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**Migration and agricultural labour  
supply in Aguata local government  
area of Anambra state**

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MIGRATION AND AGRICULTURAL LABOUR SUPPLY IN AGUATA LOCAL  
GOVERNMENT AREA OF ANAMBRA STATE

BY

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BEING A RESEARCH PROJECT REPORT PRESENTED TO THE DEPARTMENT  
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CERTIFICATION

Mr. Chukwuemeka, Uzoma Okoye is a postgraduate student in the Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Nigeria, Nsukka and with registration Number PG/M.SC./86/4246 has satisfactorily completed the requirements for course and research work for the award of the degree of Master of Science in Agricultural Economics. The work embodied in this report is original and has not been submitted in part or full for any other diploma or degree of this or any other University.

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DR. E.C. NWAGBO,  
Supervisor

DEDICATION

To my parents,  
Brothers and Sisters.

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In this work, we have studied the effect of return migration on the supply of agriculture labour in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State between 1983 and 1988. Our objectives were to describe the general migration patterns in Aguata with particular emphasis on urban - rural migration, identify the people involved in the process as well as their characteristics; to determine the proportion of the return migrants that are eventually absorbed into the agricultural labour force and other non-farm occupations and derive implications for agricultural development from the results.

A purposive sampling method was used in selecting 10 survey villages from which a sample frame was constructed. Ten return migrants were then selected at random from each village to make up a sample of 100 respondents.

Data was collected by personal interviews and from previous work in the Aguata Area and analysed by means of descriptive statistics presented in tables and figures.

The major findings are that:

1. majority of the return migrants are between 20 and 45 years old, constituting the most active members of the society.
2. only 55% of the children of return migrants are in a position to assist them in farm work;

3. mechanisation of farm operations is limited among the returnees;
4. all respondents are natives of the villages to which they have returned.
5. return migration has not eased the farm labour shortage being experienced in Aguata.
6. the return migrants are entering the agricultural sector mainly as farm operators rather than labourers, while keeping non-farm occupations.
7. the returnees are getting involved in the affairs of their communities, an indication that they are likely to be retained within the environment.

The following recommendations have been made to help increase labour supply to the farms:

1. promotion and support of rural industries through provision of basic infrastructures and granting of incentives in form of tax holidays, subsidized electricity, water, telecommunications and other services;
2. approval of more industries with rural locational bias by development and employment institutions.
3. subsidizing the education of nonboarding children of rural dwellers to retain them within the rural environment.
4. mechanisation of time-critical farm operations with intermediate technologies to reduce the labour shortage in the short-run.
5. government policy should be informed by new and substantive knowledge of the rural environment brought about by, among other things, the increasing return of young people to the rural areas.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 The Problem

The supply of agricultural labour in Nigeria's rural areas has been declining. Unpaid family labour has always been depended upon for doing much of the work on the farms. However, family supply of labour is becoming less important as the average family size continues to fall and children seek education and careers off the farm.

As a result, there is an acute labour shortage which is compelling small-holder farmers (producing 99% of the output of most crops grown in Nigeria Olayide (1980)) to reduce their hectarages to manageable proportions. Studies of labour migration in Nigeria have demonstrated that farm labour has become a limiting factor in the agricultural economy of rural communities, especially in the southern root and tree crop sub-sector of the economy (Essang and Mabawonku, 1974). Rural - urban migration of able-bodied persons is assumed to be mostly responsible for the observed labour shortage.

Rural - urban migration is in itself linked with rural unemployment and decline in agricultural labour force which are caused by Nigeria's adoption of retrogressive export-tax policies (Eicher, 1970; Diejomah, 1972; Essang, 1972). Export taxes, for example have brought reduction of 9%, 7%

and 9% in the output of palm oil, palm kernel and cocoa respectively. Other fiscal policy factors held responsible for rural agricultural labour shortage include:

- i) marketing board policies which diminished rate of entry into farming and increased the rate of exit of resources from the sector (Diejomoah, 1972).
- ii) subsidized tractor mechanisation and over-emphasis on government direct production schemes which are capital intensive (Eicher, 1970).

Thus, contrary to common development theory, there has been a drop in Nigeria's agricultural labour force as a percentage of total labour force accompanied by a fall, rather than a rise in agricultural output (Olayide, 1972).

Evidence from several studies, Norman (1969); Johnson, (1969); Luning, (1967) show that seasonal labour bottlenecks limit future expansion of agricultural production under existing technologies. The problem of labour is compounded by the fact that many small farms reach their peak demand for labour at about the same time as large farms, thus, making migration within the same ecological zones unhelpful (Norman, 1972). The extent to which hired labour is used is limited to below 20% of total labour use in small farms (Norman, 1972; Spencer and Byerlee, 1976; Byerlee, 1980).

Because urban - rural migration has never been as common as rural - urban migration in Nigeria, little has been done

to assess its impacts on the economy. However, given the prevailing depression in the Nigerian economy, the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) and the consequent retrenchment of workers in both the private and government sectors, the relative importance of urban - rural (or return) migration is changing as more and more people go back to the rural areas on losing their jobs in the urban areas. While some people are forced back to the villages due to declining urban employment opportunities, others are attracted by good prospects presented by Federal Government's rural development policies aimed at creation of more jobs, provision of infrastructures such as roads, electricity and pipe-borne water.

The question then is: to what extent is the reversal of direction of migration occurring and how does it affect the supply of farm labour in the rural areas? To address this question, attention needs to be paid to identifying those who have migrated, their characteristics and their reasons for migrating and what they do on returning. In particular, the relationships between the characteristics of urban - rural (or return) migrants (such as educational attainment, age, sex, family size, income level, etc.) and their decision to migrate will tell us much about, among other things, how many of the migrants will be available as farm workers.



1.2 Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study is to examine on urban - rural migration in Aguata Local Government Area of Anambra State between 1983 and 1988 and to determine its effects on availability of agricultural labour.

The specific objectives are:

- a) to describe the general migration pattern in Aguata with emphasis particularly on urban - rural migration.
- b) to identify the people involved in urban - rural migration in Aguata, their characteristics, why they migrated and where they came from.
- c) to determine the proportion of return migrants that eventually become absorbed in the agricultural labour force (either as farm operators or hired labourers) as well as the pattern of their distribution to various non-farm occupations within the rural sector of Aguata.
- d) to specify implications for agricultural development from the results.

1.3 Justification of the Study

This research is justified on the following grounds:

- a) Given that labour is a critical factor in agricultural production in Nigeria because of the fact that farming is still largely labour-intensive, any research work that aims at a better understanding of the mobility of agricultural labour is justified.
- b) In order to be able to formulate appropriate and effective agricultural policies, there is need

to keep abreast of changes in factors that influence the availability of agricultural labour.

- c) The results of this research are expected to shed light on the inter-dependent nature of the urban and rural economies in Nigeria and the ways their interactions affect agricultural output.
- d) Little, if any, research has been done on the specific determinants of urban - rural migration. This work is expected to go a long way in specifying such determinants. Goldscheider (1971) for example has posited that "the need to examine counter-stream flows and return movement hardly needs justification". Campbell and Johnson (1976) have also observed that "justified or not, the research has been limited in amount and scope. The neglect of such research has resulted in an inadequate representation of this migration process for theoretical purposes and for policy decisions".

Another basis for counter-stream research rests on what Goldscheider (1971) calls a "broader systems framework". Economists for example, sometimes refer to counter-stream movement as an equalising element in the labour market, acting as both a replacement factor and an initiator of labour flow (Lansing and Mueller, 1967).

- e) In Nigeria, migration studies in the past had been inordinately macro-economic in nature with emphasis almost exclusively on rural - urban migration. This work will be micro-economic and will focus, as already indicated, on urban - rural migration in Agwata.

CHAPTER TWOPATTERNS OF MIGRATION IN AGUATA

Migration patterns have always been determined by prevailing social and economic conditions. In Aguata, these patterns, when viewed in historical context, can be conveniently treated under three time periods: the pre-colonial, colonial and post-colonial periods.

### 2.1 Migration Patterns in the Pre-colonial Period

During this period, the society was primitive and traditional. It had not experienced any significant economic growth. There was a strong desire to preserve ways of doing things. Ideas that threatened the social order were viewed with suspicion and dissent was discouraged and even penalized severely. Status and occupation were largely determined by ascription (inheritance), not by ability and achievement.

Economically speaking, the society was completely devoid of monetization and trade by barter prevailed, with all families being subsistent. Population density was low and family size large. Major occupations of the people included farming, craft making, rain-making, hunting, divining, fishing and wine tapping. Communities exhibited high degrees of territorial aggression with adverse consequences for movements across boundaries. Economic and social organisation were circumscribed and information flow between communities limited.

In those days, agricultural labour was supplied either by family members themselves or by exchange labour, especially during peak periods. Thus, the quantity of labour demanded and used by the farmer depended on, among other things, his farm size, family size and belonging to age grades and other associations that could organise exchange labour for benefit of members.

Given the above circumstances, it is not difficult to understand why migration was homogenous (only rural - rural) during the <sup>pre-</sup>colonial period. Migration was limited to situations where there were:

- a) wars of expansion such that the victors moved to occupy annexed territories.
- b) fleeing of weaker communities to new areas in the wake of invasion by their neighbours.
- c) people taken prisoners of war.
- d) ostracised or banished individuals settling on virgin lands or joining their in-laws in other communities.
- e) Mature male children going out to build their own houses away from their parents.
- f) mature daughters given out in marriage.
- g) movements away from particular areas following oracular instructions, as for example with the Udo Chi Oso diety of Igbo-Ukwu which required no obstruction of its feeding route - a relatively large expanse of land vacated in the 1920's and has not been occupied again to date.

During the pre-colonial period, all migratory movements occurred over very short distances and were involuntary as with most primitive migrations (engendered by ecological push). Economic factors could not play any significant role as migration inducers for two major reasons. In the first place, the economy was based on subsistence and trade by barter. As such, it was considerably closed. Secondly, because of the high degree of territorial aggression that prevailed, travelling was particularly perilous. The overall result was that even if profitable economic opportunities existed, they could not be exploited by migrants.

Several instances could be used to illustrate the migratory tendencies of the pre-colonial era in Aguata,

a) War-induced Migrations

These were wide-spread then, representing the most important type of migration between community boundaries.

Most of these wars were caused by expansionary tendencies of the stronger of two neighbours. Thus, Etit, one of the maximal lineages of Igbo-Ukwu actually migrated from Oko when faced with an impending invasion of neighbouring Umuona with Nanka mercenaries. There were also some influxes into Igbo-Ukwu from Ichida and Akokwa for similar reasons.

b) Ritual Rivalry and Migration

In the olden days, ritual centres of varying strengths existed in various villages. There is evidence that rivalry within these centres was responsible for considerable migratory movements. Between 909 and 1049 A.D., a section of Nri migrated to Oraeri and founded a rival ritual centre there. Several others are known to have migrated from Nri and Oraeri to other places.

c) Circular Migration

Archaeological evidence suggests that the travel tradition of early Awka blacksmiths was shared by some Aguata communities (eg. Igbo-Ukwu). These people used to move around along well defined routes practicing their trade and eventually returning to replenish their stock. The presence of elaborate iron swords and razors, copper and beads in Aguata suggests that there had been contact through trade between some Northern Nigerian peoples and either Nri or Igbo-Ukwu or both (Isichei, 1976).

d) Slavery Induced Migrations

Between 1678 and 1807 (when the British Government abolished slavery), cases of slavery - related migrations were many (Isichei, 1976). For instance, the Arochukwu people had many slaves. After sometime, a good number of these slaves were trusted deeply enough which earned them considerable freedom

to migrate. Eventually, Ikelionwu, an Aro slave from Awka migrated and founded Ndikelionwu (Isichei, 1976). Ajali was also founded by an Aro slave. It is interesting to note that when freed, most of the slaves never returned to their original homes.

In those days, many small communities returned to their larger kindreds for protection from slave raiders. This led to the abandonment of farmlands and increased population pressure in the source and destination areas respectively. As slavery became less important, communities that had become thickly populated sought to expand their territories. This led to incessant conflicts between communities, especially in the southern Aguata area resulting in massive migrations.

