

Rural Urban Migration in Kwara State 1970-1985

MIGRATION RURALE URBAINE DANS L'ETAT DE KWARA 1970-1985

E.O. Ibiloye¹

Abstract: The paper examines the phenomenon of rural urban migration typical of developing economy common to the thirdworld countries. It argues that the oil boom years of the 1970s which resulted in the virtual neglect of the agricultural sector of the economy and the rural base upon which it operated, created a great disequilibrium in the economic opportunities between the rural and the urban areas. Consequently a shift of the neglected rural population in order to enjoy urban privileges was inevitable. The result was a total desertion of the rural home region of the Igbomina people of Kwara State as a result of massive migration to Lagos. The paper conclude that the consequences of this was that government became incapacitated to cope with the rate of growth of cities and its ability to adequately provide for the needs of the urban population, especially in Lagos, was greatly curtailed. This was to create urban slum and a rise in crime wave in cities while the neglected rural areas became greatly depopulated.

Key words: rural-urban migration; Kwara state; urban poverty

Résumé: L'article examine le phénomène de la migration rurale urbaine, ce qui est typique du développement de l'économie dans les pays du tiers monde. Il affirme que le boom pétrolier des années 1970 a conduit à une négligence presque totale du secteur agricole dans l'économie et la base rurale sur laquelle elle fonctionnait, et a créé un grand déséquilibre dans les opportunités économiques entre les régions rurales et les zones urbaines. Par conséquent, un déplacement de la population rurale négligée vers les villes afin de profiter des privilèges urbains était inévitable. Le résultat était une désertion totale de la région d'origine rurale dans l'Etat de Kwara et la population Igbomina a créé une migration massive vers Lagos. L'article conclut que les conséquences de cet événement est que le gouvernement est devenu incapable de faire face au taux de croissance des villes et sa capacité à constituer une provision suffisante pour les besoins de la population urbaine, en particulier à Lagos, qui ont été grandement réduits. Cela pouvait créer des bidonvilles et une augmentation de criminalité dans les villes tandis que les zones rurales négligées deviendraient dépeuplées.

Mots-clés: migration rurale-urbaine; l'État de Kwara; pauvreté urbaine

¹Dr. E.O. Ibiloye, Department of History and International Studies, College of Humanities and Culture, Osun State University Ikire Campus, NIGERIA.

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INTRODUCTION

Kwara State is located in the North Central geo-political zone of Nigeria. It was one of the first group of twelve states structure established by the military regime of General Yakubu Gowon in 1967. There has been a lot of structural changes in the size, structure and ethnic composition of the state since its creation. However, the major parts of what was traditionally known as Ilorin Emirate remain in the existing geographical component known as Kwara State. The Igbomina, the central subject of this paper used as case study, lives in the southeastern part of the state and has remained part of it since its inception notwithstanding various structural changes in the state composition over the years.

The Igbomina are recognized by themselves and by others as a distinct dialectic sub-group of the Yoruba inhabiting the northern part of Yoruba country. Today, they are found in the two states of Kwara and Osun². In 1918, the boundary declaration between the Northern and Southern Nigeria partitioned the Igbomina into these two regions, with Ila-Orangun and its southern neighbours located in the south and the others in the north³. Even in the north, the Igbomina were again sub-divided between two administrative divisions of Ilorin and Patigi/Lafiagi, until May 1946 when they were all merged under Ilorin. Following the Local Government reforms of 1968 and 1976 and the intense pressure for change⁴, the Igbomina were granted local autonomy and the majority now live in the Ifelodun, Irepodun and most recently, Isin Local Government Areas of Kwara state and Ila area of Osun state.⁵

It is much easier to be precise with Igbomina boundaries during the 20th century than for the 19th century. However, in the 19th century, Igbomina were equally divided into two prior to the establishment of colonial administration. Ila-Orangun was situated at the edge of the forest and the other Igbomina group occupied the savannah stretch below the bend of the River Niger from latitude 4 and 8 degrees East and longitude 8 and 9 degrees North (Hodge, 1966). There were close to a dozen Igbomina sub units (each having a major town and a cluster of small villages). These were the Share, Isin, Ila, Oke-Ode, Ile-Ire, Esisa, Irese, Ipo, Iyangba and Oro⁶.

