

# Determinants of Internal-Migration in Ethiopia: Qualitative Review

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## Abstract

Internal migration is a critical problem in Ethiopia. This review focused on determinants of internal migration in Ethiopia. Therefore, the objective of this review was to assess determinants of internal migration in Ethiopia. The review used secondary data sources from research articles and reports from different researchers and organizations who have written on the determinants of internal migration and related topic in Ethiopia and elsewhere. Depending on the reviewed document, the most significant determinants of internal migration in Ethiopia are encapsulating with household and individual demographic, socio-economic and structural and institutional factors. Besides, food insecurity, environmental degradation, lower agricultural productivity, demographic pressure, famine, unemployment, conflicts, drought, poor living conditions, inadequate social services, land shortages in rural areas were identified as the major push factors of internal migration in Ethiopia. Although “push” factors predominate, there are some significant “pull” factors that attract rural people to traffic urban areas such as better employment opportunities, higher incomes, better healthcare and education, urban facilities and way of life, security, and other urban amenities. So, further investigations should be conducted by governmental and non-governmental institutions to suggest possible solutions by focusing on the above aforementioned significant variables that affect internal migration in Ethiopia.

**Keywords:** Internal migration, Determinants, push and pull factors, Ethiopia.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Migration whether national or international has become an important livelihood strategy among households in Ethiopia. This is because it provides migrant households with transfers that are uncorrelated with agricultural income (World Bank, 2006). Now a day, in total, about 258 million people are living outside their country of birth globally, with two-thirds living in G20 countries (IOM, 2018). Specifically, in Ethiopia, migration is becoming the tough and challenging problem of the country from time to time due to both push and pull factors. However, migration can have a positive result in improving livelihoods if exhaustive and comprehensive approaches and systems are set up. Internal migration streams inside Ethiopia are presently bigger than international migration flows from Ethiopia. The IDMC (2009b) guesses that there are as of now 300,000 Internally Displaced people groups (IDPs) in Ethiopia contrasted with around 60,000 refugees that as of now live in different nations (UNCHR, 2009). Aside from the IDPs, the essential internal migration flows are rural-urban migration and rural-rural migration. However, a similar report uncovered that a significantly higher number of migrants, around 740 million, are occupied with intra-relocation (moved inside their nations), primarily from rural to urban areas or from one rural area to another.

This is mainly because the Ethiopian economy is predominantly depending on rain-fed agriculture and the country has experienced political instability, war, famine, economic hardship throughout its history and the economy. Internal migration flows in Ethiopia in the course of the most recent couple of decades have been driven by financial, climatic and political elements, including dry spell, political strife, constrained movements and destitution (Berhanu and White 2000; Comenetz and Caviedes, 2002). (Berhanu and White 2000; Comenetz and Caviedes, 2002). Consequently, migration is an enticing option for additional income, which is fundamental for interests in methods for production or even to sustain a current living, mainly for economic reasons. The results of some studies showed that intra-village conflict, absence of relief assistant, farmland size, access to information, livestock ownership, and family and individual qualities including family size, sex, and age of the transients are the prevailing determinant factors for internal migration. For women and girls, there is proof that early marriage and sexual maltreatment are drivers of migration (World Bank, 2010).

Internal migration in Ethiopia happens as country urban relocation, rustic provincial movement, and resettlement strategies, which are largely generous in Ethiopia. Also, internal migration in Ethiopia has generally happened at marriage when the spouse moves to live in the husband's community. Among the types of internal migration rural-rural migration take the lion share in Ethiopia both in 1999 and 2007 national household surveys (CSA, 2007). The next highest is rural-urban migration which accounts for 24.8 and 32.5% of the overall migrants in the year 1999 and 2007, respectively. The rapid rate of urbanization is primarily caused by poor rural living conditions and persistent famine, forcing rural populations to migrate to cities in search of alternative livelihoods” (Van Dijk & Franssen, 2008). The burden of rural-urban migration is more severe and challenging in less

developing countries like Ethiopia since migration rates are beyond job creation in the cities (Shamdin, 2005). As indicated by the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC, 2009b), no endeavours have been made by the Ethiopian government or universal associations to recognize the determinant factors and gauge the quantity of inside uprooted individuals (IDPs).