## 2.2 Migration Patterns in the Colonial Era

Migration patterns in Aguata during the pre-colonial period cannot be separated from those of the colonial era by a firm boundary. Wars, slavery and population pressure continued to be major determinants of these patterns. However, several exotic factors were introduced which in turn brought new patterns of migration with them. The factors are:

- a) monetization of the economy;
- b) introduction of formal education, orthodox medical practice and modern transport and communications;

- c) introduction of more sophisticated weapons and ammunition such as guns and gun powder.
- d) emergence of a coercive administrative system, following European settlement along the coasts.
- e) trading activities of Europeans on oil palm products and other commodities;
- f) development of trading posts that eventually became major cities such as Port Harcourt, Onitsha, Calabar and Bonny.
- g) discovery and exploitation of coal in Enugu.
- h) advent of christianity by 1857.

Following the above changes, the people became more mobile. Migration became less homogenous as some centres of urbanity (eg. the administrative and trade headquarters of the Europeans) sprang up. Trading was developing and migration became induced by economic variables.

Movement was almost always rural - rural or rural-semi-urban with majority of migrants being casual labourers seeking employment in the coal mines of Enugu, the Port city of Harcourt (1913) and on the site of work on the new railway line leading up North. Men were being conscripted by the colonial masters to work on the railway lines. The work was tedious. Some of the men returned home on account of lack of physical fitness for the job. Others migrated permanently out of Agwata.

The next important occupational groups involved in migration



in Aguata within the colonial period were teachers and clerks who faced repeat migrations caused by frequent transfers. The last occupational group involved was petty traders who were enormously influenced by the growth of Onitsha as a commercial town. Migration in connection with trading appears to be the most important for some reasons. Onwuejeogwu (1981) has commented that around <sup>Awka</sup> Nri, Nanka, Nnewi, Igbo-Ukwu and Oraeri farming was not very productive because the soil had been subjected to centuries of surface erosion and leaching. As a result, adds Afigbo, "the inhabitants have in course of centuries turned from dependence on agriculture to other professions which they have developed to a high degree". Thus, people from Aguata trooped out to occupy enviable places as traders in new towns developed by Europeans.

Many new christian converts also flocked to Onitsha to assist the white missionaries after the first permanent christian mission in Ibo land was established, there in 1857 under Rev. John Christopher Taylor (a Sierra Leonian of Ibo parentage) (Afigbo, 1981). Young men were trained as priests and teachers and cast farther afield or returned home to propagate christianity. These young men had as part of their weapon serious grounding in horticulture. They were not just missionaries. They were also teachers and extension agents.

Initially, migration selectivity was one sided (the migrants being mostly adult males). As information flow between source and destination areas increased as well as residential stability, some balance was achieved in selectivity because:

- a) some migrants brought their wives, children and domestic servants to the townships.
- b) some migrants acquired apprentices (mostly young boys).

There is evidence that the pattern of diaspora spread beyond the boundaries of Nigeria to places like Fernando Po and Gabon where it was known that some Ibo slaves had settled earlier. There were high expectations from working in the plantations there.

### 2.3 Migration Patterns in the Post Colonial Period

The migration patterns in both the colonial and post-colonial periods differ only in terms of scale of operation of the determinant factors. The events leading to and following the Nigerian Civil War set the stage for return migration of Aguata people. This was caused by insecurity of lives and property in other parts of the country. Two aspects of this return migration are notable. There was massive and forced return in 1966/67 before the Civil War. After the war, there was a massive outmigration followed by occasional return of old and retired people until the economic recession of the 1980s set in, and spread the return migration selectivity to all age groups.

CHAPTER THREELITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Definition of Concepts

## 3.1.1 Migration

Technical definitions of migration are weakened by differing jurisdictional definitions of political areas; by differing cultural homogeneities of political units (Richmond and Kubot, 1976). Beijer (1968) defines migration as "movement of a person or persons involving a permanent change of residence". To give a clear understanding of the concept of migration, Meyer Fortes (1977) has distinguished between mobility, which "represents movement within boundaries" and migration in which persons cross boundaries which may be geographical, structural, ethnic or some other division which is recognised by the actor as setting him apart". Mangalam (1968) gives a definition that seems more inclusive. He says that migration is a:

"relatively permanent moving away of a collectivity, called migrants, from one geographical location to another preceded by decision-making on the part of the migrants based on a hierarchically ordered set of values or value ends and resulting in the interactional system of the migrants".

We differ from Mangalam's definition slightly and agree with Ferenczi (1983) that migrations in modern times

have tended to be less predominantly movements of groups and more the movements of individuals seeking economic settlement and transient work in other lands"

3.1.2 Migration Stream:- is the movement of people between specific locations along well defined routes (Lee, 1966).

The terms "dominant stream" and "counter stream" have come recently into general use to describe the two-way movement of migrants between the same places. According to Campbell and Johnson (1976) if we accept Lee's definition of migration stream, then we may define a counter-stream as movement in the opposite direction of the original stream. Dominant stream could therefore be used to refer to the original stream or the counter-stream depending on which is larger. In our circumstance, the dominant stream is rural -urban migration - while the counter-stream is urban - rural migration.

It should be noted that "counter-stream" is not necessarily the same as "return" migration. It has return migration as one of its components, in addition to primary (or direct) migration.

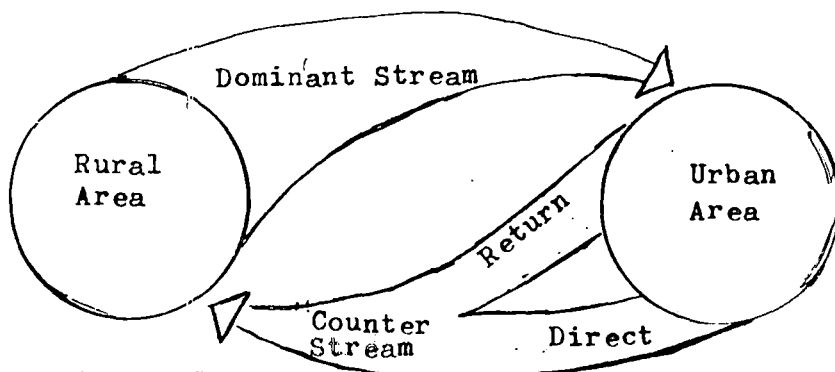


Fig. 3.1: Illustration of Dominant and Counter-stream Migration.

The primary component defines migrants as moving for the first time between the two locations in view. Other terms that have been used to refer to counter-stream in literature include "counter-current" (Ravenstein, 1889); "counter-movement" and "remigration" (Peterson, 1969); "backflow" (Hawley, 1971); "reverse flow" (Bogue, 1969) and "reverse stream" (Eldridge, 1965).

The primary (or direct) component of the counter-stream is to be ignored for the purposes of this research for some reasons. At our level of development, the quest for economic betterment appears to dominate other causes of migration. Since income generating economic activities are concentrated in the urban areas, the indigenes<sup>of urban towns</sup> have little or no cause to move to the rural areas where opportunities for easy income are limited. In addition, potential primary migrants from urban areas find it extremely difficult to acquire land in the rural areas because of high costs and feelings of insecurity by indigenes of those rural areas. Furthermore government - worker indigenes of urban areas more often than not influence their transfers to always be from one urban area to another thus effectively eclipsing primary urban - rural migrations.

3.1.3 Return Migrants:- are people who had migrated to elsewhere outside their home villages or districts, into other rural areas or urban centres, but have eventually returned and resettled in their home villages or districts (Ajaegbu, 1975).

For our purposes, it does not matter whether a migrant is returning to his home village or district. Once he or she had lived in a place up to one year, migrated and then subsequently returned to the same place, we consider him or her a return migrant.

#### 3.1.4 "Rural" and "Urban"

To give a rigorous definition of "urban or rural" area is difficult because it involves the consideration of numerous identifying criteria. These criteria can however fit into four major dimensions: ecological, demographic, occupational and socio-cultural.

Different countries have used some or combinations of these dimensions to define their "urban" and "rural" areas. For example, each country generally fixes a certain population conglomeration as urban and sometimes accords this a special administrative status (Abiagom, 1975). In the 1963 census of Nigeria, urban areas were simply determined on the basis of concentration of population of 20,000 and above in an area. Those with less than 20,000 population were regarded as rural areas.

To complete the definitions for our purposes, we have to add that rural areas are characterised by low population density, small absolute size, relative isolation (defined in terms of physical distance from the cities), with the major economic base being agricultural. However, according to Bealer, et. al. (1965), the agricultural activity is characterised by direct confrontation of nature's physical elements and a primary economic conversion function. They show a marked absence of modern amenities such as good roads, pipe borne water, electricity, telephones, and so on.

The urban areas, on the other hand are centres of concentration of government administrative machinery, commercial, industrial and manufacturing activities supported by large amounts of infrastructure. Accessibility and information flow are more in urban areas.

### 3.2 Theoretical Issues

The matter of appropriate theoretical frameworks for migration research is under continuing discussion and debate within the field. All analytical frameworks that have been advanced for studying migration in general have been "middle range" and not comprehensive (Campbell and Johnson, 1976). There is a complete absence of any theoretical framework on return migration as defined here in developing countries. Some

propositions on return migration developed by Campbell and Johnson are considered in the next section.

Most of the theoretical issues on migration are embedded in models explaining the causes of migration. Incidentally, they get intertwined with labour mobility considerations especially in the agricultural sector. The major theoretical perspectives on migration can be specified with regard to the perceptions of experts in different disciplines. Sociologists, Anthropologists and Geographers are more interested in the socio-structural conditions that cause migration (Parkin, 1975), while neo-classical economists ignore the social costs and benefits of migration and emphasize the economic variables such as income and wage differentials. Expansion of capitalism is viewed as the main cause of migration by Political Economists. This is exemplified in Amin's (1974) writing. In particular, he thinks that "migration impoverishes the home area and proletarianises the migrants". This is a clear reference to rural - urban migration. The validity or otherwise of this idea cannot be ascertained without bringing economic measurements into the picture.

### 3.2.1 Surplus Labour Models

These models operate on an assumption of closed economy where agricultural wage rate determination is influenced by institutional structures in the economy like land tenure, cropping



patterns and tenant - landlord arrangements. Labour is surplus because of limited substitutability between a scarce factor, land and an abundant factor labour while in Mynt's "Vent for Surplus" model, a lack of effective demand causes the surplus (Byerlee and Eicher, 1982).

Holleiner (1966b) has categorised the stages through which economies pass into 3 in his "Typology in Development Theory: The Land Surplus Economy". These are:

- i) Land surplus economy with labour as limiting factor;
- ii) All available land utilised leading to more intensive cultivation;
- iii) Labour becomes surplus with land as limiting factor.

The surplus labour models where the economy is assumed closed are unrealistic and cannot be applied in present - day studies since all economies are inter-dependent.

Holleiner's Stages II and III are applicable in Southern parts of Anambra State such as Aguata , Njikoka and Idemili, where adjustments have been made through aggressive engagement in non-farm occupations. More importantly , the people have migrated. Therefore, according to Holleiner and as stated earlier, because of the diversity of ecological zones and population densities in Nigeria, it is impossible to classify Nigeria as either land or labour surplus.

### 3.2.2 The Expected Income Model

Although by no means exhaustive, this is one of the models that have explained one of the root causes of rural - urban migration (and even urban - rural migration when viewed in reverse) in developing countries. In the basic behavioral model, Todaro (1969) says that the spatial allocation of labour over time between a rural and an urban sector is primarily a function of the differential in expected income between these two sectors. Migration occurs mainly for economic reasons: because urban wages are set by institutions above the market clearing level. Rural farm workers compare expected incomes from urban jobs before migrating.

Although Todaro (1969) did not indicate it specifically, we believe, as he must have assumed, that his model will operate where there is adequate flow of information between the urban and rural areas to enable rural farm workers compare the two sectors. The function of information transfers is done by return migrants mainly of the short-term circular category who in the urban areas occupy the fringes of cities. On return to the villages, they have ample "tales of the city" that lure others to migrate. The ingredients of Todaro's model must have among other things, informed Amin's assertion that capitalism is the main cause of migration.

Todaro's (1969) model is applicable to the present study of urban - rural migration if viewed in the reverse.

The real incomes of many urban workers have so fallen (below rural levels) that they are migrating to rural areas where a reasonable income from farming could be guaranteed.

