



THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF CHILDREN'S INDEPENDENT MIGRATION FROM NORTHERN TO SOUTHERN GHANA

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Introduction

Throughout Ghana, internal migration has been a major process for population redistribution. The primary influencing factor that has explained the trend and pattern of internal migration in Ghana has been the uneven spatial distribution of natural resources in the country. Five main patterns of population distribution have been identified in line with the pattern of spatial natural resources distribution in the country as follows:

- (i) concentration in the north-east and north-west of Ghana
- (ii) a sparsely populated middle belt covering larger parts of the Northern Region and parts of the Brong Ahafo and Upper regions
- (iii) a densely populated forest zone
- (iv) a moderate to densely populated coastal region and
- (v) densely populated urban centres scattered all over the country (Nabila, 1992).

Thus, the northern regions consist largely of vast areas of sparse population with some pockets of population concentrations. The sparseness of population in these regions has mainly been due to their disadvantaged position with respect to natural resource availability. In addition, the pattern of development the country inherited from the colonial administration at independence in 1957 and the subsequent post-colonial administration's development programme further deepened the disadvantaged position of the north in terms of spatial socio-economic development. While conscious efforts were made to develop the forest and coastal belts for the production of minerals, cash crops and timber products for export through the creation of ports and harbours along the coast, the north was left behind and hence a spatial dichotomy in development emerged between the relatively developed south and the largely underdeveloped north. Thus, while the south benefited from the construction and improvement in road, railway and other infrastructure, the north remained largely undeveloped.

The result of this dichotomous spatial development was that the north constituted a major source of labour supply for the mining, cocoa, timber and other cash crop production in the south. The role of migrant labour for the development of the cocoa and mining industries in Ghana has been well documented. This was in the period immediately following independence especially during the cocoa boom in the 1960s. Ashanti, Eastern and Brong Ahafo regions became the primary beneficiaries of migrant labour made up mainly of the economically active population from the north.

With time however, the trend has changed and the contemporary situation is that of female adolescents dominating the migration stream, which is largely towards the two main cities, namely Accra and Kumasi. Unlike the past trend which had a relatively positive impact on the development of the destination areas and the migrants themselves, the current situation has dimensions which are likely to have largely negative effects especially in respect of the reproductive health and rights of the female adolescent migrants. The current trend therefore provides some fertile grounds for in-depth investigation through comprehensive research. Although some small studies have been done in the past as to issues pertaining to the reproductive health rights and risks of these adolescents in the cities, the contemporary phenomenon of the north-south migration in Ghana is yet to be seriously examined from both the origin and destination areas of the young migrants.

Related to the current wave of north-south migration is the issue of child trafficking and child labour which are increasingly becoming national human resource development problems in Ghana. Child trafficking, especially of girls, is a serious problem in as much as it often becomes a vehicle for sexual abuse as well as a source of profit by many industries due to the cheap labour it often offers to the detriment of the girl victims of trafficking (Caoutte and Guthrie 1996). While this phenomenon could be global in outlook, in Ghana, there are various dimensions to the problem where often it could be carried out with the active collaboration of the parents of the victims of trafficking. Clearly, there is some element of poverty especially in situations where many parents are unable to adequately care for the needs of their children and wards.

The reasons that have been advanced to explain child trafficking and child labour are varied but nevertheless include rapidly eroding moral values, increasing selfishness and the craving for material wealth, increasing disregard for the well-being, dignity and life of others. Other reasons include rapid breakdown of the family arrangement, widespread poverty due to rapid population growth, unemployment, rapid urbanisation and migration, etc. In Ghana, there have been reports of trafficking of young boys from certain rural areas to work with fisher-folks along the Volta Lake, often their education being suspended or curtailed outright. Serious investigation by way of comprehensive research is however yet to be conducted into the dimensions of this phenomenon, which appears to have increased as poverty increases especially among the rural population. Thus, the extent to which such a practice is affecting the government's policy of universal education, especially in northern Ghana, is yet to be fully examined.

The Child Labour study in Ghana has revealed a number of startling results (Ghana Statistical Service 2003). With the upsurge of HIV/AIDS infection in sub-Saharan Africa, it is justifiably timely to examine thoroughly child trafficking and child labour within the context of the north-south migration of children in Ghana. The migration of children whether forced, voluntary or the result of widespread poverty among the population could result in the sexual abuse of the children victims.

Statement of the Problem

Analysis of internal migration in Ghana from Ghana's population censuses since 1960 has revealed that the three northern regions have largely been net out-migration areas. For the three regions, there have been large streams of out-migration to other regions especially further south. Net migration in the three regions of Northern, Upper East and Upper West was -157,055 in 1960 and -33,719 in 1970 (Table 2.1). In 1984 however, while there was a net gain of 10,716 for the Northern Region, the Upper East and Upper West suffered a net loss of 20,762 and 3,083 persons respectively. By 2000, all the three regions experienced large volumes of net losses of population, which stood at 139,216 for the Northern Region, 201,532 for the Upper East Region and 191,653 for the Upper West Region.

This suggests that with the exception of the Northern Region in 1984, the three Northern regions have consistently suffered net losses of population to other regions down south. This shows a clear migration stream between the north and south of Ghana and therefore pictures the three Northern regions as net out-migration areas with respect to inter-regional migration.

Table 1: Volume of Net-Migration in Ghana by Region, 1960-2000

Region	Net-Migration			
	1960	1970	1984	2000
Western	-1,566*	+123,916	+46,687	+350,792
Central	-	-131,286	-77,874	-274,579
Greater Accra	+90,109	+272,809	+153,154	+901,780
Volta	-94,422	-169,089	+97,192	-403,404
Eastern	-18519	-99,645	-78,136	-224,386
Ashanti	+90,821	+72,402	-28,327	+197,059
Brong Ahafo	+84,919	+117,291	+52,192	+163,749
Northern	-157,055**	-33,719	+10,716	-139,216
Upper East	-	-148,707***	-20,762	-201,532
Upper West	-	-	-3,083	-191,653

Source: Extracted from Ghana's Population Census reports, 1960, 1970, 1984 and 2000, Ghana Statistical Service, Accra, Ghana

Notes: * Includes Central Region

** Includes Upper East and Upper West Region

***Includes Upper West

Such a migration trend appears to suggest that for the Upper East and Upper West in particular, the 2000 situation is indicative of the loss of large numbers of people from the regions. Until quite recently however, such large volumes of migrants from the northern regions have contributed to the development of the cocoa and mining industries in southern Ghana. It also led to many a migrant acquiring and indeed owning lands on lease for the cultivation of cash crops. The impact of such earlier movements from the southern part of Ghana has therefore been quite positive.

However, recent developments point to a situation where the north-south migration stream is dominated by young persons, many of whom are female adolescents with little or no education and often with no employable skills in an urban setting. Many of them have become head porters, popularly called *kayayee*, at lorry stations and market centres especially in Kumasi and Accra.

In the cities, the young migrants are confronted with the challenge of having to earn a living. Without any support from the family back home, many are found to adopt diverse survival strategies. In the process, many are exposed to both physical and reproductive health risks in an environment where they cannot afford decent food and shelter.

All this is taking place at a time when the nation is grappling with the problem of how to increase literacy and school enrolments especially in the northern regions, which have lagged behind the south. At the same time, the long-standing development gap between the south and the north has

been a subject of concern and calls for the development of human resources in the region to move the region's development programme forward.

It is even feared that the recent migration of young persons from the north would increase considering the chieftaincy crises that have afflicted sections of the Northern regions especially the Dagbon traditional area, a situation which has increasingly become responsible for the atmosphere of insecurity which resulted in the imposition of a state of emergency in the area for some time. The situation therefore provides fertile grounds for increased out-migration of young people from the affected areas.

The above scenario presents a number of questions which the study hopes to find answers to. For example, to what extent does the current wave of migration of young persons from northern to southern Ghana constitute a development problem in Ghana? What category of persons are involved in the current spate of north-south migration and what are their characteristics? In what respects is the vulnerability of young migrants exploited to their disadvantage at the destination areas? In what respects is the north-south migration of children related to child trafficking, prostitution and child labour? What are the main reasons underlying the migration of young persons from northern to southern Ghana and how can the movement be curtailed or made to be beneficial to the migrants themselves, especially with respect to their reproductive health and rights. These and other research questions form the basis for carrying out this study which also serves as a unique opportunity to provide an adequate update for the north-south migration in contemporary Ghana.

Rationale

Spatial mobility of the human population is an unavoidable phenomenon of human society. In Ghana, spatial mobility has operated unhindered from pre-colonial, colonial to the post-colonial period. These movements have largely been economic and have mainly been in response to spatial variations in socio-economic development as well as differences in wages and incomes between regions within the country.

As already noted, the pattern of migration in Ghana suggests some kind of dichotomy between the geographical North and South. This has largely been the result of the historical difference in spatial development between the southern and northern segments of Ghana since independence. Thus, in response to the higher economic opportunities in the South, economically active persons from the

North have migrated to the South for jobs in the forest and mining centres. The North developed into a pool of labour force for the South.