A very important aspect of the origin of the Igbomina is that they generally see their history in terms of migration. The more popular of the two conflicting traditions of origin, (conflicting in the sense that one traced Igbomina origin to Ila-Orangun and the other to separate migration by each migrant princes or hunters from Ife, Oyo, Owu, Iwo, Ketu) was that which traces Igbomina origin to Ila-Orangun.⁷ Although it is difficult to precisely date the waves of these migrations, there is no doubt that some of the towns/kingdoms are of considerable antiquity⁸. For instance, Elphinstone seems to suggest that the whole of Oke-Ode and Oro-Ago Districts were desolate up to late 17th and early 18th Centuries when the Igbomina from Old Oyo settled there⁹. However, there are traditions of migration that pre-dated the 17th Century, just as there were migrations into Igbomina in the 19th Century and even in the last Century. Some of the people who were displaced by the destruction of Old Oyo empire settled in Igbomina founding towns like Iji, Ijara, Pamo etc. Reference has also been made to Ilorin and Nupe farmers who established hamlets as late as the first two decades of the last Century in Oke-Ode and Igbaja Districts¹⁰.

Factitious as these traditions might look, they all point to the fact that migrations of various types influenced the demographic shape of the present day Nigeria, and that migration is by no means a 19th Century phenomenon in Yoruba history. For reasons of war, pursuit of fame, socio-political or religious disagreements, people have had to move from one location to another.

² Falola, T. "Igbomina Chronicles" (Unpublished Essay) p.4.

³ Falola, T. "Igbomina Chronicles"...

* Received on April 14, 2010; accepted on June 20, 2010.

⁴ For details of this agitation see E.A. Adeyemi "Protest and Agitation in Igbomina 1932-1952" (M.A. Dissertation, University of Ilorin, 1984).

⁵ Dada, P.O.A. *A brief History of Igbomina (Igbona)* Ilorin, Matanmi Press. p.2.

⁶ Herman-Hodge, H.B. *Gazetteer of Northern Nigeria*...

⁷ Dada, P.O.A. *A brief History of Igbomina (Igbona)* Ilorin, Matanmi Press. pp.1-10.

⁸ Dada, P.O.A. *A brief History of Igbomina (Igbona)*...

⁹ Elphinstone, K.V. *Gazetteer of Ilorin Province*, London 1921 p.43.

¹⁰ Ibid P.5, Also Oyeyipo, I.N.R. "Migration in Igbominaland 1900-1977". M.A. Thesis University of Birmingham 1978.

A careful survey of the current demographic situation in Igbomina shows that a great proportion of its economically active population is settled outside the homeland, predominantly in the South-western parts of Nigeria primarily in search of economic fortune.

Migration of Igbomina people to Lagos dated back to the last decade of the 19th century. However, prior to the establishment of colonial administration, evidence abound of traditional migration associated with origin of the people dating back to the 18th and early part of the 19th centuries. During those periods, population was constantly being redistributed through migration of small groups. Migration from kingdoms to acephalous communities caused by disputes of office (Chieftaincy) seems to be common in Yoruba-land then.

The imposition of Colonial rule from 1900 brought greater peace and security. Consequently, there was a considerable flow of migration, following the consolidation of the colonial presence. However, right up to 1920, migration was still exceptional and relatively slow. Between 1920 and 1945, it increased slowly, but from 1945 to 1985, the rate of increase accelerated rapidly for reasons having to do with socio-political and economic transformation of the country. The pre-independence and four of the post-independence National Development Plans all fall within this period when greater emphases were placed on urban development to the detriment of the rural area. Therefore, a shift of the neglected rural population in order to enjoy urban privileges was inevitable (Adebayo, 1989). Migration was the result.

THE ECONOMIC BOOM AND ACCELERATION OF MIGRATION

The oil boom of the 1970s created greater opportunities, especially in the urban centres where development was concentrated; and many rural dwellers abandoned their age long subsistence economic activities to take advantage of the boom. This ultimately resulted in greater migration to urban centres. This period, which happened to fall within the years of the oil-boom, marked the peak of migration flow especially to Lagos.

It is to be noted that advances in techniques of communication, and society's increasing ability to utilize them, have extended the potential migrants awareness of available opportunities. The emerging young, better educated, and more highly skilled population in Igbominaland also abandoned their birthplaces in the 1970s to join others of similar background in the rush to cities in search of economic opportunities. The reasons for population relocation have changed as man's outlook on resources, technology and socio-cultural ties has been modified. Igbomina people no longer migrate to Lagos for reasons of cash for tax payment, bride price or political alienation in Ilorin Emirate. With the creation of Kwara state in 1967¹¹, and the Local Government Reform of 1968¹², which severed Igbomina from Ilorin Division and gave it a degree of the much-desired autonomy; the source of perceived oppression and friction was eliminated and so there was change in the existing push factors. Greater economic opportunity became the primary and dominant motive for migration.