### 3.2.3 The Backward-bending Supply Curve of Labour and Migration

This is actually a hypothesis that Africans have limited wants and would not respond to market forces like higher wages, for instance, after they had earned a target income to pay for taxes, bride prices or consumer goods. Although this idea has since been discarded as an abnormal economic behaviour, some authors (Kindleberger and Herrick, 1977) have tried to give a rational explanation of it by saying that leisure (which they assume the African workers must be seeking when they have reached the "target income") is an object of choice. They argue that a backward - bending supply curve does not imply limited wants. When wages rise and effort is withdrawn, what is needed is additional leisure. This behaviour, they maintain, is not uneconomic at all. The remarkable thing about this hypothesis is its early chronicling of return migratory tendencies of workers who migrated to the cities in search of "target income" and returned to the rural areas after achieving it. These workers can be regarded as making forays into alien environments (the cities) from their relatively primitive abodes. Under such circumstances where they had not yet imbibed what may be

described as the "city culture" and where feelings of alienation from the home village was pervasive, they had to return to the rural areas. Above all, fears of ethnic and clanish violence were high.

### 3.2.4 Contemporary Models and Concepts

These can apply to both rural - urban and urban - rural migration.

- a) Stevens (1980) provides an economic framework for return migration, distinguishing between access to public goods and to private goods. He argues that people are increasingly willing to sacrifice income to gain access to public goods (water, electricity, open spaces, clean air, silence, etc.) which are perceived to be more readily available in non-metropolitan (rural) areas. This model which considers migrants as both consumers, investors and labour is not easily applicable to developing countries.
- b) Bender's (1980) model is more appropriate in our circumstances in Nigeria (and to this study particularly) because it is concerned with the traditional concept of the migrant as labour with the structural conditions within and between areas that fix demand (and supply) for labour. Bender's model has the following propositions:

- i) basic economic activities are dispersing increasingly into the rural areas;
- ii) services disperse as a result of the growth of basic industries in rural areas;
- iii) existing labour force participation rates in combination with new employment opportunities determine the degree to which labour conditions induce new migration;
- iv) wage growth induces both higher labour force participation and new migration; and,
- v) increasing transport costs encourage further decentralisation and encourage the substitution of labour for energy.

Propositions i, ii, and iii can be used to explain the migration turn around in Nigeria. However, a missing element from the model is a statement on the urban conditions of recession and retrenchment that are supposed to be some of the primary inducers of return migration. When that is added, Bender's model would seem quite appropriate for the study of return migration and agricultural labour supply.

- c) While stressing that migration decision-making is a complex process that must be separated into steps, deciding to leave a place and selecting a destination, Williams and Mcmillen (1979) have used the concept of location-specific capital particularly for migrants motivated by retrenchment and environmental considerations. "Location-specific capital"

is a phrase coined by Davanzo and Morrison (1978) as a generic term denoting any or all of the factors that tie a person to a particular place". Thus, it is suggested that location-specific capital determines the direction of migration (Williams and Mcmillen, 1979). Prior residence entails the acquisition of location-specific capital in diverse forms. "The return migrant may respond to family or friends left behind in an earlier move, may have housing to return to; a business left behind, or may simply want to go back home.

In previous studies with this concept researchers have found it convenient to investigate only one form of location-specific capital at a time. Davanzo and Morrison (1978) formed a dummy variable where those who are return migrants are defined as having one unit of location-specific capital in the form of prior residence.

Clearly, this concept is very relevant to the present effort since it is suspected that most of the return - migrants to Aguata must have done so on basis of prior residence, home coming, return to abandoned rice and yam farms all of which are forms of location-specific capital.

- d) Another important concept in the study of long distance migration and at the individual level is Wolpert's (1965) concept of "place utility" - satisfaction with a place. If place utility is high as for example, when the individual is employed and receives regular income, the individual implicitly decides not to move.
- e) Brown and Longbreak (1920) have espoused another concept for explanation of migration behaviour referred to as "Search Space" which describes a sub-set of places within an awareness space. The potential migrant takes decisions in view of his awareness space which contains the places about which he has some information.

### 3.3 Migration in Nigeria

The bulk of literature on migration in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular relate to rural - urban migration. Only passing references have been made to urban - rural migration. As a phenomenon that had, until recently been insignificant not much has been documented on return migration. Adepoju (1975) believes that even though migration studies have proliferated in Nigeria, the data base for migration surveys still remains inadequate for the analysis of migration, partly because of unstandardized definitions, concepts and methodology and poor presentation all of which make comparative analysis difficult.

Over the years, four broad categories of migratory movements have been noted. These are:

- a) the migration of pastoralists from Northern to Southern Nigeria which can be cyclical, seasonal or trans-humance. When this extends over many years, it is called long-term migration or "migration drift" (Uyanna and Mabogunje, 1975);
- b) down hill movement of people who had taken refuge in highland areas during inter-ethnic conflicts and general political instability (Cleave, 1963). This is, perhaps, currently happening with the Koma people of Gongola State who, recently "discovered", are descending gradually to the towns with the persuasion of missionaries;
- c) seasonal agricultural labour movements (Prothero, 1957);
- d) long-term movements involving migration from rural to urban areas (Ejiogu, 1968; Mabogunje, 1970), urban to rural areas (Ojo, 1973); and urban to urban areas.

This rural - rural migration is usually from one savannah peasant agricultural area to another; from a subsistence to a cash cropping area or vice-versa. The rural - urban type involves movement from an agricultural area to a medium-sized town or to an urban industrial area. Urban - rural migration implies movement from an agricultural area to a medium-sized service or commercial town to a peasant or cash cropping agricultural rural area.

The volume and intensity of such moves are a function of economic activities between one rural area and another, between



these and the urban area on the other hand and between the various regions in the country (Adepoju, 1975).

#### 3.4 Causes of Migration

Lee (1966) has separated the causes of migration into four major categories, namely:

- a) those associated with area of origin;
- b) those associated with area of destination;
- c) intervening obstacles;
- d) personal factors.

DuToit (1975) has given incisive socio-political explanations regarding migration out of African traditional societies. According to him, migrants involved in what he calls "individual migration" can be categorised into "those who had to leave and those who wanted to leave". In the first category would fall persons who, due to social or personal circumstances, find life in the villages less than pleasant. This may include barren or divorced women, persons of a quarrelsome disposition, persons found to be suspect in soccery accusations and theft, younger sons where birth order gives preference to seniority and others who, through accident of birth and personal circumstances are badly placed to compete for positions of authority.

Although DuToit has not expatiated on the second category of migrants, they are supposed to be those propelled

by economic reasons, pleasure seekers of the much criticised "bright lights" hypothesis. Rural - urban migration has been explained on the basis of the urban - rural earnings gap. Return migration results when that gap is closed by adverse economic circumstances. Urban wage rates are higher than the marginal productivity of labour, since they reflect such non-market factors as minimum wage laws, strength of trade unionism, the desire by foreign firms to improve their image and guard against charges of exploitation of labour (Kilby, 1972; Ghai, 1978; Diejomoah, 1972).

There is evidence from Todaro (1969) that the rate of rural - urban migration is a positive function of the urban-rural earnings differential weighed by the probability of obtaining urban employment. Although studies by Sabot (1971) in Tanzania, Beals, Levy and Moses in Ghana (1967) appear to support Todaro's hypothesis, empirical work in Nigeria by Mabogunje (1970) have shown regional income differentials and rural - urban migration to be negatively related. Really, Mabogunje's findings are surprising and unbelievable since common sense and experience would appear to support Todaro's contention. While Todaro (1969) sees probability of obtaining urban employment as a support to the urban - rural earnings differential as a cause of rural - urban migration, Warriner, (1970)

says that migrants go to the urban areas to find jobs regardless of the employment situation there. The lesson here, though subject to objective determination, is that factors other than income expectations are important migration inducers.

Elkan (1960) views rural - urban migration as being caused by the low productivity and low income in agriculture which is subject to sharply diminishing returns because of population pressures. We doubt that our rural areas are already overpopulated. However, Elkan's perspective brings to mind a related cause of migration from rural areas. That is under-employment and seasonal unemployment that propel seasonal migrants some of who eventually may not return in the next season.

Sometimes, shortage of land and labour in rural areas could induce rural - urban migration. Also, lack of capital to purchase improved seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides, especially in overpopulated areas may cause out-migration. In such cases, where only application of new technology can lead to greater production, but where such are not available, individuals migrate seasonally to urban areas, in search of jobs, and eventually permanently out of the area (Goddard, 1973). Other causes of migration include the growth of export - import trade in cash crops, the cramping social sanctions of the extended family on the younger ones;

the concentration of educational and other vocational institutions in urban areas to which young rural youths must aspire; the tendency for some rural - urban migrants to eventually discover values in farming which over-ride high income expectations in urban areas that compel people to return to the villages and farm.

### 3.5 Migration Motivations

The decision to migrate involves at least two aspects:

- a) the decision to leave an area of origin; and,
- b) the decision of where to go to (Roseman, 1977; Brown and Moore, 1970).

The causal basis of the first helps explain out-migration while the causal basis of the second decision helps explain in-migration when evaluated at point of origin and point of destination respectively (Williams and McMillen, 1979). Before going further, it is important to stress that migration motivations and the causes of migration are often not easy to separate.

Writing on migration motivations, Byerlee and Eicher (1982) say that the decision to migrate can be analysed in terms of:

- a) monetary costs and returns related to income and employment in the source and destination areas;
- b) non-monetary costs and returns relating to risk, attitudinal characteristics, social ties and expectations.

Several factors have been found to influence migration decisions. These include educational attainment, sex, age, wealth status (or income level), size of house-hold, occupation, distance between origin and destination areas.

There appears to be conflicting evidence as to whether migration is positively or negatively related to educational attainment. Beals, Levy and Moses (1969) have on basis of studies in Ghana written that education is negatively related to migration. They hold that there is no evidence that education causes migration except in so far as it increases income potential and lessens an individual's abhorrence of cultural and social adjustments. Other studies by Byerlee (1976) in Sierra-Leone show the typical rural - urban migrant to be younger and more educated than the average rural resident. The propensity to migrate for persons with primary education was 7 times higher in Sierra-Leone than for persons without education.

In Ghana, the more economically active a youth is the less his integration into the work force, the fewer his familial obligations, and the higher the probability that he will migrate to other places seeking new opportunities. It is for this reason that the highest rates of migration are found in

groups of ages 15 to 25 (Fortes, 1971). Other studies on rural -urban migration in Nigeria have shown that the rate of migration peaks at late 20's or early 30's (Essang and Mabawonku, 1974; Adepoju, 1975).

According to Richmond and Kubat (1976), migration rates distribution is bimodal, first at young ages (for people still in search of occupations - mainly rural - urban migrants) and then at old age (when many people get retired - mainly urban - rural migrants).

More men than women migrate (Beiras, 1970; Sacher, 1967). The longer the distance between two possible origin and destination points, the more the reluctance to move. The deterrence effects of distance operate through the cost of moving, reluctance to leave familiar surroundings, and as a surrogate for intervening opportunities and for information.

As for return migration about which very little has been investigated, Engmann's (1972) field investigations in Ghana show that the proportion of the original migrants that return home will depend on age, sex, degree of acclimatization, adaptability to local conditions, original intention for migrating, extent of fulfilment of expectations, family obligations at home, level of education, state of market for skills possessed by

him, his readiness for retraining for other jobs, whether he has land to go back to.

### 3.6 Consequences of Migration

The consequences of migration are felt both in the origin and destination areas. These may be economic, social or political. The main economic functions of migration are to secure quantitative and qualitative equilibrium between labour supply and labour demand in different regions thereby contributing to the reduction of intra and inter-regional wage differentials, and to transfer new crops and ideas over wide regions (Richmond and Kubat, 1979; Clark, 1940).

With rural - urban migration in view, Todaro (1969) asserts that agricultural labour has a positive marginal product which is forgone when rural labour migrates to urban areas with a possible reduction in agricultural output. In addition, migration tends to lower the average product of labour in the receiving areas, thus, depressing wage rates (or causing them to rise more slowly), while in the labour-surplus areas of origin, the average product of labour tends to rise. Given the urban areas as sources of migration in urban - rural migration, this may not happen because of the high concentration of population. Also many unskilled labourers still flock to the urban areas regardless of the employment situation there (Warriner, 1970).

Migrating has an opportunity cost, Stiglitz, (1970) the magnitude of which depends on the institutional setting.

If we consider rural - urban migration, for example, the families of the migrants follow them to the urban centres and the land they worked reverts to the rural community without compensation, or remains fallow. Thus, disregarding soil fertility increases, the opportunity cost is the average family product (net of purchased inputs). Conversely, when urban - rural migration occurs, the reverse happens.