Besides, the review made on determinants and causes of internal migration in the context of the country level were few. There were many studies conducted about the topic despite lacking the consistency of determinants of internal migration in the country context. So that the aim of this review is tried to compile studies conducted in the different part of the country to contribute knowledge and show the real image about the determinants of internal migration in Ethiopia. Optimistically, this review paper may be helpful for government and development practitioners who work on migration of people (Like, IOM) through signifying in what issue they should intervene. For researchers, it may give insight on how they should conduct research to fill the gaps of different studies and to make the community beneficial through generating timely information by their investigation for making a decision.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This review paper aimed to assess the key determinants and causes of internal migration in Ethiopia and to suggest a possible solution to the identified determinants and problems regarding the internal migration of Ethiopia. Therefore, different published and unpublished secondary documents were composed of diverse sources like research articles and reports. Accordingly, all data relevant to this review were collected, interpreted and evaluated from secondary data sources that have been written on internal migration and related topics in Ethiopia. The decision to hold or discard a particular source was made based on new, relevancy for the review topic. At last, all collected data were examined and ended description and understanding qualitatively.

## 3. DISCUSSIONS

### 3.1. Internal Migration in Ethiopia

It is recognized that in many developing countries, internal migration from rural areas to cities is set in motion at least in part by natural disasters, land degradation, and desertification (UNDP, 2015). Internal migrants who move Poverty, low agricultural incomes, low productivity, population growth, shortages, fragmentation and inequitable distribution of land, environmental degradation, and the relative lack of economic opportunities in rural areas are the deriving factors to people move from rural areas to urban areas (IOM, 2014). Internal migration mostly composed of young adults and the poor constitute the main flow of people in developing countries (UNDP, 2009).

Internal migration is important almost everywhere and in some countries is far greater than international migration. Ethiopia is one of the nations in Africa with a moderately significant level of internal migration and population redistribution. Internal migration in Ethiopia is believed to be bigger than external flows, even though the specific number of individuals who move inside isn't known (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2009; Frouws, 2015). However, rural-urban migration is increasing, up from 10.4% in 1980 to 19% in 2014 as people seek new opportunities in the city to escape rural poverty (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2009; Rahmato *et al.*, 2013; Frouws, 2015). On top of dealing with women and children in Ethiopia from provincial to urban networks is believed to be expanding, however, there are no accurate numbers (Fransen & Kuschminder, 2009). Currently, many people in Ethiopia are internally displaced. As of July 2015, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre estimates that there were over 413,400 internally displaced people due to inter-communal and cross-border violence, most of them living in protracted displacement situations. The IOM projects that 821,400 people will be displaced; 286,400 from drought, 425,000 from flooding and 110,000 from communal conflict (Government of Ethiopia & Ethiopia Humanitarian Country Team, 2015). Currently, migration within Ethiopian borders has been common as well, mainly in the form of rural-urban migration flows.

Shockingly, Ethiopian internal migration can't be bolstered by information because of an absence of accessible and dependable information on this issue. The absence of such examinations might be halfway because of the absence of dependable information just as the way that internal migration is far less of a political. In any case, it is apparent from existing examinations that roughly 50 to 70 percent of the population moves briefly or for all time inside the nation (Mberu, 2006). Ongoing experimental proof has concentrated on breaking down the determinants just as the effect of international migration. The study of internal migration has been somewhat abandoned when in fact, it constitutes a very important policy area.

### 3.2. Determinants of Internal Migration in Ethiopia

Based on their inferential statistics results various scholars distinguish different determinant factors which influence internal migration. Therefore, the review paper discussed and summarized the diverse determinants and causes of internal migration in the aspects of demographic, socio-economic and institutional characteristics of individuals and households.

**Sex:** The share of females for the whole sample indicated that females migrate more than males in general (Berhe,

2011). This implies that female household members are migrating more than males. According to (Beneberu and Mesfin, 2017), the logistic regression analysis results demonstrated that females are more transitory than their male partners. This is maybe due to female-headed households have lower earning capabilities than male-headed households, and for this reason may be more driven to become migrant households (Ackah and Medvedev, 2010). This is consistent with the study in Ethiopia (Gray and Mueller, 2012) and Senegal (Kusumawardhani, 2012).

