187 square kilometres (NBS, 2011) with 180,000 farm families (OMOREGBE, AJAYI, 2009). It has a population of about 3,218,332 (NBS, 2011).

Notable ethnic groups in Edo State include Bini, Esan, Etsako, Owan and Akoko Edo. Edo people engage in professional and non-professional as well as skilled and unskilled jobs. Farming is the predominant occupation among rural dwellers in the state. The main crops grown are rubber trees, oil palm trees, cocoa, yam, cassava, maize, rice, plantain, pineapple, tomatoes as well as leafy vegetables (UDDIN, 2010). There is also a significant animal husbandry industry, with cows, goats, pigs, rabbits and sheep being the main products. Edo people are progressives and explorers. Hence, they migrate and can be found across several states in Nigeria and other countries across the globe.

Edo State has three agricultural zones, namely Edo Central, Edo North and Edo South. Edo Central agricultural zone has five extension blocks, namely Esan Central, Esan West, Esan North-East, Esan South-East and Igueben. Edo North agricultural zone comprises six extension blocks: Owan West, Akoko-Edo, Etsako West, Etsako East, Owan East and Etsako Central. Edo South agricultural zone has seven extension blocks: Oredo, Ovia South West, Ovia North

East, Ikpoba-Okha, Egor, Uhumwode and Orhionwon. All in all, there is a total of 18 extension blocks in the study area (UDDIN, 2014).

Research design

The study adopted the survey design. Survey research involves the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions (CHECK, SCHUTT, 2012). This type of research allows for a variety of methods to recruit participants, collect data, and utilize various methods of instrumentation (PONTO, 2015). Survey research can use quantitative research strategies (e.g., using questionnaires with numerically rated items), qualitative research strategies (e.g., using open-ended questions), or both strategies (i.e., mixed methods). As they are often used to describe and explore human behaviour, surveys are frequently used in social and psychological research (SINGLETON, STRAITS, 2009).

Population and sampling procedure

The population for the study comprised all international migrants' household heads in Edo State, Nigeria. Multi-stage sampling technique was used to collect data from the population of international migrant(s) households' heads in the study area. In the first stage, the three agricultural zones (Edo Central, Edo North and Edo South) in the state were selected. In the second stage, two blocks were randomly selected from each zone, giving a total of 6 blocks. The blocks selected are Esan West and Esan North-East (Edo Central agricultural zone); Etsako Central and Etsako West (Edo North agricultural zone) and Ikpoba-Okha and Orhionmwon (Edo South agricultural zone). In the third stage, two circles were purposively selected from each block, giving a total of 12 circles. In the fourth stage, a list of households with international migrant(s) was compiled with the help of community youth leaders in each circle. Community youth leaders were engaged because they were likely to know more households with international migrants based on the assumption

that most migrants are youths. From the list, 20 household heads were randomly selected from each circle. Thus, the total sample size for the study was 240 respondents.

Data collection

Quantitative data were collected using a semi-structured interview schedule. The respondents, who are household heads, were asked to derive information on international migration in sampled households in line with outlined objectives of the study. In addition, focus group discussion (FGD) was used to collect qualitative data, especially for objective two. The FGD involved group discussions where men, women and youths gathered together from different backgrounds or experiences discuss specific issues of interest in international migration. One FGD was conducted in each of the sampled zones giving a total of three FGDs. Furthermore, key informant interviews (KIIs) were conducted with one opinion leader considered to be adequately knowledgeable in each of the sampled blocks. Thus, in each of the zones, two KIIs were conducted giving a total of six KIIs. The FGDs and KIIs were used to gather ethnographic information, especially the information which may be difficult to gather adequately using questionnaires. As a result, illustrative quotes from the FGDs and KIIs were used to buttress the quantitative data.

Data analysis

Variables in objectives one, two, three and four were presented using frequency, percentage, mean scores and standard deviation. Objective four, differentials in assets of remittance-receiving households before and after migrants left the country was analysed using paired sample t-test.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Rural households' information sources on international migration decisions

Entries in Table 1 show that 67.9% of household heads did not source information on in-

ternational migration. This finding shows that household heads in the study did not source much information with special reference to international migration. This finding implies that some household heads may be lacking information which could aid their migration decisions. On the other hand, 32.1% of household heads did seek information on international migration. Sourced information includes visa processing and obtaining residency/work permit (15.8%), human trafficking and consequences of illegal migration (10.0%), and job opportunities (2.5%). Other sourced information includes possible routes to Libya and how to cross from Libya into Europe (2.1%), migrating to Europe through Morocco (1.2%) and travelling from Nigeria to other West African countries (0.4%). Furthermore, results presented in Table 1 show that 19.2% of respondents sourced the information on international migration from family and friends, 14.1% from the Internet, 5.4% from travelling agencies, 2.5% from the immigration office and 2.1% from radio, TV and newspapers.

