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ARTICLE

Does domestic migration have a challenge? Evidence from Northwestern Ethiopia

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Adino Kibrom, Atinkut Haimanot, Yehuala Sisay and Petros Tigist

Full Length Research Paper

Does domestic migration have a challenge? Evidence from Northwestern Ethiopia

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The role of internal migration to the rural poor households is highly appreciable because of its low cost of travel and immediate response for livelihood shocks and problems. Despite the fact, internal migration has tremendous contribution to the livelihood of the rural households; yet it is not free of challenges in the pursuit of its benefits. This study similar to previous works have recommended for the need to conduct study on the challenges of domestic migration. Therefore, this study mainly focused on the main challenges associated with internal migration in rural setting of North Gondar where internal migration is dominated. Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were utilized. According to the study, the result revealed migration towards the rural areas for labor work following farming activities in the large scale farming fenced with ethnic conflict among workers, prevalence of theft, payment suspension as well disease. Besides, the result of the study revealed that migrants toward the urban area challenges are mainly related with brokers' deception, lack of immediate job and life costs. Thus, if internal migration is required to play its role as one of the livelihood strategy for subsistence producers of the rural households in the domestic market, the associated challenges of internal migration must have relieving solutions.

Key words: Challenge, Dabat district, domestic, migration, livelihood.

INTRODUCTION

Migration of people from place to place has been existing from the beginning of human history up to the realities today. "As long as Homo sapiens have existed, members of the species have migrated in search of food or to escape from disasters or conflicts" (Lundius et al., 2008: 8).

Recently, however, migration have been found to be the result of the difference between developed and

developing regions in terms of the employment opportunities, the remuneration amount, the peace and security and the quality of life that they have for their people (Sorensen, 2004).

Moreover, it interfaces with the theory of dual economy which explains the mutual benefit of the two extremes (IOM, 2003; Adamnesh 2006). Such dual nature of an economy is also the fact that existed within the country

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itself. Particularly in developing countries, there are extreme gaps within the country itself. Subsequently, the flow of people from the less attractive labor market to the market place that migrants assume lucrative will occur.

It is apparent that as a livelihood¹ strategy, households or individuals decision for migration depends on the various combinations of social, human, political and economic assets of the migrants (Carling, 2008; Gebrehiwot and Fekadu, 2012). Due to this fact, the better the households that have best combination of the aforementioned assets, the higher the experience in international migration, since it requests much cost than internal migration. As a result, poor households particularly of the rural households are obliged to indulge in internal migration.

The spatial patterns of internal migration can be viewed as rural to rural, rural to urban, urban to urban and urban to rural (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2005). Yet the most frequently occurring patterns for rural households are both rural to urban and rural to rural migration. Some studies also emphasized on the rural to rural migration that in most cases has been ignored in various studies (Banerjee and Duflo, 2007). This cast a message that rural migrants are not always moving towards the urban areas, rather to the rural areas that can produce better job opportunity.

It has been understood that the role of internal migration to the rural poor households is highly appreciable because of its low cost of travel and immediate response. However, despite the fact that internal migration has tremendous contribution to the livelihood of the rural households; it is not free of challenges in the pursuit of its benefits. Studies have been recommended for the need to conduct study on the challenges of internal migration in the specific study area (Kibrom et al., 2015). Therefore, this study is mainly focused on the main challenges associated with internal migration in rural areas of North Gondar where internal migration is highly dominated district.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study site

This study was principally conducted in Dabat district (North Gondar of the Amhara region) which is located in 75 km away from the historical Gondar town.

The area is known in terms of food security challenges for long periods of time. Still there are districts dependent on the government support for food. The unemployment situation too is very high, especially for the rural youth group in the area. Considering Dabat district as the center of research area, different research instruments have been used to study the main challenges of internal migration in the study area (FEDO, 2015).

The research design is both mixed quantitative and qualitative type. The quantitative analysis is substantiated with qualitative analysis. To draw the sample respondent households, multi-stage sampling techniques were employed. Firstly, from North Gondar zone², Dabat district, was purposively selected due to the experience of migration in the region. At the same time, the district was stratified into two strata on the basis of agro-ecology into Dega/woina Dega and Kola, respectively. Then, four kebele³ (Tenseye, Dequa, Wokin zuria and Bera) were selected two from each agroecology on the basis of proportional rules in the samples size. Finally, a total samples sizes of 120 were selected randomly for the analysis of the study as shown in Table 1.

