

COUNTER-URBANIZATION, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: THE NIGERIAN EXAMPLE

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Abstract

The potential of counter-urbanization on rural development in developing countries has not enlisted a deserved discourse in the literature. Whereas, the complex consequences of counter-urbanization, present challenges to policy makers who seek to alleviate poverty, improve rural areas conditions and reduce spatial income inequalities, the development trajectory of rural areas hinges on the number and quality of human resources and endogenous capital, which underpin sustainable development. Realizing the potentials of counter-urbanization therefore, requires more concerted efforts to plan and manage rural development with counter-urbanization and closely related factors of entrepreneurships as the main factors. This also means that local development initiative must use the resources they have (local knowledge, land, skills and traditions, primary production, natural environmental beauty, and social networks), turning or configuring these resources into development resources to unlock their internal development capacity in a sustainable manner. This requires a new and reformed rural development policy to comprehensively address deficiencies of the local development system, poor human resources, the lack of legitimate local institutions, weakness of trust and

entrepreneurship, as well as making all these issues be part of rural development policy.

Keywords: Rural development, Entrepreneurship, Tourism, Counter-urbanization, Sustainable Development.

Introduction

Rural areas across developing countries, especially Africa, though heterogeneous, face similar economic and demographic problems arising from loss of population through out-migration. A priori, migration is linked to a number of factors, which in turn have important and complicated consequences on natural environment, economic, social, political, socio-cultural developments of rural areas (Wu and Yao, 2010; De Braun and Rozelle, 2008; Gu, Aranda and Silverstein, 2009; Aluko and Agbola, 2006).

Like much of African countries, rural-urban migration is a problem in most rural area of Nigeria. Since independence in 1960, rural areas in Nigeria have lost about half of its population (Table 1). As loss of labour summarizes the problems of rural areas in Nigeria, the resultant loss of human capital, labour and basic infrastructure, negatively affect rural socio-economic activities and development (Ibrahim, Yakubu, and Alhaji, 2014; Ekong, 2003; Fadoyomi, 1998; Afolabi, 2007). Consequently, many rural areas are unable to attract or maintain sustainable population levels (Spencer, 1997; Santic, Bosworth, Rydzik and McAeavey, 2017), which further reduced economic opportunities and prevent rural regions from overcoming their structural problems, become impossible to take care of cultivable lands or to find workers for forestry jobs. Since farming and animal husbandry are vital sectors of rural economy, this, tend to cause increase in the farm/food prices and products of animal husbandry on the one hand, as rural areas lose population. Although, the dominant pattern of change in rural areas has been one of population decline, due to rural-

urban migration, nonetheless, there are cases of increase in population, due to natural increase (Turok, 2016; Mitchell, 2008) and counter-urbanization (Aluko and Agbola, 2006)

Table 1: Trends in Rural Population 1960-2018

Year	Rural Population	Urban Population	Rural Population as % of Total
1960	38,182,075	6,955,737	84.6
1965	41,830,659	8,296,555	83.4
1970	46,039,103	9,942,297	82.2
1975	50,838,279	12,535,293	80.2
1980	57,321,403	16,139,321	78.0
1985	62,179,031	21,434,269	74.4
1990	66,793,856	28,476,132	70.1
1995	73,226,377	34,785,088	67.8
2000	79,724,569	42,627,440	65.2
2006	85,649,746	54,353,796	61.2
2010	89,628,433	68,947,828	56.5
2015	94,620,354	86,561,390	52.2
2016	95,604,258	90,385,382	51.4
2017	95,122,219	95,764,092	49.8
2018	95,907,366	99,967,871	49.0

Source: World Population Indicator (2017)
<https://knoema.com/search?query=nigeria%20population>