Among the adverse economic consequences of rural - urban migration is the fact that it reduces the capacity of those rural areas to achieve sustainable growth. This is because migratory activities are very high among the most productive age group (11-33 years), Mabawonku, (1974); Adepoju (1975) and thus not only leads to heavy brain drain on the supply of rural family labour but in addition draws out individuals with characteristics most appropriate for agricultural development programmes (Dale, 1969). In their study, Essang and Mabawonku (1974) have found that often, rural areas, contrary to common belief, lose out in the exchange of monetary and other resources between urban and rural areas. The misery and poverty in which unemployed and newly arrived migrants live is cost in terms of discomfort. Some are not even sure of a "bedspace" and a number are not certain of a meal next day (Hunter, 1973). City-ward migration not only increases



the rate of urban unemployment, congestion, poverty and physical deterioration of the city, it, in addition, contributes to a large extent, to increase in crime rates.

Some possible consequences of return migration in Nigerian circumstances where it almost certainly means urban - rural migration are: the introduction of new skills and innovations by return migrants. They may start planting new crops, employing new production techniques, erecting buildings with new designs and even encouraging education. They can break the social rigidities that are incompatible with economic development; they may, sadly though, stir social crises by behaving in ways the traditional residents would regard as improper.

### 3.7 Migration and Agricultural Labour

Migration involves movement of people. In a society where economic organisation of production emphasizes labour-intensity, labour mobility becomes very important. Holleiner (1966) has concluded that because of the diversity of ecological zones and population densities in Nigeria, it was impossible to classify Nigeria as either land surplus or labour surplus economy. Once it is recognised that both situations exist in a country, such as Nigeria, the issue of labour mobility re-emerges as an important factor in development.

Although there is considerable rural - rural movement of

agricultural labour between food producing areas, the rural - urban movement of agricultural labour is of more concern since they are lost to the urban fringe economies, as the "marginal labour force". Seasonal migration of agricultural labour has been shown to improve the total allocation of labour in the rural areas and has been shown to be a major factor in the establishment of cash crops such as cocoa, oil palm and rubber (Beals and Menzes, 1970).

In some food-producing areas in Sub-sahara Africa, where there are relatively few landless labourers as in Aguata, hired labour must be provided by other farmers or migrants from other areas if farm output is to be expanded (Byerlee and Eicher, 1982). Population growth is therefore an important determinant of farm labour availability. The net migration rate in the rural areas, the extent of availability of alternative employment (i.e. non-farm jobs), rates of retention and turnover of in-migrants determine the size of the labour force.

Carpenter (1980) has categorised retention periods into two:

- a) short-term retention; and,
- b) long-term retention.

If the short-term retention pattern is dominant, the supply

of migrants would soon be exhausted. The lower the turnover of migrants, the larger the pool of potential farm workers.

The extent of non-farm economic activities in a rural area can affect the amount of labour supplied in the farms. As much as 50% of working time may be spent on non-farm economic activities such as crafts, bicycle repairing; etc. (Norman, 1969; Cleave, 1970; Luning, 1967). Norman found an inverse relationship between labour input and off-farm labour inputs, suggesting that off-farm work is a means of salvaging labour time that has low opportunity cost.

### 3.8 Campbell and Johnson's Propositions on Return Migration

This is a compilation (a "state of knowledge" report) presented, according to the authors, to draw attention to the lack of research on return migration and to stimulate new research. These propositions have been developed from theory, empirical research, intuition, and speculation. Well-tested propositions are designated Type A, those with "limited testing" are Type B.

Some of these propositions have been selected as a guide in the present effort, and as a partial review of literature on return migration, although the researcher is aware that they have been developed and tested in circumstances very different from ours. Nevertheless, many of them are expected to be valid under our own conditions.

## 3.8.1 Type "A" Propositions

- a) Return migration will tend to be greater to those areas with a history of large out-migration (confirmed by Miller, (1973); Richmond, (1966) and Appleyard(1962).
- b) Return migration increases when labour market conditions deteriorate (VanderKamp, 1971; Eldridge, 1965).
- c) Return migrants are older than direct migrants (Eldridge, 1965; Campbell, et. al., 1974; Myers and Masnick, 1968; Hernandez - Advarez, 1968; Richmond, 1968; Appleyard, 1962).
- d) Return migration consists of a disproportionately large number of females (Campbell, et. al., 1974; Hernandez-Alvarez, 1968; Myers and Masnick, 1968).
- e) Return migrants tend to have higher levels of educational attainment than the non-migrants in the communities of destination (Bugue, 1969).
- f) Return migrants tend to have higher skilled occupations than the non-migrants in the communities of destination (Hernandez-Alvarez, 1968; Tadros, 1968).
- g) Return migrants tend to have higher incomes than non-migrants in the community of destination (Tadros, 1968).
- h) Return migrants are likely to cite social, as opposed to reonomic reasons for their move (Johnson, 1973; Richmond, 1968; Tadros, 1968).

- i) The stronger the inter-personal ties within groups in the community of origin of the major stream, the higher the probability of return migration if there are no sanctions against returning (Tadros, 1968; Johnson, 1973).

### 3.8.2. Type "B" Propositions

- a) Return migration tends to occur soon after the first migration (Eldridge, 1965; Comay, 1971).
- b) The longer a migrant stays in his area of destination, the less likely he is to return (Comay, 1971).
- c) Increasing employment in the community of origin will attract increasing numbers of return migrants (Tadros, 1968).
- d) A disproportionate number of the migrants with low "personal effectiveness" are likely to be return migrants (Lansing and Mueller, 1967).
- e) Rural migrants whose initial residence was on farm are more likely to return than non-farm residents (Lee, 1974).
- f) Return migration increases as size of place decreases (Lee, 1974).

### 3.9 Methodology

#### 3.9.1 Area of Study

Aguata Local Government Area is one of the 23 local government areas in Anambra State of Nigeria. It is situated at the southern end of the state, extending towards the border with Imo State and has a total land area of 718km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 347,031 by 1963 census estimates.

The Northern parts of Aguata (otherwise called Orumba) have wide expanse of very fertile soils while the southern areas have relatively less and highly leached soils. Farming is therefore more elaborately pursued in the north although majority of the inhabitants of the local government are peasant farmers. Outmigration of able-bodied young people is more from the south than from the North. The World Bank, Federal and State Governments have cooperated in setting up a small-holder rice irrigation scheme in four Orumba communities.

Agricultural products from Aguata include rice, yams, cocoyam, cassava, palm produce, cashew nuts, bananas, oranges and maize. The major problems facing the inhabitants are soil erosion, absence of motorable roads, lack of good drinking water and electricity.

#### 3.9.2 Sampling Procedure

The population of this study is made up of all return migrants coming to the villages from the urban areas.

A purposive sampling method was used at two levels:

- a) selecting survey villages; and,
- b) identifying return migrants.

a) Ten villages were chosen at intervals of an average of 8km so as to ensure even spread of survey villages across Aguata Local Government Area.

b) A sample frame of return migrants was compiled in the selected villages. Choice of respondents was restricted to those that returned between 1983 and 1988 - a period during which, as adjudged by the researcher, the effects of economic changes under consideration would be most at play. In making up this sample frame, the help of traditional rulers and councillors who should know the returnees was enlisted.

Finally, a random sample of ten return migrants was taken from the sample frame in each of the ten villages. The total number of respondents sampled is thus, one hundred (100).

### 3.9.3 Data Collection Methods

Data collection was by personal interview by the researcher in the company of literate enumerators and natives of the chosen villages. The questionnaire used was structured in such a way as to collect data broadly classified into:

- a) demographic data;
- b) labour force data;

- c) income and earnings information data;
- d) behavioural and attitudinal data.

Finally, secondary data from previous works in Aguata area were used to supplement questionnaire-generated data. These secondary data include early migration patterns, geographic descriptions and demographic information.

#### 3.9.4 Data Analysis Methods

The data has been analysed by extensive use of descriptive statistics. The mean, mode, and percentages were employed. The data is presented in Tables and figures.

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CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF DATA: CHARACTERISTICS OF RETURN MIGRANTS IN AGUATA

The characteristics of the return migrants are considered under three major sub-headings, namely: demographic, educational and socio-economic characteristics.

4.1 Demographic Characteristics

The survey results show that 62% of the return migrants fall within the age group 20-45 years (See table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Distribution of Return Migrants by Age and Sex

Age of Respondent	15-19	20-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	66 +	Total
Male	3	19	22	16	16	1	77
Female	-	12	9	-	2	-	23
Total (%)	3	31	31	16	18	1	100

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

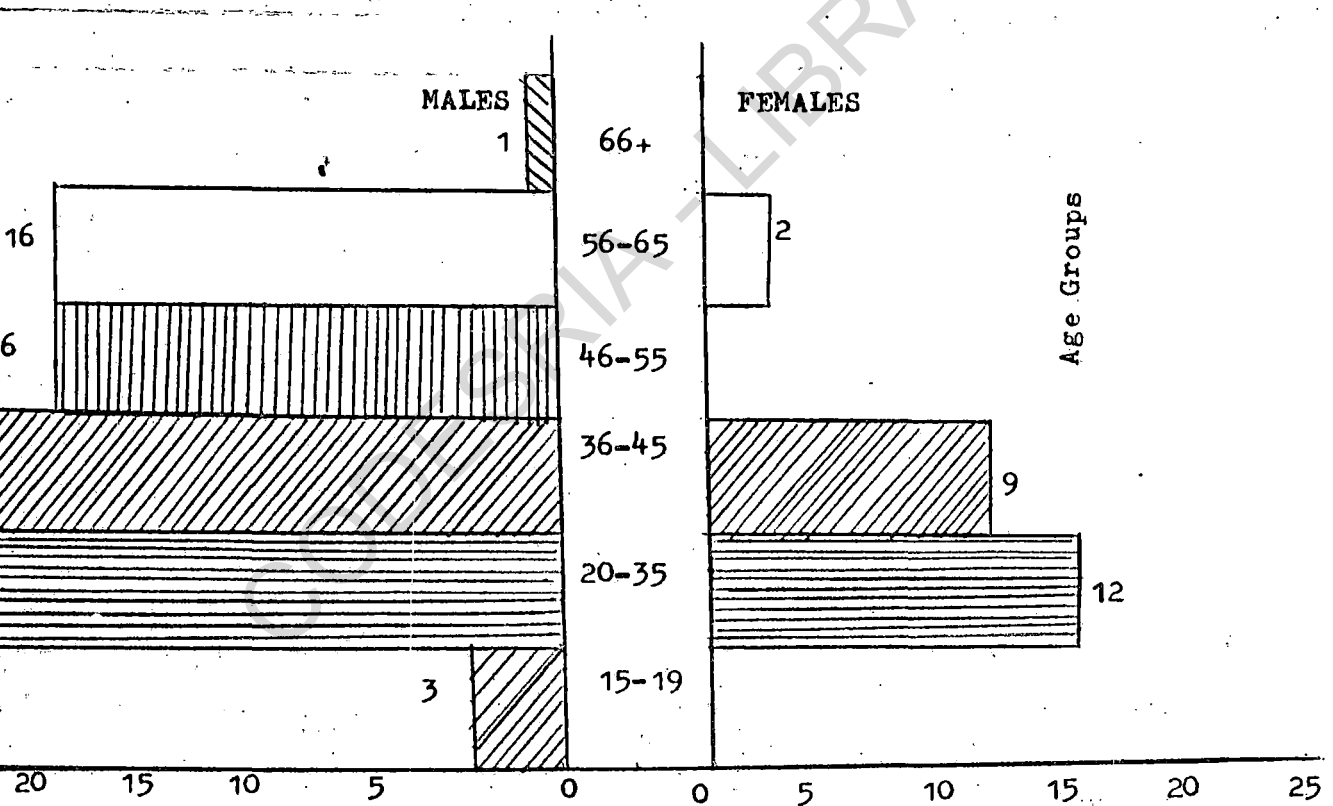
Only 1% of the return migrants were 60 years old and above. It is apparent that middle age persons constitute majority of the returnees. This must have distorted the rural age structure towards having more young people than had hitherto been the case. There is an implicit suggestion that the majority of the returnees had

moved for involuntary reasons. This is because at the age 20-45 years, most people have not attained the retirement age in their chosen careers.

The preponderance of returnees in the 20-45 age bracket tallies with Essang and Mabawonku's finding; though with regard to rural - urban migration, that migration rates peak at late 20's or early 30's (See p. 15).

The survey further shows that seventy-seven percent of the returnees were male while 23% were female. The information of Table 4.1 has been transformed into an age/sex pyramid (figure 4.1). The highest level of female migration occurred at age range 20-35 years, when, as discovered, marriage-related reasons for moving feature most prominently among females. The youngest return migrants were identified among males (3%). These were apprentices and students.