Once the 120 sample respondents are appropriate, methods of data collection were employed. To this end pre-tasted interview schedule, key informant discussion, observation, and interview and focused group discussion were used as the prime methods of data collection. After the collection of the raw data selection, appropriate analysis techniques were employed. In this regard, both quantitative analysis (such as mean comparison, percentages) and qualitative (organization, synthesis and presentation) were employed. At the same, previous studies were utilized to substantiate the findings of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profiles of the respondents

In the study area, majorities of the respondents were agricultural households who relied on agricultural produces. Among total sample populations of 5,572 households 153 household heads were randomly selected with the population of them about 5,572 households in the sample kebeles of Dabat district. Those who mainly depends on agriculture accounts for 96% of the total, whereas the remaining 3 and 1 % are unemployed and government employees, respectively. Looking into the educational status of the respondents in the study area, 67% of the respondents' are illiterate, whereas the remaining 33% of them are literate.

Farm related challenges in the origin areas

As the large share of the respondents were engaged in agriculture, the existence of intense agricultural related challenges were assumed as the prime push factors for migration decision. However, the study by Kibrom et al. (2015) has confirmed that determinant for internal migration was multiple and interlocking. Attempt has been made to assess the experience in crop failure in the study area. In that effect, Figure 1 revealed that 78% of the respondents replied the experience of continuous crop failure.

The chi-square value ($\chi^2=6.26$, $p=0.01$) indicated the

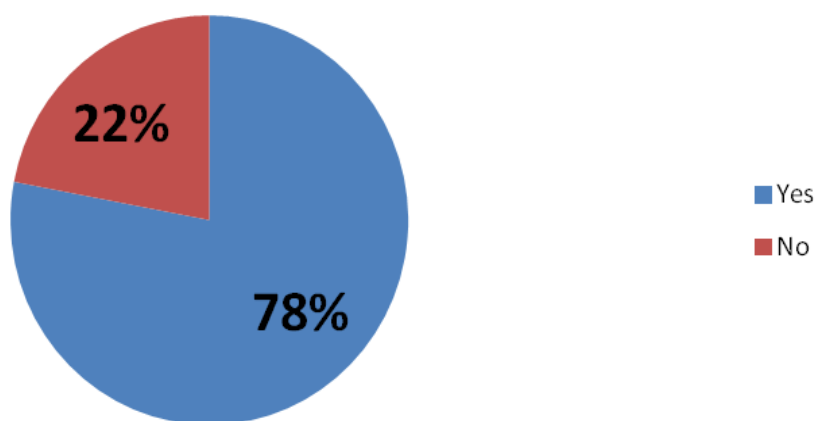
¹ Zhao (2002), since 1980s Rural people in china has an experience of out migration to urban areas of china and low turn backs, because of stabilizing livelihood at settlement area.

² kebele is the smallest administrative unit of the Ethiopian government structure since 1991.

³Zone is the medium unit of the Ethiopian government administrative structure found between district and region/state since 1991 to present

Table 1. Sample size from the selected four Kebeles (Own Survey, 2015).

Kebeles	Household size	Sample size
Wokin Zuria	1341	32
Bera	1204	29
Tensiye	1143	27
Dequa	1330	32
Total size	5018	120

**Figure 1.** Experience in continuous crop failure.**Table 2.** Major farm related challenges in the study area (Own Survey, 2015).

Major challenges	Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Weed Infestation	Yes	62	56
	No	49	44
Soil erosion	Yes	67	60
	No	44	40
Water shortage	Yes	49	44
	No	62	56
Frost	Yes	46	41
	No	65	59

existence of significance difference in terms of crop failure among the migrants and non-migrants household. Putting differently, continuous crop failure is one of the prime factors that ignite migration for farmers whose livelihood is mainly agriculture.

Furthermore, the study has made attempt to isolate the major farm related challenges in the study area. As shown in Table 2, soil erosion (60%), weed infestation

(56%), water shortage (44%) and frost (41%) are the respective major challenges that led for continuous crop failure in the study area.

In this study, the existence of continues crop failure is mainly attributed to those factors; prevalence of weed infestation that could create great burden for farm productivity. At the same time, soil erosion was found to reduce the fertility of the soil coupled with erratic rainfall

Table 3. Challenges associated with migration in the study area.

Problems	Perception	Frequency	Percent
Employer related	Strongly Agree	29	26.2
	Agree	46	41.4
	Disagree	36	32.4
	Total	111	100
Broker related	Strongly Agree	38	34.3
	Agree	48	43.2
	Disagree	25	22.5
	Total	111	100
Life cost	Strongly Agree	11	9.9
	Agree	31	27.9
	Disagree	69	62.2
	Total	111	100
Health related	Strongly Agree	13	11.7
	Agree	24	21.6
	Disagree	13	66.7
	Total	111	100
Absence of immediate job	Strongly Agree	76	68.5
	Agree	7	6.3
	Total	111	100

and frost problem that of all the area at the great risk of crop production.

