# DETERMINANTS OF MIGRANTS' LIVELIHOOD SECURITY IN RURAL AREAS OF OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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**ABSTRACT**
Migrants in rural areas face multifaceted challenges during which they engage in a range of activities to secure their livelihood. This study examined the determinants of migrants' livelihood security in rural areas in Ogun State. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to obtain data from 129 migrants using a well-structured interview schedule. Data were gathered on socio-economic characteristics, perceived livelihood activities, livelihood assets, and livelihood security. Data were analysed using frequency count, percentages, and linear regression. Results showed that the mean age was 40 years, majority (60.5%) were male, (38.8%) had spent between 1 to 9 years in the community, (81.4%) were members of a social group and 40.3% had left their home community between 12 to 22 years. A high percentage (81.4%) migrated due to improved employment opportunities, 58.8% were involved in food crop production while 51.2% of the respondents had high livelihood assets. The migrants had insecure livelihood security. Length of stay in the community (ß= 0.193), livelihood activities engaged in (ß= 0.248), and livelihood assets (ß= 0.454) determined respondents' livelihood security. Migrants' length of stay in the community, livelihood activities engaged in, and livelihood assets acquired influenced respondents' livelihood security. The study therefore recommends that migrants should be involved in more than one livelihood activity and also stay longer in their host community to better secure their livelihood.
**Keywords**: Livelihood security, migrants, livelihood assets, livelihood activities

## INTRODUCTION

Rural families rely heavily on agriculture and natural resources for sustenance and livelihood generation (Obayelu *et al*., 2021 and Eheazu, 2023). This reliance helps alleviate poverty and enhance the means for families to thrive, thereby forming the bedrock of their livelihoods. Livelihood is the adequate flow of resources (both monetary and in-kind) to meet fundamental needs, access to social institutions related to kinship, family, and neighbourhood, unbiased property rights, and village support, which are crucial for sustaining the standard of living of people (Chauhan, 2022). Livelihood security on the other hand has been interpreted by scholars through diverse lenses to encompass ownership or accessibility to resources and assets that mitigate risks, buffer shocks, and address unforeseen circumstances (Gautam & Jha, 2023). In essence, livelihood security is rooted in fostering sustainable socioeconomic and political systems while acknowledging constraints, vulnerabilities, marginalization, and risks. Hence there is a need for greater agricultural growth to generate employment, especially for the unskilled ones among the rural poor.

Traditionally, Nigeria's rural economy is agrarian but in recent times only a few rural households derive income exclusively from farming as a result of the influx of abled young men and women from rural areas to urban areas in search of white-collar jobs which has drastically reduced the rural population and made labour increasingly scare (Ethim and Udoh, 2018).

This leaves agriculture in the hands of aged farmers thereby constraining the expansion of the agricultural sector which has a negative implication on food security considering that Nigeria's agriculture is still labour-intensive and characterised using primitive tools which makes it less efficient and productive as ageing sets in among these farmers.

To cater for the deficit of manpower in the rural areas, it has been observed that migrants from cross border nations like Benin Republic, Togo, and Niger Republic and even within Nigeria migrate from their host nations or communities to the rural areas.

These migrants are often faced with various challenges ranging from access to services, language barriers, and access to land because of the dominance of landowners who control the right to land. During these challenges, migrants still engage in a range of on-farm and off-farm activities to secure and meet their basic needs. Against the background of the significance of migrants in sustaining growth, preventing jeopardy in the agricultural sector, and ensuring food security in the nation, this study assessed the determinants of migrants' livelihood security in Ogun State.

The objectives of the study were to:
1. Describe the socio-economic characteristics of the respondents
2. Determine the livelihood activities of the respondents
3. Ascertain the access to livelihood assets by the respondents
4. Determine the livelihood security of the respondents

The hypothesis states that socioeconomic characteristics, livelihood activities and livelihood assets of the migrants are not a significant determinant of their livelihood security.