The sex ratio of the survey population - 3.4 males per female (or 335) is much higher than the average for Nigeria which is 104 (Adepoju, 1982). We note that the modal age group for female returnees (20-35) differs from that of males (36-45 years) although the data exhibits a bimodality as depicted for age groups 20-35 and 36-45.



g 46.1: Age/Sex Pyramid of the Survey Population

The survey further shows that sixty percent of the respondents were married, 4% were either divorced, separated or widowed while 36% were single. Of the married respondents, 7 were polygamous while 49 were monogamous.

A total of 253 children were indicated for the married members of the survey population (Table 4.2). Children here covers both infant and grown up offsprings of the return migrants. Average number of children per married return migrant was 4. Children are important as the suppliers of a large portion of unpaid family labour. This is examined in later sections.

Table 4.2: Distribution of Return Migrants by Number of Children

Number of respondents	Number of Children	Total Number of children
5	1	5
8	2	16
11	3	33
9	4	36
13	5	65
11	6	66
2	7	14
1	8	8
1	10	10
61*		253

\*Three married returnees do not have children.

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

Majority of returnees' children i.e. 38% of the 208 on whom information was obtained) are living with their parents and schooling. Sixty-one (or 39%) are workers who do not live with their parents compared to 3% who work and live with them. Those that school who do not live with their parents are either in boarding houses or with relations in other places and constitute 13% of the children. The remaining 17% live with the returnees but are neither employed nor schooling. This group includes mainly infants and jobless adult children. This help on the farm can only be expected from 55% (38+17) of the children.

Table 4.3: General Circumstances of the Children of Return Migrants

Children	No.	%
Living with respondent and schooling	78	38
Living with respondent and working	6	3
Not living with respondent and working	61	29
Not living with respondent and schooling	27	13
Living with respondent but neither working nor schooling	36	17
Total	208	100

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

#### 4.2 Educational Characteristics

Survey statistics indicate a rather high level of educational attainment and literacy among the survey population relative to that of the population returned to (Table 4.4). Twenty-one percent of the respondents have had no formal education although up to 74% can read and 56% can write the English Language. Eighty-five percent and 68% can read and write Igbo respectively. This is indicative of a relatively highly enlightened and socialized group of people in comparison to the village population they have joined. Nineteen of the return migrants have passed through higher institutions ranging from universities, polytechnics, college of education to nursing schools. One apparent finding from the survey is that poorly educated people perhaps do not return as easily as the well educated ones. Rather, they continue in the fringe economies of urban areas probably hoping that their lot would one day improve.

Many of the return migrants that fell between the "No education" and "some secondary" range in Table 4.4 have received non-institutional (apprenticeship) training in vocations like trading, tailoring, bricklaying, hair dressing and so on as detailed in Table 4.6.

Table 4.4: Distribution of Return Migrants by Educational Attainment

Level of Education	No. of Returnees Involved	Percentage (%)
No education	21	21.87
Some primary	16	16.66
Primary completed	14	14.58
Some secondary	9	9.38
Secondary completed	17	17.71
Higher institution	19	19.89
Total	96	100

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

Table 4.5: Distribution of Return Migrants by Literary Level

Literary level	No. of Returnees Involved	Percentage (%)
Can read English Language	74	77.10
Can write " "	56	58.30
Can read Igbo	85	39.58
Can write "	68	70.83
Can speak English Language	70	72.92

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

Table 4.6: Distribution of Return Migrants by Type of non-institutional Training Received

Type of Non-institutional Training Received	No. of Returnees Involved	Percentage (%)
Trading	1	1
Carpentary	5	5
Driving (professional)	3	3
Domestic science	5	5
Tailoring	2	2
Electronic mechanic	4	4
Bicycle repairing	1	1
Watch "	1	1
Shoe "	1	1
Brick laying	1	1
Hair dressing	1	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>35</b>

Source: Field Survey, 1988



### 4.3 Socio-Economic Characteristics

The return migrants have moved into rural areas where the agricultural sector employs  $2/3$  of the working population (Adepoju, 1982). The agricultural sector has hitherto over-shadowed the growing informal sector: cottage industries, petty trading and services to which many of the return migrants have come back. That was the situation during the so-called Oil Boom years including 1979 which we have used here as a convenient reference point. We assume that by 1979, the major causes of return migration had not become significantly important.

In 1979, the occupational distribution of the return migrants was as shown in Table 4.7. By then, many of them were schooling (22.92%). Interestingly, only 0.92 percent of the respondents was looking for work then. One, fourteen, twelve and <sup>eleven</sup> percent of them were engaged in the armed forces/ police, other public services, trading and construction respectively. "Construction" encompasses casual labour, carpentry, masonry, bicycle repairing, shoe repairing, hair dressing, auto and electrical mechanic. Ten percent of the respondents were working in agricultural estates within and outside Nigeria while twenty percent were in industry. Only nine persons held multiple jobs. The "Other" category includes diviners and full-time housewives.

As a result of recession, by the period just before return, some changes had occurred in the occupational distribution of the survey population (See Table 4.8).

Table 4.7: Occupational Distribution of Return Migrants in 1979

Occupation of Return Migrant in 1979	No. of Return Migrants in such Occupation	Percentage of all Respondents
Armed forces/Police	1	0.92
Other public service	16	14.78
Trading	14	12.80
Construction	13	11.93
Schooling	24	22.02
Looking for work	1	0.92
Agricultural Estate (+ Farming)	11	10.10
Industry (Private Company)	22	20.20
Other	7	6.40
<b>Total</b>	<b>109*</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

\*Multiple responses raise total above 100.

Just before return, up to 31% of the return migrants were looking for work. The major occupational changes between the three periods considered in Table 4.8 are obvious only in relation to the construction, industry, 'looking for work' and agricultural estate categories. The decline in the number of respondents who were students from 22% in 1979 to 4% just before return only indicates the progressive maturity of the survey population.

Construction attracted and held more people for two reasons. In the first place, it offered refuge to numerous people being retrenched from the government and, especially, the private sectors. Secondly, that category includes casual labourers who easily convert from skilled occupations without extended learning periods.

Between 1979 and just before return, the number of return migrants engaged in agricultural estate (farming) declined from 10% to 6%. This perhaps conforms with the normal decline in proportion of the working population engaged in farming and related occupations as economic development progresses. In addition, and more directly, the Oil Boom (of the late 1960s and early 1970's) had induced neglect of agriculture that heightened the exodus which by 1979 must have been tapering off.

Table 4.8: Occupational Distribution of Return Migrants in 1979, Just before Return and at time of Survey

Type of Occupation	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS							
					ON RETURN			
	In 1979	%	Just before Return	%	Primary	%	Secondary	%
Armed forces/ police	1	0.92	2	1.70	-	-	-	-
Other Public Service	16	14.78	16	13.60	13	13.50	-	-
Trading	14	12.80	15	12.70	15	15.60	6	7.00
Construction	13	11.93	19	16.10	27	28.10	15	17.90
Schooling	24	22.02	5	4.20	-	-	-	-
Looking for work	1	0.92	36	30.50	-	-	-	-
Agric. Estate(+ Farming)	11	10.10	8	6.80	19	19.80	57	67.90
Industry (Private Coy.)	22	20.20	15	12.70	16	16.70	3	3.60
Other	7	6.40	2	1.70	6	6.30	3	3.60
	109		118	100	96	100	84	100

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

It has to be noted that the totals in table 4.8 exceed 100, the sample size, because of multiple responses. Many of the respondents engaged in menial jobs classified under construction were at the same time looking for work. In all, 18 migrants were engaging in multiple occupations just before return in comparison to the situation in 1979 when only 9 persons were thus engaged. The occupational combinations recorded just before return are as follows:

Agricultural estate/trading	1
Agricultural estate/looking for work	1
Trading/looking for work	3
Construction/looking for work	9

#### 4.4 Movement Information

All respondents happen to be natives of the respective villages to which they have returned. All of them have lived in such villages before. Table 4.9 shows that outmigration took place from some survey villages as recently as after 1979. The villages are Akpugo, Igbo-Ukwu, Awgbu, Umuchu, Oko and Umunze.

All return migrants that left the survey villages between 1979 and the period just before return must have gone to non-survey urban towns. This is because no return migrant resided in any of the survey villages by the period just before return. Also, between 1979 and just before return, number of returnees by then resident in urban towns had increased in some towns and decreased in others. Logically, we can conclude that those that left urban

Table 4.9: Distribution of Return Migrants by Place of Residence between 1979 and just before Return

Name of Town	No. Residing in 1979	No. Residing just before Return	Diff-erences
Benin City	3	4	+1
Awka	4	6	+2
Onitsha	9	11	+2
Nsukka	4	4	0
Owerri	4	4	0
Ilorin	3	1	-2
Ogidi	1	1	0
Bauchi	1	1	0
Uga	1	-	-1
Wari	1	1	0
Ibadan	2	3	+1
Makurdi	3	2	-1
Igbo-Ukwu	1	-	-1
Awgu	1	-	-1
Port-Harcourt	3	4	+1
Umuchu	1	-	-1
Okigwe	1	2	+1
Oko	1	-	-1
Abakaliki	6	4	-2
Yola	1	1	0
Nnewi	8	8	0
Lagos	5	6	+1
Kaduna	5	5	0
Enugu	10	9	-1
Sapele	1	-	-1
Aba	3	4	+1
Awgbu	1	-	-1
Jos	2	2	0
Owerre Ezukala	1	-	-1
Ihiala	1	-	-1
Akpugo	3	-	-3
Umunze	1	-	-1
Fernando PO	1	-	-1
Mamfe	1	1	0
Lafia	1	1	0
Abuja	-	3	+3
Ogoja	-	1	+1
Kano	-	2	+2
Gboko	-	1	+1
Oji River	-	1	+1
Abeokuta	-	-	-
Total	96	96	

Source: Computed from field survey, 1988.

towns between 1979 and the period just before return must have moved to other urban towns because in no survey village was residence of any respondent recorded within that period. It therefore suggests that some of the respondents must have moved at least once between two urban towns before finally returning to some survey villages. The number of respondents that engaged in this sort of step migration is 20 (i.e. 20% of the respondents). This has been deduced thus from Table 4.9.

Table 4.9: Distribution of Return Migrants by Place of Residence between 1979 and just before Return

	Number of respondents that left non-survey urban towns between 1979 and period just before return	11
Plus	Number of respondents that came to the non-survey urban towns between 1979 and the period just before return	19
Less	number of respondents that left the survey villages between 1979 and the period just before return	10
Less	number of respondents that came into the survey villages between 1979 and the period just before return	0
	Number of respondents that step-migrated	<u><u>20</u></u>

Obviously, the first move by these step migrants was rural - urban while subsequent moves must have been urban - urban or urban-rural.

An examination of the year of return of the migrants (Table 4.10) shows a rise in the yearly rate of return from 3, in 1983 to the peak of 36 in 1986. By 1987, the rate had fallen to 14.

Table 4.10: Year of Return and Number of Migrants Returning

Year of Return of Migrants	No. of migrants that returned
1983	3
1984	16
1985	31
1986	36
1987	14
	100

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

We must note that the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) was introduced in Nigeria in 1986 and was followed by a spate of retrenchments which worsened an already alarming retrenchment and unemployment rate. If, as we assume here,



retrenchment would cause people to migrate to the villages, then Table 4.10 is an expression of the trend that prevailed between 1983 and 1988.

Restriction of the coverage of the research between 1983 and 1988 does not eliminate consideration of returnees who have migrated for voluntary reasons (eg. retirement) which would be deemed normal - not caused by the adverse economic circumstances of the recession. The official retirement age for government workers is 55 years. Ninety percent of the respondents are above 55 years (Table 4.1) and 6 percent reported moving for retirement reasons (Table 4.11). However, looked at from another angle, we can argue that retired people who would have liked to remain in the urban areas are being forced to move to the villages where cost of living is lower. Retirement per se is therefore probably not the cause of these movements. Apparently, retirement-related movements are for the above reason rendered involuntary.

#### 4.5 Migration Motivational Characteristics

The return migrants have given diverse reasons for leaving their last places of residence. In some instances, reasons for leaving can be related to reasons for choice of the place of return although they do not need to be identical.