Adewale (2005) observed that urban-rural migration is one of the important modes of migration in the last one decade. Previous studies concentrated on rural and rural-urban modes of migration. For instance, Okpara (1983); Fadayomi (1998); Ekong (2003) discovered that rural-urban and rural-rural types of migration were predominant in developing societies. However, studies by Okpara (1983) reveal that rural-urban migrants outnumber urban-rural migrants. Urban-rural migration (counter-urbanization) is only gradually finding its way into sustainable rural development discourse in developing countries (Akgun et al., 2011; Cloke, 1985). However, in

developed countries, the concept of counter-urbanization has been used to explain the phenomenon of urban-rural migration, where the concept has been loosely defined and tends to direct attention towards urban-centered factors of change (Clove, 1985). In the process of counter-urbanization, the rural areas are playing an important role as well, and not just passive receivers of migrants (Enyedi, 1988). Although the level of counter-urbanization was not sufficient to contribute to a positive rate of net migration, the movement of residents from large urban areas to rural municipalities did, nonetheless, continue (Mitchell, 2008). This counter-urbanization is akin to modernization in the 70s and to globalization subsequently (Akgun, et al., 2011).

No matter how long the rural-urban migrant stays in the city, he regards himself as a temporary sojourner (Aluko and Agbola, 2006). In effect, the rural areas are not really abandoned as a result of mostly, seasonal rural-urban migration; there are often feedbacks and linkages with the rural origin with significant development impact on the rural environment. Indeed, with the recent recession in Nigeria and as the effects of the recession are more severely felt in the urban centers (Gkartzios, 2013), rural areas and small towns are increasingly constructed as spaces of refuge from the economic crisis (Kasimis and Zografakis, 2013).

The complex consequences of rural migration, including counter-urbanization, present challenges to policymakers who seek to alleviate poverty, improve rural areas conditions and reduce spatial income inequalities (Lacroix, 2013; Wu and Yao, 2010). Moreover, there is scope for social and economic networks to support such migrants in rural areas (Santic, Bosworth, Rydzik and McAreavey, 2017).

Sustainable Development

Pearce et al (1990) asserted that “strong sustainability” is likely to be consistent with resource preservation, and suggested that more modest benefits from development or “weak

sustainability” will be more consistent with resource preservation. Pearce et al (1990) further favoured two fundamental considerations that is intergenerational and intergenerational equity. This also brings benefits to poor developing countries like Nigeria from a constant supply of natural resources (Abba, 2004).

Sustainable development is simply seen as the desire to maintain the achievement of such development over time (Pearce et al 1990). Sustainable development emerged in the 1980s as a unifying approach to the environment, economic development, and the quality of life.

It is the view in this review that the relatedness of counter-urbanization, entrepreneurship and sustainability at the rural level, if appropriately integrated, can form a comprehensive development policy, and can aid bottom-up rural development in developing countries.

Counter-urbanization: A Reversal of Rural-Urban Migration

Migration is an old human phenomenon. In retrospect, human beings have moved and settlements established as rural or urban, showing stratified socio-economic and geo-political compositions. There is the movement between local rural settlements, called rural-rural or lateral migration (Mitchell, 2008). In fact, lateral migration is far more common in developing African countries than is rural-urban migration (Udo, 1983; Aluko and Agbola, 2006). To ignore this common form of migration is to lose sight of the heterogeneous nature of rural sector (Lucas, 2007).

Population movement, be it, seasonal, temporary or permanent, rural-urban or rural-rural, and recently, urban-rural, is a routine part of life among settlements in developing countries. Given the significant disparities that have emerged and developed between and within rural and urban settlements, migration

phenomenon can be strategically used for the redistributive development dynamics; designed to solve problems usually associated with it: the problems that have emerged out of population pressures to handle or balance resource demand, resource availability and resource management (Abass, 1998)

Harris and Todaro (1970) gave the main reasons for the early rural-urban migration to be the pursuit of employment opportunities, the higher urban real wage as against low rural real wage and earning potentials of urban centers (Wu and Yao, 2010, Udo, 1983). The wage gap results in a rural push and urban pull factors. While modernization of farming, the industrial revolution, and resource exports theories are associated with urbanization and economic development, the rural poverty, and urban bias theories imply that urbanization may occur without growth (Fay and Opal, 2000). All these theories assume that urbanization comes from migration only. Moreover, urbanization does not come from migration only, as internal growth also matters. Urban push, (here used as expression opposed to rural push and urban pull), suggests that cities are growing internally and "pushing" their own boundaries. It is not that urban workers are being pushed to the countryside, but rather, high urban rates of natural increase are creating an urban population push (Jedwab, Christiaensen and Gindelsky, 2014)