In addition, the patterns, structure and intensity of mobility of Igbomina people also changed. Group migration gave way to individual initiative, while school leavers and women migration became a common factor. Migration then reflected individuals desire to maximize a utility function involving many economic and socio-cultural variables. Beside economic motives, certain political, sociological, medical and educational factors also influenced people's decision to migrate to Lagos and other southwestern areas. The growth of education and uneven distribution of educational and medical facilities became a strong and attractive force for migration when it meant escape from agricultural jobs and the traditional social norms (Harvey, 1975). This introduced a new pull factor to migration phenomenon as the needs and wants of rural dwellers changed with the changing socio-economic milieu.

¹¹ The Government of General Yakubu Gowon created twelve states out of the existing four regions in 1967. Kwara State was one of the twelve.

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The relative attraction of the potential receiving centres was not only a function of the absolute numbers of opportunities existing there, but also a function of the potential migrants awareness of them. The perception of opportunity rather than the opportunities themselves determined the decision to migrate (Stouffer, 1940). Therefore; many of those who migrated did so in response to the colourful impression of Lagos created by returning migrants.

There was the gradual awakening of the desire for a higher standard of living, which supplied the incentive necessary for increased activities and mobility. Agriculture remained the principal economic pursuit of the people. In this sphere, there have been two important changes, which have been characterised as “economic revolution” by some authorities. This “revolution” was confined largely to the field of agriculture and was marked by transition from the production of subsistence crops to the cultivation of exchange crops (cash crops), which in turn had involved the development of monetary economy with all the implications. Secondly, the “revolution” had involved the problem of creating wants in a population accustomed for centuries to rely largely upon the products of its own fields and forests to supply its needs (Cook, 1964). Consequently the desires of the people could no longer be satisfied under a subsistence economic system. Therefore the desire to live a more comfortable life pushed many to search elsewhere than home for avenue for prosperity.

This modest achievement in agriculture was however, abandoned with the onset of the oil-boom of the 1970's. The consequent neglect of the rural area in term of development which the boom created, invariably led to mass exodus of rural population to the urban areas. The income gap between the rural and urban centres was the push and pull factor in individuals decision to migrate. It is true that the pattern of migration before 1960 (migration of colonization) was replaced by a new pattern, principally migration of urbanization as Green very correctly remarked (Green, 1974). It is also true that local situation sometime reinforced the push-effect in migration. Igbomina case was that of limited economic opportunities available in the home region that could no longer satisfy the demands of evolving modern society, and this prompted emigration.

As late as 1975, a survey carried out by Group 5 Engineering of Beirut on twelve major cities in Igbomina for the Kwara State Government revealed that migration was still a major factor in Igbomina socio-economic life. The survey revealed the following analysis.

Table 1: Actively Employed Labour Force: Percentage of Total Working Outside the Home Town

1. Omu-Aran	- 20%	7. Oke-Onigbin	- 8%
2. Ajasse-Ipo	- 23%	8. Oko	- 17%
3. Esie	- 59%	9. Olla	- 1%
4. Igbaja	- 9%	10. Oro Group	- 53%
5. Isanlu-Isin	- 65%	11. Ilofa	- 6%
6. Oke-Ode	- 8%	12. Odo-Owa	- 16%

Source: *Report of Studies: Master Plan 1975 – 2000. Igbomina/Ekiti by Group 5 Engineering Sample Survey. P.17*

The proportion of “outside” workers varied widely from town to town, from one percent in Olla, to sixty-five per cent in Isanlu-Isin. In Esie, Isanlu-Isin and Oro group, more than half of the total number of workers worked outside the town of origin¹³.

A further survey by the same Engineering firm revealed the occupational pattern and destination of Igbomina migrants at this time. An analysis of the 2,631 persons recorded in the sample surveys as being resident outside the town of origin shows the following pattern and characteristics of migrants.

¹³ *Report of Studies: Master Plan 1975-2000. Igbomina/Ekiti Division, Kwara State – By Group 5 Engineering Company Beirut, Lebanon (June 1975). p.17.*

TABLE 2: OCCUPATIONS AND DESTINATIONS OF MIGRANTS

Occupation	Igbomina/ Ekiti Division	Ilorin	Rest Kwara State	Lagos	Ife	a) Ibadan	Rest Western State	Rest Nigeria	Total	%
Farmer	3	-	-	4	208	2	27	1	245	9
Trader	6	26	3	799	24	17	14	16	905	34
Student	140	41	31	328	61	24	36	48	709	27
Housewife	5	5	-	105	37	3	8	7	170	6
Infant	-	7	7	202	48	8	4	7	283	11
Other	30	34	21	158	14	11	10	41	319	12
Total	184	113	62	1,596	392	65	99	120	2,631	100
Per cent	7	4	2	61	15	2	4	5	100	