Migration has over the years played quite a significant role in the growth of urban settlements in Ghana especially during the 1960-1970 period when cocoa production had begun to attract migrant labour from regions particularly in the North that were and continue to be ecologically less endowed for cocoa and other cash crop production. However, migration has combined with natural increases to explain the population growth of settlements in the country.

From Table 3.1, it is noted that in all the regions, the contribution of migration to urbanisation during the period 1960-1970 was 54.5% compared with 45% attributable to natural increase i.e., differences between births and deaths. This is understandable since at the time, relatively few settlements had attained an urban status of a population size of 5,000 or higher. At the same time, migration from smaller settlements to the few urban settlements and other comparatively large settlements was relatively high. Prior to 1960, however, migration was quite significant in the distribution of the Ghanaian population.

Table 2. Relative Contribution of Migration and Annual Rate of Increase to Urban Population Growth by Region, 1960-2000

Region	Growth due to Migration			Growth due to Natural Increase		
	1960-1970	1970-1984	1984-2000	1960-1970	1970-1984	1984-2000
All Regions	54.5	25.0	37.4	45.5	75.0	62.6
Western	27.1	-124.6	59.2	72.9	224.6	40.8
Central	-32.5	-126.3	51.1	132.5	226.3	48.9
Greater Accra	60.1	17.4	4.1	39.9	82.6	95.9
Eastern	44.0	30.5	54.6	56.0	69.5	45.4
Volta	33.3	12.2	54.8	66.7	87.8	45.2
Ashanti	54.2	15.1	56.3	45.8	84.9	43.7
Brong Ahafo	67.8	47.8	53.9	31.8	52.2	46.1
Northern	77.9	48.4	11.3	22.1	51.6	88.7
Upper West	62.3	58.9	71.6	37.7	41.1	28.4
Upper East	43.7	63.3	57.5	56.3	36.7	42.5

Source: Computed from the 1960, 1970, 1984 and 2000 Population Censuses of Ghana.

This study conceives of the North to comprise of the three northern regions of Northern Region, Upper East Region and Upper West Region. It should be noted that the Northern Region has had

one of the lowest rates of urbanisation in Ghana. It is possible that instead of large movements of people towards the urban areas within the region, migration is rather towards other cities and towns outside the region as recent events have shown with large streams of young migrants, known as *kayayee* from the Northern regions especially to Kumasi and Accra. It is also acknowledged that the Northern Region, notably Tamale, receives migrants from other regions, especially the Upper East and West. Whatever the situation is in each region, the interplay of natural population increase and migration has implications for urban population growth and development for each of the regions.

It can be deduced from Table 2 that with the exception of the Northern Region in 1984, the three northern regions have consistently suffered net losses of population to other regions to the South. This shows a clear migration stream between the North and South of Ghana.

Analysis of the 2000 Population and Housing census of Ghana provides enough justification for the choice of Accra and Kumasi as the destination areas for young migrants and the northern regions (i.e., Northern, Upper East and Upper West) as the regions of origin of migrants. In Table 3, it is noted that while the Greater Accra Region had a much higher proportion of its population as inter-regional migrants compared to the other regions, the proportion of inter-regional migrants in Northern, Upper East and Upper West were the lowest compared to the other regions in the country. Thus, while the North presents a scenario of less migrant attraction, the Greater Accra and to some extent, Western, Brong Ahafo and Ashanti regions appear to be relatively more attractive for migrant populations in Ghana.

Table 3. Percent of Ghana's Population by Region and Migration Status, 2000

Region	Percentage			
	Non-migrants	Intra-regional migrants	Inter-regional migrants	International migrants
All Regions	71.6	9.9	17.5	0.9
Western	63.8	9.2	26.1	0.9
Central	73.9	13.4	11.8	0.9
Greater Accra	56.0	6.0	36.9	1.1
Volta	78.1	13.9	6.7	1.2
Eastern	69.5	15.1	14.9	0.5
Ashanti	71.3	11.3	15.7	1.6
Brong Ahafo	72.4	7.1	20.0	0.5
Northern	85.3	8.3	6.0	0.4
Upper East	91.7	2.4	5.4	0.5
Upper West	83.7	10.0	5.8	0.5

Source: Computed from 2000 Ghana Population and Housing Census, Ghana Statistical Service, 2001, Accra, Ghana.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study is to investigate the current dimension of the north-south migration in Ghana for the purpose of ascertaining the extent to which it constitutes costs or benefits for the migrant, family and the nation.

The specific objectives are to:

- (i) Provide an overview of north-south migration in Ghana.
- (ii) Examine the characteristics of contemporary child migrants.
- (iii) Analyse the costs and benefits of the north-south migration of children in Ghana.
- (iv) Find out the fundamental reasons underlying their decisions to migrate.
- (v) Examine the extent to which the current wave of migration of children is related to child trafficking and child labour in the country and
- (vi) Provide the policy implications of the current wave of the north-south migration to make it beneficial to the country's development.

Sources of Data and Methodology

The study uses data collected from a survey of autonomous child migrants in Accra and Kumasi. These are migrants specifically from the Northern, Upper East and Upper West regions of Ghana who are currently resident in Accra and Kumasi. Data were also collected through in-depth interview of child migrant households at selected districts of origin in the Northern Region where a large proportion of the child migrants who were interviewed came from. In addition, key informants at the places of origin of the migrants were also interviewed. The views of some persons who had migrated as autonomous child migrants but had returned from their sojourn were again sought. Information was further gathered from focus group discussions (FGDs) involving some potential child migrants and some adults regarding their views about the migration of children from the northern parts of Ghana to Kumasi and Accra.

In the survey of autonomous child migrants, the study targeted 600 interviews of children and youth aged 10-24 years, 400 in Accra and 200 in Kumasi, using structured questionnaire. In Ghana, a child is defined legally to include all persons less than 18 years of age. However, the target group was extended beyond 17 years in order to capture persons who, though at the time of the survey were not children, might have migrated to their current destination areas at ages less than 18 years. In the survey therefore, all migrants from the three Northern regions within the age bracket of 10-24 years

were interviewed but the analysis focused on only those whose migration took place at the time they were 17 years or younger. Thus, all persons who migrated at ages older than 17 years were excluded from the sample.

Apart from the survey, in-depth interview and focus group discussions, the study uses secondary data from Ghana's population censuses since 1960 to examine the dimension and pattern of migration in Ghana. It is noted also that much of the current internal migration situation in Ghana, particularly with respect to children, is locked up in many unpublished reports and other documents. These were used to strengthen the analysis from the primary data that were collected in the various surveys and interviews.

The study uses proportions generated from simple cross-tabulations as the main technique of analysis. In addition, however, a test of mean (T-test), Anova (F-test) and logistic regression analyses are employed to examine the variation of the migrants on the basis of some selected background variables considered to be of relevance. The limitation of the data relates to the small sample size and the largely homogeneous characteristics of the child migrants particularly with reference to their education, marital status, type of work engaged in and sleeping place at night. The analysis is made with a 95 percent level of confidence i.e., $p = 0.05$.

Sample Design and Data Collection

In the two cities where the survey of autonomous child migrants was carried out, it is known that the child migrants are found at major lorry stations and market places where their services as head porters are mostly needed. They also operate in groups and have leaders. These leaders were contacted and used as key informants at the various locations where the child migrants operate. These key informants then led the team of enumerators to child migrants from any of the three Northern regions after which a snowball approach was adopted to locate other child migrants in the specific locations that were identified for the survey.

In Accra, for example, the survey was carried in the Kwame Nkrumah Circle lorry park, Kantamato Market area, Okaishie-Makola Market area, Agbogloshie Market area, Keneshie Market area, etc. In Kumasi, the locations included the Kejetia Lorry Park, Adum shopping centre, Asafo Market area and Kumasi Central Market area.

In all, the survey collected data from 641 migrants of 10-24 years from the two cities, 437 from Accra (68.2%) and 204 from Kumasi (31.8%). These were made up of 39.5% male and 60.5% female. However, when persons who migrated at ages older than 17 years were excluded the total sample used for the analysis in this study came to 450 consisting of 305 (67.6%) from Accra and 146 (32.4%) from Kumasi. These are the respondents who by definition qualify as child migrants, having migrated at ages less than 18 years.

Literature Review

Studies on child migration basically trace the evolution of the phenomenon to socio-economic circumstances where poverty invariably, pushes children from poor economies to areas perceived to have better opportunities for survival either within or across national boundaries. The available literature documents experiences that can be classified as positive and negative from the perspective of the child migrant.

Gurung (2000), in a study that sought to explain child migration in Nepal as a response to modernisation, underscores the fact that the on-going modernisation of Nepal has affected children's lives as a result of which children are leaving home for better survival opportunities in the urban areas. The study bases its explanation principally on the frameworks of modernisation and the corresponding increase in child work in Nepal at an annual rate of 18.1%. The study notes that an increasing migration of children especially from rural to urban areas is an indication of a changing demographic pattern in terms of migration and a changing sociological phenomenon regarding migration. Among the main factors affecting child migration, the study cites poverty, parents' suggestion, domestic problems, personal reasons and influence of other persons. It is important to note that the decision of children to migrate in Nepal, is not entirely that of the migrant.