Employment-related reasons rank high among return migration motivations (Table 4.11). Many respondents gave multiple reasons for leaving. Twenty<sup>two</sup> percent of the returnees that

Table 4.11: Reasons for Leaving former Place of Residence

Reasons for leaving former place of residence	No. of migrants involved	Percentage (%)
Retirement	12	6.00
To stay nearer home	42	22.00
Transfer	19	10.00
Retrenchment	26	14.00
Unemployment	29	15.30
Voluntary withdrawal from service	9	5.00
Task force demolition	16	8.50
On completing education	7	4.00
Too little pay	8	4.20
Other (detailed elsewhere)	21	11.00

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

came back in order "to stay nearer home" for various reasons (detailed below). This 22% also includes some people from other categories especially those that moved for retrenchment, task force demolition and retirement reasons. Unemployment is the second most mentioned motivation for migrating homewards (15%). Some 4% of the respondents had completed their education and returned to the village mainly for want of alternative places to go. Fourteen percent of the people returned after being retrenched while 10% did so on transfer - two being spouses joining their husbands. Other reasons given and classified under the 'other' category are:

-	no alternative	-	1
-	loss of guardian	-	1
-	ill health	-	1
-	taking up a new job	-	9
-	loss of husband	-	2
-	business failure	-	1
-	too many taxes in town	-	1
-	to join husband	-	2

They sum up to 21 or 11% of the total number of return migrants.

These reasons are separated from those on Table 4.11 for heuristic reasons only. They could otherwise be left on the

table as "other" category of reasons. Reference to "too many taxes" is, by implication an expression of the escalating operational cost of business and rising cost of living within the period covered by the research. In addition, by that time, businesses and individuals were being made to pay for so many services that had hitherto been taken for granted and at little or no charge.

All these reasons given above can be linked to the possession of location-specific capital in the destination villages. We sought to bring out this link by asking return migrants that wanted "to stay nearer home" why they chose to do so. Interestingly, the largest number of them (36%) do so because of their intention to farm - some as farm operators and others as farm operator/labourers and the rest as farm labourers (Table 4.12).

Majority of the returnees who want to stay nearer home apart from going there to farm are also interested in a settled life and rest (8%) and grassroots politics (4%). Especially, among the involuntary migrants, the reasons for staying nearer home are to reduce cost of living (8%), to base trading headquarters there (4%), no special reason (4%), no alternative (4%). We can imply some kind of financial

Table 4.12: Reasons for Staying Nearer Home

Reason for staying nearer home	No. staying nearer home	Percentage (%)
For settled life and rest	4	7.5
To take part in politics	2	3.8
To farm	15	28.3
To help develop home village	5	9.4
To reduce cost of living	4	7.5
To attend school from there	4	7.5
To join family	3	5.7
To care for aged parents	4	7.5
To base trading headquarters there	2	3.8
Land dispute	2	3.8
Fear of political instability	3	5.7
No special reason	2	3.8
No alternative	2	3.8
To set up industry there	1	1.9
	53	100

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

insecurity behind these moves. Viewed that way, we have to mention, in addition, the 8% that want to attend school from home in order to reduce costs. Feelings of insecurity inspired by

the volatile political climate of the early 1980's influenced 6% of the returnees to stay nearer home. Another 4% moved home to pay closer attention to some pieces of land that are in dispute while 8% want to care for their aged parents.

Another category of returnees made up mainly of retired and wealthy businessmen would want to "help develop" their home villages or to set up industries there.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### ANALYSIS OF DATA: ACTIVITIES OF RETURN MIGRANTS

In this chapter, we shall assess the distribution of the respondents among various occupations and compare the situation during the pre-migration and post-migration periods. We shall also do a critical assessment of the farming activities of the migrants and reach conclusions about the effect of their return on the availability of agricultural labour.

#### 5.1 The Occupations of Return Migrants

Several sub-divisions are conceivable under this section. We are interested in the occupations of the return migrants. We are also interested in the occupations of the members of their families for two reasons. In the first place, because some of the respondents are farm operators, we want to know how many of them have family members who help them in the farm. Secondly, some of the family members may be involved in the farm labour market - supplying their labour for wages.

##### 5.1.1 Primary and Secondary Occupations of Return Migrants

Of the 96 migrants that supplied information on their primary occupations, 19.8% were farm operators (Table 5.1). Construction and industry as defined earlier account for 17.8% each while 15.6% were traders. Public servants make up 13.5% while 9.4% were farm labourers. Only 2.1% were non-farm labourers. From the same Table, we can see that 67.9% of the respondents

Table 5.1: Distribution of Return Migrants and Members of their Family by their Primary and Secondary Occupations

Type of Occupation	RETURNEES' OCCUPATION				FAMILY MEMBERS' OCCUPATION			
	Primary	%	Secondary	%	Primary	%	Secondary	%
Farming	19	19.8	57	67.9	12	20	35	58.33
Public Service	13	13.5	-	-	9	15	-	-
Trading	15	15.6	6	7.0	24	40	5	8.33
Industry	16	16.7	3	3.6	3	5	2	3.33
Labour (non-farm)	2	2.1	3	3.6	2	3.33	6	10
Labour (farm)	9	9.4	9	10.7	6	10	6	10
Construction	16	16.7	3	3.6	2	3.33	3	5
Other	6	6.3	3	3.6	2	3.33	3	5
Total	96	100	84	100	60	100	60	100

Source: Field Survey, 1988.



engage in farming as a secondary occupation. This is not surprising, given the rural nature of the villages. More than 10% of those reporting to have secondary occupations were farm labourers.

When we focus on the rest of the migrants' family members, it becomes clear that majority (40%) have families that are primarily traders while 20% have families that are primarily farmers. About 58% of the respondents have families that engage in farming as a secondary occupation. Their involvement is mainly by way of assisting the house-hold head/farm operator in farm work.

We have not summed the number of family members involved in farming and farm labour. That would have been interesting but for the fact that it will be a worthless endeavour without, in addition, a knowledge of the total number of farm operators and labourers in the Aguata area, and a quantitative appreciation of farm labour demand and supply trends. These would have helped us establish the rates of entry into and exit from the farm labour market and thence determine whether supply increased or decreased following the return of the migrants under study. In the face of the above difficulties, we shall rely on static analysis using the 100 respondents.

## 5.2 Nature of Migrants' Farms

The largest number of farmer (22) returnees occupied their farms in 1986 (Table 5.2) - the same year in which majority returned (Table 4.10).

Table 5.2: Distribution of Return Migrants by Years of Occupation of their Present Farms

Year of Occupation of present farm	No. of migrants occupying farms	Percentage (%)
Long ago	9	12
1983	3	4
1984	5	7
1985	20	26
1986	23	30
1987	16	21
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

With the exception of 12% of the returnees that occupied their farms long ago (ever before the economic recession), the trend within Tables 4.10 and 5.2 for the period 1983-1987 are related: both rising and peaking in 1986.

To the return migrants, access to land on return was relatively easy. This is because many of them had "location-specific capital" in form of farm land and relatives to go back

to. Thus, thirty-eight percent of the returnees that farm went back to their farms which they had before they left their wards (Table 5.3). Fifty percent of them started working on their fathers' or other family members' farms while 39% of them established new farms the land for which they obtained from various sources including uncles, fathers, brothers and friends. The rest purchased their farm land. Some returnees would initially work on their relation's farms before setting up theirs.

Because of the relatively large number of returnees either going back to their farms or establishing new ones, labour demand has risen. The average number of children per family is 4, of which some are either too young to work in the farm or grown up and not living with their parents. Thus, the prospects of supply of enough family labour are low, making use of hired labour inevitable (See table 4.6). The result has been the aggravation of the labour shortage situation. Some additional reasons strengthen the above observation.

As shown on Table 5.4, majority of the returnees have been away from farming for long periods.

Table 5.3: Farming Activities of Return Migrants by Farm Size, Type of Enterprise and Source of Farm Land

Size of Farm (ha)	No. of Returnees that had farms before they left their wards	No. working on fathers' or other family members' farms	No. of Returnees that established new farms and from whom they got land				
			Uncle	Father	Brother	Friend	Purchased
a) Food Crop Production							
1	16	20	4	1	2	4	
1-2	8	17	1	3	2	3	
2-3	5	3	1	-	-	-	
3	1	-	-	-	-	1	
Total	30	40	6	4	4	4	
b) Tree Crop Production							
1	6	1	-	-	-	-	
1-2	6	10	1	1	-	1	
2-3	3	4	1	-	-	1	
3	1	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	16	15	2	1	-	2	
c) Livestock Production							
1	3	11	-	1	2	-	
1-2	2	1	-	-	-	-	
2-3	2	2	-	-	-	-	
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	7	14	-	1	2	-	
d) Other Commercial Crops Production							
1	1	1	-	-	-	-	
1-2	-	1	1	-	-	-	
2-3	-	-	-	-	-	-	
3	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Total	1	2	1	-	-	-	
e) Fishery							
1	-	-	-	-	-	-	
1-2	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2-3	-	-	-	-	-	-	
3	1	-	-	-	1	-	
Total	1	-	-	-	1	-	

Sources: Field Survey, 1988.

Table 5.4: Distribution of Return Migrants by Number of years they have been away from full-time and part-time farming

No. of years Returnees have been away from farming	No. of Returnees away from full-time farming	%	No. of Returnees away from part-time farming	%
1-5	4	5.0	29	38
6-10	3	4.0	12	13
11-15	4	5.0	7	8
16-20	1	1.2	1	1
26-30	2	2.4	-	-
31-35	1	1.2	-	-
36-40	-	-	-	-
41-45	-	-	-	-
46-50	-	-	-	-
51-55	-	-	-	-
56-60	1	1.2	-	-
All through	33	41	6	6.5
Cannot recall	31	38.2	34	37
	81	100	92	100

Average number of years of absence (See Appendix IV)

Full-time 19.5 years  
Part-time 4.4 years

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

They have been away on the average for 19.5 years and 4.4 years from full-time and part-time farming respectively. Forty-one percent of the respondents have never been full-time farmers, compared to 6.5% that have never been part-time farmers. Thirty-eight and thirty-seven percent cannot remember the length of their absence from full-time and part-time farming respectively.

We can decipher from the survey results that the migrants who work on their fathers' or other family members' farm are few and so constitute a limited source of family labour. However, many of them reported working on their relatives' farms. Only for a short while before setting up their own farms and requiring to hire labour themselves. This usually exacerbates the already serious labour shortage.

With residential stability reaching 4 years (as for those that returned in 1983) and as the returnees consolidate holdings and expand both farm and non-farm operations, the labour situation can only get worse. This is because they are most likely to continue requiring more and more labour for hire. Moreover, with the exception of poultry farming (of which only 5 cases were reported), other enterprises have continued to enjoy relatively high demand and prices for their products and so are expected to expand holdings.

### 5.3 Land Preparation and Labour Use

The survey further shows that 31% of returnee farmers do their cultivation by tractor. The tractor hirers are mainly the large-scale cultivators having farms of size 2 hectares and above. Tractor use is however, limited to tillage and in some cases ridging, leaving all cultural practices and harvesting for manual labour. As such, the extent to which mechanization relieves the labour shortage is limited.

A look at Table 5.5 which distributes the returnee farmers by farm operation and type of labour hired shows marked rise in the number employing labour between 1986 and 1987. For instance, the largest number of the farmers (39% in 1986 and 60% in 1987) employed labour for land clearing. The next important operations in terms of number of returnees hiring labour are ridging/heaping (33% in 1986 and 50% in 1987) and weeding (33% in 1986 and 56% in 1987).

Table 5.6 shows the average number of labourers employed per farmer migrant for clearing/heaping, weeding and harvesting/processing. Between 1986 and 1987, the number employing labour increased with number employed. Thus, the average number of labourers employed per migrant remains approximately the same for both years. The implication again is that majority of the migrants rather than depend solely on their own labour are exploiting the labour market more and more.

Table 5.5: Distribution of Return Migrants by Farm Operation and Type of Labour Hired in 1986 and 1987

	No. of Return Migrants Hiring Labour and Category of Labour Hired in:															
	1986							1987								
	M	W	C	M,W	MW&C	WC	MC	M	W	C	MW	MW&C	WC	MC		
Land clearing	19	3	-	8	1	-	-	31	31	5	-	8	3	1	-	48
Ridging/heaping	20	-	-	5	1	-	-	26	30	-	-	9	1	-	-	40
Planting	2	6	1	3	-	11	-	23	2	11	-	5	-	14	-	32
Staking	7	4	-	5	-	-	-	16	12	9	-	5	-	-	1	27
Weeding	-	8	-	-	3	15	-	26	1	16	-	2	1	26	-	46
Harvesting field crops	-	6	-	7	4	5	-	22	2	10	-	10	4	9	-	35
Harvesting tree crops	11	-	-	-	2	-	2	15	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	13
Preparing of foods	-	-	-	-	1	1	-	2	-	3	-	1	-	1	-	5
Poultry	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	2	-	1	-	2	-	-	-	3
Fishery	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	60	28	1	29	12	32	2	-	88	4	-	42	9	51	4	-

NB: NM = men; W = women; C = Children, = summation sign.