Source: *Report of Studies: Master Plan 1973-2000: Igbomina/Ekiti Division Group 5 Engineering Survey*. P.17

While there was evidence of a wide pattern of migrants destinations, indicating the extent to which people were prepared to search for opportunities outside their home village, 61 per cent of the migrants went to Lagos, (reflecting the urban ward migration in the years of Oil boom) 15 per cent to Ife and a total of 82 per cent migrated to the southwest. Only 15 percent went to other parts of Nigeria, including the Northern states and Ilorin. In this case, the coastward pattern of migration is clearly evident. Housewives and children migration, which constituted 6 and 11 per cent respectively, was still very much a reflection of the old pattern.¹⁴

A significant proportion of the migrants, 27% consisted of persons engaged in full-time education. Apart from those in tertiary institutions, it is likely that students have followed family circumstances, rather than any perceived advantages of education standards and facilities outside the town of origin. Only four per cent migrated to Ilorin even after the creation of Kwara State in 1967 and appointment of an Igbomina military officer as Governor. Majority of those who migrated to Ilorin were students and civil servants (75 out of 113).¹⁵ The lack of interest for northward migration is discernable from the pattern given above. Consequently, the northward migration was a migration of skilled labour associated with regionalisation in the early years and state creation from the late nineteen sixties. At this period also, group migration had completely ceased, giving way to individual initiatives, nor was migration for social and political reasons of such significance any more, the over-riding consideration was economic.

Demographic growth could also, in some cases, be another cause of emigration, although this was hardly the case in Igbomina. Even at the peak of its growth, population density was never a source of problem in Igbomina. It was rather the sparseness of the population that made the area an easy prey to various conquering powers¹⁶. It often appears that emigration is hardly voluntary, migrants coming from among the poorest or least powerful socially as the Igbomina were. The circumstance of the home region and the prevailing socio-economic policy of the colonial authority made migration inevitable.

School also fulfilled a significant function in Igbomina migration to Lagos especially in the sixties and seventies and it became more and more an important element of the process. As a result of neglect by government, no adequate transport system or secondary school was available in Igbomina¹⁷. Hence the migration of the people to places where schools were located, especially secondary school that was a rare thing until the seventies¹⁸. School also enhanced the prestige of urban values, creating motivation for migration.

¹⁴ Report of Studies:... p.19.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ For details on the political subjugation of Igbomina people under various colonial powers see Ibiloye E.O. (M.A. Thesis) op-cit.

¹⁷ Interviews of Professor Timothy Adeyemi Afolayan at Esie and Joseph Aransiola (aged 75) a retired Lagos migrant living in Iludun Oro 30th August 2000.

¹⁸ Interviews of Professor Timothy Adeyemi Afolayan...

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS AND RURAL NEGLECT

However the most fundamental changes in the growth and distribution of Nigeria's population have been associated with equally fundamental changes in the fields of industry, commerce, transport and administration. Between 1958 and 1966, the sector of the economy in which the rate of growth in gross domestic product fell below the overall national growth-rate of 5.6% per annum, were those of agriculture (3.3% per annum) and general government (3.3%).¹⁹ By contrast, oil production (over 35%), manufacturing (9.4%) and distribution (5.8%), electricity and water supply (18.2%), transport (5.5%), each equalled or surpassed the national average as did education (9.2%) and health services (11.1%). All these were concentrated in urban centres.²⁰

The precedent of rural neglect set by colonial power was followed by successors to colonial authority. The tables below show the extent to which rural areas were neglected in resource allocation under the various National Development Plans.

TABLE 3: THE PLANNED RURAL-URBAN DISTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN THE FIRST NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1962-1968

SECTOR	RURAL	URBAN	RURAL-URBAN
Trade & Industry	2.6	7.1	0.3
Electricity	0.6	97.9	1.5
Communications	0.0	91.4	8.6
Health	3.9	76.2	19.9
Information	0.0	37.8	62.2
Social Welfare	9.2	90.8	0.0
Water Supply	39.6	58.5	1.9
AVERAGE	4.9	91.7	3.4

Source: Adopted from Okowa W.J. (1987). Urban bias in Nigeria Development Planning. *Nigeria Journal of Economic and Social Studies* Vol. 29 No.1 March 1987 P. 51.