Oropesa and Landale (2000) also explored the extent to which migration of children either reduces their poverty or intensifies it. The researchers analysed the migrants' economic circumstances by comparing them with the native-born in the destination area. Using data from the 1990 Census Public Use Microdata Samples for the United States and Puerto Rico, the study demonstrates the benefits derived from migrating as a child with a comparison of the origin and destination areas. Primarily, the study has the objective of determining how and why the risk of child poverty is associated with migration from Puerto Rico to the United States. Among the key findings are that migration reduces the risk of child poverty, partly due to the availability of better jobs on the mainland. The study also

underscores the finding that the economic benefits of migration continue for the native-born on the mainland, emphasising that return migration to Puerto Rico is associated with impoverishment. The question however, is to what extent the migration of children would benefit the home country from the standpoint of the immediate family members if returning as a migrant constitutes a further deepening of their poverty situation.

Camacho (1999) has studied the relationship between the family, child labour and migration in Metro Manila. The study among other things, examines the role of the family in decision-making and migration processes as well as the economic benefits of child migration for the child's family. It analyses 50 children below the age of 18 years, who migrated from provinces in the Philippines to work in Metro Manila as waged domestic workers. From the findings, the majority of the child migrants reportedly took their own personal decisions to migrate and work although many of them had consultations with their family members particularly their mothers. The study also found that for many of them the major driving force for their wanting to work was the desire to contribute to the income of the family and also to attain some level of education. It was, however, quite clear that those who migrated were largely following other kinsmen/women and community members as well as friends who had earlier migrated. Such a migration process therefore reduced the risk associated with migration of children to areas hitherto completely unknown to them. The limitation of this study is its rather small sample size, which precludes the use of robust techniques of analysis.

Prabhakara (1984), using the 1961 Indian Census data, examines the rate of child migration to the cities of India and the proportion of the migrant children who were engaged in the labour force. A major finding from Prabhakara's study was a positive association between child migration and total migration. While just over a fifth of the urban children were migrants, nearly 40% of the child labourers were migrant children who were found to be concentrated in a few occupational divisions. At the same time, it was found that while rural migrant children were short distance migrants, the urban migrant children were long distance movers.

Socio-economic development as manifested in the spatial arrangement of human activities is always uneven both in time and space (Benneh 1976). Thus, the ramification of geographical mobility in response to or as a consequence of these human activities may not be limited to the boundaries of an administrative region. According to the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS 2002), migratory flows are prompted by imbalances in development existing between the origin and destination areas. Movement from rural to urban areas still continues on a large scale in Ghana. In view of this, the

proportion of residents in urban areas is rising even though fertility level is relatively low. For instance, in relative terms urban population grew by 11% between 1984 and 2000 (GSS 2002).

The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) did a study on child labour in Ghana on a wide range of subjects (GSS 2003). An aspect of the study, which is of critical relevance to the current study, is its analysis of the region of origin of the street children in Ghana. From the study, it was found that more than a third of the street children were from the Northern Region with the Upper East as the second most important source region for street children. Specifically, the proportion of the street children coming from Upper West Region was however, found to be quite small i.e., about 5% compared with 38% and 12% respectively from Northern and Upper East regions.

Internal migration is seen as a reaction to stress arising from the individual's own unique physical, economic, social and cultural environment. The potential migrant would feel some stress regarding his present location when he gets access to information about an alternative location which convinces him/her that he/she may be better off in some respects including social relations, employment, housing, access to further education/skills, training, etc. Thus, stress would result from the potential migrant making an overall negative evaluation of his conditions at the current location vis-à-vis his/her likely life pattern at alternative locations (Papanek 1975).

The influence of family i.e. marital status change is a relevant motivating factor in female migration (De-Jong and Fawcett 1981). According to them, migration may become a 'fever' with people educated to move and facilitated by family and friends network between the place of origin and destination (May and Skeldon 1977).

Urzua (1981) distinguishes between survival and mobility strategies. According to him, households within the survival strategy are groups subject to living conditions that barely allow them to survive while those in survival mobility have already solved the survival strategy problem and are looking for ways to improve the well being of entire households or at least some of their members (Adepoju 1985). This shows that migration decision making by the households depends on their economic status, which subsequently influences the type of migration strategy to be adopted. In view of the pervasive poverty in the three northern regions in Ghana, this study seeks to examine the extent to which migration of children could constitute a survival strategy.

Migration in developing countries arises from the attraction of the city as compared to the rural areas from which migrants move. Migrants are attracted by better access to public services such as electricity, clinics, schools, as well as better prospects for recreation in cities (Anarfi and Asante 2003). Thus, the 'bright lights' of the cities may be a pulling factor. However, although some migrants move for these reasons, other studies show that migrants respond primarily to economic incentives. People move from poorer areas to wealthier areas for economic gains. Therefore, differences in average income or wage levels between rural and urban areas significantly affect migration flows between them.

While economic incentives are recognised as one of the main determinants of rural urban migration, risk analysis on individual and households migration decisions in developing countries (Stark 1991) has emphasized the need for a better understanding of the role played by informal insurance mechanisms at the community and household level. Another important issue is how agricultural transformation affects the rate and characteristics of rural migration towards urban areas by affecting their socio-economic environment.

Households generally make migration decisions to maximise life-time income flows, or to acquire human capital for its members. In extreme cases, migration can be a response to severe hardships, acting as a safety valve during periods of deprivation and economic stress.

According to the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) reports for 1992 and 1999, the proportion of migrants in Accra dropped from 61.8% to 44.7% between 1992 and 1999. The rural forest recorded the highest number of migrants of 60.8% followed by the rural coast with 47.6% and the rural savannah with 46.1%.

The GLSS shows that majority of migrants do so for reasons other than economic and it appears that the reasons for migrating have not changed much over the years. Analysis of the reasons for people moving from one place to another suggests that it is domestic considerations, rather than employment needs, which have the greatest influence on migration.

The GLSS2 showed that 18% and 43% of all migrants cited marriage and other family related reasons as the basis for migrating, while 24% indicated that they had moved for work-related reasons involving their own or their spouse's employment. The GLSS3 however, reported that 45% of all migrants in Ghana identified disputes and famine as the basis for migrating.

About 28% of the migrants claimed they had moved for work-related reasons, involving their own or their spouse's employment in 1999. Work does not appear to be a strong pull factor in migratory behaviour in Ghana, although the percentage of migrants in this class increased from 24% in 1991/92 to 27.6% in 1998/99. This study therefore, intends to examine the reasons for the migration of children from northern to southern Ghana.

An analysis of migrants by previous places of residence does not suggest any large drift of population from rural to urban areas. In 1991/92, about a third of all migration flows (34%) involved rural-rural migration, and another third (31%) involved urban-rural migration. A further 25% were involved in inter-urban migration flows leaving only 10% of all migrants moving from rural to urban areas.

The trend of migration flows in Ghana followed the same pattern in 1998/99 even though the percentage changed. In terms of their previous place of residence, about four in every 10 individuals migrated from rural areas (Anarfi and Asante 2003).

From the available literature, one sees a clear picture of poverty as a fundamental motivating factor behind most movements embarked upon by children. At the same time, it appears family members play influential roles in encouraging child migration in the hope of benefiting from the migration process. The current study is thus well positioned to examine the extent to which the scenarios painted in the available literature are supported within the context of Ghana. The available literature also has little or no focus on the reproductive health of the child migrants while their views regarding their desire to continue as migrants and or encourage their peers to also embark on a similar movement are not investigated. It also falls short of examining their incomes and possible remittances. These are fundamental gaps, which the current study attempts to find answers for in addition to investigating the extent to which some of the findings from the available literature would be validated to pave the way for policy-oriented recommendations to be made. In other words, exploring the extent to which the process of child migration could be made a relatively positive phenomenon while reducing the risks associated with it becomes fundamentally important.

Background Characteristics

This section analyses the characteristics of the child migrants interviewed in the two cities the study was undertaken. The characteristics that were examined include age and sex, region and district of

origin, current education, occupation and marital status. This provides a basis for assessing the costs and benefits of child migration from Northern Ghana to Accra and Kumasi.

Analysis of the age-sex distribution of the child migrants that were surveyed shows that more than half of the migrants in the two cities were in the age group 15-19 years. As is presented in Table 4, 54.4% of them were in this age group. Among the females, almost 58% were in this age group while among the males, it was 49%. It is also shown that just about a quarter of them were of ages 10-14 years, 33% females and 15% males. Less than one percent of them were of ages less than 10 years, suggesting that we do not have very many young children operating as migrants in the two cities. It is again observed that the males were relatively older than the females. Overall, more than a third of the males in either of the two cities were of ages 20-24 years compared with less than 10% and 13% of the females in Accra and Kumasi respectively. This shows that a relatively higher proportion of the males than females have stayed in the destination areas after leaving the child ages of less than 18 years.