In retrospect, the urban pull and rural push forced the rural population to move out of their settlements of origin in droves, towards the surrounding towns and villages. This mass exodus, particularly to towns and cities resulted in significant problems in these urban centres, i.e, rapid urbanization, constant migration of rural people to cities, and concentration of population and activities in one or two cities or, in other words, urban primacy and macrocephaly (Faraji, Qingping, Valinoori and Komjani, 2016). Although, the suburbanization process eased the migration flow to urban centers, thereby helped to relieve urban

problems, but generated new settlement locations near to, and well connected to urban area (Hosszu, 2009; Woods, 2006)

Counter-urbanization is a term coined by the Brian Berry (1976). He defined it as “a process of population de-concentration; it implies a movement from a state of more concentration to a state of less concentration” (Szilvia, 2009). Counter-urbanization broadly refers to a series of social phenomena concerning the relocation of residents, either by choice or necessity, from urban to rural residential environments (Hosszu, 2009). Counter-urbanization is a demographic and social process whereby people move from urban areas to rural areas, either within or beyond, a political border (Mitchell 2004; Champion 2000; Fielding 1998; Findlay 2000). Counter-urbanization is a reaction against urbanization processes, such as core-city deprivation, the rising property prices and overcrowding (Jensen – Svendsen, 2007; Van Den Berg et al., 1982), as well as economic recession as happens in many developing countries from time to time.

In England, counter-urbanization is associated with the colonization of the countryside from middle-class residents, motivated by particularly positive views surrounding rural living and rural lifestyle (Woods, 2006). In other European countries, counter-urbanization is an opportunity for developing rural communities, linked with excessive housing construction and facilitated by the planning system, involving diverse social groups (not just the middle classes) and irrelevant to idyllic representations of rurality (Gkartzios and Scott, 2010; Grimsund, 2011; Stockdale et al., 2000; Paniagua, 2002). In Australia, counter-urbanization is the net migration downwards in a hierarchy (Berry, 1976; Walmsley et al. 1998). Indeed, counter-urbanization is about people being able to explore alternatives to living in the city, creating changes in living location preferences.

Halfacree (2008) identified three forms of counter-urbanization: back-to-the-land migration, the pursuit of land-based lifestyles, and the creation of eco-villages. Other forms of migration are; green migration (Jones et al., 2003), amenity migration (Chipeniuk, 2004), Circular migration, retirement migration and Commuter migration (Lucas, 2007), expatriate migration (Stone and Stubbs, 2007). Counter-migration has internal or domestic dimension and international dimension when foreigners move to the rural area to work or to take-up residence (Halfacree, 2008). Hence, counter-urbanization refers to the settlement of both internal and international migrant groups in the rural area (Akgun et al., 2011).

Literature accounts show that urban residents are drawn to rural areas for a plethora of reasons. In Nigeria, Williams (1970), cited in Ofuoku (2012) observed that factors like crisis, old age, transfer, retirement and invasion of pests and disease are correlates of urban-rural migration. On the other hand, Jibowo (1992) listed factors like congestion, traffic jams, sanitation problems, increasing urban unemployment and crime rate and accommodation (housing) problem as factors that prompt urban-rural migration. According to Lucas (2007) reasons for return migration to the rural area may include; changing circumstances that led to the initial migration, economic deterioration in the destination area or rising incomes at home may induce return. The behavioural reasons are the rural idyll, family, and friends, collective reactions, and individualism. However, counter-urbanization means different thing to different people, but it is incontrovertible that the quality-of-lifestyle considerations for counter-urbanization are more than economic factors (Akgun, et al., 2011; Jones et al., 2003).