Participants in an FGD in Edo Central Agricultural Zone identified rural households' information sources on international migration and said: *'information on international migration always comes from family or friends most frequently in form of speculation – somebody said this, somebody said that. Also, from different types of social interactions or gatherings and more recently through social media.'* In one of the KIIs in Amedokhian community in Esan North East LGA, a chief said: *'information that migrants seek was mainly on how to travel, cost implications and who can lead the way. Would-be migrants keep looking for links to sponsors who will direct them on how they will go. Of course, there are people in the community who are agents that assist those who want to travel legally or illegally.'* Additionally, during a key informant interview in Ologbo community in Ikpoba-Okha LGA, a participant said: *'information sourced for illegal migration, centres on how to travel, who to meet (agents), routes to follow and accommodation matters. Most of the information may be correct or wrong. That is why at the end*

TABLE 1 Rural household's information sources on international migration decisions

Variables	Freq.	%
Information sourcing on international migration		
Yes	77	32.1
Information sourced for		
Visa processing and obtaining residency/work permit	38	15.8
Human trafficking and consequences of illegal migration	24	10.0
Job opportunities	6	2.5
Travelling routes to Libya and how to crossover from Libya into Europe	5	2.1
Migrating to Europe through Morocco	3	1.2
Travelling from Nigeria to other West African countries	1	0.4
Sources of information*		
Family members and friends	46	19.2
Internet	34	14.1
Travelling agency	13	5.4
Immigration office	6	2.5
Radio, TV and newspapers	5	2.1

*Multiple responses

of the day, most migrants suffer untold hardship when they leave the shores of the country due to inadequate information.'

Corroborating the above statements, United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) (2013) asserts that most migrants begin their journey with little information because they are selective in what they want to know. Learning about the risks of the journey does not deter them as they believe that nothing can be worse than what they are currently living and, despite a dangerous journey, they believe that their life will improve once they arrive at their destination. Unrealistic expectations of their migration are fuelled by migrants in their destination who rarely send negative news home because of the pressure on them to succeed, which creates a distorted understanding of life abroad (UNHCR, 2013).

Further deductions from the results (Tab. 1) are that; access to ICT tools could translate to use in making migration decisions among some household heads. According to Ebri (2017), international migration is said to be on the increase due to awareness of opportunities in various countries through various platforms such as television, and the Internet, among other media. Ruysen (2013), considers these technological revolutions are expected to further deepen migration pressures both within and across borders.

Stepwise process(es) involved in migrants' departure from the country

As obtained from the focus group discussions (FGDs) and key informant interviews (KIIs) conducted, the step-wise processes involved in migrants' departure from the country are discussed below.

Legal migration: Migrants make necessary enquiries (i.e. from formal and informal sources) and arrangements through travelling agencies, obtain travel documents from the Nigerian immigration office, get the visas from embassies of the chosen country, book a flight or obtain bus tickets to leave the country depending on the destination country.

Illegal migration: Migrants make necessary enquiries and arrangements mainly through informal and unapproved channels. They establish necessary links with agents (human traffickers, sailors, transporters etc.). Agents charge migrants and thereafter hand them over to syndicate groups who will take the migrants to their respective locations travelling either by land or water.

Furthermore, data in Table 2 show that the choice of destination country was largely migrants' decision (62.9%). Reasons for choosing the destination country were because the following: family/friends reside in the country (72.9%), good living conditions (62.9%), job