On the other hand, male migrants are more probable to be pulled either by marriage, by the attraction of job opportunities, or higher expected income in urban areas, while a female is more likely to be pushed out of the rural area, maybe due to the non-availability of jobs, family size or lack of adequate income. (Fassil and Mohammed, 2017).

**Age:** There is a positive relationship between a young household head age and the odds of sending a migrant (Osawe, 2013; Akhter and Bauer, 2014; Ferrone and Giannelli, 2015; Atsede and Marianne, 2016). Especially younger women are more likely to migrate from rural to urban areas than older people and men (Birhanu and Kavitha, 2017). The possible reason is younger women do not have land to work on and means of subsistence to establish their livelihood. Besides, young people specifically women move from rural to urban areas in search of work or better opportunities in general. (Birhanu and Kavitha, 2017).

Besides, as the age of household head increases, the farmer will be getting older and could not be a volunteer to leave their home and more likely to concentrate on-farm activities for their subsistence. From the logistic regression analysis Beneberu and Mesfin, (2017) found that age is insignificant in determining rural-urban migration. Age consistent with the prediction of human capital theory and findings of many studies has a negative and significant effect on internal migration (Berhe, 2011). Because, the older the head, the more he/she can diversify income and allocate farming and family responsibilities across the household's members both within the household farmland and outside the farmland (Herrera and Sahn, 2013).

**Education:** Economic theories predicts that educated people are more likely to be pulled toward urban areas due to their networks, access to information, income-earning opportunities, and availability of jobs. Because the more educated the head, the more he/she can gather and process the information required to migrate (Ratha *et al.*, 2011). This is consistent that those who are better educated are relatively more involved in different migration streams than those who are not (Oberai, 1978; Mberu, 2006). In other words, the less educated individuals are more likely to be pushed out of the rural areas (Görlich, *et al.*, 2006; Berhe Mekonen, 2011; Fasil and Mohammed, 2017).

Individuals who are more educated tend to be more mobile; they seek work that matches their higher skills and expectations, and which pays returns on education costs incurred (Richter and Taylor, 2006; Ackah and Medvedev, 2010). In general, the probability of each type of migration increased with education, however, education is particularly important for rural-urban migration (Birhanu and Kavitha, 2017).

**Gender:** There is wide variation across different contexts that the propensity to migrate differs between men and women. According to Awumbila *et al.* (2015), women are less likely than men to migrate because of their reproductive and care responsibilities in addition to financial and decision-making constraints that they face. This is contrary reported that rural women were 6.4 percent more likely than men to move to rural areas. This is probably the limited access of women to productive resources and they are more vulnerable to different kinds of shocks (Herrera and Sahn, 2013). Alemante *et al.* (2006), found that women are increasingly migrating to urban areas in search of job opportunities and a better life.

**Family size:** Large and extended households have a positive effect on raising the flow of migration or externally or internally (Görlich, *et al.*, 2006; Mekonen, 2011; Beneberu and Mesfin, 2017). This implies that there is a positive association between the size of the family and the migration of the family members. Therefore, the family members decide to migrate in search of a job in urban areas due to decreased in income caused by the non-availability of non-agricultural jobs. According to Fassil and Mohammed (2017), as the size of the family increases, its per capita income decreases and family members may migrate to seek work elsewhere. The family size of migrants at the time of migration was found in the large, average family size of 4-6 per household (Bundervoet, 2018).

**Assets base:** Whether a household needs to pursue livelihood diversification and afford the financial cost of migrating through migration determined by the ownership of productive assets that the household had (Waddington and Sabates-Wheeler, 2003). The probability of migration initially increases as the asset base of the household increases but after a certain level, its effects become negative implying that migrants come from households who are in the middle of the wealth distribution (Fassil and Mohammed, 2017). The lower its vulnerability and the less the propensity of its members to migrate out of distress as the larger a household's assets base (Berhanu, 2012). The likelihood of rural out-migration reduces as the possession of a large size of livestock probably increases the likelihood of the household to be food secure.

