

The Positive Impact of Rural Migration

Ertuğrul Güreşçi
Ahi Evran University
İspir_ert@hotmail.com.

Abstract

Rural migration, which has commenced in Europe in the late 1700s, can be defined as the social movement that has occurred in parallel with the Industrial Revolution. The urbanization of the population in rural areas arising from various economic and social causes is also accepted as a result of economic and social changes and developments. It is also a known fact the cited developments and changes have been considered to be a problem for the country and various measures have been taken with an eye to solve the foregoing issue. Basing on such an approach, it is concluded that rural migration has consistently a negative impact. However, it should also be considered that it is necessary to evaluate rural migration as an expected consequence of the economic development process of a country and the necessity of turning this situation into opportunity must also be considered. This study, which has been conducted through basing on this point, aims to bring to the forefront the fact that rural migration, as well as being a problem, also creates some positive results. It is expected also that the aim for bringing this fact to the forefront is expected to be helpful in revealing the requirement that migration from rural areas should also be discussed with the positive aspects thereof.

Keywords: rural migration, rural areas, agricultural

Introduction

Rural migration denotes the migration to the cities from rural settlements (villages, towns, hamlets, etc.). This concept is employed from time to time as migration from village, the most important settlements of the rural areas to cities. However, inasmuch as the only administrative units in the rural areas are not the villages, there is a difference between the concepts of rural migration and migration from villages to cities (Güreşçi, 2014, 18-19).

Rural migration is a phenomenon which has commenced in England in the 1700s with the Industrial Revolution and which can be identified from the consequences thereof and reasons of which are being tried to be revealed. Utilization of machines in lieu of human power with industrialization has paved the way for increase in volume and value in production (Song et al., 2012; Itoh, 2009). This increase in value has gained a new dimension with the realization of more production in less time. Consequently, more raw materials and more labor supply have become necessary for more production. This labor supply has begun to be met from rural areas which are outside the industrialized or industrializing regions. Hence, a population movement from rural to urban areas has occurred over time and this population also has begun to attract more and more new rural population. Accordingly the number and the amount of the population of cities in Europe with populations of over a million have increased exponentially within the century.

Rural migration is considered as a natural extension of the industrialization process along with the causes and consequences thereof. However, an industrialization which takes place late which supports status quo and which is haphazard has led to numerous problems in many countries. This situation has led to consideration of rural migration as an issue. Particularly the haphazard urbanization in developing countries, rural-urban identity conflict, unutilization of agricultural land, increase in costs of public investment in rural areas and increase in external dependence in agriculture have brought forward rural migration as a serious issue. (Güreşçi, 2012; Çelik, 2006).

Rural migration can be considered as a situation that may create very positive impacts should same be in parallel with economic development and industrialization. An overall assessment of this situation has been made in this study with the causes and consequences thereof.

The Positive Aspects of Rural Migration and the Grounds Thereof

Rural migration, in general, is deemed to be as a serious issue in developing countries. The most important reason for foregoing is based on the fact that, rural migration has started late in these countries and the added value created in the industry cannot assimilate the population coming from rural areas. The positive impacts of rural migration can be categorized under two main topics:

1. in Developed Countries: These countries are generally Western European countries such as England, France, Germany and the United States which have spearheaded the industrial revolution. In these countries the most important reason why rural migration does not emerge as a serious problem and why on the contrary it is accepted as the driving force of industrialization and economic development and change is that the labor factor required through industrialization is met from the rural areas. Another reason for foregoing is that the population in rural areas decreases gradually along with meeting the required labor by virtue of industrialization and urbanization. Rural depopulation is based on the fact that people have preferred to work in industry and services sector which has more marginal productivity and income and less risks and uncertainties compared to agriculture which has more risks and uncertainties. Thus, rural migration in developed countries can be deemed as an expected result of economic development and change.

2. in Developing Countries: These countries are the countries which have started industrialization after developed countries which are trying to maintain intensive production and competitiveness in the market. These countries are the countries which face heavy and big rural migration, along with rapid and uncontrolled economic growth. A variety of short, medium and long-term solutions have begun to be sought with an eye to solve these problems both in urban and rural areas of developing countries where rural migration causes serious problems particularly in urban areas (Güreşçi, 2011).