TABLE 2 *Step-wise process(es) involved in migrants' departure from the country*

Variables	Freq.	Percentage (%)	Mean (\bar{x})
Choice of destination			
Migrant	151	62.9	
Friends	35	14.6	
Members of the nuclear family	27	11.2	
Household head	13	5.4	
Scholarship board	8	3.3	
Members of the extended family	4	1.7	
Church missions	2	0.8	
Reason for choosing destination country*			
Family/friends reside there	175	72.9	
Good living conditions	151	62.9	
Job opportunities	120	50.0	
Study opportunities	75	31.3	
Ease of doing business	68	28.3	
A safe passage to Europe	45	18.8	
Love for western culture	34	14.1	
Adequate health care	6	2.5	
Missionary responsibilities	2	0.8	
Plans and arrangements for departure			
Household head	70	29.2	
Migrant alone	69	28.8	
Members of the nuclear family	57	23.8	
Travelling agency	18	7.5	
Members of the extended family	11	4.6	
Scholarship arrangement	9	3.8	
Friends	3	1.2	
Church missions	2	0.8	
Royal palace	1	0.4	
Provision of money for departure*			
Household head	168	70.0	
Members of the nuclear family	110	45.8	
Migrant alone	88	36.7	
Members of the extended family	69	28.8	
Scholarship funding	25	10.4	
Travelling agency	18	7.5	
Church missions	2	0.8	
Royal palace	1	0.4	
Estimated amount used for transit (n=160)**			
≤ ₦200,000	12	5.0	
₦200,001 – ₦400,000	45	18.8	
₦400,001 – ₦600,000	28	11.7	
₦600,001 – ₦800,000	25	10.4	
₦800,001 – ₦1,000,000	22	9.2	₦513,000
Above ₦1,000,000	28	11.7	
Means of transportation			
By land using a vehicle	128	53.3	
By air using an aeroplane	109	45.4	
By sea using a ship	3	1.2	

Multiple responses

**1 USD = 365 NGN (June 2019)

opportunities (50.0%) and study opportunities (31.3%). In addition, the ease of doing business (28.3%), a country being an easy route to enter Europe (18.8%), and love for western culture (14.1%) contributed to what made migrants choose the destination country.

Plans and arrangements for migrants' departure from the country were largely facilitated by the household head (29.2%), followed by 28.8% that were made by migrants themselves. Entries in Table 2 further show that household heads provide a greater proportion (70.0%) of the money needed by migrants to travel. About 46% was provided by members of the nuclear family, while 36.7% was by migrants themselves. Additionally, 28.8% of the monetary contribution was made by members of the extended family, while 10.4% was from scholarship funding.

Table 2 shows that a greater proportion (18.8%) of migrants spent from N200,001 – N400,000 to travel overseas, while 11.7% spent N400,001 – N600,000 and only about 12% spent above N1,000,000. The mean amount spent on foreign travel by migrants was N513,000. Moreover, data in Table 2 reveal that 53.3% of migrants travelled by land, while 45.4% travelled by air and 1.2% by sea.

As expected, migrants made their choice of destinations. Nonetheless, the results show that the choice of destination alongside plans/arrangements to leave the country had a combination of factors influencing it. According to Crawley et al. (2016), the decision-making process regarding the choice of destination country is believed to be contingent primarily on the information that is accessible through personal networks, especially information provided by the Nigerian diaspora. Nigerian nationals, who have family members or friends living in Europe, are more likely to have a specific destination country in mind, in contrast to compatriots that do not have family or friends in Europe. As can be further deduced from the results, the immediate family of migrants were actively involved with financial and moral support for migrants' departure. Ellis et al. (2011) posit that in Nigeria, it has become customary for children-rich households to invest in the emigration of one family member given that many

families consider sending one household member to Europe.

Migrants in first destination country and destination country

Entries in Table 3 show that a greater proportion (36.2%) of migrants had Libya as their first destination, 9.6% Ghana, 5.8% USA, 4.6% Malaysia while 3.8% first arrived in Spain, UAE 3.3% and 2.9% South Africa. On the other hand, Table 3 shows that a greater proportion (29.6%) of migrants had Italy as their destination country, 8.5% Spain, 7.1% United Kingdom, and USA 6.2%. Furthermore, 5.8% of migrants reside presently in Ghana, 5.4% in Germany, 5.0% in Malaysia, 3.8% in UAE and 3.3% in South Africa.

From these findings, there is a clear indication that a good number of migrants had Libya as their first destination country before transiting to other parts of the world (especially Europe). By implication, migration flows into Libya have steadily increased due to its strategic positioning between Africa and Europe. According to UNHCR (2013), most migrants claim to be drawn to Libya by the opportunities in generating income. Some arrive and work for a few years before returning to their country of origin with a pool of savings, some repeat the pattern over and over again at different points in their lives, and some are passing through only long enough to generate the necessary funds for their onward journey to Europe, their final destination. In addition, Hamood (2006) posits that a significant proportion of migrants in Libya have an irregular or ambiguous legal status. The irregular status of many, both while en route to the European Union (EU) and when based in Libya, leads to a heightened sense of vulnerability.

Furthermore, irrespective of the quest of many migrants to leave the African continent, some still seek greener pastures in some African countries as seen in the results. By implication, migrants' choice of first destination country or destination country will largely be influenced by several factors such as the rationale behind migrants' decision to travel, the available opportunities and the connections that can be explored.