NOTE: Rural-Urban as indicated in the table are public expenditure items whose benefits could not be disaggregated into rural and urban components (Okowa, 1987). Public policy in Nigeria has tended to favour the urban centre at the expense of the rural, consequently rural-urban income gap increased over the years. Public resources arising from the political economic structure of the country were concentrated in the urban areas in contradiction to the demands of equity. Of the first four development plans executed in Nigeria, only the Second Plan (1970-1974) has been identified as promoting social equity by taking cognisance of the fact that the bulk of Nigerian population lived in rural areas and recognized the need for improved quality of life by evolving for Nigeria, as ultimate goal, a just and egalitarian society²¹.

In the over all allocation, the 4.9% allocated to the rural areas is certainly of very little significance when compared with the 91.7% allocated to the urban sector. The peasants and the rural dwellers accounted for about 75% of the total population during this time. This implies that in per capita term, the average urbanite benefited from government investment 58.5 times more than that of average rural dwellers.

A look at the second National Development Plan will give a clearer perception on government urban-bias in resource allocation.

¹⁹ Green, L.P. "Migration Urbanization..." p. 292.

²⁰ Akiwowo A.A. Economic and Social Survey 1958 to 1968, Proceeding Conference on National Reconstruction and Development in Nigeria (Ibadan, NISER) March 1969.

²¹ Okowa, W.J. "Urban Bias in Nigeria Development Planning"... p.51.

TABLE 4: PLANNED RURAL-URBAN DISTRIBUTION OF GOVERNMENT INVESTMENT IN THE SECOND DEVELOPMENT PLAN (1970-1974)²²

SECTOR	RURAL	URBAN	RURAL-URBAN
Industry	47.0	53.0	0.0
Commerce & finance	16.0	84.0	0.0
Electricity	11.0	89.0	0.0
Communication	0.0	100.00	0.0
Health	6.6	43.1	50.3
Information	0.0	53.9	46.1
Labour & Social Welfare	28.2	66.1	5.7
Water & Sewage	14.7	60.8	24.5
Town & Community Planning	9.1	81.4	9.5
Average	8.0	79.6	12.4

Source: Adopted from Okowa W.J. "Urban bias in Nigeria Development Planning" *Nigeria Journal of Economic and Social Studies* Vol.29 No.1 March 1987 P. 52.

The second National Development Plan was a little improvement on the location of government investment in rural areas, but one finds again that over 95% of government spending in support of private industries and direct government industrial production was concentrated in the urban sector in contrast with the neglect of small-scale industrial enterprises in the rural areas. Similarly an overwhelming amount of government credit facilities (over 98%) in support of commercial sector was allocated to urban commerce. In addition, only 6.6% of health spending unambiguously benefited the rural sector²³.

In the 1970s, the rural population accounted for about 70% of the country's population. Thus 8% of government spending, with respect to the above nine sectors, was on 70% of the population, while 79.6% was expended on the remaining 30% of the population resident in the urban areas. In per capita term, the average urban inhabitant benefit from government investment spending was over twenty three times more than (2300%) that of average rural inhabitants. This included educational institutions; especially those financed by government, which were concentrated in the urban areas, particularly tertiary institutions.

The general tendency towards rural neglect impacted greatly on Igbomina rural community. Socio economic lives of people in the home region therefore, became less attractive and rewarding. Consequently, most male adults within the economic productive age bracket still living at home saw migration as panacea to the rural neglect. Hence the great exodus of Igbomina to Lagos that was witnessed in the years of the oil boom and shown on table 2 in the chapter. The most controversial among the excluded sectors is agriculture in which there was relatively small proportion of public sector investment spending that went to it. The plan figure and actual percentage allocated is given below²⁴.

TABLE 5: ACTUAL AND PLANNED ALLOCATION TO AGRICULTURE IN NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANS 1962-1985

National Development Plan Allocation to Agriculture	Plan Figure	Actual Allocation
First National Development Plan 1962 – 1968	13.6%	9.8%
Second National Development Plan 1970 – 1974	12.8%	9.7%
Third National Development Plan 1975 – 1980	6.6%	6.1%
Fourth National Development Plan 1981 – 1985	12.4%	12.00%

Source: Adopted from Okowa W.J. "Urban bias in Nigeria Development Planning" *Nigeria Journal of Economic and Social Studies* Vol.29 No.1 March 1987 P.55

Apart from the consistent decline in the allocation, the allocation itself was such that if we assume that all allocations to the sector benefited the rural people, there would still be a significant urban bias in the rural-urban distribution of public investment spending. Ironically the above assumption was not even valid. Government involvement in directly productive activities in the agricultural sector usually involved the

²² Okowa, W.J. "Urban Bias in Nigeria Development Planning"... p.52.

²³ Okowa, W.J. "Urban Bias in Nigeria Development Planning" ...