These countries are the countries where, deeming rural migration positively is seriously difficult. Rural migration with the negative results thereof is mostly at the forefront in these countries. The issue should be dealt with a different perspective with a view to create positive thoughts incident to the issues in these countries as follows;

a. Population pressure has decreased with rural migration and indigence and poverty in rural areas have begun to decrease. The major cause of poverty in rural areas is the excessive population pressure in an industry where

agricultural activities and income expectation is low. The utilization of the income continuously which is already low and remaining of a new poor and indigent population as a result is called 'Circle of Poverty' by Ayyıldız (1992). The population is not only intense in rural areas but at the same time it lives in scattered settlements. As such, the provision of public services to the rural areas is quite difficult and costly. A country's rural viz. agricultural population will be gradually reduced due to rural migration. This reduction is deemed as a spontaneous positive result of getting rid of rural poverty. Sure enough, it can be said that the rural migration to cities in the 1950s of Turkey was not deemed as a problem and it was even partially supported (Yavuz et al. 2004). The reservations incident to this positive approach can be enumerated as following;

1. This kind of heavy rural migration realized in a short time can lead to the emergence of a newer and more problematic poor class in cities. It is a reality that this population which is more docile and compliant in rural areas may become more problematic in the cities. The reason for this is the rural-urban identity conflict and emergence of urban requests in a more severe way.

2. Haphazard urbanization will lead to the formation of new slum culture and emergence of a new class, characteristics of which cannot be fully predictable in this regard. This is because this mass has embraced neither rural values nor urban values fully. This will result in formation of new districts in the cities to where even provision of public services will be hard. Sure enough, urban transformation works in our day arise as a result of this problem.

b. The second way of having a positive result from problems created by rural migration in developing countries is turning same into an opportunity in rural areas. This opportunity has to be realized in favor of the declining population in rural areas as a result of immigration by providing a higher rural agricultural potential or capital. The decreasing agricultural population will lead in provision of more agricultural capital per capita or for each farm. In this way, the smaller rural population will have the opportunity to use a bigger agricultural potential. As a matter of fact, revenue and revenue growth in agriculture is extremely low. If this increase is consumed by a population growing more impoverishment will increase more. However, when there is more agricultural value for the remaining population the issue is convert this value to revenue and growth. A significant portion of the things to be done to this end things that can be accomplished by the public. (Güreşçi, 2014, 138-140; Güreşçi and Yurtaş, 2008) These areas follows;

1. Legal arrangements: Distribution of the agricultural lands of those who migrate from their village to relatives or non-relatives who live in the villages by tenancy or sharecropping system by making arrangements in the laws of inheritance and transfer. Thus, the remaining rural population will have bigger amount of agricultural land that can be used in agriculture and this situation will lead to a revenue increase.

2. Land consolidation: Land consolidation application also requires a legal arrangement. However, should be noted land consolidation will be much easier with the declining rural population.

3. Regulation of the utilization of pasture land case: This work also requires a legal arrangement. The legal arrangements to ensure the use of pasture lands by the population in rural areas by alternatives agricultural production methods outside livestock breeding can be considered within this context. These lands can be used for cultivation of medicinal and aromatic plants, beekeeping, aquaculture and cultivation of mushroom and this application can be transmitted by virtue of agricultural extension.

4. Increase in public services: The required infrastructure to deliver more public services to a less population is necessary. Reconditioning of rural settlements, houses, animal shelters and other agricultural buildings and establishment of modern villages if necessary and achievement thereof through employment of institutions such as TOKI (Housing Development Administration) and similar institutions in Turkey. Establishment of new models in ensuring the collective provision health, education and transport services of rural settlements.

Conclusion

Revealing the positive impact of rural migration is a difficult work. This is simply because constantly negative results of such migration are faced in developing countries such as Turkey. It is extremely difficult to look for a positive effect under these negative circumstances. However, some positive approaches can be developed in this regard basing on industrialization and economic transformation created by rural migration in developed countries. This situation can be converted into a positive impact by taking into account the fact of consideration of rural migration as an opportunity especially in developing countries and changing of tools and methods especially in implementing agricultural policies in rural areas. This situation will be possible by considering the relationship to be established between the declining rural population and agricultural production with a special understanding and approach.

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