Table 4. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Age-Sex, Accra and Kumasi

Age (yrs)	Accra			Kumasi			Both Cities		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
< 10	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.4
10-14	9.2	32.7	26.0	21.2	33.3	27.4	14.6	32.9	26.4
15-19	56.3	59.0	58.2	39.4	53.4	46.6	48.7	57.5	54.4
20-24	34.5	7.4	15.1	39.4	13.3	26.0	36.7	8.9	18.7
Total %	28.6	71.4	100.0	48.6	51.4	100.0	35.1	64.9	100.0
N	87	217	304	71	75	146	158	292	450

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

It must be noted again that females dominate the migration of children from the north to south. This is especially the case in Accra where a little more than two in three of the child migrants were females. In Kumasi, however, it was quite balanced, about 49% male and 51% female. It may imply that more of the females migrate to Accra while many of the males have Kumasi as their destination area.

The results presented in Table 4 further show that about two in three of the migrants were from the Northern Region (60%). In contrast, a smaller proportion of them were from Upper East Region (29%) and Upper West Region (11%). When examined by sex, however, we note that most of the males were from Upper East (65%), 75% in Kumasi and 58% in Accra. Conversely, most of the females had come from the Northern Region (80%), 69% in Kumasi and 83% in Accra. Clearly,

therefore, the Upper West Region has the least proportion of the child migrants surveyed in the two cities.

Table 5. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Sex and Region of Origin, Accra and Kumasi

Region of Origin	Accra			Kumasi			Both Cities		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Northern	25.3	83.4	66.8	21.1	69.3	45.9	23.4	79.8	60.0
Upper East	57.5	5.1	20.1	74.7	24.0	48.6	65.2	9.9	29.3
Upper West	17.2	11.5	13.1	4.2	6.7	5.5	11.4	10.3	10.7
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	87	217	304	71	75	146	158	292	450

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The study also examined the migrants by the districts from which they had moved to stay at their current destination areas. From Table 6, four districts came up as the dominant districts of origin of the child migrants. These were West Mamprusi (25.4%), Tamale Municipality (14.7%), Bolga Municipality (14.0%) and Bawku East (10%). It is also noted that 13% of the migrants in Accra were from 25 districts listed as "Other Districts" in Table 6 and in Kumasi, 31% of them were from 27 other districts.

Breaking the analysis by sex, we observe that overall, the males were from two main districts, Bawku East and Bolgatanga Municipality. Among the females, however, they were mainly from West Mamprusi District and Tamale Municipality. Comparing the two cities, it is to be noted that in Accra, the males were mainly from Bawku East (43%), Bolgatanga Municipality (20%) and Wa Municipality (10%) while among the females, they were mainly from West Mamprusi District (46%) and Tamale Municipality (46%). In Kumasi, however, it is observed that the male migrants were mainly from Bolgatanga Municipality (17%). The analysis therefore clearly shows that in either city, the districts of origin of the child migrants were not the same in terms of proportions. On the whole, however, the districts where high proportions of the migrants came from were located in the Northern Region.

Table 6. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Sex and District of Origin, Accra and Kumasi

District of Origin	Accra			Kumasi			Both Cities		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Bawku East	42.5	0.0	12.6	6.3	1.4	3.8	27.3	1.0	10.0
Bolgatanga	19.6	1.4	6.5	46.0	18.8	31.9	30.7	5.5	14.0
Savulugu-Nanton	1.2	4.9	3.9	0.0	1.4	0.7	0.7	4.1	2.9
Sisala	3.4	8.5	7.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.0	6.5	5.0
Tamale	4.6	17.1	13.6	6.3	27.6	17.4	5.3	19.6	14.7
Tolon-Kumbungu	0.0	4.5	3.2	0.0	1.4	0.7	0.0	3.8	2.5
Wa	10.4	0.9	3.6	4.8	5.8	5.3	8.0	2.1	4.1
West Mamprusi	5.7	46.0	34.6	1.6	5.8	3.8	4.0	36.4	25.4
Yendi	0.0	0.0	0.0	3.2	7.3	5.3	1.3	1.7	1.6
Gushiegu-Karaga	0.0	2.7	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.1	1.4
Other Districts	12.6	13.1	12.9	31.8	30.5	31.1	20.7	17.2	18.4
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total Number	87	222	309	63	69	132	150	291	441

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

It should also be noted that for about a third of the child migrants, their place of birth (66.3%) and of childhood residence (65%) was urban i.e., with a population of 5,000 or more. It suggests that most of the migrants are from other urban areas in the three Northern regions. The caution however, is that there is a tendency for people to associate their hometowns with urban settlements. It is therefore possible that not all persons indicating they come from urban places of origin may actually be from urban areas. It is for example a common practice in Ghana for people to quote the nearest well-known town to their place of birth as their hometown or place of birth.

In terms of education, we find that majority of the child migrants had little or no education. From Table 7, it is observed that almost half of them had no education and 35% had Primary school education. At the same time, just 2% of them had Secondary or Senior Secondary education. Notwithstanding this overall low level of education, the males had relatively higher education in comparison with the females. With only small differences between the migrants in Accra and Kumasi, they are largely similar with respect to education i.e., majority have little or no formal education, the males being relatively better of compared with the females. This is, however, to be expected as the three Northern regions have historically had the highest proportion with no education in Ghana. For example, the 2003 Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS) reports the proportion of the population with no education to be 74.4% in Northern Region, 71.1% in Upper East Region and

66.1% in Upper west Region compared with 39.1% in Central region with the highest proportion with no education among the remaining seven regions in the country (Ghana Statistical Service, 2004).

Table 7. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Sex and Education, Accra and Kumasi

Current Education	Accra			Kumasi			Both Cities		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
No Education	21.8	60.4	49.3	38.0	60.0	49.3	29.1	60.3	49.3
Religious	1.2	2.8	2.3	1.4	8.0	4.8	1.3	4.1	3.1
Primary	43.7	32.7	35.9	43.7	22.7	32.9	43.7	30.1	34.9
Middle/JSS	29.9	4.1	11.5	12.7	5.3	8.9	22.1	4.5	10.7
Sec./SSS	3.4	0.0	1.0	4.2	4.0	4.1	3.8	1.0	2.0
Total %	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
N	87	217	304	71	75	146	158	292	450

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Linked to education is the type of occupation the migrants were engaged in at their destination areas. From the analysis presented in Table 8, it is quite obvious that overall, majority of the migrants were engaged in jobs as head porters (*kayayee*) i.e., carrying loads of persons at the lorry parks and market centres for a fee. This is especially the case pertaining to the females among whom only one in 10 was not working as *kayayee*. The situation is largely the same in Accra and Kumasi, except that the proportions vary. Between the sexes for example, the females operate as porters more than the males in either Accra or Kumasi. It is also noted that the proportion of the females working as porters in Accra (95%) compared to their counterparts in Kumasi (76%). Among the males, the highest proportion (43%) were working as technicians or mechanics in Accra. In Kumasi, however, about the same proportion (44%) reported to be working as porters.

Other jobs that were common among the males in Accra were carrying of load (26%), street vending (16%) and trading/selling (7%) and in Kumasi, street vending and trading/selling (21% each). With reference to the low level of education recorded in Table 7 among the migrants, the types of work they reported to be engaged in are not unexpected. This is obviously due to the fact that many of them do not have any employable skills to enable them get jobs in industrial and office establishments.

Table 8. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Sex and type of work, Accra and Kumasi

Type of Occupation	Accra			Kumasi			Both Cities		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
No Work	2.3	0.5	1.0	2.8	4.0	3.4	2.5	1.4	1.8
Porter	26.4	94.9	75.4	43.7	76.0	60.3	34.2	90.1	70.5
Technician/Mechanic	42.5	1.4	13.1	11.3	10.7	10.9	28.5	3.9	12.4
Street Vendor	16.1	0.8	5.2	21.1	8.0	14.4	18.4	2.8	8.2
Trading/Selling	6.9	0.5	2.3	21.1	0.0	10.3	13.3	0.4	4.8
Artisans	1.2	1.4	1.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.0	0.9
Labourer	3.4	0.0	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.9	0.0	0.7
Other	1.2	0.5	0.7	0.0	1.3	0.7	0.6	0.4	0.7
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	N	87	218	305	71	75	146	158	293

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The majority of the migrants were quite expectedly never married. Overall, nine out of 10 of them were never married. A relatively higher proportion of the males were also never married compared with the females. This is to be expected as women generally marry earlier than males in Ghana. There was therefore a higher proportion of the females who had ever been married compared with the males in Accra. The reverse of this is, however, observed in Kumasi where for example, 12.3% of the male migrants reported that they were ever married compared with 11.3% among the females.

Table 9. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Sex and Marital Status, Accra and Kumasi

Marital status	Accra			Kumasi			Both Cities		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
Never married	97.7	90.8	92.8	87.7	88.7	84.2	90.5	89.8	90.0
Ever married	2.3	9.2	7.2	12.3	11.3	15.8	9.5	10.2	10.0
Total	%	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	Number	87	218	305	71	75	146	158	293

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The analysis has so far shown that the child migrants are not a homogenous group although in terms of education, marital status and type of work they engage in, there is not much variation among them. There are obvious age differences in spite of their concentration within 15-19 years, a large proportion of them with little or no education but varying between the sexes in either Accra and Kumasi. It has also been noted that while majority of the males had migrated from Upper East whether they are in Accra or Kumasi, the females were largely from the Northern Region. With little or no education, it is to be expected that, majority of them had no employable skills and therefore, have got themselves employed as head porters especially the females in either city of destination.