Differences in counter-urbanization trends worldwide show differences in the urbanization history of the countries, the planning systems and rural housing policies that regulate the countryside, as well as socio-cultural values surrounding rural living (Gkartzios, Garrod and Remoundou, 2013). A plethora of

concepts and names for counter-urbanization processes exist. Some researchers summarize them as desurbanization (Van Den Berg, et al., 1982, Enyedi 1988), or dis-urbanization (Vartiainen 1989). Others prefer the term counter-urbanization (Berry, 1976; Dahms and McComb 1999, Löffler and Steinicke 2006). Some prefer the spelling counterurbanisation (Halliday and Coombes 1995, Spencer 1997, Ainsaar 2004), others counter-urbanisation (Jensen and Svendsen 2007), while some researchers are simply trying to avoid the whole term and refer to the process as urban-rural migration (Aluko and Agbola, 2006; Nivalainen 2003), population turnaround (Burnley and Murphy 2002), rural repopulation (Stockdale et al., 2000) and so on. The variation in factors that account for counter-urbanization also means that there is the need to widen the lens of counter-urbanization theory and include cases that embrace diverse economic, cultural and personal factors (Halfacree, 2008).

Counter-urbanization is capable of redistribution of people and businesses toward a more balanced settlement pattern, both in terms of population density and state of development (Hosszu, 2009). Counter-urbanization can be regarded as a radical lifestyle-change, continuing urbanization, a deconcentration process or a stage in the life of the town. Of course, not all settlements are affected by counter-urbanization: because of the selective nature of migration, the process of counter-urbanization can cause many changes in some places, while others may remain untouched. Counter-urbanization benefits: rural and urban areas and economy and national economy as well (Aluko and Agbola, 2006). Gkartzios, Garrod and Remoundou (2013) see rural areas of Greece as resilient countryside that offers some solutions to crisis-hit urban households, while Aluko and Agbola (2006) thinks that urban areas are relieved at least on a temporary basis by the migration of urban dwellers to the rural areas at weekends and on major festival periods, this act to decongest the oversaturated urban environment.

Mitchell (2004) recognized two forms of counter-urbanization in the literature: either as a migration movement or a process of settlement system change, resulting in a deconcentrated settlement pattern. Early description focused on what is called statistical counter-urbanization, which saw counter-urbanization as shifts, or a rural turnaround, drawing on quantitative analysis of national population data (Champion, 1992; Fielding, 1989). Later, the focus of counter-urbanization research changed to qualitative specific local case studies irrespective of wider urban-rural population dynamics (Halliday and Coombes, 1995; Rivera, 2007). The case study research seeks to highlight the spatially selective character of counter-urbanization (Boyle and Halfacree, 1998) and the uneven local and regional geographies of rural in-migration (Woods, 2006). In more recent studies, Smith (2007) and Milbourne (2007) highlighted the need for more quantitative approaches to examine counter-urbanization in its national, regional and local contexts.

Counter-urbanization in some cases tends to be associated with a very positive perception of rural living, emphasizing the environmental, anti-urban and communitarian features of rural areas, and the existence of a 'rural idyll' has been well used to rationalize the migration decision (Halfacree, 2008; Van Dam et al., 2002). Economic condition (push-led) is also an important motivation for counter-urbanization.

Mitchell (2004) also used different terms to differentiate between economic and quality of life motives associated with the migration decision. Ex-urbanization describes the movement of middle-class commuters to accessible peri-urban rural areas, motivated by environmental amenities associated with rural living; Displaced-urbanization describes relocations motivated by the need for employment, lower costs of living and/or affordable housing and taking place in any geographic location that provides for these needs; and Anti-urbanization describes the movement of urban residents whose driving force is to live and work in a rural setting. These residents are motivated by

anti-urban motives (i.e. urban crime, the rat race) and pro-rural perceptions about rural life. With respect to the people involved in counter-urbanization, this ordinarily refers to out-migration of an urban middle class (Urry, 1995), marginal settlers and misfits (Halfacree, 2007), lesbian households (Smith and Holt, 2005), artists (Mitchell et al., 2004), pre-retirement groups (Stockdale, 2000) and international return migrants (Ni Laoire, 2007).