Source: Field Survey, 1988.



Table 5.6: Number of Farm Labourers Employed for Selected Farm Operations in 1986 and 1987

Farm Activity	Total No. of people employed in 1986	Average per migrant	Total No. of people employed in 1987	Average per migrant
Clearing/ridging/heaping	102	3	179	3.4
Weeding	100	3.3	180	3.7
Harvesting/processing	91	3.2	128	3.2
Total	293		487	

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

Table 5.6 further reveals that land clearing, weeding, ridging/heaping required the largest number of labourers in that order and in both years. These are the tedious and time-critical operations. The upsurge in labour demand for these operations are reportedly met by:

- a) mobilising family members;
- b) employing labourers from the large army of seasonal migrant labourers who come especially from the Abakaliki area; and,
- c) working longer periods of time in the farm.

Table 5.7: Allocation of Time to Farm and Non-farm Activities  
by Farmer Return Migrants

		1986							
Place where Labour is spent	No. of Hours spent per day	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No. of returnees on personal farms		23	16	15	9	3	1	-	-
No. of returnees on other people's farms		3	-	6	2	1	-	-	-
		1987							
No. of Returnees on personal farms		5	22	25	10	4	2	-	1
No. of Returnees on other people's farms		-	4	6	11	2	-	1	-
No. of Returnees on non- farm jobs		1	8	1	4	1	3	2	4

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

Table 5.8: Average Time Allocated to Farm and Non-Farm Activities  
by Farmer Return Migrants

Place of Activity	Total Hours spent spent by all farmers per day in 1986	Average	Total Hours spent by all farmers per day in 1987	Average
Personal farms	122	2.6	204	3.1
Other people's farms	46	3.8	87	3.6
Non-farm jobs	99	4.3	96	4.0

Source: Computed from Field Data, 1988.

#### 5.4 Time Sharing between Personal Farms, Other People's Farms and Non-farm Jobs

In Table 5.8, we have calculated the average amount of time spent per migrant per day in his personal farm, other people's farms, and non-farm jobs. The least time is spent on personal farms. In 1986, an average 2.6 hours per day was spent on the personal farms. This rose to 3.1 hours/day in 1987 and is most probably accounted for by the increasing number of migrants who develop and expand their own farms and consequently, reduce the amount of their labour for hire or the few that remain and work longer hours or the diversification into more time demanding enterprises.

The number of return migrants hiring labour (Table 5.5) rose generally for all farm operations. Several reasons for this can be deduced. Some of the return migrants were becoming less directly involved in farm labour and spending more time on non-farm activities. Others expanded their hectarages to the extent that they needed hired labour. Employment of more hired labour also accompanied diversification into labour-intensive enterprises as, for example, moving from house-hold poultry farming into yam and cassava/maize cultivation.

While the average labour time spent on personal farms rose between 1986 and 1987, that spent in other people's farms fell from 3.8 to 3.6 hours per day. The decrease in amount of time spent on non-farm jobs from 4.3 hours per day in 1986 to 4.0 hours per day in 1987 may be capturing the movement into

a more profitable rural calling given the prevailing depressed economic situation in Nigeria. This is also apparently expressed in the decline in the percentage of time spent on non-farm occupation from 40.2% in 1986 to 37.4% in 1987.

The return migrants have several sources of income. These have been considered under two major categorizations, viz: income from casual labour (farm and non-farm) as in Table 5.9 and income from pensions, remittances from children and relations and sale of farm produce as in Table 5.10. With reference to Table 5.9 and appendix V, we note that in both 1986 and 1987, income from non-farm jobs surpassed that from wage labour in farms. However, income from non-farm jobs fell on the average from ₦10.2/day to ₦9.5/day. Income from wage farm labour correspondingly rose from ₦7.3/day to ₦7.4/day. There appears to be an inverse relationship between incomes from these two areas. Thus perhaps, reflecting the increasing scarcity of agricultural labour despite the migration flow into the rural areas.

The demand for and price of farm products have risen mainly because of the increasing substitution of local foods for hitherto imported ones the prices of which have become too inflated (eg. rice). In consequence, the rate of expansion in farm size and number (See Table 5.2) in response to dwindling incomes, from non-farm economic opportunities appears to surpass the rate of farm labour supply.

Table 5.9: Distribution of Return Migrants by Income and Source of Income

Income Per Day (₦)	No. of Returnees working on other people's farms		No. of Returnees Receiving incomes from non-farm jobs	
	1986	1987	1986	1987
3	1	1	1	1
4	-	-	3	3
5	4	4	2	4
6	-	1	1	1
7	-	4	1	1
8	6	7	4	3
9	1	2	5	6
10	1	2	4	5
12	1	1	3	3
15	-	-	3	4
20	-	-	2	3
30	-	-	1	1

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

Income from pensions and remittances from children and relatives have little implication for our analysis except to the extent that such incomes, as discovered during the survey, help a few returnees in the financing of payments to hired labour. In other words, such incomes encourage the hiring of labour. However, only 10 of the people interviewed indicated receipt of such incomes.

Table 5.10: Distribution of Return Migrants by Income Range and Source of Income

Income Range (N)	Class Mark (N)	No. OF RETURNEES RECEIVING INCOMES FROM:							
		Pension		Remittances from children dren, etc.		Sales		Other	
		1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987
100	100	3	3	5	6	6	6	2	2
100-200	150	2	2	2	3	1	1	1	1
200-300	250	5	5	-	-	1	1	-	-
600-700	650	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-
900-1000	950	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-
1000-2000	1500	-	-	-	-	4	4	-	-
2000-3000	2500	-	-	-	-	6	8	-	-
8000	8000	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	10	10	7	9	19	25	3	3

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

### 5.5: Community Involvement of Return Migrants and Farm Labour Supply

During the survey, questions were asked concerning the activities of the return migrants in their respective communities. Their responses have given us some idea of the labour demand and supply consequences of their return to the villages involved.

The sociological impact of the return migrants is measured by the ability of the local institutions to cope with the changing needs and aspirations of the diversifying population. This diversification is in terms of culture, education, religion, government and economic undertakings rather than in ethnic or other composition. Because of the return of these more or less counter-culture elements, community and individual life were found to have been affected in several respects.

Direct activities of the return migrants such as establishment of farms, rural small-scale industries and commercial concerns are helping to change the rural economy. Not only is there increased demand for unskilled labour for farm work, there is also an increasing competition between the agricultural sector and the non-farm sector. We do not know the rate of transfer or the net numerical exchange of labour between the two sectors. However, given the fact that many returnees maintain investments in both the farm and non-farm sectors which tap labour from the same unskilled labour pool, agricultural labour availability is

likely to be affected.

At a secondary level, new attitudes to business are emerging. The industries and services which the migrants have established such as hospitals, insurance companies and hotels, etc. are attracting complementary staff who have introduced some form of cultural contrast from their source areas. But that is not important for our purposes.

In another breath, we discovered that some migrants are involved in the enlightenment of their communities. One of them has been organising workshops and lectures on health-related issues. Another organises well publicised local government-wide jogging sessions tagged "Run for Life Campaign". Its success has been remarkable.

Another measure of the return migrants' community involvement is the extent of their belonging to local clubs and associations other than town unions. Nineteen percent of the respondents belong to one association or another. Ten of these hold posts in their associations. Two percent of the respondents have won election into the local council. These trends are attributable to the migrants' relatively superior education and previous managerial and leadership experiences which have imbued them with some measure of creativity and innovativeness.



The overall impact of the return migrants' activities on their destination areas will depend on the consistency of such activities. This in turn will depend on the level of satisfaction the returnees are deriving from their communities, expressed in residential stability terms. The higher the residential stability of the return migrants, the more the chances that the observed consequences of their return (eg. deminishing agricultural labour supply) will persist, se teris paribus.

Respondents were thus, asked to rate their communities in terms of the extent to which they have met the objectives of returning as well as current realities on return.

Seventy-four percent of them indicated having met their objectives. Fifty three percent discovered new advantages for which they are happy. These advantages have to do mainly with doing part-time farming and keeping abreast of local political and social issues in their communities. Some 14% are unhappy about their return for not meeting their objectives and for not having any alternative places to go. They are mainly students, school leavers and retrenched people.

Finally, following our request, the returnees compared their living conditions in the survey villages with those of their source areas. The ranking is in three places: (a) better, (b) Same; and, (c) worse for security living standard, health and profitability

(See Table 5.11). For most returnees (57%) security is better now than before they moved. Thirty-one percent see no change while seven percent <sup>are</sup> actually worse off. Security as defined here includes for life and properties, job security and safety from the Task Force's demolition activities.

The living standards of the returnees has not changed much. As much as 27% of them think theirs have actually deteriorated. Among these are many retired people who could not sustain themselves in the urban areas owing to rising cost of living. Those experiencing rising standards of living (37%) have mainly <sup>in</sup> dual occupations ~~at~~ the farm and non-farm sectors. In conclusion, it is apparent that majority of the returnees would exhibit high residential stability and are likely to continue and even expand their labour activities along lines observed in this study.

Table 5.11: Level of Satisfaction with Destination Areas as Rated by Return Migrants

Criterion	RANKS AND NUMBER OF RETURNEES RES-		
	PONDING		
	Better	Same	Worse
Security	57	31	7
Living standard	37	35	27
Health	22	60	8
Profitability	69	-	-
Other	1	-	-

Source: Field Survey, 1988.

CHAPTER SIXSUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

## 6.1 Summary of Findings

In this study, we have tried to throw some light on the phenomenon of return migration and its consequences on the rural economy of Aguata, particularly with regard to the supply of agricultural labour. The aim was to understand the patterns of migration in Aguata, identify the migrants and ascertain their characteristics as well as their labour and other activities.

Before the advent of colonialism, migration patterns in Aguata were shaped by feelings of territorial aggression, population pressures, ritual rivalry and inter-communal wars. During the colonial era, slavery, trading activities, imperatives of the newly introduced civil services, the advent of christianity and urbanization became important determinants of mainly rural-urban migration. Return migration became a significant component of the migration patterns just before and after the Nigerian Civil War. Subsequently, however, high economic growth rate during the oil boom induced a massive rural - urban migration stream until the recession of the early 1980's when adverse economic circumstances have been reversing the trend.

Our analysis in chapter four show that people within the

age group 20 - 45 years returned most. Also, more males than females were involved in return migration. The rural age structure in Aguata has been diluted with the influx of younger persons.

Sixty percent of the respondents were married with an average of four children each. Children are important suppliers of unpaid family labour. Judging by their living circumstances, however, help on the farms could only be expected from fifty-five percent of the returnees' children.

Literacy measured by the number of return migrants that can read and write the English Language is high among the survey population. Between 1979 and the period just before return, the number of returnees looking for work increased by about 29%. At the time of the survey, only seasonal unemployment was noticed among the returnees. None was looking for work.

All respondents were natives of the respective villages to which they returned. Twenty percent were step migrants while two percent came from outside Nigeria. The greatest number returned in 1986. Majority of the migrants returned on account of wanting to stay nearer home although when probed further, "to stay nearer home" turned out to be a surrogate for having nothing doing in the source areas. This can still be reduced to

economic causation. The second largest group returned for unemployment reasons. Further analysis demonstrated that those who left for reasons of wanting to stay nearer home drew heavily on location-specific capital in form of prior residence when selecting their destinations.

In Chapter Five, we concentrated on the activities of the migrants on return. Majority of the returnees engage in farming as a primary and secondary occupation while majority of their family members are primarily traders and engage in farming as a secondary occupation. Only a very small percentage of the migrants are purely farm labourers. Although access to land was relatively easy for the returnees, many have had to work on their parents' and relatives' farms before being able to acquire and develop theirs. The difficulties encountered in acquiring own farms were increased by the fact that the migrants had been away from farming for various lengths of time averaging 19.5 years from full-time and 4.4 years from part-time farming.