The child migrants were further examined on the basis of the age at which each of them moved to stay at their present locations. From Table 7.7, it is seen that a relatively higher proportion of them migrated to live in Accra and Kumasi at ages 15-17 years. The situation is similar comparing migrants in Accra and Kumasi. It thus, suggests that quite a substantial number of them are recent migrants.

Table 10. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Sex and Age at Migration to Current Location, Accra and Kumasi

Current Age	Age (Years) at Migration to Current Location								
	< 10		10-14		15-17		Total N		
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	
Accra									
< 10	0.0	100.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0	2	
10-14	25.0	38.0	75.0	62.0	0.0	0.0	8	71	
15-19	0.0	7.0	40.8	28.1	59.2	64.9	49	128	
20-24	23.3	6.2	30.0	25.0	46.7	68.8	30	16	
Total	%	10.4	18.0	40.2	38.7	49.4	43.3	100.0	100.0
	N	9	39	35	84	43	94	87	217
Kumasi									
10-14	33.3	40.0	66.7	60.0	0.0	0.0	15	25	
15-19	3.6	0.0	32.1	32.5	64.3	67.5	28	40	
20-24	17.9	30.0	35.7	10.0	46.4	60.0	28	10	
Total	%	15.5	17.3	40.8	38.7	43.7	44.0	100.0	100.0
	N	11	13	29	29	31	33	71	75

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

It is, however, important to note that in either city, a little more than a third of the migrants moved at ages 10-14 years. Furthermore, less than 20% of either the male or female migrants moved to their current location at very young ages of less than 10 years. Overall, the analysis lends some support to the fact that north-south child migration is a relatively recent development in Ghana. This reasoning is supported by the finding from the analysis (not shown in the table) that for 89.6% of the migrants, they have stayed at their present place of residence (destination) for five years or less. That leaves just one in 10 of them having stayed for more than five years at their present location.

Further analysis of the data showed that three out of four of them (74.7%) have migrated only once. Again, 15.5% of them have migrated two times and 5.5% of them three times. Clearly therefore, many of them have not been involved in multiple migration and therefore their migration experiences are limited mainly to their current place of location.

Factors Affecting Children Migration

Until quite recently, it was quite unthinkable to have children migrating independently of their parents. The study therefore sought to investigate some of the key factors or circumstances that have affected this phenomenon of independent child migration from the Northern to Southern Ghana. The migrants were asked to state what they considered as the key motivating factors behind their decision to migrate to their current place of residence in Accra or Kumasi.

Table 11 shows that the migrants mentioned quite a number of reasons for their decision to migrate to either Accra or Kumasi. From the results, it is abundantly clear that privacy or monetary considerations are over-riding reasons for the migrants' decision to move to either of the two cities. This is especially the case among migrants in Kumasi where about nine in 10 of the males and four in five of the females gave this reason as the main factor influencing their migration. We also note that among the males in Accra, a little over a quarter of them wanted to learn a trade at their place of destination. The corresponding figure for their female counterparts is however small (4.5%), suggesting that for the women, learning a trade is not an immediate consideration. It is again relevant to note that for quite a substantial proportion of the females in Accra, they followed their siblings in the hope of finding jobs in the city. The fundamental reason for most of the migrants to migrate at the time they did therefore is monetary.

Table 11. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Reason for Migrating to Current Location

Reason	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Parents unable to take care of me	2.3	4.2	3.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Privacy and Money	51.2	78.1	70.4	89.7	79.6	84.6
Followed siblings to work	2.3	9.8	7.6	2.9	6.7	4.9
To continue schooling	9.3	0.5	3.0	1.5	1.4	1.4
Frequency of civil unrest	2.3	0.0	0.7	1.5	0.0	0.7
To assist sibling to trade	1.2	0.0	0.3	1.5	8.1	4.9
No longer wanted to go to school	2.3	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
Parents wanted to give out into marriage	0.0	0.9	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.0
To learn a trade	26.7	4.6	11.0	1.5	0.0	0.7
To be independent	1.2	1.4	1.3	0.0	1.4	0.7
To stay with husband	1.2	0.0	0.3	0.0	1.4	0.7
To stay with mother	0.0	0.5	0.3	1.5	0.0	0.7
Maltreatment at home	-	-	-	0.0	1.4	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	86	215	301	68	74	142

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

As a follow-up to the reasons why they migrated, the respondents were asked about how they financed their trip to Accra or Kumasi. Analysis of the responses presented in Table 12 suggests that although about half of them indicated that they financed their trips themselves, for about a third of them, their parents were the financiers. This clearly paints a picture of the overt connivance of parents and other relations to instigate child migration from the Northern to Southern Ghana.

It must be noted that while in Kumasi about the same percentage of males and females reported to have personally financed their movement, in Accra the proportion of females who by themselves financed their movement is by far higher (57.6%) than among the males (34.9%). Again, the results show that some of the migrants used quite unorthodox means as for example, sneaking unnoticed into cargo trucks en route to either Accra or Kumasi. In the event of such trucks breaking down on the way or being involved in accidents (as some of them do), one wonders what would happen to these children. Interestingly, this practice is not limited to the males but also females who are more vulnerable in such circumstances. Furthermore, the results suggest some form of child trafficking taking place from the North to the South as some of them (though quite a small percentage) indicated they ended up at their present location having been trafficked in a group.

Table 12. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Person Financing Migration

Person Financing Trip	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Self	34.9	57.6	51.2	49.3	48.0	48.6
Parents	32.5	31.3	31.7	25.4	38.7	32.2
Friends	4.7	0.0	1.3	8.5	6.7	7.5
Sneaked unnoticed into cargo truck	7.0	1.8	3.3	1.4	0.0	0.7
Negotiated with truck driver	7.0	3.7	4.6	2.8	0.0	1.4
Other relations	11.6	3.2	5.6	8.4	4.0	6.2
Husband	0.0	0.5	0.3	0.0	1.3	0.7
Teacher	0.0	0.5	0.3	-	-	-
Trafficker	2.3	1.4	1.7	4.2	1.3	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	86	217	3.3	71	75	146

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

On the question of whether the migrants moved straight from their places of origin to current destination, it is shown in Table 13 that for a very high proportion of them the response was in the affirmative. However, we note a higher proportion of the migrants in Kumasi (91%) than in Accra (81%) reporting to have migrated straight from their places of origin to their current destinations. This shows some element of proximity playing a role where, in view of the relatively closeness of Kumasi

to the North compared to Accra, one could easily plan a movement from home to Kumasi. For those in Accra therefore, it is possible that some of them might have stayed in Kumasi before finally, continuing their journey to stay in Accra. This was however not investigated.

Table13. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Migration Stream

Migration Stream	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Moved straight from place of birth	78.2	82.6	81.3	89.6	93.1	91.4
Did not move straight from place of birth	21.8	17.4	18.7	10.4	6.9	8.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	87	218	305	67	72	139

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

There is often a tendency for speculation pertaining to whether or not parents of these child migrants were alive or dead as a factor influencing their decision to migrate. The migrants were therefore asked to indicate whether their parents were alive or dead. From the analysis (Table 14), it is observed that the presence or absence of a parent from home may not constitute enough reason for children in Northern Ghana to migrate to either Accra or Kumasi. This is because from Table 8.4, we note that for more than two-thirds of the migrants, both parents are reported to be alive. In just about a few cases that both parents are reported to be dead. This goes to support the observation in Table 12 that parents paid for the transport of most of the migrants in either Accra or Kumasi. It therefore suggests that it does not really matter whether one's parents are alive or dead for migration of children to occur. Perhaps, it is more convenient if they are alive so that they could directly support the children by paying for the cost of transport of the prospective child migrants.

Table 14. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Living Status of Parents of Migrants

Parents alive or dead	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Only mother alive	24.1	7.3	12.1	15.5	13.3	14.4
Only father alive	6.9	4.6	5.3	7.0	9.3	8.2
Both parents alive	66.7	87.2	81.3	70.4	74.7	72.6
Both parents dead	2.3	0.9	1.3	7.1	2.7	4.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	87	218	305	71	75	146

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

In sum, we have observed that the main factor influencing the independent child migration is the quest to make money with the active support of parents. The practice of some kind of child trafficking between the Northern and Southern Ghana has also been underscored. Furthermore, some of the

means by which the children travel to their final destination could expose them particularly the females to much vulnerability to the weather, accidents and reproductive health.

The Costs and Benefits

Often, there is a tendency for policy makers to instinctively, tag migration of any form as negative. Thus, for independent child migration, this line of reasoning could even be higher. This section therefore discusses the main focus of this study regarding the real costs and benefits of this phenomenon of children's independent migration in Ghana. The analysis focuses on the migration decisions; living as child migrants, their reproductive health and their own views regarding what they consider as the costs and benefits of having migrated. A multivariate analysis using logistic regression and test of means are also employed to examine the variation of the respondents regarding what could be considered as some of the benefits accruing from the lives of these child migrants.

Migration Decisions

One critical area that this study considers as constituting a cost is in the sphere of education i.e., to what extent has the migration of children affected their schooling. As already noted earlier, almost half of the migrants in either Accra or Kumasi have never been to any formal education.