**METHODOLOGY**

The study was carried out in Ogun State. Ogun State is located between latitude $7^0 00'$ and $7^0 10'$N and longitude $3^0 45'$ and $4^0 12'$E. The State is bounded on the North by Oyo State; in the east by Ondo State; in the south by Lagos State and the Atlantic Ocean and in the West by Republic of Benin which makes it an access route to the expansive markets of the Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS). The people are engaged in subsistence and commercial crop production, livestock farming, agroforestry, fishing, and milling, etc., some of the major cash crops and arable crops include; cassava, maize, oil palm, rice, cocoa, kolanut, etc.

The population of the study included migrants in rural areas of Ogun State. A multistage sampling procedure was employed to select 129 migrants in the study area. The first stage involved the purposive sampling of the eight Local Government Areas (LGAs) that share boundaries with one or more states or countries out of the twenty LGAs in Ogun state. The second stage involved the purposive selection of 25% out of the eight sampled local governments to give 2 LGA. The selected LGAs are Ipokia and Ijebu North LGAs. This is because Ipokia LGA hosts the most common border community in the state and has a lot of rural communities close to the border, while Ijebu North is the only LGA in the state that shares boundaries with three different states. The third stage involved the simple random selection of 20% of the rural communities, making four rural communities in Ipokia (Agosasa, Maun, Tube, and Tongeji) and six in Ijebu North (Mamu, Ajegunle Awa, Araromi Adekanbi, Dagbolu, Ako-Onigbagbo Gelete, Teseyin). The fourth stage involved the use of systematic random sampling to select 20% of the sample frame to make 49 respondents out of the 245 migrants identified in the four rural communities selected in Ipokia and 80 respondents out of the 398 migrants identified in the six rural communities selected in Ijebu North to make a total of 129 respondents.

Primary data were collected through the use of a structured questionnaire and interview schedule. Descriptive statistics involving the use of frequency, percentage, and mean score were used while the hypothesis was tested using linear regression analysis at p=0.05.

Livelihood security was measured using six livelihood security outcomes which are food, economic, health, education, habitat, and social network security to develop a Livelihood security index. To develop the livelihood security index, relevant livelihood indicators for each of the livelihood outcomes were selected from the livelihood security standard menu indicators of CARE USA/Program Division/PHLS. The selected indicators measured components like accessibility, availability, quality, and status. Since the components were measured on different scales, each component indicator was standardized into a five-point ordinal scale and the ranges were determined based on the responses from the respondents. The livelihood security index for food, economic, health, education, habitat, and social network security was computed by finding the mean score of the selected indicators for the respondents.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

**Socioeconomic characteristics**

The results of the socio-economic characteristics in Table 1 reveal that 38.0% of the migrants were between 29-39 years, and the mean age was 40 years, which presents them as agile and able-bodied and in productive ages. The result is in line with the reports of Adebayo. (2020) that the majority of the labour force in rural areas of Southwest Nigeria were of ages between 26–50 years. This is expected to have a positive effect on their livelihood activities which in turn affect their livelihood security. The study also reveals that majority (60.5%) were male and (81.4%) were members of a social group. Table 1 further reveals that (40.3%) had left their home community between 12 to 22 years ago and a total of (61.2%) had spent over 9 years in the community. Also, a high percentage (81.4%) migrated in search of improved employment opportunities while more than half (55.0%) earned between ₦39,553-₦59,105 monthly while the mean monthly income was ₦57282.9. This reveals that the majority of the migrants earn above the ₦30,000 minimum wage despite living in rural areas. This finding implies that the migrants' pursuit of better employment opportunities is justified due to their earnings while social group membership and long-term settlement provide essential support and enhance their potential for social and economic integration, positively affecting their livelihood security. This result is in line with the findings of Rufai *et al*. (2019) which revealed that a larger percentage of migrants are male, who migrated to seek improved employment and earn above Nigeria's minimum wages which indicates that migration has a positive effect on migrants' standard of living.