**Land size:** Land is owned and allocated by the government in Ethiopia however households preserve the right to farm it through a continuous residence and the use of the land and, this finally, mitigates against migration (de Brauw and Mueller, 2012).

Moreover, migrants' farmland size in the rural area was found small, an average of 0.5 hectares per household

(Bundervoet, 2018). Shortage of land is an important motivation for internal migration especially for men in Ethiopia (World Bank, 2010; Birhanu and Kavitha, 2017). In Ethiopia, most household heads have small plots that are not sufficient to feed their family members. This leading to migrate whether it is permanent or seasonal to secure the household food security condition (Beneberu and Mesfin, 2017). Drought, pest infestation, and shortage of farmland are significant variables of internal migration for individuals looking for wage and related business openings. This is in opposition to the outcome that the households with huge developed land are less inclined to be food uncertain and the other way around which is equivalent to the relocation of the family to move somewhere else to fill the gap of food uncertainty for themselves or their families (Beyene and Muche, 2010).

**Income:** The monthly income differential between urban-rural areas positively and statistically affects rural-urban migration (Fassil and Mohammed, 2017). This is also in agreement with Harris-Todaro model of rural-urban migration. According to this theory, rural-urban migration is mainly due to the urban-rural wage differentials and it predicts that lower rural wage relative to urban wage induces rural out-migration. It implies that rural dwellers with family members in accepting territory are bound to be pulled towards urban focuses, while those rustic occupants without any family members in urban regions are bound to be pushed towards the urban center (Angelucci *et al.*, 2009; Dolfin and Genicot, 2010). In Ethiopia, migration could be triggered by low income that is generated in the agriculture sector and it required to diversify livelihood activities. According to Zewdu and Malek (2010), people with better-off in their income could migrate to urban centers to get a better social infrastructure driven by urban amenities. **Information and Networks:** Information flow and personal networks such as friendship and kinship connections are important determinants of any type of migration. Migrants have a piece of earlier information and networks about the destination area before migration. Access to information and systems builds the likelihood of rural out-migration (Beneberu and Mesfin, 2017). Migrants often depend on networks once they reach their destination, especially for food, shelter, and advice about customs and language (de Brauw and Carletto, 2012).

### 3.3. Causes of internal migration in Ethiopia

There is no general agreement among researchers on the cause of migration since the nature of migration and the cause for it are difficult. Arguments about the difference in migration causing factors to exist among specialists from various trains as well as among scientists within one discipline (Timalsina, 2007). A large number of scientists' related migration to instruction and the correlation represents the idea of migration as an investment in human capital.

Migration in Ethiopia was not just an individual as well as family reaction to socio-economic, physical and the world of politics yet besides because of the official government policy implementation. Therefore, in this section, the paper reviewed the causes of internal migration in Ethiopia to provide a potential solution for policymakers and any development partners who work on migration that helps suitable planning and response strategies to the emerging challenges and problems of internal migration.

Accessible kinds of the literature showed that internal migration in Ethiopia is an appropriate method to improve their own and families' living standards and to relax land constraints in rural areas (Brauw and Mueller, 2011). The type of people migrating and levels of decisions made, the reviewed kinds of literature so far showed that internal migration has pushed and pull factors although the extent could differ contextually. Push factors refer to conditions that push people out of their original place of residence.

Different study results agreed that the Ethiopian rural areas are characterized by weak socio-economic conditions, unreliable weather for agricultural activities, lower agricultural productivity, poor infrastructure, inadequate social services, conflicts, environmental degradation, demographic pressure and limited land access. These all were recognized as the key push factors of migration. Pull factors refer to the accessibility of better opportunities elsewhere, mainly related to employment. Although "push" factors prevail, there are some huge "pull" factors that draw in rural individuals to relocate, for example, training, wellbeing administrations, security, a superior activity, improvement openings and other urban facilities and services.

### 3.4. Conceptual Framework of Internal Migration in Ethiopia.

This subsection presents the conceptual framework for internal migration in Ethiopia. The framework focuses on both the push and pulls factor of internal migration in Ethiopia. Accordingly, the framework comprises two parts:

1. Analysis of the main push factors determining the propensity of internal migration at the country, both in household and individual level.