As a result, internal migration was found to be the promising strategy for some of the family members of the respondents' in the district.

The main challenges of internal migration

These days, migration is one of the livelihood strategies to peruse the desired livelihood outcomes. Though internal migration has economic and social implication to the migrants' household, it is not free of challenges. The attempt to examine the challenges, both household survey and migrants direct interview and focused group discussions were conducted.

Through household , the main challenges were grouped into five main categories as employer related, brokers related, health care related, life cost of the destination and the how fast job is accessed to migrants in the destination area. Table 2 shows that about 67% of the respondents have agreement with employer related challenges such as dalliance of payment, labor abuse and rudeness for home related works in urban areas.

The interview conducted with one of the migrants from Dabat working in Gondar town, but anonymously

presented as that "she explained the work load bitterly, there is nothing that I cannot do in this home; early in the morning I will begin the work activities soon I will take over to care for the baby...the day will continue without having rest up to the night"

Despite this fact, she does not hide the benefits she had from her employers beyond the usual salary. Since she is at the age of 17, the work load and the payment is not balanced. As a result, she is not happy even though the payment as well as other benefits related with purchase of clothes are given to her.

In similar fashion, Table 3 indicated that about 77% of the respondents agreed that migration is embedded with full deception from brokers about the job nature and characteristics of employers in urban areas.

However, challenges related with health care and life costs were very low as compared to the previously discussed challenges. Yet, about 75% of the respondents agreed that absence of immediate job in the destination area as the other challenge to internal migration. This is mainly due to the time needed for adaptation and adjustment of the new location that attributes significantly for low efforts for job hunting (Gashaw, 2002). Due to this fact, the majority of the respondents agreed that lacking immediate job is one of the challenges for migrants.

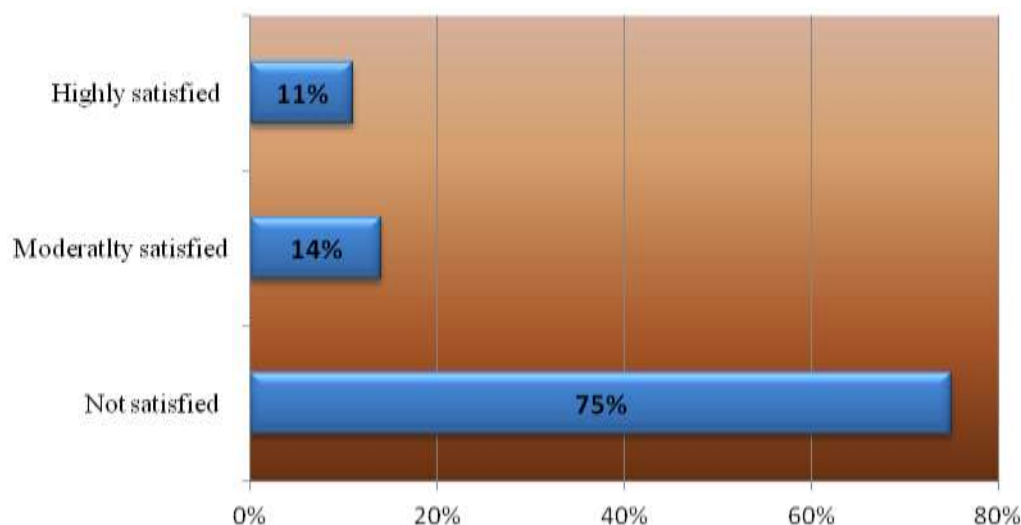


Figure 2. Level satisfaction on infrastructure.

Despite of this study, the study conducted in china⁴ strongly indicated that urban disease as the major bottleneck to rural migrants' (Siham, 2013). Moreover, besides the challenges, the attempt to know the general perception of the households' regarding migration was assessed. The percentage indicated that 47% of the respondents' considered migration as not important, and only 25% of the respondents perceived it as very important whereas the remaining 28% of the respondents are in between. In line with this, the level of satisfaction on the existing infrastructure of the destination was assessed as shown in Figure 2. The figure revealed that only 11% of the respondents' showed high satisfaction on the existing infrastructure level. Unfortunately, the vast majorities of the respondents' are not satisfied, whereas the remaining 14% of them are moderately satisfied. In this study, basic infrastructure assumed to create conducive environment for the success of migration be it to the rural or to the urban ward movements of migrants. However, the result indicated very low level of satisfaction on the existing level of infrastructure.