The respondents were therefore asked whether at the time they migrated, they were in school or not. From the results presented in Table 15, one observes that for more than two in three of them, migration occurred at a time they were not in school. Nonetheless, it is alarming to find that among the males especially, a quarter in Accra and a little higher in Kumasi migrated while they were in school. This situation suggests that for most of these persons, migration may constitute the termination of their formal education. It is also equally possible that for those who did not migrate while schooling, a considerable proportion might not have started formal education at all. The cost here would pertain to the curtailment of their formal education and eventually, their development as a human resource would be cut short. It is therefore not surprising that most of them reported to be working in jobs where no specific skills are required .

Table 15. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by School Attendance at the Time of Migration

School attendance at time of Migration	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
In School	24.1	18.5	20.1	25.4	14.7	19.9
Not in School	75.9	81.5	79.9	74.6	85.3	80.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	87	216	303	71	75	146

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Among those for whom migration took place when they were in school, they were asked to indicate the main reason why they did so. From the results shown in Table 16, it is abundantly clear that most of the children abandoned school to migrate because their parents could not take care of their education. It is only in few instances that they either could not cope with studies at school or wanted to continue their education at their destination area. Considering that such children may not have education at their place of origin with parents unable to fund their education, perhaps the decision for them to migrate may be considered less of an evil as it throws the chances of stumbling on a relatively better opportunity at the place of destination quite open to the children upon migration. The bottom line however, is the high level of poverty among most parents in Northern Ghana.

Table 16. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Reason for Migration When in School

Reason	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Not interested in going to school	0.0	5.0	3.3	11.1	0.0	6.9
Unable to cope with studies	9.5	5.0	6.6	5.6	0.0	3.4
Parents unable to fund schooling	71.5	72.5	72.1	83.3	81.8	82.8
Wanted a better opportunity	9.5	12.5	11.5	0.0	18.2	6.9
To continue education at destination area	9.5	0.0	3.3	-	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	21	40	61	18	11	29

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Further analysis (Table 17) again shows that although more than two in three of the migrants, particularly the females in Accra took the decision themselves to migrate, parents and friends play influencing roles. In Kumasi, for example, it is quite clear that for more than half of them, the decision to migrate was taken by persons other than themselves. This goes to reinforce the fact already established regarding the role of parents and other relations in actively financing the movements of the children from home. It shows further that left to the children themselves, many of them may not migrate if there is no influence from their parents and other older relatives.

The influence of parents and relatives towards the decisions of children to migrate may suggest that the parents and relatives may stand a better chance to benefit from the children when they migrate. In the first place, it may ease them from the burden of taking care of the children in terms of their education, clothing, feeding and shelter. As has been established (Table 16) the main reason why most of the children left school to migrate was the inability of their parents to fund their education. Yet, this relief (if any) may only be in the short term. In the long term however, it may have dire consequences for the children, especially where their education is curtailed by the act of migration if further training is not guaranteed at the final place of destination.

Table 17. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Migration Decision Maker

Decision Maker	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Self	47.2	74.2	66.5	47.9	44.0	45.9
Both parents together	10.3	6.0	7.2	14.1	22.7	18.5
Mother only	10.3	9.7	9.9	7.0	13.3	10.3
Father only	10.3	3.7	5.6	7.0	2.7	4.8
Friends	2.3	1.4	1.6	12.7	9.3	10.9
Surrogate parents	3.5	1.8	2.3	1.4	0.0	0.7
Husband	-	-	-	0.0	1.3	0.7
Other relatives	16.1	3.2	6.9	9.9	6.7	8.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	87	217	304	71	75	146

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

It has been observed that for most of the migrants, the decision to migrate is often taken by persons other than themselves. At the same time, though it is only in few cases that migration occurred while they were in school, the underlying factor compelling them to leave school to migrate is poverty among their parents back at home. These may constitute some costs to the migrants but depending on the opportunities that may be open to them at their respective places of destination, it may either constitute a benefit or a further deepening of the costs particularly to the child migrant.

Living as a Child Migrant

The study sought information from the respondents regarding where they spend the night. Their responses are presented in Table 18. From the table, we find that some variation between migrants in Accra and their counterparts in Kumasi exists. In Accra, more than half of the females and a little more than a quarter of the males reported to pass the night at market squares and lorry stations. Again, while a third of the males in Accra and one in seven of their female counterparts make do with kiosks at night, a relatively lower proportion of either of the sexes spend the night at a home. In

contrast, in Kumasi close to two in five of either males or females sleep in a home or in kiosks with about 12% using the markets/lorry stations as their place of abode at night. The results show quite clearly that many of the young migrants are exposed to risks of not only of the weather but of sexual harassment. To many of them therefore, their sleeping places at night constitute a big cost that could be life threatening.

Table 18. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Place of Spending the Night

Place	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Home	28.7	12.8	17.4	38.0	41.3	39.8
Market/Lorry Station	27.6	67.4	56.1	12.7	10.7	11.6
Street	0.0	2.8	2.0	1.4	1.3	1.4
In front of shops	4.6	0.9	2.0	4.2	2.7	3.4
Kiosks	33.3	15.1	20.3	38.0	44.0	41.1
Workshops	5.8	0.5	2.0	-	-	-
Cinema Halls	0.0	0.5	0.3	-	-	-
Uncompleted buildings	-	-	-	5.7	0.0	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	87	218	305	71	75	146

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

With respect to the average income earned per day, the analysis shows that migrants in Kumasi appear to earn relatively higher incomes than their counterparts in Accra (¢32,522.00 compared to ¢21,528.00). In either city however, the males tend to have a higher income per day relative to the females: approximately ¢26,700.00 compared to ¢19,330.00 in Accra and ¢38,970.00 compared to ¢23,870.00 in Kumasi. Furthermore, the pattern of earnings shows that in Accra about four in five of either male or female migrants earn less than ¢30,000.00 a day. In contrast, however, the figures in Kumasi are 52% among the males and 69% among the females who reported to earn less than ¢30,000.00 a day. The proportion of the migrants who earn ¢60,000.00 or more is also higher by all standards in Kumasi than in Accra. The results should however, be interpreted with some caution considering the reluctance of people to come out with accurate information when it is about their own incomes. Yet, granted that these figures are accurate, then by Ghanaian standards, where the minimum wage per day is currently at ¢13,500.00, many of the migrants may be considered to be doing quite okay especially if they live by themselves with no dependents.

Table 19. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Average Income Earned Per Day

Amount	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
< ₵10,000.00	14.5	18.5	17.4	13.3	11.8	12.5
₵10,000.00 - ₵19,999.00	47.0	44.0	44.8	23.5	38.2	30.9
₵20,000.00 - ₵29,999.00	20.5	16.2	17.4	14.7	19.1	16.9
₵30,000.00 - ₵39,999.00	3.6	7.0	6.0	13.2	7.4	10.3
₵40,000.00 - ₵49,999.00	3.6	7.4	6.4	4.4	10.3	7.3
₵50,000.00 - ₵59,999.00	4.8	3.7	4.0	5.9	5.9	5.9
₵60,000.00 or more	6.0	3.2	4.0	25.0	7.3	16.2
Average income	₵26,691.57	₵19,527.78	₵21,528.43	₵38,770.06	₵23,867.64	₵32,522.06
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	83	216	299	68	68	136

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Note: ₵9,100.00 = US\$1.00

To a question as to the possibility of each migrant making savings, it was found that although in either city more than two-thirds of them reported to be making some savings on their earnings (Table 20), the proportion responding this way is higher in Kumasi (95% or higher) than in Accra (69% among the males and 29% among the females). This is consistent with the results in Table 19, suggesting the earning of higher incomes by migrants in Kumasi relative to their counterparts in Accra.

Table 20. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Savings on Earnings

Response	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Yes	69.0	79.3	76.3	95.8	97.3	96.6
No	31.0	20.7	23.7	4.2	2.7	3.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	87	217	304	71	74	145

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Further analysis regarding the frequency of savings by the migrants in Table 21 shows that most of them save on a daily basis. Compared to those who save on a daily basis a relatively smaller proportion of the migrants save on a weekly or on monthly basis. This is to be expected because in Ghana, most people in the informal sector make daily savings with what is traditionally referred to as the "susu" banking system where accredited individuals go round the market places and even to homes on daily basis to collect a stipulated amount that each client voluntarily decides to pay. This is saved and payments made to the individual at the end of each month less the savings for one day, which is retained by the "susu banker" as his/her commission. This system is fairly convenient as the

“bank” in this context moves to the client instead of the customer going to the bank as the case is with the modern banking system.

Table 21. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Frequency of Savings

Frequency	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Daily	68.4	92.5	86.3	80.9	88.9	85.0
Weekly	18.3	6.9	9.8	8.8	6.9	7.9
Monthly	3.3	0.0	0.9	2.9	2.8	2.8
Every two weeks	1.7	0.0	0.4	-	-	-
When there is money	8.3	0.6	2.6	7.4	1.4	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	60	174	234	68	72	140

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Table 22 also shows that for a large chunk of the migrants, the savings at any given time is less than ₵20,000.00, about 88% among either male or female migrants in Accra and 69% and 80% respectively among male and female migrants in Kumasi. The average amount saved by each migrant however, is around ₵14,000.00 in Accra and ₵17,000 in Kumasi with a relatively lower average savings among the females compared to the males in either Accra or Kumasi.

