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A Socio-Demographic Analysis of Migration and Translocality in Nigeria

*C.O. Idiaye¹, T.A. Adeyemo² and A.O. Olajide¹

¹ Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Ibadan

² Nigerian Institute for Social and Economic Research (NISER), Ibadan

¹Abstract

Migration and translocality are important factors in the socioeconomic adjustment of households in Nigeria, and rural ones in particular, as they provide an alternate means of economic opportunities when such become scarce in the areas of origin. Using data from the General Household Survey, Wave 4 (2018/19), this study sought to provide a socio-demographic picture of migration and translocality in Nigeria as well as the determinants of migration. It concluded that most rural migrants in Nigeria are translocal and mostly move to and from communities with the country for economic opportunities and the trend is most prominent in the South West region. Further it was found that economically active rural-dwelling males were the most prominent migrants. Marriage, family and work were found to be among the most important reasons for migration and most migrants sent assistance mainly for the upkeep of their spouses. The Trade sub-sector showed the highest proportion of migrants per employed persons among the sectors of employment although the Agricultural sector also had a significant proportion of migrant workers. Finally, using a probit regression model, age, sex, primary employment in services as well as primary employment in education were found to significantly influence migration in Nigeria.

Keywords: Migration, Translocality, Socio-demographic Analysis, Probit Regression, Nigeria

1. Introduction

Migration and translocality in West Africa have a long history and have played a major role in shaping settlement patterns in the region (DFID, 2004). Migration has significant consequences on the nature of both places of origin and migrant destinations more than any other phenomenon in human geography (Oderth, 2002). Internal migration, which IOM (2013) defines as "a movement of people from one area of a country to another area of the same country for the purpose or with the effect of establishing a new residence either temporarily or permanently," is a complex and multifaceted process that can help develop countries by lowering poverty and

¹ *Corresponding author (chuksidiaye@gmail.com)

enhancing household welfare. Researchers have frequently looked into whether migration affects the welfare of households that send migrants, and they have frequently discovered that migration increases the income and consumption of households through remittances in the form of both cash and goods that migrants send to their family members back home (Martey and Armah, 2021).

The foregoing makes migration a very beneficial process by which resources, including labour, are withdrawn from places of surplus to places of need. Through migration for instance, excess rural labour has been reallocated from the traditional agricultural sector to the growing urban industrial sector. Thus, migration is seen as a crucial indicator of how a society is changing from an agricultural to an industrial economy. According to Todaro (1969), moving labor from rural areas where it was frequently assumed that their marginal social products were zero to urban industrial complexes where these marginal products were not only positive but also rapidly increasing as a result of capital accumulation and technological advancement was highly beneficial to an economy and the welfare of households. This brings to the fore the concept of translocality. Peth (2018) defines it as a free process that results in interactions and intimate relationships between various locations and populations, forming communities and networks through migration movements. Therefore globalization, along with its attendant mobility of people, knowledge, skills and other resources, has created significant economic interdependencies among communities, regions and countries which are now being exploited by individuals, households and communities to achieve greater welfare.

The changes that arise due to household members relocating are various for the majority of homes that contain migrants, including those that get and do not receive remittances. First, the possibility of receiving remittances from the immigrant may have a direct impact on household welfare. Second, the migrants' information transmission on the best agricultural and nutritional practices may potentially have an indirect impact on household welfare. Third, a decrease in household size brought on by migration may not only result in fewer consumption needs but also less family labor, a disruption of gender roles inside the home, intra-household resource allocation, and the feminization of agriculture (Crush, 2013; Radel et al., 2012; Zezza et al., 2011). The functioning of homes is a crucial consideration when analyzing the impact of migration. Resources may be managed by different household members for different goals and

not always for the overall good of the household due to complicated and varied levels of inequalities and roles (Agarwal, 1997; Dwyer & Bruce, 1988; Guyer & Peters, 1987). Male outmigration may leave women managing farm fields and serving as household breadwinners, adding to their already heavy workloads of maintaining subsistence farming and ensuring that children's nutrition is improved (Radel et al., 2012). Both good and negative effects on household welfare could result from these changes overall (Crush, 2013; Karamba et al., 2011; Agarwal, 1997).