However, beyond infrastructure, assessment of the relative importance of the main challenges associated with internal movement of migrants is worth mentioning in this study. Since the migration pattern mainly inclined from the rural areas to the rural destination, the main challenges associated with that of migration are emphasized in this section. The first ranks of each of the respondents have been analyzed to know the relative importance of each of the challenges in the large scale

farming areas of Metema and Humera. As shown in the Figure 3, conflicting among workers (32%), payment dalliance (27%), theft (20%), disease (12%) and poor transportation (9%) are the orders as the major challenges for workers in large scale farming areas. The majority of respondents selected conflict among workers as the first rank among the alternatives given. Since labor workers are from different ethnicities and locations, conflicts are intense in the destination areas. Secondly, payment dalliance was found to be the other challenge for migrants. Since the payment is not given in most cases in the farming location, it requires travelling to the area where the payment is disbursed. This has created dalliance to get the payment as soon as the workers need the payment.

Moreover, theft is one of the bottlenecks in destination area because of low security and long distance foot travel for the majorities of the workers. The poor transportation also attribute the travel security problem. On the other hand, the harsh environmental condition of the working areas have created great burden to works in terms of disease prevalence. In both Metema and Humera malaria, Kalazar, and water borne diseases are the frequently occurring challenges for labor workers. At the same time, there is a strong threat for great transmission of HIV/AIDS⁵ since the two locations are the vulnerable areas for the disease⁶. The same evidence has been

⁴Kung (2002). Using a recent farm survey show that households with active participation in off-farm labor markets, measured by the number of days worked, have indeed rented less land. This has a sound implication for migration.

⁵Uta (2008) reviewed paper confirmed concurrent to migration, HIV/AIDS has also a negative impact on labor supply in low- and middle-income countries. This is therefore, migration is a disaster on departure countries irrespective of setting particularly intensively labor consuming rural areas

⁶A study in Latin America contested equal that migration had historical impact on labor availability and land due to recurrent flooding rural-urban migration was leaving marginal grazing and agricultural lands abandoned (See Mitchell and Grau, 2004)

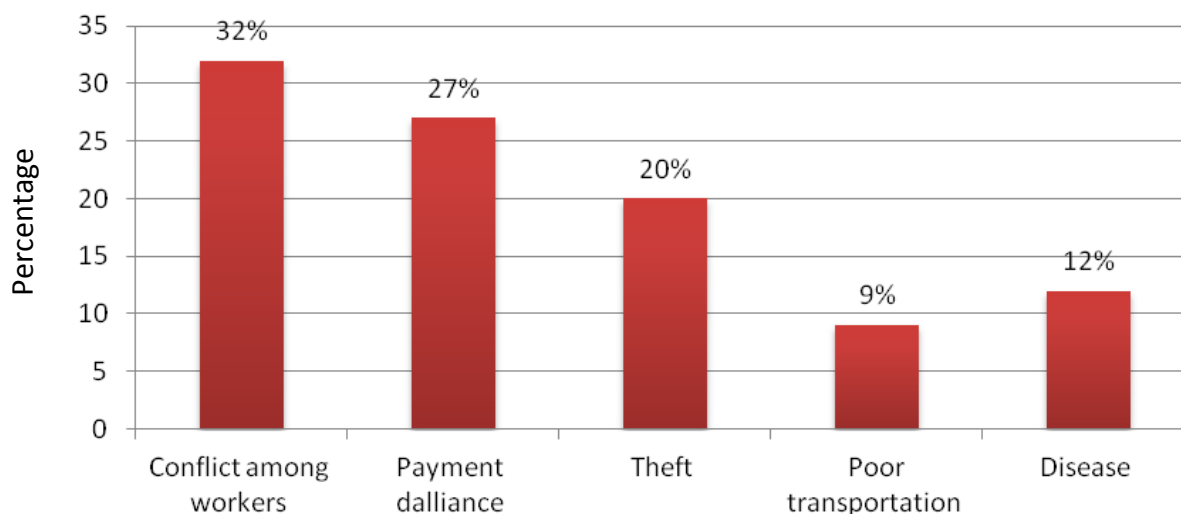


Figure 3. Workers challenge in the large scale farming areas.

observed in Thailand, Uganda, Ghana associated with migration of workers (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2004).

CONCLUSION AND OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Internal migration is one of the immediate livelihood strategies for the majorities of the respondents in the study area. However, it has been understood that internal migration is not free of challenges. Rather it is imbedded with various bottlenecks for both urban migrants and rural migrants.