Counter-urbanization, however, could be associated with Mitchell's 'anti-urban' term and could be subdivided into three groups: simple living movement, pent urbanization and retirement migration (Szilvia, 2009).

The aim of this paper is to explore the potential of counter-urbanization as an opportunity for developing rural areas, linked with the entrepreneurship tendencies of the diverse peoples involved in counter-urbanization, the residents of rural areas and the potentials and rural capitals endowments of rural areas. In doing this, the paper also explores the age-long and modern functional relationships between urban and rural areas. This idea is what is aptly captured in urban-rural continuum (Gkartzios, Garrod, and Remoundou, 2013; Damianakos, 2001). In this continuum, urban and rural spaces, networks, socioeconomic activities, and identities were never truly separated, due to later urbanization and industrialization in developing countries.

In the light of reported cases of urban-rural functional relationships, the issue of counter-urbanization in rural development becomes simpler, especially because literature supports the need for acknowledging the diverse social, spatial and cultural factors in discussing counter-urbanization (Gkartzios, Garrod, and Remoundou, 2013; Aluko and Agbola, 2006; Halfacree, 2008). These authors demonstrate the positive implications of such mobility for the rural economy (particularly in agriculture, livestock and the construction industry), but also highlight the migrants' contribution to a wider social rural development (such as the demographic revival of depopulated

areas and maintenance of social cohesion). Indeed, national prosperity and spatially balanced development depend on strong linkages between cities and their rural hinterland (Turok, 2016; McDonagh, 2012; Woods, 2006).

Counter-urbanization - Entrepreneurship Nexus: key Opportunities

It has been established in the literature that people involved in counter-urbanization are usually adults (though younger than rural population), richer, better educated and trained in one skill or the other (Hosszu, 2009; Akgun et al, 2012; Aluko and Agbola, 2006). Initially, retirement migration is seen as the main flows into rural areas (Bures, 1997; Stockdale et al., 2000), but the recent literature provides evidence that some older newcomers are not retired but, instead, people in employment (Stockdale, 2005). Indeed, Santic, Antic, Ratkaj and Budovic (2017) reported that rural areas in developed countries faced with similar structural problems of rural areas in developing countries, compensate losses of the population with immigration or "importing" young, fertile people of working age.

Entrepreneurship has been important for the economic development, national and individual wealth creation, productivity and new job formations, wherever individual had opportunity to make economic initiative (May, 2005). Sexton and Bow-man – Upton (1991) cited in (May, 2005) defined entrepreneurship as the process of identifying opportunities, gathering resources, and exploiting these opportunities through action.

Entrepreneurship function implies the discovery, assessment and exploitation of opportunities. Entrepreneurship – the entrepreneurial function can be conceptualized as the discovery of opportunities and subsequent creation of new economic activity, often via the creation of new organization (Reynolds, 2005) cited in (Cuervo et al 2007). It is worth mentioning that

creation of enterprise is an essential element of economic reforms of both the rural and urban settlements.

Entrepreneurship activity has low social acceptance and all manners of disadvantages, including, smallness, funding, infrastructure, etc., in the rural areas (Kibler, 2015). Hence, the few new rural businesses, among which many are businesses in retail and local workshops, do reproduce the apparently weak local structures and have a lower growth potential. Without prejudice to the homogeneity of rural areas, Stam, (2005) and Bergmann and Baumgartner, (2010) advised that policy instruments that focus on the sustainable development of business in the tourism sectors may better fit the rural entrepreneurial milieu. Moreover, urban migrants are not likely to be engaged in arable farming like the indigenous rural population. It is no accident, therefore, that the current strategy of rural development plans is to support and stimulate entrepreneurship while exploiting the potential of rural capital instead of bringing it in from outside (Herslund and Tanvig, 2012; Petrin and Gannon, 1991)

Although, traditional theories of development have always ignored the role of entrepreneurship (Lacroix, 2013), but studies have established the importance of this concept, especially in order to encourage sustainable rural development by using local resources (Phillipson And Raley, 2002; Renkow, 2003; Stathopoulou et al., 2004; Fink, Lang and Kepler, 2017). According to Lang, et al. (2014), social entrepreneurs are considered to be change agents who can break unfavourable routines through social innovation. Entrepreneurs drive economic change by innovatively combining existing elements, while social entrepreneurs push social innovation at the intersection of the public, private, and not-for-profit sectors (Fink, Lang and Kepler, 2017).