The need to assist rural household members is viewed as the primary driver of labor migration and translocality, and the cash remittances that migrants send to them are essential in translocal livelihood systems (Poverty Research Programme Consortium, 2016). This, along with knowledge mobility in the areas of health, agricultural production, political engagement, and gender relations provides a channel by which translocality can significantly improve households' quality of life. This paper presents a descriptive analysis of the socio-demographic variables of migration and translocality in Nigeria using secondary data from the fourth wave of the General Household Survey data (GHS) collected in 2018/19 by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics (NBS). A Probit model was also estimated for the factors that influence migration.

2. Methodology

2.1. Data Source

The data used for this study was obtained from the General Household Survey (GHS) conducted by the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics. The panel data was collected in four waves namely: 2010/11, 2012/13, 2015/16 and 2018/19. It contains information on households, agriculture and the community. Respondents were interviewed during both post-planting and post-harvest periods and the information obtained was stratified along those lines throughout the data. The data for this study was extracted from the fourth wave post-planting data.

A total sample of 2,738 individuals was selected from the data and used for analysis for this study. The sample was spread across all 6 geopolitical zones of the country (North Central: 514; North East: 468; North West: 385; South East: 394; South South: 614; South West: 363) as well as the 36 states of the country and the Federal Capital Territory.

2.2. Analytical Techniques

- *Descriptive statistics* were used to analyze the socio-demographic characteristics of the sample and the results were presented in charts.
- *Probit regression*; a Probit regression model was estimated for the factors that influence migration among the respondents. The model is specified below:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_{1i}X_i + e_i \quad (1)$$

Where; Y_i = migrant status of the respondent (1 = migrant, 0 = non-migrant)

β_0 = constant term or intercept of the equation

β_1 = vector of coefficients of the explanatory variables

X_i = vector of explanatory variables or determinants of migration

e_i = random error term

The explanatory variables are as follows:

X_1 = age of the respondent (in completed years)

X_2 = sex of the respondent (1 = male, 0 otherwise)

X_3 = role of the respondent in the household (1 = household head, 0 otherwise)

X_4 = years of formal education (number)

X_5 = primary employment of respondent in agriculture (1 = yes, 0 otherwise)

X_6 = primary employment of respondent in services (1 = yes, 0 otherwise)

X_7 = primary employment of respondent in education (1 = yes, 0 otherwise)

X_8 = primary employment of respondent in trade (1 = yes, 0 otherwise)

3. Limitations of the Study

Since the study relied on secondary data (GHS, 2018/19) which was not collected primarily as migration data, there were only few variables in the data that were directly related to migration and translocality and these were used for the study as presented in the following sections.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Socio-demographic Analysis of Migration and Translocality in Nigeria

Table 1 presents a summary of the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents in the sample. The description of migration and translocality in this study was done at the individual level across both rural and urban Nigeria. Among the respondents, 72% were from rural Nigeria which is expected given the fact that the GHS data is largely an agricultural data set. Also,

83.6% of the sample had migrated at least at some point or the other during or prior to the period of the data collection.

Table 1: Description of the Sample

Socio-demographic Variables	Percentage (%) (n = 2,738)	Socio-demographic Variables	Percentage (%) (n = 2,738)
Sectoral Representation of Respondents		Migrant Status of Respondents	
Rural	72.1	Migrants	83.6
Urban	27.9	Non-migrants	16.4
Distribution of Respondents by Sex		Age Distribution of Respondents	
Male	61.7	<18	26.7
Female	38.3	18 – 38	27.0
Distribution of Respondents by Sector of Employment		39 – 59	28.4
Agriculture	8.8	≤60	18.0
Services	26.6	Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status	
Education	34.2	Never Married	36.3
Health	8.5	Monogamous	28.7
Mining	1.9	Polygamous	15.7
Manufacturing	5.7	Informal Union	0.20
Construction	6.7	Divorced	1.10
Transportation	3.3	Separated	2.90
Trade	4.3	Widowed	15.1
Distribution of Migrants by Geopolitical Zone		Sectoral Distribution by Migrant Status	
North West	75.8	Rural Migrants	58.1
North East	80.3	Urban Migrants	25.6
North Central	76.3	Rural Non-migrants	14.0
South West	93.7	Urban Non-migrants	2.3
South East	85.0		
South South	90.4		

Further, the highest migration statistics are seen among rural households (58%). This is expected given the penchant of rural dwellers in Nigeria to migrate to other rural areas or urban areas mainly in search of economic opportunities. The geopolitical distribution of the respondents shows that while migration was generally very high among the respondents, the South West reported the highest value as it had 93.7% of its respondents having migrated at some point before or during the period. The North West recorded the lowest proportion of 75.8%. Males make up 61.7% of the sample used for this study and, as Figure 1 shows, rural male migrants make up the bulk of the entire sample (36.5%). Studies have shown that many males migrate out of rural areas in search of resources for investment back home (Pickbourn 2011; Lopez-Ekra *et al.*, 2011), thus the results here are expected. The age distribution of the respondents is almost evenly spread with the smallest part of the sample (18%) belonging to the elderly (aged above 60 years) while those between 39 – 59 years making up a slight majority at 28.4%.