2. Analysis of the main pull factors determining the propensity of internal migration at country, household and individual level.

The conceptual framework assumes that the decision to migrate reflects demographic, socio-economic, institutional characteristics and aspirations of the individuals and households, and the composition, wealth and main livelihoods of the individuals and the households (Stark, 1991; Taylor, 1996, 1999). The level of economy specifically rural development in the area of origin has a strong impact on internal migration. In particular, there



is evidence that joblessness and underemployment in rural areas are among the principal drivers of the internal migration of youth (FAO, 2004a; Van de Glind, 2010; Young, 2013; UNICEF, 2014). This is especially the case when there is the coexistence of underdeveloped rural areas and more advanced urban areas offering better chances of employment and higher wages. Besides, migration is mainly a household-based strategy who often depend on family support to cover the costs associated with migration. The decision of rural people to migrate also depends on individual characteristics. Understanding the role of these individual factors is challenging, as it requires the collection of specific data (Carletto and de Brauw, 2007). In rural areas, households face labor and financial market limitations, and migration is a system to enhance income sources and adapt to dangers (WB, 2006a; Herrera and Sahn, 2013). Therefore, the framework assumes that the choice to move is dependent upon a lot of determinants, which shift as per the neighbourhood setting and stage of structural transformation, as well as the household typology and individual characteristics of the migrant, explained in the figure below (Figure1).

