

Introduction

The concept of migration has been defined in various ways by different authors. According to Hossain (2001), migration is relocation of residence for a specified duration and various reasons. On the other hand authors simply refer to migration as a permanent relocation of residence. Tostensen (2003) stipulates that for any move to be considered as migration it has to meet at least three criteria 1. A move must be accompanied by a significant demographic consequence 2. Must be sustained hence visits to relatives or business trips cannot be regarded as migration 3. Must also include a transformation of a social environment in terms of realignment of social relationships.

Research problem

The drive for conducting this research is based on the fact that migration has been seen as something that makes life better people without looking at the negative side of it. The elderly people left are now assigned with more responsibilities which at times are way beyond their abilities .

Aim of the study

This study aims to investigate the effects of rural urban migration on the families left in rural area

RESERCH QUESTION

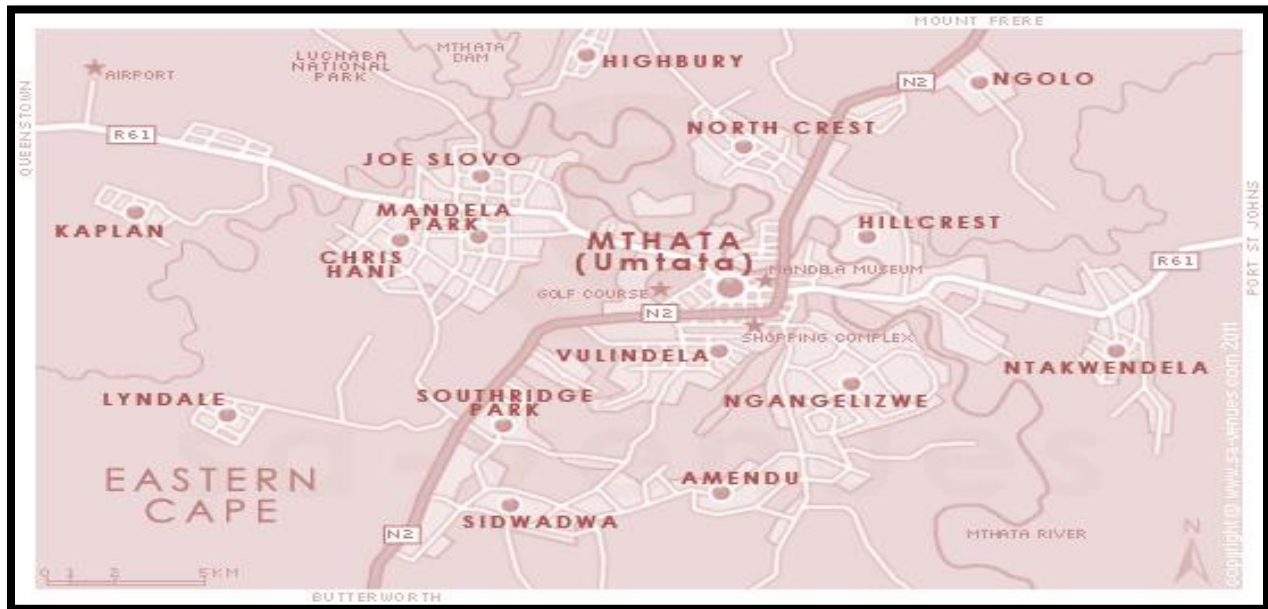
How does rural-urban migration affects the rural community at large?

Research methods

The study used both methods quantitative and qualitative method. The use of both methods is called mixed method (Boston, 2003). When both methods are used the weaknesses of the other are complemented by the strengths of the other. The study employed simple random sampling. It is not just a matter of a researcher randomly selecting individuals. The respondents were selected randomly from the community to represent entire population of the community. The study constituted a sample size of 60 respondents both males and females from the ages of 18 to 40 years upwards. The researcher wanted 30 females and 30 males as to balance the gender but ended up having 35 females and 25 males. The reason for that is because participation in the research is voluntarily and women were more willing to participate in the study. The researcher used questionnaire as a method of data collection.

Study area

The study made use Mthatha rural community in the Eastern Cape Province to shed some light with regards to the effects of rural urban migration on the families left in rural areas.



Ethical consideration

Ethical procedures have been taken into consideration when this study was conducted. The protection of the participants was ensured. This included the right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity. Participation was voluntary and the principle of informed consent ensured this. Research ethics places an emphasis on the human and sensitive treatment of research participants who may be placed at varying degrees of risk of research procedures.

Discussion findings

Results show that many respondents were of the view that rural areas are less developed due to the influx number of people moving to urban areas, leaving rural areas with less and less chances of being developed. Points such as the young economic active people migrate to urban areas so rural areas are lacking people with fresh ideas for development. Although respondents pointed out these responses, the dominant one was that the government is not much concerned about rural development. From the results of the study 90% of the respondents believe that rural-urban migration contributes to loss of morals and culture in rural areas, while 10% does not agree or said no, rural urban migration does not

contribute to loss of morals and culture. Results from the study show that 60% of the respondents are of the belief that rural-urban migration results in the increase of female headed households. They further went on to say that rural-urban migration leads to health issues on those left behind especially the elderly. Kaplan & Meyer (2001) states that this type of migrations leads to issues such as brain drain. Circular labour migration may have positive economic and health effects on the 'sending' household (Collinson, 2005; Kuhn, 2003), however there can also be negative effects associated with this type of move, including increased exposure to HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases (Lurie, 2001; Collinson, 2005). Others viewed rural urban migration as harmful to those left behind because it even creates a situation whereby children have to live on their own without a parent. This indicates that indeed rural urban migration impacts badly on those left behind. The study revealed that amongst all other factors that influence the decision of migrating to urban areas, economic factors are the main pullers to urban areas, this constituted for about 87% of the respondents. Respondents were of the belief that urban areas offer more job opportunities, so the great influx into urban areas is due to the fact that people need job opportunities. Again an argument was made that people migrate to get access to better social services such, clean water, housing, transportation etc, so since these services are better in urban areas people decide to reside in city.

The results indicate that rural-urban migration leaves children with more responsibilities this is indicted by the 63% who agreed who agreed with the question that said this type of migration leaves children with more duties. Children have the responsibility of having to take care of their grandparents because the adult child has migrated. Children have to play even parental role to their siblings because of parental absence and the elderly are too old they need care themselves. These responses were due to the fact that most parents when migrating expect children to grow up and be more responsible. Findings show that rural-urban migration impacts negatively on the elderly people left in rural areas. Old people are left with more duties like child care. This is because the work that was supposed to be done the young active grouped is now left for those who are left in rural areas. Respondents also pointed out that the left behind tend to feel lonely and unhappy due to the absence of an adult child.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of rural-urban migration on families left in rural areas. The study revealed how rural-urban migration effect the left behind families and it has been noted that although this type of migration is beneficial at times, it is mostly disadvantaging to those left behind.

References

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