Migration towards the rural areas for labor work following farming activities in the large scale farming fenced with ethnic conflict among workers, prevalence of theft, payment dalliance as well as disease. Whereas for migrants toward the urban area, challenges are mainly related with broker's deception, lack of immediate job and life costs.

Thus, if internal migration is required to play its role as one of the livelihood strategy for subsistence producers of the rural households; the associated challenges of internal migration must have the prime focus of the concerned bodies. To that end, awareness creation for labor workers is expected to be the solution for ethnic conflict among them. The payment system must be revisited so that works can be satisfied that in turn will have implication on labor productivity. At the same time, the nature and legality of the local brokers needs close follow up and formalization to minimize the deception and labor abuse.

Moreover, basic infrastructures and facilities must be given higher priority by both the regional and federal government, so that, the poor transportation and the prevalence of diseases can get solution.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

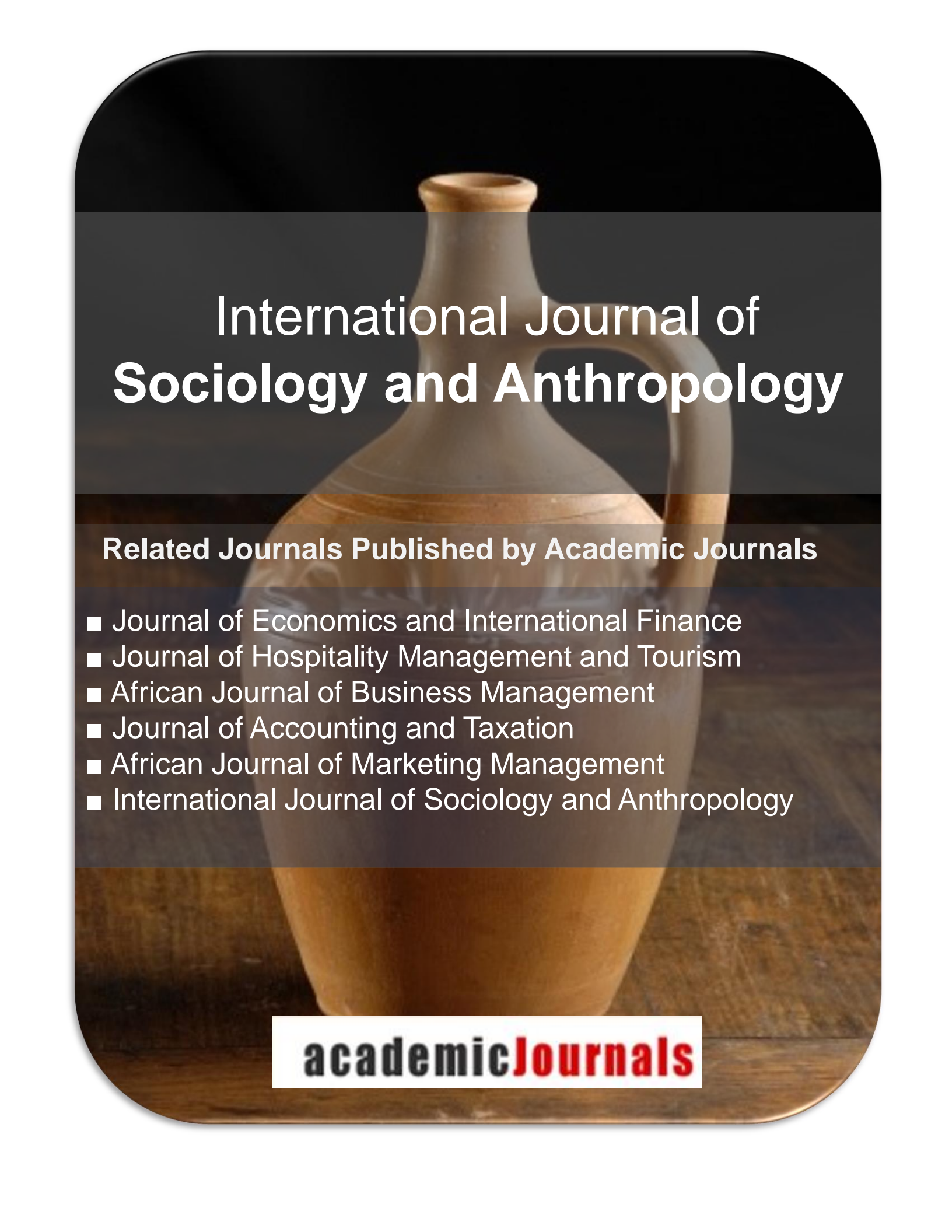
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