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents' socioeconomic characteristics**

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage | Mean±SD |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Age** | | | 40.06±9.8 |
| 18-28 | 14 | 10.9 | |
| 29-39 | 49 | 38.0 | |
| 40-50 | 46 | 35.7 | |
| 51-61 | 20 | 5.5 | |
| **Sex** | | | |
| Male | 78 | 60.5 | |
| Female | 51 | 39.5 | |
| **Monthly income (Naira)** | | | 57282.9±19551.8 |
| 20000-39552 | 10 | 7.8 | |
| 39553-59105 | 71 | 55.0 | |
| 59106-78658 | 30 | 23.3 | |
| 78659-98211 | 11 | 8.5 | |
| 98212-117764 | 4 | 3.1 | |
| 117765-137317 | 3 | 2.3 | |
| **Reason for migrating** | | | |
| Skill acquisition / trade | 24 | 18.6 | |
| Improve employment opportunities | 105 | 81.4 | |
| **Duration of migration from home community (years)** | | | 18.2±10 |
| 1-11 | 40 | 31.0 | |
| 12-22 | 52 | 40.3 | |
| 23-33 | 25 | 19.4 | |
| 34-44 | 11 | 8.5 | |
| 45-55 | 1 | 0.8 | |
| **Duration in the present community (years)** | | | 13.1±8.3 |
| 1-9 | 50 | 38.8 | |
| 10-18 | 47 | 36.4 | |
| 19-27 | 23 | 17.8 | |
| 28-36 | 7 | 5.4 | |
| 37-45 | 2 | 1.6 | |
| **Member of a social group** | | | |
| Yes | 105 | 81.4 | |
| No | 24 | 18.6 | |

Source: Field survey, 2018

**Livelihood activities**

The result in Table 2 reveals that the on-farm activities engaged in by the respondents were food crop production (58.8%), livestock production (47.3%), and cash crop production (38%). For the off-farm and non-farm categories (46.5%) were involved in crop processing while (27.1%) were involved in trading. Also, food crop production (40.3%) and livestock production (38.0%) were the dominant activities in both dry and wet seasons. The result however reveals a very poor representation of migrants in non-farm activities. This implies that less attention is given to exploring other non-farm opportunities that exist in rural areas. This result agrees with Olutegbe *et al*. (2021) that the majority of those living in rural areas are engaged either directly or indirectly in agriculture.

**Table 2: Distribution of livelihood activities engaged in by the migrants**

| Livelihood Activities | Involvement in activities | | Season of involvement | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes (%) | No (%) | Wet/Dry (%) | Both (%) |
| ***On farm activities*** | | | | |
| Food crop production | 58.8 | 41.1 | 18.6 | 40.3 |
| Cash crop production | 38 | 62.0 | 4.7 | 33.4 |
| Livestock production | 47.3 | 52.7 | 9.3 | 38.0 |
| Fishing | 17.8 | 82.2 | 10.9 | 7.0 |
| ***Off-farm activities*** | | | | |
| Crop processing | 46.5 | 53.5 | 16.3 | 30.2 |
| Fish processing | 17.1 | 82.9 | 6.2 | 10.9 |
| Animal processing | 14.8 | 85.3 | 7.8 | 7.0 |
| ***Non-farm activities*** | | | | |
| Civil servants | 18.6 | 81.4 | - | 18.6 |
| Trading | 28.7 | 71.3 | 1.6 | 27.1 |

Source: Field survey, 2018

**Livelihood assets**

The result in Table 3 shows that majority (72.1%) of the respondents had access to land, but only (22.5%) owned the land. This indicates that the migrants have access to land for either agricultural or non-agricultural activities. These findings align with the findings of Popoola *et al*. (2020), which revealed that good access to land is a major consideration for migrants when choosing a destination area. In addition, Table 3 shows that more than half (54.3%) of the respondents owned farm implements, while majority (81.4%) owned radios and (82.2%) owned mobile phones. The high number of respondents with access to mobile phones and radios suggests that they have access to information beyond their communities and maintain frequent communication with their families in their home communities. Table 3 further shows that majority (96.1%) had access to houses, but only (26.4%) owned a house, and (3.9%) inherited a house. The result aligns with the study by Rufai *et al*. (2019) that suggests that migrants have a high level of accessibility and ownership of mass media (radio and television) and communication (mobile phone) elements but have low ownership of houses.