Table 22. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Savings at a Time

Amount	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
< ₵10,000.00	64.4	52.6	55.7	48.5	43.8	46.0
₵10,000.00 - ₵19,999.00	23.7	36.3	33.0	20.6	36.6	28.8
₵20,000.00 - ₵29,999.00	3.4	7.0	6.1	10.3	4.2	7.2
₵30,000.00 - ₵39,999.00	0.0	1.7	1.3	0.0	5.6	2.9
₵40,000.00 - ₵49,999.00	0.0	1.2	0.9	1.5	4.2	2.9
₵50,000.00 or more	8.5	1.2	3.0	1.9	5.6	12.2
Average income	₵23,949.15	₵10,783.63	₵14,160.87	₵20,213.24	₵13,253.52	₵16,658.28
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	59	171	230	68	71	139

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Note: ₵9,100.00 = US\$1.00

From the analysis so far, it is obvious that although some incomes are earned by the migrants and some savings made, the migrants mentioned some basic problems they face in their day-to-day living in either Accra or Kumasi. The problems as have been presented in Table 23 revolve mainly around their socio-economic living conditions. For example, problems like having no proper place to sleep at night, services being cheaply paid for, disturbance from city guards, work being too difficult, financial problems, etc., were mentioned. Several other problems mentioned by small proportions of the

migrants in either Accra or Kumasi (21% in Accra and 33% in Kumasi) covered issues of harassment by some security men (night watchmen), less pay, traffic and human interference, thieves, increased population that has reduced job availability for them, being looked down by other well-placed people and insults they often receive from customers who go for their services.

It suggests then that in spite of the incomes the migrants may be earning, most of them are not comfortable. Thus, from Table 23, it is only 13% of the migrants in Accra and about 18% in Kumasi that the response was that they have no problem.

Table 23. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Problems Faced

Problem	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Business gone down	5.1	2.3	3.1	-	-	-
Cheap prices for migrant services	2.6	5.6	4.8	6.6	11.4	9.2
Disturbance from City Guards	3.8	14.0	11.3	9.8	1.4	5.3
Financial problems	6.4	1.9	3.1	-	-	-
Too heavy loads for less pay	2.6	4.2	3.8	9.2	14.3	11.4
Work is too difficult	1.3	1.9	1.7	9.8	20.0	15.3
No load to carry/No job	19.2	20.1	19.9	-	-	-
No proper place to sleep	15.4	15.9	15.8	9.8	7.1	8.4
Too high taxes	3.8	2.3	2.7	-	-	-
Other minor problems	27.0	19.2	21.1	35.1	30.1	32.8
No problem	12.8	12.6	12.7	19.7	15.7	17.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	78	214	292	61	70	131

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Comparing migrants of the two cities, the analysis in Table 24 has shown that while just about a third of the migrants in Accra reported to spend their earnings on other persons apart from themselves, close to two out of three of their counterparts in Kumasi responded similarly. In either Accra or Kumasi, a relatively higher proportion of the males than females reported to spend money on other persons apart from themselves. This is perhaps in conformity with the traditional practice in Ghana where men are usually considered bread winners and therefore are looked upon by women and children for their up-keep.

Table 24. Percent of Child Migrants Spending on Other Persons

Response	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Yes	40.5	36.4	37.5	73.7	55.0	64.1
No	59.5	63.6	62.5	26.3	45.0	35.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	84	209	293	57	60	117

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Linked to the issue of whether the migrants spend on any other person apart from themselves, the study probed into where the migrants who have ever had a child were keeping these children. From Table 25, we observe that for a large proportion of the migrants, their children are with their parents and other siblings back home. Interestingly, the spouses of the migrants play a relatively small role in the custody of migrant children compared to parents and siblings of migrants at home. As already observed, with many parents taking the decision for, and practically financing the movement of their children to live in these two cities, it follows almost as a contractual agreement that the parents would take care of the children they would have in order to free them to be able to live and work at their destination areas. Thus, it is only in one out of six cases that children of female migrants are reported to be living with their own mothers in either Accra or Kumasi.

Table 25. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Person with Whom Migrant Child/Children are Staying

Person	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Migrant him/herself	2.1	15.4	10.8	4.1	15.8	9.2
Friends	6.2	3.3	4.3	4.1	3.5	3.8
Sexual partner	10.4	1.1	4.3	5.4	3.5	4.6
Parents at home	52.1	48.3	49.7	45.9	52.6	48.8
Siblings at home	18.7	19.8	19.4	27.0	19.3	23.7
Home	0.0	3.3	2.2	2.7	3.5	3.1
Spouse	4.2	0.0	1.4	9.5	1.8	6.1
Other	6.3	8.8	7.9	1.3	0.0	0.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	48	91	139	74	57	131

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

As expected, more than half of the migrants indicated that they send home some remittances in the form of money. This is especially the case among the migrants in Kumasi where up to 80% of the males and 63% of the females that responded to the question indicated that they send home monetary remittances (Table 26). It should be noted that only 33.8% (103) of the migrants in Accra

gave a response to this question on monetary remittance home. By implication therefore, many of the migrants in Accra either do not send home monetary remittances or do not want to disclose it.

Table 26. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants in Respect of Remittances Sent Home

Response	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Yes	58.1	55.4	56.2	80.3	63.0	71.5
No	41.9	44.6	43.8	19.7	37.0	28.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	57	46	103	71	73	144

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The migrants reported to send home monetary remittances mainly through relatives, friends, traders and drivers (Table 27). It shows that these migrants may not have any regular plan for sending home remittances. It is therefore based largely on whenever they find a trustworthy person going home and they having some money to send home. So far, it may appear that these channels of sending money home have been working because no one complained that any of them has been a disappointment. It has to be noted however, that while on the question of whether or not they send money home, the number of migrants in Accra that responded was quite low (Table 26), it increased with regard to the means by which the monies are sent (Table 27). This suggests how sensitive some of the migrants consider issues pertaining to money.

Table 27. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Means of Sending Money Home

Means	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Friends and drivers	12.0	9.3	10.0	1.8	2.6	2.1
Someone known going home	18.0	15.1	16.0	-	-	-
Traders going home from the city	8.0	6.7	7.1	-	-	-
Migrant him/herself	4.0	6.7	5.9	9.1	10.3	9.6
Relatives	14.0	25.2	21.9	21.8	23.1	22.3
Migrant and friends	0.0	4.2	2.9	7.3	2.6	5.3
Drivers	4.0	0.8	1.8	5.5	5.1	5.3
Migrant and relatives	2.0	1.7	1.8	1.8	5.1	3.2
Friends and relatives	3.0	7.6	7.1	12.7	5.1	9.6
Friends	20.0	15.1	16.6	29.1	25.6	27.7
Other	12.0	7.6	8.9	10.9	20.5	14.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	50	119	169	55	39	94

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

In spite of their small earnings and savings, the migrants reported to be able to manage to send home money for various purposes. On the average, the migrants in Kumasi reported sending home

close to ₵400,000.00 at a time compared to about ₵300,000.00 for their counterparts in Accra. From Table 28, it is to be noted that on the average, the remittances from the males in either city are higher than the females. This is to be expected considering that the average reported earnings for the males have been found to be higher than the females.

On the other hand, Table 28 shows that while just about half of the migrants in Accra remit home less than ₵200,000 at any given time, about two-thirds of their counterparts in Kumasi send home similar amounts. It thus, suggests that the higher average remittance sent home by migrants in Kumasi is contributed by a relatively smaller proportion who send large amounts ranging between ₵1million and ₵3million (7.1% of the males and 11.4% of the females). Again, this should be interpreted with caution.

Table 28. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Remittance Sent at a Time

Amount	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
< ₵100,000.00	13.7	14.3	14.7	30.4	38.6	34.0
₵100,000.00 - ₵199,999.00	49.0	28.6	34.7	35.7	22.7	30.0
₵200,000.00 - ₵299,999.00	25.5	25.2	25.3	12.5	15.9	14.0
₵300,000.00 - ₵399,999.00	3.9	10.9	8.8	5.4	6.8	6.0
₵400,000.00 - ₵499,999.00	2.0	12.6	9.4	-	-	-
₵500,000.00 - ₵999,999.00	3.9	8.4	7.1	8.9	4.5	7.0
₵1 million - ₵3 million Average	-	-	-	7.1	11.4	9.0
income	₵460,196.08	₵415,882.35	₵292,498.23	₵454,392.86	₵294,795.45	₵384,170.00
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	51	119	170	56	44	100

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Note: ₵9,100.00 = US\$1.00

On the uses to which the monies sent home are put, more than half of the migrants in either Accra or Kumasi indicated that they have been used in buying food for the household back at home (Table 29). This is important and a major contribution to livelihoods in the North considering the perennial famine that often plague parts of the three Northern regions especially during the dry season. At the same time, it is interesting to note that while some proportion of the migrants indicated that their remittances are used to take care of their mothers' health, none mentioned taking care of their fathers' health. Taking care of siblings back at home is also considered an important area of investment for the remittances of the migrants. There are also some of them especially in Kumasi who mentioned the purchase of building materials. Another area of investment especially for migrants in Accra is trading. Again, to the females, the purchase of personal belongings perhaps in preparation for marriage is important.