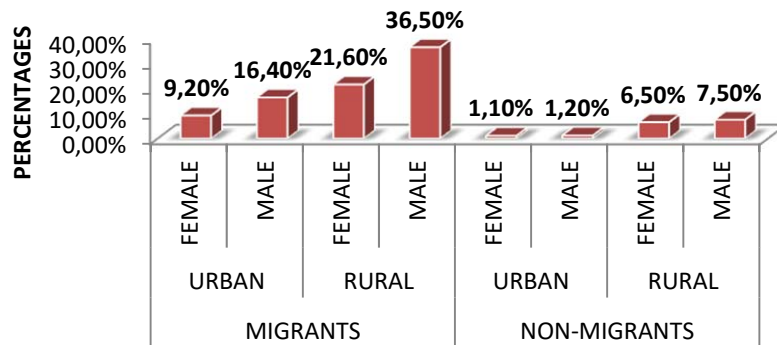


Figure 1: Distribution of Migrants and Non-Migrants by Gender and Sector

A further decomposition of the age distribution across sex, sector and migration status reveals that the most active migrants in Nigeria are the rural males aged between 39 – 59 years as they had the highest proportion of migrants in the sample (14.6%). Given that this age range contains mostly economically active individuals who are also likely to have families of their own to provide for, these statistics conform to expectation. Figure 2 presents a detailed breakdown.

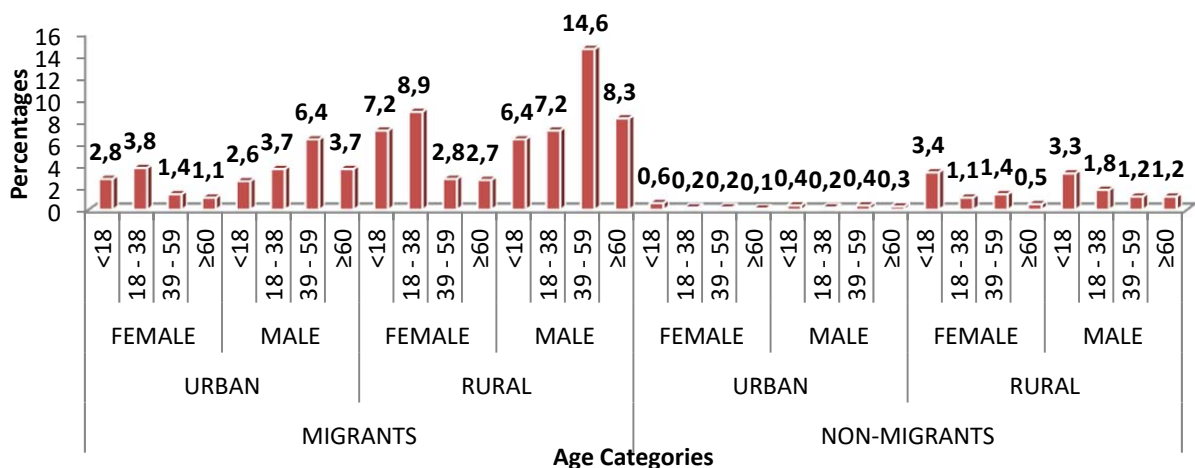


Figure 2: Distribution of Migrants and Non-Migrants by Age

4.2. Factors Influencing Migration among Respondents

The major reason for migration reported among rural individuals was marriage as they had to relocate after marriage or to live with a new spouse. This was the same for the urban dwellers as well. Among the rural respondents, 568 persons (28%) reported this as their reason for migration. Family (16%) and work (14%) were the second and third most reported reasons for migration among the rural people. More details in this regard are presented in Figure 3.