TABLE 3 *Migrants' first destination country and destination country*

	First destination n=238		Destination n=236
Country	%	Country	%
Libya	36.2	Italy	29.6
Ghana	9.6	Spain	8.3
USA	5.8	United Kingdom	7.1
United Kingdom	5.0	USA	6.2
Malaysia	4.6	Ghana	5.8
Spain	3.8	Germany	5.4
UAE	3.3	Malaysia	5.0
Germany	2.9	UAE	3.8
South Africa	2.9	South Africa	3.3
Italy	2.5	Turkey	2.9
China	2.1	China	2.5
Morocco	2.1	Canada	2.5
Turkey	2.1	Ukraine	2.1
Ukraine	2.1	Libya	1.7
Canada	1.7	Australia	1.2
Kenya	1.2	France	1.2
Cameroon	1.2	Netherlands	1.2
Australia	0.8	Scotland	0.8
Tunisia	0.8	Portugal	0.4
France	0.8	Brazil	0.4
Japan	0.8	Finland	0.4
Belgium	0.8	Poland	0.4
Saudi Arabia	0.4	Japan	0.4
Ivory Coast	0.4	Belgium	0.4
Togo	0.4	Chile	0.4
Mali	0.4	Denmark	0.4
Scotland	0.4	New Zealand	0.4
Finland	0.4	Benin Republic	0.4
Poland	0.4	India	0.4
Chile	0.4	Singapore	0.4
Denmark	0.4	Austria	0.4
Netherlands	0.4	Switzerland	0.4
Benin Republic	0.4	Saudi Arabia	0.4
India	0.4	Kenya	0.4
Singapore	0.4	Morocco	0.4
Switzerland	0.4	Senegal	0.4

TABLE 4 *Length of stay in the first destination country and destination country*

Variables	Frequency	Percentage (%)	Mean (\bar{x})
First destination			
No response	6	2.5	2.66 ± 3.17
< 1 year	78	32.5	
1 – 5 years	124	51.7	
6 – 10 years	20	8.3	
> 10 years	12	5.0	
Destination at present			
No response	3	1.2	3.50 ± 3.29
< 1 year	38	15.8	
1 – 5 years	153	63.8	
6 – 10 years	30	12.5	
> 10 years	16	6.7	

Migrants' length of stay in the first destination country and destination country

Entries in Table 4 show that a greater proportion (51.7%) of migrants stayed in their first destination country for 1-5 years, 32.5% stayed less than a year, 8.3% stayed 6 – 10 years and 5.0% stayed over 10 years. The mean number of years of stay in the first destination country was (2.66 ± 3.17). On the other hand, Table 4 shows that a greater proportion (63.8%) of migrants stayed in their destination country for 1-5 years, 15.8% less than a year, 12.5% stayed for 6 – 10 years and 6.7% stayed over 10 years. The mean number of years of stay in the destination country was (3.50 ± 3.29).

Based on UNDESA (1998) criteria; an international migrant who changes his or her place of usual residence for at least one year is defined as a long-term migrant, while a person who changes his or her place of usual residence for more than three months but less than one year is considered to be a short-term migrant. Following the above, the results show that a large proportion of international migrants in the study were long-term migrants with just a few being short-term migrants.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In summary, in this research, it was found that some household heads sourced informa-

tion to aid their international migration decisions. Information sourced covered a range of subjects such as visa processing and obtaining residency/work permit, human trafficking and consequences of illegal migration, and job opportunities among others. The source of information on international migration was: family and friends, the Internet, travel agencies and the immigration office. Migrants from households either left the country legally or illegally. Plans and arrangements for the departure of household members were spearheaded by household heads, migrants themselves and members of the nuclear or extended family. Commensurably, migrants from rural households first stopped over in Libya before relocating to other countries majorly in Europe. It was further deduced from the study that a good number of migrants from households were long-term migrants with just a few being short-term migrants. This study contributes to migration literature by providing more information on the type and sources of information most rural household heads seek in their quest to help their members relocate overseas for greener pastures. Moreover, it comprehensively x-rays the processes and patterns involved when a migrant chooses to migrate from the country using legal or illegal means. More so, the present study offers an interesting analysis by engaging quantitative and qualitative data, to shed more light on the patterns of international migration among rural households in Edo State, Nigeria. Considering the active

roles played by household heads in assisting members of their household to relocate outside the country, it is suggested that the Edo State government, NGOs and other agencies engage them, particularly in the fight against illegal migration. The state government should

also employ a variety of tactics to combat illegal immigration, including solid institutional reform and legal framework, public awareness campaigns, the reintegration of returnees, and empowerment initiatives to support the aspiration of its youthful population.

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