Newcomers integrate their urban ways of life into the new relationships obtained in rural areas. Moreover, the rural areas

might be peripheral in the physical sense, but globalization, increased mobility, new technologies and the specific use of rural areas open novel possibilities for entrepreneurship in rural areas and challenge the notion of rural business (Herslund and Tanvig, 2012). According to Aluko and Agbola (2006) return migrants have played an important part in the development of their rural places of origin through the introduction of new ideas, skills, symbols and sociological patterns, collectively called social remittance (Levitt, 1999).

While, Findlay, et al., (2000) argued that the main economic impact of newcomer migrants is job creation, Stockdale (2005) insists that rural economic diversification and regeneration are mainly driven by locals and not by newcomers, but the higher human capital and skills attained outside the rural area by the newcomers are crucial for rural change and revitalization. Moreover, urban migrants perceive rural areas as a dynamic, expanding and entrepreneurial milieu in which to invest (Bryant, 1989; Stathopoulos et al., 2004). No wonder, the OECD (2006) has included entrepreneurship and endogenous economic growth as the main focus in its New Rural Paradigm.

Rural Capital and Tourism: Pivot for Entrepreneurship in Rural Areas

Endogenous development potential forms the basis for the development of different activities in rural areas (agriculture and forestry, entrepreneurship, tourism, recreation, residence, etc.). Rural development as a concept means various things to various people. For a long time, rural development and agricultural production were viewed as synonymous. In recent years, however, it has been argued that agriculture is by no means the only occupation for the rural people and accordingly a new and broader view of rural development has emerged (Ilbery, 1998)

Augustine (2005) asserted that rural development is a development intervention that is directed at:

- i. Sustainable improvement in the living standards and welfare of the rural people,
- ii. Improvement in rural infrastructure and services,
- iii. Availability of access to resources, facilities, and means of production,
- iv. Enhancement of opportunities for participation in designing, managing and steering development

In Nigeria, rural development programmes have focused on more areas of development programmes rather than the traditionally narrow focus on agriculture. While agricultural development is usually still the ultimate of rural development, such other areas as infrastructural development and health care are gaining increasing attention. Some agencies are centred for such development like opening up of rural roads. They also embark on rural water supply, especially boreholes and deep wells, and rural electrification. All these programmes are embarked upon to enhance the stemming of rural-urban migration and also improve lots of the rural dwellers (Olatubara, 2004).

Rural capital is an organizing concept for rural development. It is the combination of natural capital, man-created capital, human capital, and social capital. Human capital reflects both the size of the working-age population (with population growth leading to the widening of human capital) and investment in education and training of people (which leads to the deepening of human capital) (Akgun et al 2011). Social capital refers to trust and social networks among individuals and to the reciprocity, which arises from these connections (Perpar and Udovc, 2011) and the relationships within communities (Akgun, et al, 2011). Environmental capital plays a key role in encouraging or limiting economic development, while physical capital refers to the interconnectedness of the various units with respect to roads, telecommunication etc.

The above resources constitute a good business opportunity (Dinis, 2006) waiting to be exploited by rural entrepreneurs. According to Ibrahim (2014), rural tourism offers a possible solution to the problems associated with lost economic opportunities and population decline that accompany the decline in agriculture employment. Similarly, Bergmann and Baumgartner (2010) think that policy instruments that focus on the sustainable development of business in the tourism sectors may better fit the rural entrepreneurial milieu. According to Norhafiza and Lonik, (2014), the focus on tourism development is due to the increased demand from tourists who want to enjoy nature found only in rural environments as well as to experience cultural heritage that is still preserved by the rural communities (Yusnita, Shaladdin, and Aziz, 2013).