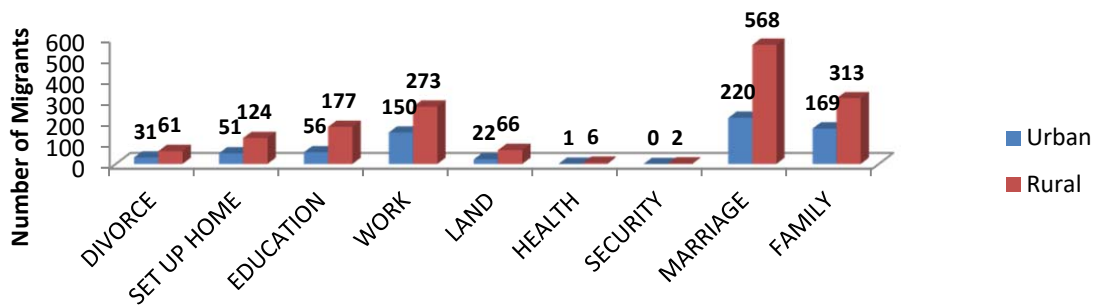


Figure 3: Reasons for Migration

With regards to employment sectors of migrants, Figure 4 shows that Trade has the highest proportion of migrants at 97% which is expected given the fact that trading in goods and services has a high potential to influence moving of its actors across local and international borders. Agriculture also has a high proportion of migrants. Of the total persons employed in agriculture, 83.4% reported that they had migrated at some point.

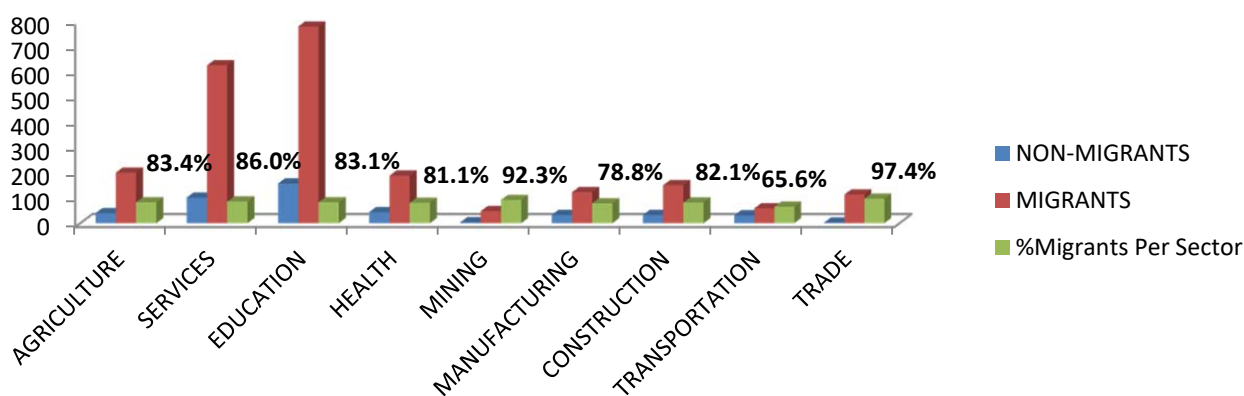


Figure 4: Distribution of Migration Status by Employment Sector

Furthermore, Figure 5 shows the major reasons for migration by those employed in the major sectors of employment. As expected, work (37 individuals, 15.4% of sample) is one of the major reasons for migration among those employed in agriculture. This conforms to the fact that a lot of seasonal migration of workers occurs in agriculture particularly during the off-season when agricultural workers seek employment off the farm and often times outside their communities of residence. However, setting up a home was the dominant reason for migration among the workers in all sectors.