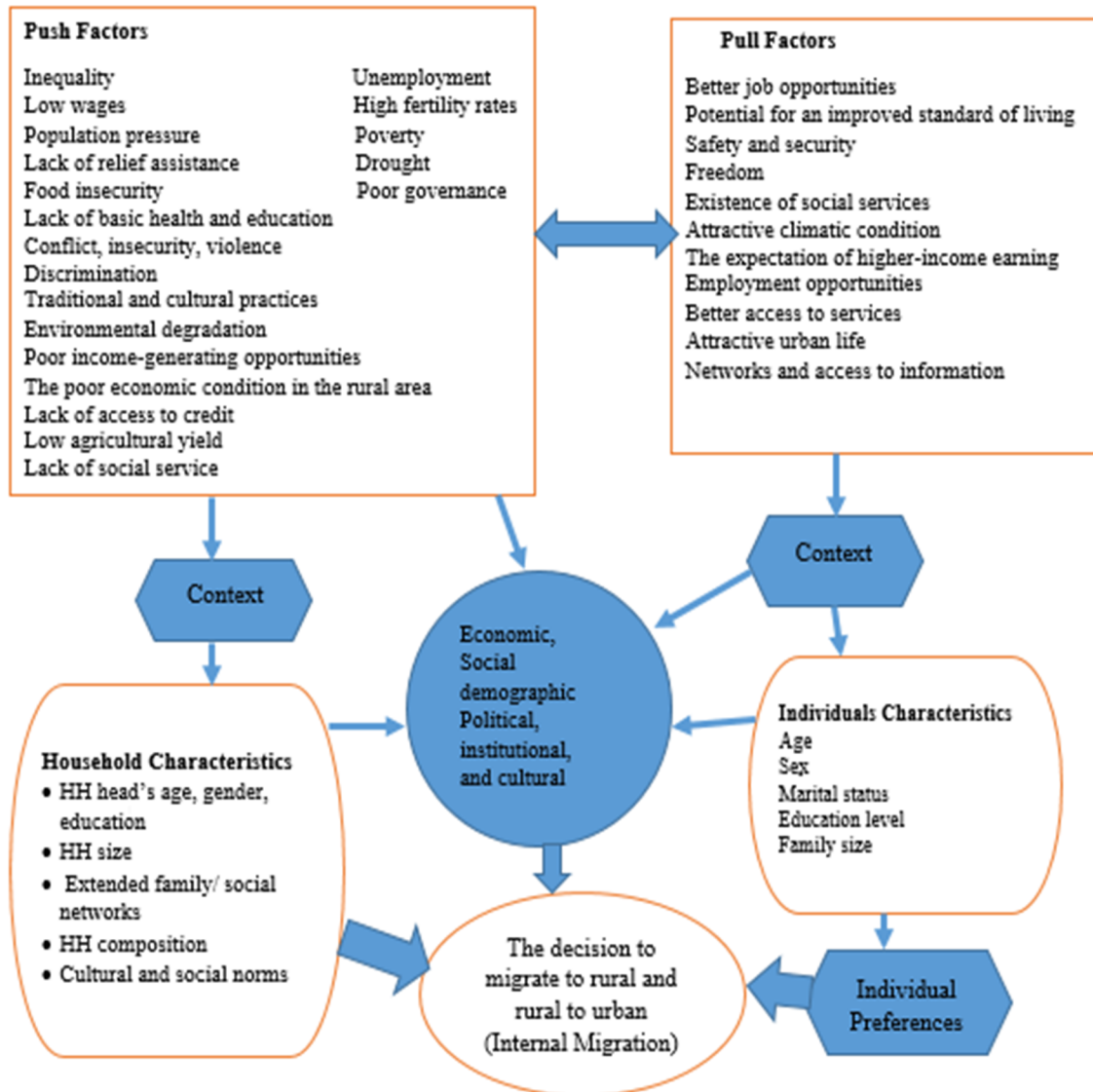


Figure1. Conceptual framework (adopted from A. Ishtiaque and M. S. Ullah, 2013. and Bilsborrow 2002)

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 4.1. Conclusions

This paper seeks out to review the determinants of internal migration in Ethiopia through a qualitative approach. In Ethiopia, internal migration has had positive economic effects, both for cumulative growth and individual migrants' wellbeing. Migration has demographic, institutional, social, economic, environmental, and cultural factors that determine internal migration. The empirical studies result indicated that high levels of internal migration in the country as both an adaptation mechanism and a survival strategy.

Based on their inferential statistics results, the main determinants that affect internal migration in Ethiopia were identified. Besides, different literature found that intra-village conflict, absence of relief assistant, livestock ownership, and households and individual attributes including age, sex, education, gender, asset base, land size, family size, income and information, and network are the leading determinant factors for internal migration of Ethiopia and found to have a significant relationship to internal migration. Both push and pull factors are found as determinants for internal migration in Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, recent investigations revealed out both push and pull factors are found as the main determinants for internal migration in Ethiopia. Poor economic condition, natural disaster, shortage of capital, inadequate infrastructures, lack of credit service, lack of access to market and marketing service, lack of job openings and lack of social services in the rural area are serious problems that pushed rural people to migrate to rural and urban to urban centers.

The weak and less conscious of the country's rural development policy and strategy and the ethnic-based federalism government system contributed a lot which assisted migrants to be pushed from their rural origin to other parts of the country. On the other hand, attractive climatic conditions, the existence of urban amenities, better access to information, social networks, better social infrastructure (education, health), modern technologies, modern way of thinking and easy access to a job (job opportunities) specifically in urban centers are strong pull forces.

In general, these two factors play a vital role in determining migrants' specific household and individual characteristics and place of destination and their works.

#### 4.2. Recommendations

Currently, internal migration has been promptly increased and become an important issue for researchers, practitioners, policymakers and governments and non-governmental organizations in Ethiopia. Therefore, taking into account the findings of the different studies and the current status of internal migration in the study the following conclusion remarks are forwarded.

- Different livelihood diversification strategy choices and job opportunities that could generate alternative income for rural men and women should be introduced in rural areas to improve the rural suffering life.
- The problem of landlessness and land shortage and their total dependency on only one source of livelihood, especially rain-fed agriculture production must be improved through implementing small scale irrigation schemes in the migrant areas of origin.
- The existing knowledge gaps should be address regarding internal migration and its impact on the economy. Therefore, additional studies should be conducted to fill the information gap on determinants, causes, and challenges of internal migration in Ethiopia.
- Generally, policymakers should formulate and ratify appropriate rural development policies and strategies based on the aforementioned significant determinant variables in line with the existing situation of rural livelihood and make alternative livelihoods to boost the development of the rural community to tackle unplanned and unnecessary migration and mobility of people specifically from the rural parts of the country.

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