²⁴ Okowa, W.J. "Urban Bias in Nigeria Development Planning" ... p.55.

subsidization of agricultural output sold to consumers, This further depressed the sales prices received by the rural farmers. For instance Prices of local eggs were actually depressed by government-subsidized production of eggs by the Ministry of Agriculture²⁵ The implication of this subsistent economic activities in Igbomina was that farm produce could no longer sustain the needs of even the minimal population at home in a globalised economic environment. Migration from home to places where there were better economic opportunities such as the southwest and Lagos became irresistible. This probably accounts for the intensification of migration of rural dwelling Igbomina at this period. Tables 1 and 2 in this sub-section are a clear illustration of the fact that the phenomenon was at its peak in Igbomina in the Oil-boom years of the seventies.

Similarly, a study by Ajaegbu (Ajaegbu, 1969) on the beneficiaries of government extension services indicated that urban elite with large plantations were the main beneficiaries. Furthermore, Purvis study of agricultural input subsidization scheme indicated that urbanites, as well as a few rural dwellers that have spent sometime in urban areas were the main beneficiaries of such scheme (Purvis, 1970). Even in the 1980s agricultural development schemes in the Northern parts of the country, only top civil servants and retired military officers were the beneficiaries. For example in the entire Igbomina, it was only one Dr. Ololade (a university lecturer) who had access to credit and established a mechanised farm at Esie in the mid seventies²⁶.

It would be seen from the above that policy designs by government, disproportionately favoured the urban centres at the expense of the rural. The significance of this for the Igbomina was that while the nation's economic environment kept changing, the rural subsistence agrarian economy they operated remained little affected by the general changes. The technology of agricultural production remained the basic old cutlass and hoe. Those who benefited from the subsidized tractor purchases were the retired public officers who had access to capital and means of securing loan. The typical rural dwellers in Igbomina in the 1970s were not only handicapped by lack of financial resources to improve their economic status, but also by total ignorance of the way to go about securing government assistance. Therefore, those wishing to benefit maximally from government resources allocation were forced to migrate to urban centres even in the oil-boom era, hence, the migration of many Igbomina from the rural home region to urban centres such as Lagos.

Nothing was really attractive in rural lives. This was typically so in Igbomina where the subsistent agricultural production preclude any great economic opportunity. The state was using the Marketing Board as a means of taxing the agricultural producers in the cash crop producing areas. From 1947-1954, the commodity boards extracted £119,914,700 (N31, 179,200,000) as trade surpluses from export crops (Bonat, 1989). The agricultural producers did not make any gain. The nefarious activities of the Local Buying Agents (LBA) continued unabated. They received loans from the Marketing Boards, finance corporations, loans boards, and cooperative finance institutions whose funds came from peasant taxation. The prices L.B.A's paid the peasantry for their products did not accord with those fixed by the marketing boards. The actual producer price should therefore only be 20% of the price per ton fixed by the Marketing Board. The LBA bought at the lowest grade prices. This often led to peasantry indebtedness to moneylenders resulting in widespread crop mortgaging. Many of the Igbomina migrants in the cocoa belt were at this time reduced to penury. In the extreme cases, some had to resort to hiring out part of their cocoa farm just to be able to feed their families²⁷. There was massive decapitalization in agriculture and impoverishment of the agricultural producers leading to mass exodus by farmers from rural areas to urban centres where greater economic opportunities seemed to abound²⁸. This scenario was typical of the circumstance in which Igbomina migrants who settled in the cocoa belt of the southwest in the 1920s and 40s found themselves. Many of them left Lagos for cocoa plantation in the years of the great depression; the 1970s were the years of their return to Lagos in great number when cocoa price dropped to its lowest level. As many as a

²⁵ Okowa, W.J. "Urban Bias in Nigeria Development Planning" ...

²⁶ Dr. Ololade established his merchanted farm close to the National Museum at Esie.

²⁷ Chief Adedayo (aged 71) community leader interviewed at Isanlu-Isin 10th Sept. 2004.

²⁸ Bonat, Z.A. "Agriculture..." p.85.

thousand cocoa plantation owners were estimated to have left their cocoa farm for a better economic opportunities in Lagos²⁹.

The impact of the low public sector investment spending on agriculture became so pronounced that by 1975, groundnut, groundnut oil, palm oil and cotton exports had ceased. This was to be followed by timber and groundnut cake in 1977 and hide and skin in 1980³⁰. All the agricultural exports took a downward dive after 1970, except cocoa, which, although greatly reduced, remained at a higher level than others. The exploitation and use of fossil fuel shifted the focus of demand by the multi-national corporations from agricultural raw materials to petroleum products. Therefore, the share of agricultural product in total export value dropped rapidly from 32.38% in 1970 to 13.54% in 1973, then dropped again to 5.21% in 1975. By 1980 agriculture contributed only 2.4% of export earnings, while crude oil contributed 96.1%. The lowest levels were reached in 1981 and 1982 when agriculture exports accounted for only 1.1% of Nigeria exports³¹.