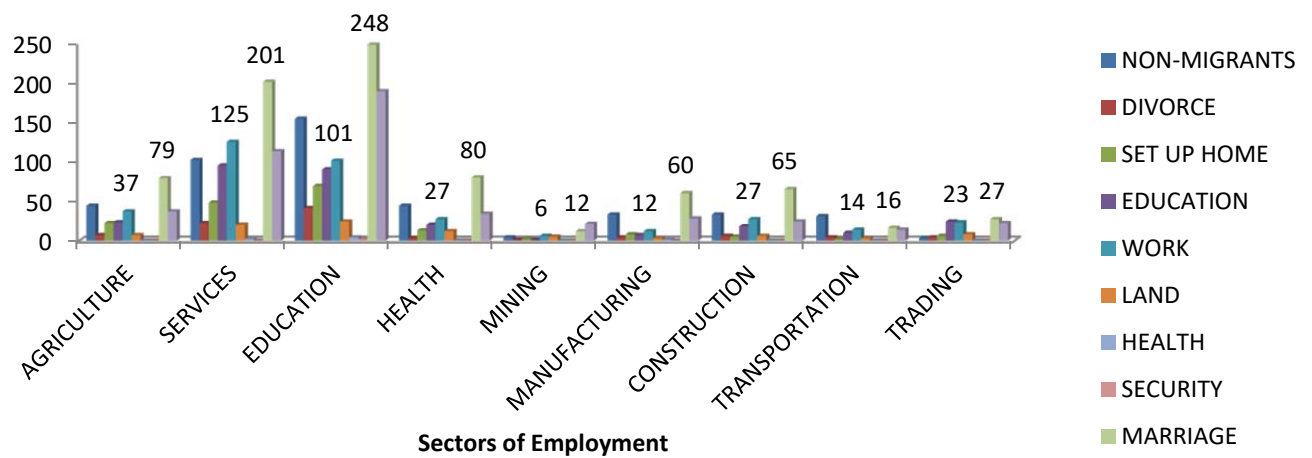


Figure 5: Reasons for Migration by Sector

4.3. Translocality among Migrants

The results in Figure 6 show that migration outside the country was low among the respondents with only 0.9% of the rural migrants reporting that they had migrated outside Nigeria and 1.6% of the urban migrants reporting same. Given the focus of the data mainly on agricultural households, this pattern is expected as such households mostly send out migrants to nearby communities where they can supply their labour for better incomes in on-farm, off-farm or non-farm activities.

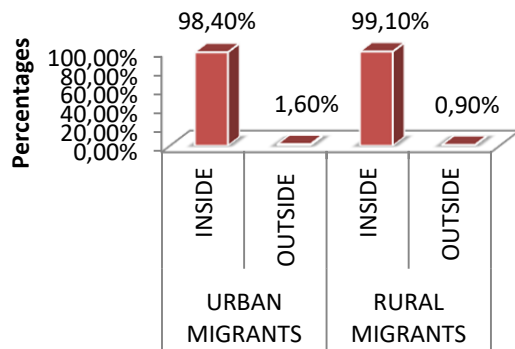


Figure 6: Where are migrants moving to: INSIDE or OUTSIDE Nigeria?

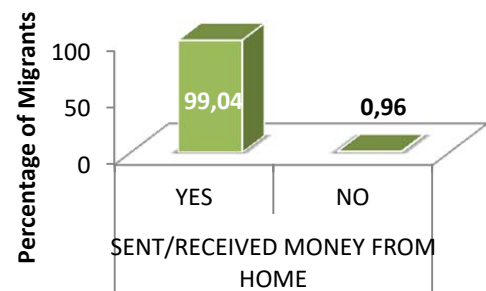


Figure 7: Remittances Sent To or by Migrant (Money)

Figures 7 and 8 show the proportion of migrants that have sent (or received) monetary or in-kind assistance to (or from) their sending households and/or communities. Both variables expressed herein serve as proxies for translocality (or otherwise) of the migrants in the sample. The analyses show that the overwhelming majority (almost 100%) had one form of interaction or the

other with their sending households and/or communities in terms of exchange of monetary assistance or in-kind assistance which could have been in form of knowledge, skills, goods, services, among others (Ajaero and Onokala, 2013).

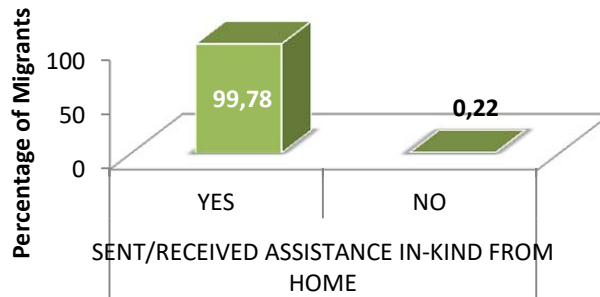


Figure 8: Remittances Sent To or by Migrant (In-kind Assistance)

Based on the foregoing, it can be concluded that nearly all the migrants in the sample are translocal migrants who shared remittances and other things with their communities and households. Going by Figure 9, presenting the distribution of purposes for which assistance was sent, it was revealed that upkeep of spouse was the major reason for which migrants either sent or received aid to or from the households or communities from which they migrated. On the other hand, Figure 10, showed that the major means reported as being used for sending or receiving assistance by the migrants was through relatives (78.8%) with bank transfers coming a distant second (at 10.1%).

