

ABSTRACT

Migration has been recognised as a coping mechanism in response to escalating climate change and environmental degradation globally, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, where Nigeria is located. The search for livelihood opportunities and improved living conditions, among other underlying factors, makes migration complex and multifaceted. Employing a mixed-methods approach, this study integrates remote sensing and climate data (1993 to 2022) with household surveys ($n = 1080$) and focus group discussions across selected hotspots in Nigeria. This study revealed a significant increase in temperature at the migration origins in Kano Municipal, Kwali; and sea level rise in coastal communities of Warri South-West and Brass ($p < 0.05$). The study provided empirical evidence of a paradox: despite the established environmental and climatic changes, there was a notable reluctance to migrate. While perceptions of migration drivers were consistent across the communities ($H = 8.108$, $p = 0.423$), socioeconomic factors, particularly the pursuit of job opportunities (35 percent) and business/trading prospects (29 percent), were identified as the major drivers of migration. Climate and environmental factors were cited by 11 percent of the migrants, with persistent drought (32 percent) and inadequate rainfall (27 percent) being the major climatic drivers. Destination communities in Fagge, Kano Municipal, Gwagwalada, and Kwali faced significant variations in challenges due to migration ($H = 41.729$, $p < 0.05$). These challenges were competition for jobs (43.7 percent), insecurity (23.2 percent), pressure on agricultural lands (11.7 percent), pressure on environmental resources (10.7 percent), land degradation (7.6 percent), and pressure on land for development (3.4 percent). Furthermore, there was a significant variation among communities regarding who should be responsible for leading interventions related to climate and environment-induced migration ($H = 37.327$, $p < 0.05$). The findings imply that while socioeconomic factors are the major drivers, environmental and climatic changes were critical in influencing migration decisions. This study thus advocates for multi-stakeholder partnerships to develop tailored strategies to address climate and environment-induced migration in Nigeria.