On the contrary, Nigeria wage earners, concentrated in the urban centres, were better off relative to other occupational groups. Unskilled urban wages were much more than twice a farmer's income (Rimmer, 1981). Thus, rather than being an exploited group, organized labour was already a highly privileged minority. According to Sam Aluko, only six percent of the working population of Nigeria were in the wage-earning sector and that was less than one percent of the population of Nigeria (Aluko, 1971).

During this period of the 1960's, a comparison between the movements in earnings and movement in the GDP shows that the rate of increase in wages was consistently higher than the rate of increase in the GDP. Between 1962 and 1966 the average income of wage earners was more than eight times the income per capita in the country, thus signifying a widening gap in income distribution. It is significant to note that even the clerical class and the artisans earned a higher income than some of the most affluent farm labour—the cocoa farmer. It is no wonder therefore, that urban-ward migration took a dramatic turn from the early 1970's (Sada, 1989), when the income gap between the rural and urban dwellers became further widened. Reuben K. Udo in his book *Migrant Tenant Farmers of Nigeria* noted this urban ward migration in the seventies when he wrote among other things that the post-civil war influx into the city of Lagos was already causing concern in several quarters and was thought to be partly responsible for the inadequate transport service and water shortage in the city since 1970³².

The great attraction the relative affluence of urban dwellers had for the impoverished rural dwellers was better seen than imagined. Many Igbomina, who had earlier migrated to the cocoa belt of southwestern Nigeria in the early years of the 20th century, abandoned their cocoa farms for a life of greater comfort in Lagos³³. The sources of emigration of Igbomina in the era of the oil-boom were therefore, unlike the early years of migration. Emigration was from two directions, viz: the remnant of the subsistence farmers in the home region and the frustrated cocoa farmers of the forest belt of southwestern Nigeria³⁴.

A clear evidence of massive emigration from the home region was shown by a survey conducted by Group 5 Engineering Company of Beirut in Igbomina for the Kwara State Government in 1975 as shown in table I in this chapter. The survey shows that 28% of the actively employed labour force of the twelve townships surveyed migrated outside the home region³⁵. Three out of the township surveyed recorded over 50% emigration. Absolute statistic is however, not available in respect of migration from the cocoa belt of the southwest³⁶. The emigration pattern from this region initially took the form of circulatory migration

²⁹ Adewoye, N. (aged 61) was interviewed in Lagos 13th Sept' 2000. He is among cocoa plantation owners who migrated to Lagos in the years of oil boom. He gave an average of between 20 and 30 people per village leaving the cocoa farm for Lagos.

³⁰ Bonat, Z. A. "Agriculture..." p.85.

³¹ Bonat, Z. A. "Agriculture..." p.58.

³² Lagos Sunday Times July 5 1970 P.6 quoted in Reuben K. Udo *Migrant Tenant Farmers of Nigeria: - A geographical study of Rural Migrants in Nigeria* (Ibadan, Africa University Press 1975) p.1. Pa Fakeye Interview...

³³ Nathaniel Adewoye from Arandun is a typical example of Igbomina migrant from the cocoa belt.

³⁴ J.O. Fakeye, Interviewed 21st August 2000.

³⁵ *Group 5 Engineering Beirut, Lebanon 1975 Survey Report...* p.17.

³⁶ A survey conducted in Lagos and Ife area revealed that not less than ten people per village, on the average, left their cocoa farm around Ife, Ibadan, Ondo and Ilesha in the days of the oil-boom. Spread over a minimum of forty villages

reminiscent of the early years. For many years, these new migrants numbering about a thousand people did not entirely abandon their cocoa farms, they were shuttling between the Lagos base and the farms, even when they had a caretaker to tend the farm and report back to them annually on the proceeds from it. They used the cash realized from the farm to sustain their Lagos businesses. Their permanent base could therefore not be easily discerned as some even went back to their cocoa farms when the going became rough in the mid 1980's. This is not to say that all of them failed in business, many succeeded and came to stay permanently in Lagos³⁷.

Migration flow at this time was, however, multi-directional and the urban centres, which had the greatest attraction for the migrants, were Lagos Ibadan and Oshogbo. The difference between these two categories of migrants was in the amount of capital at the disposal of each group. While those from the home region still migrated with little more than the transport fare to destination, depending as they were on the benevolence of friends and relations at destination to start life from the scratch, Ibadan/Ife migrants were much better furnished with capital derived from the cocoa plantation they abandoned in preference for business. The general characteristics of migrants originating from Ife/Ibadan axis in the seventies was that, apart from being fairly furnished with capital, many of them were considerably advanced in age relative to migrants originating from home. The average age could be put between thirty-five and forty³⁸.