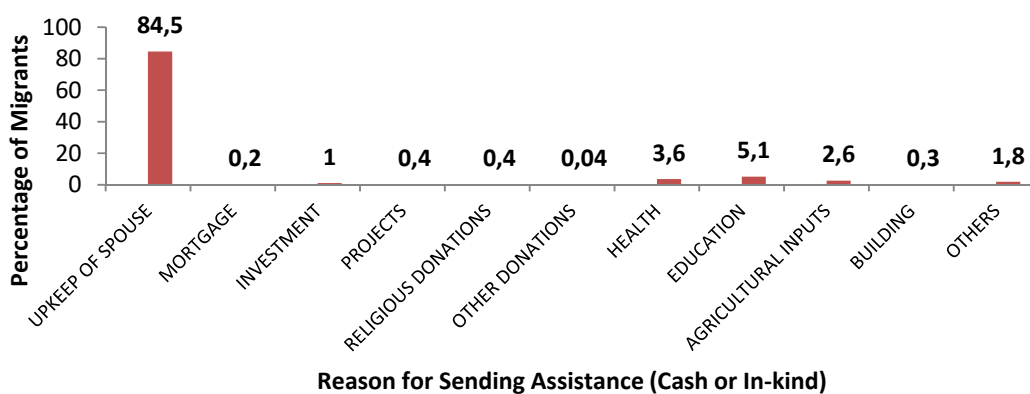


Figure 9: Distribution of Reasons for Sending Assistance

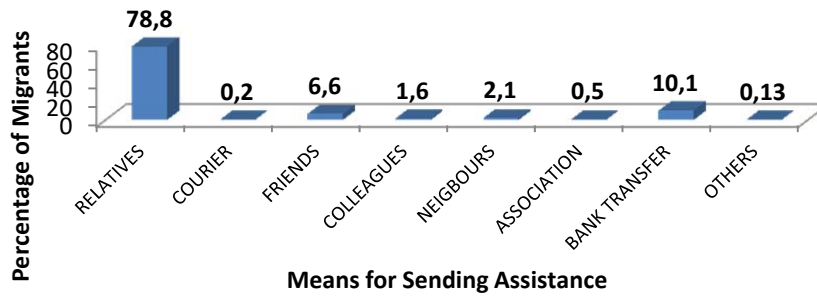


Figure 10: Distribution of Means for Sending Assistance

4.4. Determinants of Migration in Nigeria

Table 2 shows the parameter estimates of the factors influencing migration among the respondents. It reveals that the older a respondent is and the more formal education they have the greater their probability to migrate. Similarly, being primarily employed in services, education and trade increased the probability to migrate while being primarily employed in agriculture did not significantly influence the probability of an individual migrating. However, the results showed that being the family head reduced the probability of an individual migrating.

Table 2: Parameter Estimates of the Factors Influencing Migration

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	z-statistic	P-value	dy/dx
Age	0.014***	0.002	7.760	0.000	0.003
Sex	0.054	0.064	0.850	0.393	0.013
Role	-0.286***	0.088	-3.230	0.001	-0.067
Formal Education	0.029**	0.013	2.260	0.024	0.007
Pry. Employment in Agric.	0.162	0.112	1.450	0.148	0.038
Pry. Employment in Services	0.239***	0.080	2.970	0.003	0.056
Pry. Employment in Education	0.175**	0.074	2.380	0.017	0.041
Pry. Employment in Trade	1.162***	0.256	4.540	0.000	0.273
Constant	0.045	0.166	0.270	0.786	
Number of Observations = 2738					
LR chi2(8) = 121.49					
Prob > chi2 = 0.0000					
Log likelihood = -1159.3902					
Pseudo R2 = 0.0498					

*** means significant at 1% level, ** means significant at 5% level, * means significant at 10% level

5. Conclusion

The study has shown that migration and translocality are important variables in the socioeconomic adjustment of households in Nigeria, and rural ones in particular, as they provide

an alternate means of economic opportunities when such become scarce in the areas of origin of the migrants. It can be concluded that most rural migrants in Nigeria are translocal migrants who mostly move to and from communities with Nigeria and the South West region of the country supplies a larger number to the pool of these translocal migrants than any other geopolitical zone. Rural males of the economically productive age are the most active migrants in Nigeria. Moreover, most migrants in Nigeria are married and expectedly, marriage, family and work are among their most important reasons for migration and their major reasons for sending remittances and other forms of aid are for the upkeep of their spouses. The Trade sub-sector has the highest proportion of migrants per employed persons among the sectors of employment although the Agricultural sector also has a significant proportion of migrant workers. However, being primarily employed in agriculture did not increase the chances that an individual would migrate.

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