Tractor use was found to be limited to a few farm operations and by only thirty-one percent of the returnee farmers. It therefore does not significantly relieve the labour shortage being experienced by the farmers. Between 1986 and 1987, there was an appreciable rise in the number of

returnees employing labour although the average number of labourers employed per migrant remained approximately the same. This is probably because of the corresponding increase in the number of migrants establishing new farms, expanding their farms and employing more labour. For the same reasons, the amount of time spent on personal farms increased between 1986 and 1987. Also, there was a decrease in the amount of time spent on non-farm jobs.

An inverse relationship was observed between income from non-farm jobs and income from farm wage labour. Although it could not be confirmed, it is most likely that the phenomenon resulted from the rate of expansion in farm size and numbers outpacing the rate of supply of farm labour. A few returnees have received income from children and relatives in other places and have used same to finance their farm operations. A large percentage of this went to payment for hired labour.

## 6.2 Policy Implications of Results

The policy issues considered here centre on measures that would encourage selectivity of potential farm labour or operator/labour in return migration.

Return migration has become a reality in Nigeria. Although imposed by adverse circumstances, it might prove a

blessing in disguise. The fears expressed by Adepoju (1982) regarding the effect of increasing drain of the family labour pool (of out-migration of young persons) on labour supply and food production may no longer hold.

The implicit assumption in most related literature that once able-bodied young people go back to the villages, Nigeria's food shortage problems would be solved is not plausible given that critical analysts have held many other non-demography factors responsible for the food shortage. Eicher, et. al. (1970) have always held that poor policies in African (nay Nigerian) agriculture have for long perpetrated rural unemployment and out-migration. Such policies, as outlined in earlier sections include:

- i. subsidized tractor mechanization;
- ii. self-sufficiency food policies which raise consumer prices and induce high minimum statutory wage rates;
- iii. anti-export policies; and,
- iv. over-emphasis on government direct production schemes which are capital-intensive.

The above measures encourage exit of resources from and diminished entry of investors into the agricultural sector. As far back as 1973, Byerlee showed that removal of taxes on export crops would raise agricultural employment by 2.3%. The taxes are no longer there. However, the increasing level of agricultural employment

being experienced now cannot be attributed solely to the removal of those taxes. Many measures under the Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) of the Federal Government (which ended officially in 1988) are contributing to rural farm employment generation. These measures, however, are not enough solutions. Besides, some of them appear to be coercive.

In the remaining paragraphs, we enumerate our major findings and their policy implications:

1. Majority of the returnees fall within the age group 20-45 years, consisting of the most active members of the society. The tendency to perceive the rural area as the abode of the old and the very young should therefore be discarded. Planners should accordingly reflect this fact in their provisions and recommendations.

2. Return migration has become a reality in Aguata. The labour shortage problem in the farms is expected to be reduced. However, to encourage a faster solution, the return migration rate needs to be hastened.

When, in 1962 rural - urban migration was becoming alarming, one of the measures adopted by the then Eastern Regional Government was the establishment of the first farm settlements (FAO, 1966). These settlements have since died but can be reactivated now to encourage urban - rural migration by:

- i. making rural living more attractive;



- ii. providing employment and livelihood to school leavers who cannot be absorbed in industry and commercial houses.

Among the measures to be used for achieving the objective of adequate labour supply is the conscious effort to promote rapid but cautious industrialization of the rural areas to encourage the return of able-bodied men and women. The more important aspect of this is the fact (from data analysis) that most returnees would readily engage in farming as a secondary occupation even if primarily industry workers. Besides, members of their family (especially children) will come in handy in farm work. The industries to be encouraged need not be agro-based although such agro-based industries would be most appropriate. The necessary support and encouragement to be given to rural industrialists should include:

- a) provision of basic infrastructure such as roads, electricity, potable water, telecommunication facilities, schools and recreational centres.
- b) granting of incentives in form of tax holidays and subsidised electricity, water and telephone services for rural industries. The criteria for determining eligibility in this regard should include the extent of linkage between the industry and the rural economy, number of people employed, sourcing of raw materials among others.

Government loan support agencies such as the Nigerian Agricultural and Cooperative Bank, Nigerian Bank for Commerce

and Industries, the National Directorate of Employment should be made to approve more of loan applications for industrial projects that have rural locational bias. When the purchasing power of rural industry workers is enhanced, demand for agricultural products will be strengthened leading to higher incomes for farmers. In this way, urban - rural income differential, noted to be one of the major causes of rural - urban migration, could be reduced.

3. Only 55% of the children of return migrants are in a position to assist their parents on the farm. The rest are either too young to be of help or have left their parents to live in boarding houses in schools or with relatives in urban areas. They could also have become apprenticed to learn a trade in the urban areas.

The policy objective here should be the retention of children of rural dwellers within the local environment. One way of achieving this is by subsidizing the education of non-boarding students in rural areas thereby retaining them to assist their parents in farm work.

4. Mechanization of farm operations is limited among return migrants, nay their villages to which they returned.

Economic planners have always been advised not to recommend the introduction of labour-saving technologies

if the negative-effects of migration are to be mitigated. However, where there is acute shortage of labour and low farm output, as in Aguata, one would advocate mechanization in the short-run with intermediate technologies for specific time-critical farm operations such as tillage. This will permit expansion of hectarages thereby creating employment for returnees as economic recession bites harder. It will be disappointing and counter-productive to mount a successful urban-rural migration campaign only to glut the rural labour market.

Since, as we discovered, only a very small percentage of the returnees are farm labourers per se, it will be necessary to encourage mechanization because as most returnees establish farms, labour demand will rise accordingly unless labour is attracted from other areas like Abakaliki. But these other areas are expected to experience similar trends.

5. All the respondents are native of the villages to which they returned.

As both farm and non-farm economic activities expand in the rural areas, the labour force participation rates of both male and female indigenous population are expected to level up gradually. Eventually, the potential for an

indigenous labour supply would narrow considerably making in-migration of labour inevitable as employment expands, provided the wage rates are competitive. At present, return migration in Aguata, as indeed in most parts of Nigeria, involves only indigenes. Thus, where most of the returning indigenes are in occupations, other than farming and even have the resources to set up new farms, it becomes difficult to relieve the farm labour shortage by encouraging return migration only. As suggested by Mabogunje (1970) and Eicher, *et. al.* (1970). Measures should be instituted to encourage labour mobility across not just urban-rural boundaries but across ethnic, tribal and religious barriers.

6. Return migration has not eased the labour shortage in the villages surveyed for several reasons:

- a) most returnees are educated and could engage in non-farm jobs.
- b) Most returnee farmers are labour hirers rather than suppliers.
- c) most returnees have location-specific capital in their villages and as such, tend to be largely self-employed.

7. There is evidence that the returnees are getting involved in the affairs of the communities to which they returned.

This points to possibilities of retention of the migrants.

The possible retention periods cannot be known, however, but efforts could be made to lengthen them. If long-term retention is dominant, it means fewer turnover problems for businesses and farms and, as a result, fewer expenditure on training and skill development in the local environment. Retention of return migrants could be ensured by improving the physical and social environments of farmers. Erosion control must be pursued; electricity, water, health and recreational facilities made available and cooperative organisations encouraged.

Return migration should not be considered a policy issue in and of itself. It should be considered in the context of overall rural development policy which should have as its central focus the economic well-being of rural people. This should be to the extent that even if urban economic conditions eventually improve, the ensuing rural - urban migration will not be disruptive of the productivity and labour supply situation in rural areas. In designing programmes to assist rural areas receiving return migrants, policy must recognise the insipient diversity of the population in terms of age, experiences, enlightenment and world view. There is therefore the need for government policy to be informed by new and substantive knowledge and a better appreciation of the political and social salience of rural issues.

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APPENDICES

## Computation Methods

Appendix 1

Average number of labourer employed per farmer migrant  
for selected farm operations (Table 5.6)

$$\frac{\text{Total Number of Labourers employed for given farm operation}}{\text{Number of farmer migrants employing labour for given farm operation}}$$

Appendix II

Average amount of time spent per day by return migrant (Table 5.8)

i) In his personal farm

$$= \frac{\text{Total Number of Hours spent per day by all Farmer Return Migrants in their Personal Farms}}{\text{Number of Farmer Return Migrants Working on their Personal Farms}}$$

ii) On other people's farms

$$= \frac{\text{Total Number of Hours spent per day by all Farmer Return Migrants on other People's Farms}}{\text{Number of Farmer Return Migrants Working on other People's Farms}}$$

iii) On non-farm jobs

$$= \frac{\text{Total Number of Hours spent per day by all Farmer Return Migrants on non-Farm Jobs}}{\text{Number of Farmer Return Migrants doing Non-Farm Jobs}}$$

Appendix III

Percentage of time spent on non-farm occupations by return Migrants (Table 5.8)

i) For 1986

$$= \quad (2.6+3.8+4.3) \quad \longrightarrow \quad 100$$

$$4.3 \quad \longrightarrow \quad ?$$

$$100/10.7 \times 4.3/1 \quad = \quad \underline{\underline{40.2\%}}$$

ii) For 1987:

$$= \quad (3.1+3.6+4.0) \quad \longrightarrow \quad 100$$

$$4.0 \quad \longrightarrow \quad ?$$

$$100/10.7 \times 4.0/1 \quad = \quad \underline{\underline{37.4\%}}$$

Appendix IV

Average number of years of absence from full time farming (Table 5.4)

$$= \quad \frac{\text{Total Number of Years Absence from Full-time Farming was Reported}}{\text{Number of Respondents Reporting Absence from Full-time Farming}}$$

Total Number of years absence from full-time farming was reported = 1636.26

=  $\sum$  (Class mark x number reporting absence within the Class)

i.e

A Class (Years)	B Class Mark	C No. Reporting Absence	BxC
0	-	-	-
1-5	3	4	12
6-10	8	3	24
11-15	13	4	52
16-20	18	1	18
21-25	23	1	23
26-30	28	2	56
31-35	33	1	33
36-40	38	-	-
41-45	43	-	-
46-50	48	-	-
51-55	53	-	-
56-60	58	1	58
*All through	-	33	Av. x age of all respondts. 1360.26
Can't recall	-	31	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>84</b>	<b>1636.26</b>

NB: The "can't recall" category is ignored.

\*Number of years absence was reported from full-time farming all through life.



= Average age of all respondents x number of respondents reporting absence from full-time farming all through life.

Average age of all respondents (See Table 4.1)

= 
$$\frac{\text{Class mark (table 4.1) x number within the class}}{\text{Total Number of Respondents}}$$

i.e.

A Class	B Class Mark	C No. of Respondents within Class	BxC
15-19 years	17	3	51
20-35 years	27.5	31	852.5
36-45 "	40.5	31	1255.5
46-55 "	50.5	16	808
56-65	60.5	18	1089
66+	66	1	66
Total age of all respondents			4122

∴ Average age of all respondents:

$$= \frac{4122}{100} = \underline{\underline{41.22}} \text{ years}$$

Finally, number of years absence was reported from full-time farming:

$$= 41.22 \times 33$$

$$= \underline{\underline{1360.26}}$$

The same process was used for part-time farming.

Appendix V

Method of Calculation of Average Daily Income per Return Migrant working in other People's Farms and Non-Farm Jobs for 1986 and 1987

Income per day (₦)	Total Income from other People's Farms = (Income per day x Number of Returnees Receiving Income from Other People's Farm) (₦)		Total Income from Non-Farm Jobs = (Income per day x number of Returnees Receiving Income from Non-Farm Jobs) (₦)	
	1986	1987	1986	1987
3	3x1=3	3x1=3	3x1=3	3x1=3
4			4x3=12	4x3=12
5	5x4=20	5x4=20	5x2=10	5x4=20
6		6x1=6	6x1=6	6x1=6
7		7x4=28	7x1=7	7x1=7
8	8x6=48	8x7=56	8x4=32	8x3=24
9	9x1=9	9x2=18	9x5=45	9x6=54
10	10x1=10	10x2=20	10x4=40	10x5=50
12	12x1=12	12x1=12	12x3=36	12x3=36
15			15x3=45	15x4=45
20			20x2=40	20x3=60
30			30x1=30	30x1=30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>333</b>

Average Daily Income Per Return Migrant (₦) =  $\frac{\text{Total Income of All migrants responding.}}{\text{Number of Migrants responding.}}$

Thus Average daily income per migrant:

- Working in other people's Farms:	1986 = 102/14 = ₦7.3
	1987 = 163/22 = ₦7.4
- Working on non-farm jobs:	1986 = 306/30 = ₦10.2
	1987 = 333/35 = ₦9.5