According to Merican, Ruzian, and Azrol (2014), the homestay programme, for example, encourages rural communities to participate in the tourism industry, increase their income and create tourism entrepreneurs in the rural areas. The increasing demand for tourism products will indirectly encourage new investments in infrastructure, communications, and transport (Milman, Pizam, 1988) and develop rural areas through other social support. The development and conservation of rural capital are of fundamental importance to rural people, as they attempt to resolve local problems and pursue their aspirations. Rural entrepreneurship and rural development are fundamentally influenced by the relative abundance of each type of rural capital. Conversely, the activities of rural entrepreneurs are the major driving force in rural capital accumulation (Skuras et al., 2005; Meccheri and Pelloni, 2006).

According to Perpal and Udovc (2011), mobilization of local (endogenous) resources and local collective goods to support comparative advantages for local businesses, local entrepreneurship and innovation and social cohesion can be better strategies. Nemes (2005) thinks rural values (clean environment, natural beauty, cultural traditions, etc.) that have

been given little consideration in the past, should be converted or configured to 'marketable assets' and into development resources. Quoting Van der Ploeg et al., Nemes (2011) states that 'old rural resources' (values) (land ecosystem, landscape, animals, social networks, craftsmanship, etc.) should be considered in the context of rural development. The consensus is that rural development should take advantage of both newly emerging and historically rooted realities. One way to do this is by functional integration of newcomers (urban migrants) into the rural environment. Moreover, the concern for sustainable rural development influenced the change from the idea of development as a process mainly linked with economic growth to the approach based on the increase in quality of life and environment (Ibrahim and Nwokoro, 2012).

In creating competitive advantage for rural area, development strategies should focus on immobile resources, which are not in contention, such as social capital, cultural capital, environmental capital and local knowledge capital, as mobile traditional resources (such as capital, information, skilled labor etc.) have left the rural area and therefore do not create any more solid base for the development of rural areas (Bryden, 1998, cited in Terluin, 2003). What rural areas have in abundance and cannot be attracted away are the rural values. There are three aspects of rural values (Nemes, 2011).

- Socio-cultural values (rural culture, folklore and the built environment, local cuisine, arts and crafts, locally specific products and production methods, minority languages, traditional ways of life)
- Increasingly, people are discovering the importance of rural values, so, the importance of rural tourism and enterprise have increased (Hosszu, 2009). Indeed, the resources and potentials of rural areas can be the basis for a thriving rural tourism and if managed effectively, tourism can have minimal negative impact on natural environment and can act as a catalyst for

social development and biodiversity conservation (McNeely, Redford and Carter, 2005).

From the above discussions, the rural space cannot be considered any longer as being purely for agriculture. Tourism is an agent of rural development; it offers opportunities for family business and small-scale entrepreneurship (Liliana, Amalia, and Mirela, 2014). Tourism promotes rural entrepreneurship and business development.

It is also abundantly clear that counter-urbanization and entrepreneurship are the sine qua non to sustainable rural development. However, counter-urbanization and entrepreneurship factors only relevant to human resource aspect of rural development. There are equally, both resource –type and access-type disadvantages to contend with in the process of rural development in developing countries

Main Rural Disadvantages

Rural areas need protection because resulting from a different development trajectory; they have serious comparative disadvantages with reference to competition for markets (Nemes, 2005). One basic aim of rural development is to eliminate or overcome these comparative advantages, to make them competitive and make for social and economic cohesion between different areas. To achieve this, rural areas need to surmount three main disadvantages.

First, the disadvantages of persistent economic structure: Nemes (2005) calls these resource-type disadvantages. He likens this to long-term economic and political dependence on urban centres, their unfavourable economic structure and/or geographical location and their limited access to goods, information and central resources. Another major disadvantage is that rural areas in Nigeria are not the only constraint by financial resources; capital accumulation (if available at all) is low and slow in primary production, scarcity of different types of infrastructure

also sets constraints on local production and the development of entrepreneurship, so is the weakness of human resources. Both the number and the structure of the rural population, occasioned by severe out-migration and sometimes-negative natural growth, are impediment to rural development.

