**RURAL ELECTRIFICATION AND URBAN DECONGESTION**

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**Introduction**

* The congestion of an area is determined by a multiplicity of intricately related factors.
* The growth of cities is a product of the interplay of the components of population dynamics: fertility, mortality, migration
* Arises from: high birth rate, declining death rates, migration (in-migration and immigration), urbanization is largely a consequence of migration, migration is the permanent or semi-permanent change of residence.
* In internal migration, four patterns of movement can be identified: rural-rural, rural-urban, urban-urban, urban-rural.
* The predominant pattern in sub-Saharan Africa is rural-urban migration and this is what has largely contributed to urbanization and congestion in most African cities.
* The rapid rate of increase in the population of large urban centers has been a source of great concern to successive governments in Nigeria since the mid 1950s.
* Lagos, Port Harcourt, warri, Kaduna, Kano, Jos, Abuja and some of the new state capitals have witnessed phenomenal growth as a result of migration.

**Social problems of rapid urban growth**

- Urban congestion or overcrowding

- Poor housing

- Poor environmental sanitation

- Unemployment

- The development of slums

- Crime and other social vices

* The most affected city in nigeria is lagos which is also notorious for

- Traffic congestion

- Pollution

- Problem of garbage and waste disposal

 **Central Concerns**

- How can rural electrification assist in decongesting cities?

- We utilize the push-pull theoretical model

- We explain how rural electrification can assist in stemming the high rate of rural-urban migration

- We explain how rural electrification can stimulate urban-rural return migration thereby decongesting the cities.

**Rural Electrification**

* The process of bringing electrical power to rural and remote areas.
* The use of electricity is not limited to lighting and household purposes but also for the mechanization of many farming operations, e.g. threshing, milking and hoisting of grain for storage.
* On the global level, it is estimated that over 1.6billion people do not have access to electricity.
* 80 percent of this number live in the rural areas
* Only 9 percent of rural population in sub-Saharan Africa has access to electricity.
* Limited access makes it impossible for the storage of food by refrigeration and also limits the mechanization of many rural farming and artisanal operations
* Electricity can free large amounts of human time and labour, reduce drudgery, make job more interesting and increase productivity

**Urbanization**

* Increase in the proportion of the population residing in towns
* Brought about by rural populations into towns and cities, and/or the higher urban levels of natural increase in population
* African countries are far less urbanized than countries of Europe and America
* Paradoxically, they are over urbanized
* Urbanization in African countries is not a response to industrialization

**Consequences of over urbanization**

* Unemployment/underemployment
* Low productivity
* Bloated tertiary or service sector
* Marginalization of labour force in towns and cities
* Urban misery and rural poverty co-existing
* Crime, development of slums, traffic congestion, population, poor sanitations, e.t.c
* Nigeria is experiencing rapid urbanization

 Year Urban Population

1970 16%

1980 20%

1993 38%

2005 44%

2008 47%

* Between 1980 and 1993, annual rate of growth of urban population was 5.5 percent (world bank, 1996)

**Push-pull model of migration**

* Most frequently heard theory of migration
* Originally put forward by e. Ravenstein in 1889
* Later developed by Everett lee in 1966
* The theory holds that some people move because they have been pushed from their former location
* Others, because they have been pulled or attracted to somewhere else
* Push-pull factors determine the migration of persons

**Push factors**

* Push factors at migrant’s origin are unfavourable and they include: lack of services, lack of safety, high crime rate, crop failure, unfavourable weather conditions, drought and flood, poverty, war, inadequate job opportunity, desertification, famine, political persecution, poor medical care, loss of wealth, natural disasters, death threats, poor housing, pollution

**Pull factors**

* Pull factors at migrants destination are the favourable factors which pull them. They include: better services, better job opportunities, higher wages, favourable climate, low crime rate and better security, political stability, more fertile soil, low risk of natural hazards, better living conditions, absence of religious conflicts, better medical care, availability of educational opportunities

**Intervening obstacles**

* These exist between the desire to move and actual decision to do so. They include:

 - distance of the expected destination

 - cost of getting there (transportation)

 - dislocation from friends and family members

 - the challenges of settling down in the new location

 - poor health etc.

* All these are lumped together as overall costs of moving
* **Graphical Representation of the Push-Pull Model**

**Rural Electrification, Rural Pull and Urban Decongestion**

* Rural electrification would mitigate the effect of push factors in the rural areas
* It would create more pull factors in the rural areas
* It would encourage the establishment of cottage industries in the rural areas thereby creating jobs for family members who would have migrated to cities in search of jobs.
* It will facilitate the activities of persons engaged in artisanal occupations in the rural areas
* It will enhance the mechanization of many farming operations such as milking and hoisting of grains for storage
* Storage of food by refrigeration will be facilitated without incurring the cost of owning and running personal generators
* It will stimulate the establishment of hospitals and industries in the rural areas thereby pulling urban unemployed
* It will encourage retirees to return to their rural homes

**Conclusion**

* Rural electrification will stem rural-urban migration, stimulate urban-rural migration and decongest the cities.

Thank you.