Before leaving the cocoa farm, a prospective migrant would make arrangement to ensure continuity in terms of maintenance of the farm during years of absence. This often constituted a guaranteed source of replenishing business capital in Lagos. While some rented out their farms to reliable persons on payment of an annual clearly stated amount, others left the farm to members of their families left behind in the village to oversee the maintenance. Regular visits to such families ensured effective supervision. The most unfortunate thing about most of the emigrants from the cocoa belt in the 1970s was that owing to lack of experience in business, the capital they brought disappeared within a short time. Many fell victim of the sharp practices of business partners and swindlers³⁹ Some capital, however, vaporised as a result of mismanagement. Many of these migrants had to return to their cocoa farms when their businesses, (road side kiosks), were destroyed by the WAI (War Against Indiscipline) brigade of the Buhari\Ibadan regime in the mid-eighties⁴⁰.

The group from the home region, coming from an economically depressed area as it were, had no viable alternative on the choice of option on whether to return or remain in Lagos when business environment became unfavourable. Unlike the cocoa-belt migrants who inspite of the relative low prices of cocoa could still make some money for sustenance from their plantations, home migrants could not dream of returning to subsistence agrarian economy which required annual tilling of the soil before any crop could grow for self and family sustenance. Therefore, most home migrants remained in Lagos inspite of the hardship, except probably for a few who returned to other urban centres such as Ibadan, Oshogbo and Ilorin⁴¹.

With the creation of states in the late sixties and the expansion of education industry, especially in Igbomina, emigration was no longer unidirectional specially targeting Lagos. Other urban centres that recently became state capitals with the creation of the twelve states structure in the country became places that offered attraction, especially for products of educational institutions that were springing up in the seventies and eighties. The appointment of an Igbomina military officer, Col. David Bamigboye, as the first Military Governor of Kwara state, also served as an impetus, especially to the job-seeking educated elite, to make Ilorin the destination of migration in the seventies⁴². Although Lagos still offered the greatest attraction for potential Igbomina migrant, a considerable percentage was however, at this time looking elsewhere as possible destination for economic exploit. As the migration of educated elite to Kwara state capital increased with time, Igbomina people grew more assertive of their political rights and were

where there was high concentration of Igbomina migrant's farmers, the rate of migration in the decade of the oil-boom could conservatively be put at between four and five hundred people.

³⁷ Nathaniel Adewoye of Arandun (aged 61) interviewed in Lagos 13th sept'2000 gave a rough estimate on the rate of emigration from the cocoa belt.

³⁸ Nathaniel Adewoye of Arandun...

³⁹ Interview with Chief Moses Folorunsho Adewumi of Edidi (aged 72) 12th August 2000.

⁴⁰ Interview with Chief Moses Folorunsho Adewumi of Edidi....

⁴¹ Mr Ezekiel Olayiwola of Isanlu-Isin (aged57) interviewed in Lagos 4th Sept. 2004.

⁴² Mr Ezekiel Olayiwola of Isanlu-Isin (aged57)....

becoming more vehement in demanding for it. This crystallised into the formation of a more vibrant socio-cultural union that was to champion the course of self-development and pressurise government and its agencies for allocation of development projects to Igbomina.

While Lagos bound new migrants remained mostly non-literate artisans and a few job seeking school leavers, those settling in Ilorin were mostly educated elite. This no doubt placed them in advantage position to show direction in development to their mostly illiterate wealthy Lagos compatriots. The thesis will now focus on the formation of socio-cultural unions by migrants at destination, which had served as a veritable tool for development of the home region.

CONCLUSION

The oil-boom of the 1970s resulted in virtual neglect of the agricultural sector of the economy and the rural base upon which it operated. The great disequilibrium in economic opportunities between the rural and the urban area this created accelerated the rate of migration from rural to urban areas. It was therefore no great surprise that the post-independence period, especially the oil boom years, witnessed a great intensification of migration of Igbomina people to Lagos.

The relative attraction of the potential receiving centres was a function of the absolute numbers of opportunities existing there and the potential migrant's awareness of them. There was the gradual awakening of the desire for higher standard of living which supplied the incentive necessary for increased activities and mobility. Local situation also reinforced the push-effect in migration. Igbomina case was that of limited economic opportunities available in the home region that could no longer satisfy the needs of evolving modern society. The result was massive emigration from Igbominaland.

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