The third, the disadvantage of (physical) accessibility: Access-type disadvantages are usually visible and quantifiable results of uneven development, based on imperfect resources. Not only does this limit commuting from rural areas to urban markets but also limits the attractiveness of an area for investment.

Surmounting Rural Disadvantages

A key endogenous potential in rural area is the entrepreneurship of the area. The regional development agencies that fit both criteria can contribute much to rural development through entrepreneurship.

Tackling Access- Type Disadvantages

To successfully improve access to and from the backward rural area, national, regional and local institutions are very necessary. The rural areas gain through the coming of external capital and other resources (information, expertise, etc.), which helps to revitalize the local economy. In addition, improved access open up new space, markets, natural and human resources and supports continuous growth of the urban, regional and national economy.

Moreover, physical access without economic access can make rural areas worse off. Therefore, creating soft infrastructure for economic access (financial and market support institutions, vertical and horizontal integrations, services, training, etc.) though requires less capital investment but more organization, connections local knowledge and social engineering (Nemes, 2005) and therefore, is better undertaken by regional or local institutions.

What all this means is that a bottom-up process with the active driving machine of the Local development system (LDS) of rural development is the assured way to increase the competitiveness and comparative advantage of rural areas and development. With Local development institutions that are truly on the ground in the rural environment, they are more likely to improve access to the rural areas and the regional/national economy. Local level institutions are also essential for unlocking resources.

Tackling Resource- type disadvantages

Good rural feeder roads, educational facilities, health facilities etc., in other words, physical, economic and policy accesses mentioned above, in place, will provide the enabling environment required. Beyond that, there is the need for a strong local development system exemplified by local institutions mentioned above. The role of local development system includes,

- To put in place a well thought out, a comprehensive development plan for the rural area.
- A well-articulated strategy of actualizing the development plan.
- Provision of appropriate information about local needs, advisory services; local business associations; local development plans or marketing.

For a sustainable rural development, local development initiative must use the resources they have (local knowledge, Land, skills and traditions, primary production, natural environmental beauty and social networks), turning or configuring these resources into development resources to unlock their internal development capacity. This type of local development initiative is specific to the local-regional area. The scale of the development and of economic and social change is usually smaller than those of large-scale FDI or other urban-based developments and based on rural development resources;

building, skills, land, family savings and finances and labor, therefore does not create economic dependency and cannot be disrupted by outside forces (as it is the case with sole development that depends on primary production) through stoppage of external assistance or relocation of investment.

Nevertheless, there are problems as identified somewhere above with respect to endogenous development in rural areas; longtime dependency, neglect and economic and social degradation of the rural areas, inadequate, costly to unlock or utilize resources as a result of capital flight, remoteness and lack of infrastructure and local financial capital. Perhaps, the most difficult problems can be attributed to deficiencies of the local development system, poor human resources, the lack of legitimate local institutions, weakness of trust and entrepreneurship. These and other factors like cooperation and innovation are the ingredients important for successful rural development and therefore should be specifically and comprehensively addressed in rural development policy.

Conclusion

The purpose of this paper was to establish the significance of tourism as a panacea to sustainable entrepreneurship in the rural areas while undergoing a counter-urbanization process. Urbanization can be easier to be described with its socio-economic effects in the urban areas. However, counter-urbanization can only be explained with an adventure such as tourism entrepreneurship. It is an established fact that rural areas and rural settlements are heterogeneous. It is also a fact that large numbers of rural settlements in Africa are facing demographic shrinkage.

Rural policy making and management can help greatly in the counter-urbanization process and rural development. The formulation of policy and management of rural areas natural environment development can facilitate the movement of several migrants in the urban areas in to the rural settlements.

This can help to improve the living conditions of the inhabitants in the rural areas of developing countries like Nigeria. Tourism facilities, for example, if appropriately located and planned could provide the basis for the stimulation of economic, social and political development in the remotest rural communities.

It is the contention in this paper that resources are bound in the rural areas that can form the basis of an endogenous development. Therefore, counter-urbanization, entrepreneurship, and tourism should be part of any rural policy to reactivate, rejuvenate and develop the rural areas.

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