**Table 3: Distribution of respondents' access to physical assets**

| Physical assets | Yes (%) | No (%) | Owned (%) | Inherited (%) | Rented/ Borrowed (%) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Land | 72.1 | 27.9 | 22.5 | 7.0 | 42.6 |
| Farm implement | 62.1 | 38.0 | 54.3 | 0.8 | 0.8 |
| House/ shelter | 96.1 | 3.9 | 26.4 | 3.9 | 65.9 |
| Radio | 81.4 | 18.6 | 81.4 | - | - |
| Mobile phone | 83.7 | 16.3 | 82.2 | - | 1.6 |

Source: Field survey, 2018

The distribution of the migrants' access to financial access in Table 4 shows that majority (86%) always had access to income. This indicates that respondents' income is regular; this helps them to plan based on their income and also assures them that they can achieve their set goals without any financial hindrance. Also, more than half (52.0%) of the respondents always had savings while a large proportion (69.8%) lacked access to loans. This implies that respondents have cultivated the habit of saving for rainy days which they can fall back on whenever their incomes dwindle or in case of any unforeseen circumstances or events. This result supports the claim that access to credit and loans is a great challenge in rural areas in Nigeria (Ajefu & Ogebe, 2019).

**Table 4: Distribution of respondents' access to financial assets**

| Financial assets | Always (%) | Occasionally (%) | Never (%) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Income | 86.0 | 13.1 | 0.8 |
| Loan | 5.4 | 24.8 | 69.8 |
| Savings | 52.0 | 37.3 | 10.9 |

Source: Field survey, 2018

The distribution of the respondents' access to natural assets in Table 5 shows that majority (88.4%) had access to land, (86.0%) had access to forest and its product, and (88.4%) had access to river/stream.

**Table 5: Distribution of respondents' access to natural assets**

| Natural assets | Yes (%) | No (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Land | 88.4 | 11.6 |
| Rivers/Stream | 83.7 | 16.3 |
| Forest and its product | 86.0 | 14.0 |

Source: Field survey, 2018

The result in Table 6 shows that about two-third (69.8%) of the migrants belonged to religious organisations while only a few belonged to other groups (38.8%) tribal associations, (37.3%) cooperative societies, (35.7%) community-based associations and (29.4%) farmers association. This implies that the migrants had limited interaction with various social groups which may hinder them from being empowered socially and financially. This result aligns with the finding of Zhou *et al.* (2019) that migrants often lack integration opportunities with other social groups, due to their minimal social interactions and network diversity.

**Table 6: Distribution of respondents' access to social asset**

| Social groups | No (%) | Yes (%) |
|---|---|---|
| Cooperative society | 62.8 | 37.3 |
| Farmers association | 70.5 | 29.4 |
| Religious association | 30.2 | 69.8 |
| Community-based association | 64.3 | 35.7 |
| Tribal Association | 61.2 | 38.8 |

Source: Field survey, 2018

The result of the distribution of the migrants' level of livelihood assets in Table 7 shows that more than half (54.3%) of the respondents had low livelihood assets. This implies that the access the migrants have to assets, especially financial assets, social assets, and physical assets is minimal which will negatively affect their livelihood security in the study area. The finding of this study is in agreement with the work of Fakoyede and Faborode (2021) which reported that migrant populations in rural areas in Nigeria have low livelihood assets which negatively impact their economic well-being and overall quality of life.

**Table 7: Distribution of level of livelihood asset of respondent**

| Assets | Freq. | Percentage | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | S. D |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Low (2.14-10.8548) | 70 | 54.3 | 2.14 | 18.47 | 10.8548 | 3.28154 |
| High (10.8548-18.47) | 59 | 45.7 | | | | |
| Total | 129 | 100 | | | | |

Source: Field survey, 2018

**Livelihood security**

Six different livelihood outcomes were assessed and presented in Table 8 to present the index scores for different aspects of livelihood security. Food security, educational security and habitat security of the respondents were moderately high in that they have the composite index of a value slightly above the midpoint index score on a scale of one to five. Food security could be related to the fact that the respondents live in an agrarian community and are mostly engaged in agricultural activities all year round. This is contrary to the findings of Otekunrin *et al.* (2021) that the majority of rural households are food insecure. Obayelu *et al.* (2021) emphasised that engaging primarily in farming increases the probability of households being food insecure in Nigeria. The migrants' educational security result could be associated with the availability of schools in the study area and the literacy level of the migrants since the majority of them can read and write. Notwithstanding, the values of the overall habitat security index which show the migrants were moderately secure, a higher percentage of the migrants were vulnerable to diseases and their living conditions were bad. The table also shows that the migrants were economically, socially, and health-wise vulnerable. This is obvious from the composite index score of their economic security, health security, and social network security which is lower than the midpoint index score on a scale of one to five. The table further reveals that the overall livelihood security of the migrants is low in that it had a composite index of a value slightly above the midpoint index score on a scale of one to five. This implies that most of the migrants were livelihood insecure and had a low livelihood security which makes them vulnerable to poverty. This result aligns

with the findings that rural households are livelihood insecure (Ayinde, 2021).

**Table 8: Aggregate mean score of each livelihood outcomes**

| Livelihood outcomes/Indicators | Indices |
|---|---|
| Food Security | 3.20 |
| Economic Security | 2.15 |
| Health security | 2.83 |
| Educational security | 3.75 |
| Habitat security | 3.03 |
| Social network security | 2.90 |
| Overall LS security | 2.98 |

Source: Field survey, 2018

**Determinants of livelihood security**

From the results in Table 9, length of stay in the community, livelihood activities engaged in, and livelihood assets were found to be significant, hence influenced the livelihood security of the migrants. The length of stay of the migrants was significant at 5% with a positive coefficient of (ß= 0.193), this implies that an increase in the migrants' length of stay in the community will increase the probability of their livelihood security of the migrant. Likewise, livelihood activities and livelihood assets were also significant with a positive coefficient of ß= 0.248 and ß= 0.454 respectively implying that an increase in the livelihood activities and livelihood assets of the migrants will increase the probability of the livelihood security of the migrants in the study area. This result aligns with the findings of Gautam & Jha (2023); Syafrial *et al.* (2022) that livelihood security is influenced by various factors such as livelihood activities, access to livelihood capitals, social assets, and sustainable land management practices.

**Table 9: Regression Results of the Determinants of Livelihood Security**

| Variables | Beta | T | Sig |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | -0.118 | -1.160 | 0.248 |
| Length of stay in the community | 0.193 | 2.133 | 0.035* |
| Income | 0.149 | 1.644 | 0.103 |
| Livelihood activities | 0.248 | 2.764 | 0.007* |
| Livelihood assets | 0.454 | 3.805 | 0.000* |

Source: Field survey, 2018

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study revealed that migrants in the study area were mostly male who migrated to seek better employment and earn above the monthly minimum wage. They had spent substantial years in the host community and were primarily involved in agricultural production during both wet and dry seasons. The migrants had access to land and sources of income but lacked access to loans and were not members of cooperative societies. Although they lived in poor conditions and were vulnerable to diseases, they had moderate food security, education security, and habitat security. However, they were economically, socially, and health-wise vulnerable. The main determinants of their livelihood security were livelihood activities, livelihood assets, and length of stay in the host community.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Migrants are encouraged to seek employment opportunities in agricultural processing and non-farm sectors to enhance their livelihood security and contribute to significant growth and development.
2. The government should provide functional health facilities in the study area to improve the migrants' livelihood security.
3. Migrants should join and actively participate in cooperative societies to increase social interaction and access to loans.
4. Migrants should be involved in more than one livelihood activity and also stay longer in their host community to better secure their livelihood
5. Migrants should be accepted and supported by the host community to improve their overall livelihood security.

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