Table 29. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Use of Money Sent Home

Use of money	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Building materials	0.0	0.8	0.6	13.2	5.3	9.9
Farming	0.0	3.4	2.4	-	-	-
Food for household at home	54.9	51.7	52.7	56.6	73.7	63.7
Mother's health	7.8	6.8	7.1	3.8	5.3	4.4
Trading	9.8	12.7	11.8	0.0	5.3	2.2
Purchase of sewing machine/livestock	2.0	2.5	2.4	11.3	0.0	6.6
Savings by mother for migrant	2.0	4.2	3.5	-	-	-
Purchase of items for marriage	0.0	3.4	2.4	-	-	-
Help young siblings	13.7	4.3	7.1	11.3	5.3	8.8
Purchase of personal belongings	3.9	6.8	5.9	0.0	5.3	2.2
Take care of children	-	-	-	1.9	0.0	1.1
Can't tell	5.9	3.4	4.1	1.9	0.0	1.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	51	118	169	53	38	91

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The study further examined the migrants on the basis of their access to health care by asking them about how they seek treatment when they fall sick. From Table 30, there is evidence to show that just about one in four of them seeks health care from established hospitals, clinics and health posts/centres. The proportion seeking such modern health care is higher among the males than the females in either Accra or Kumasi. By far however, more than half of the migrants in Accra and about half in Kumasi seek health care by consulting pharmacies and chemical shops. Such a practice may or may not constitute self-medication depending on whether or not a qualified pharmacist administers the medication based on his or her professional assessment of the condition of ill-health of the customer. The practice however, is that more often than not people visit the chemical shops having already pre-determined what they want to buy, which are offered by these chemical shop attendants who may not ask any questions, thus, resulting in abuse of drugs by many otherwise health care seekers.

Table 30 also shows that quite a considerable proportion of them particularly in Kumasi (close to one in four of the migrants) reported to depend on self-medication, a practice which could have dire consequences for the migrants. This is important considering that Accra and Kumasi have the leading health facilities in Ghana. The bottom line therefore, may be affordability, considering the low incomes many of the migrants reported to be earning per day.

Table 30. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Source of Health Care

Source	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Hospital, clinic, health post	27.9	20.3	22.5	26.8	21.7	24.1
Herbal treatment	3.5	0.5	1.3	5.6	1.4	3.4
Self medication	9.3	11.1	10.6	23.9	20.3	22.1
Pharmacy, chemical shop	52.3	59.1	57.1	43.7	55.4	49.7
Oracles, soothsayers, divine healers	0.0	0.5	0.3	-	-	-
No medical care	1.2	2.8	2.3	0.0	1.4	0.7
Never fallen sick since migration	5.8	6.0	5.9	-	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	86	217	303	71	74	145

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

From the analysis so far, it has been noted that the migrants are exposed to some risks by virtue of poor sleeping places at lorry parks, market squares and in kiosks. In spite of this, they manage to make some earnings and savings and are able to remit their families back home. They have thus, demonstrated their contribution towards the upkeep of their families at home in the area of provision of food to feed the household. The benefits of their migration are therefore not to themselves only but also to the bigger families at home. It is therefore not surprising that parents take active interest in deciding and actually financing their wards' migration to Southern Ghana from the three Northern regions, perhaps in the hope that they would also benefit from their expected remittances.

Reproductive Health of Child Migrants

It has so far been noted that a large proportion of the migrants in Accra and Kumasi spend their nights at lorry stations, market squares and in kiosks. This situation suggests that they are to some extent exposed to some reproductive health risks. The study therefore investigated into possible reproductive health problems that the migrants may be exposed to. It must however, be stated at the outset that responses from the migrants point to elements of inaccuracies. This is however not peculiar to the migrants because in Ghana, matters of sex and reproductive health are often shrouded in secrecy. Caution must thus, be exercised in the interpretation of the results that have been presented.

The migrants were asked about matters relating to their sexual practice. The results presented in Table 31 give an impression that a large chunk of the migrants have never had sex. This is especially the case among those in Accra. However, in Table 25, almost 90% of the migrants in Kumasi claimed to have children when asked about persons their children were living with. The

figure for Accra was 46%. Quite obviously, anyone with children living elsewhere cannot claim he/she has never had sex. It suggests quite clearly that the proportion indicating ever had sex in Table 31 is on the low side.

With reference to age at first sex however, Table 31 shows that a large proportion of the migrants in either Accra or Kumasi reported to have initiated their first sex at the age of 15-19 years. The mean age at first sex also does not vary much between migrants in Accra and Kumasi except that the females have a relatively lower mean age at first sex than the males particularly in Accra. Compared with the 2003 Ghana Demographic and Health Survey (GDHS) report, age at first sex among the migrants is lower, i.e., 15.7 and 16.6 in Accra and Kumasi respectively compared with the 2003 GDHS figures of 18.4 among females of 20-24 and 19.6 among the males of the same age group.

Table 31. Percent of Child Migrants by Ever Had Sex, Age and Timing of First Sex

Reproductive Health Variable	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Ever had sex						
Yes	26.4	13.3	17.0	47.1	31.5	39.2
No	73.6	86.7	83.0	52.9	68.5	60.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	87	218	305	70	73	143
Age at first sex						
< 15	21.7	37.9	30.8	18.2	13.0	16.1
15-19	60.9	56.6	59.6	63.6	82.6	71.4
20-24	17.4	3.5	9.6	18.2	4.4	12.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Mean	16.6	15.0	15.7	16.8	16.4	16.6
Number	23	29	52	33	23	56
Timing of first sex						
Before migration	39.1	75.9	59.6	42.4	39.1	41.1
After migration	56.5	24.1	38.5	54.5	60.9	57.1
Cannot tell	4.3	0.0	1.9	3.0	0.0	1.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	23	29	52	33	23	56

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

It is also observed that overall, majority of the migrants in Accra reported to have had their first sex before migrating to their current location while in Kumasi the observation is to the contrary. Concerning the circumstances within which first sex occurred, a very high percentage of them particularly in Accra attributed it to mutual consent (91% among the males and 79% among the females). In Kumasi, the proportion stating mutual consent is relatively lower, 73% among males and 57% among females. There were however, some 10% of the females in Accra and 13% in Kumasi

who indicated that their first sex was as a result of coercion. Peer pressure and monetary considerations were quoted among migrants in Kumasi than in Accra (Table 32).

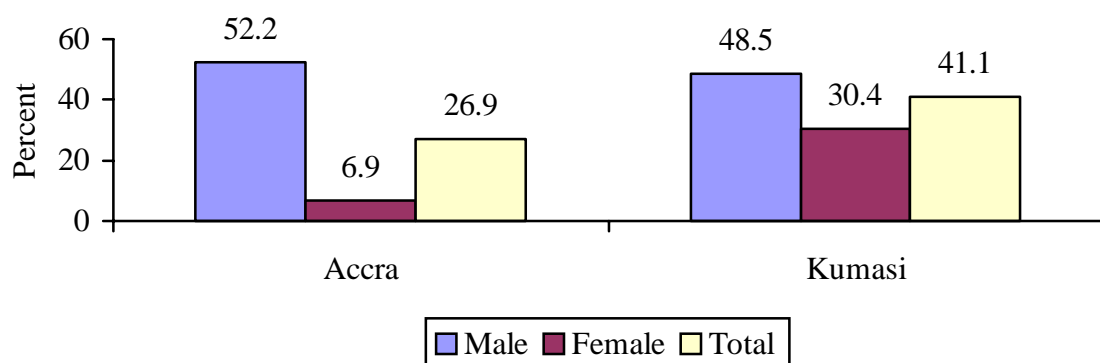
Table 32. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants by Circumstances First Sex Occurred

Circumstance	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Forced/Coerced	0.0	10.4	5.8	6.1	13.0	8.9
Mutual consent	91.4	79.3	84.6	72.7	56.6	66.1
Monetary considerations	0.0	3.4	1.9	9.1	13.0	10.7
Peer pressure	4.3	0.0	1.9	12.1	17.4	14.3
For pleasure	4.3	6.9	5.8	-	-	-
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	23	29	52	33	23	56

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The few who responded to have ever had sex were asked about the use of any method of protection against unwanted pregnancy at first sex. The responses indicated that the female migrants in Accra had the lowest proportion using any method of protection at first sex. This was as low as 7% compared with 52% among their male counterparts while in Kumasi, the figures were 49% male and 30% female (Figure 1). Again, further analysis showed that apart from the females in Kumasi among whom 71% used condoms and 29% vaginal tablets (not shown in Figure 1), all the other users of any family planning methods mentioned condoms. Granted that this is the case, then it could be safely concluded that the child migrants are quite conscious of protecting themselves against unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Figure 1. Percent of Child Migrants Using any Method of Protection at First Sex

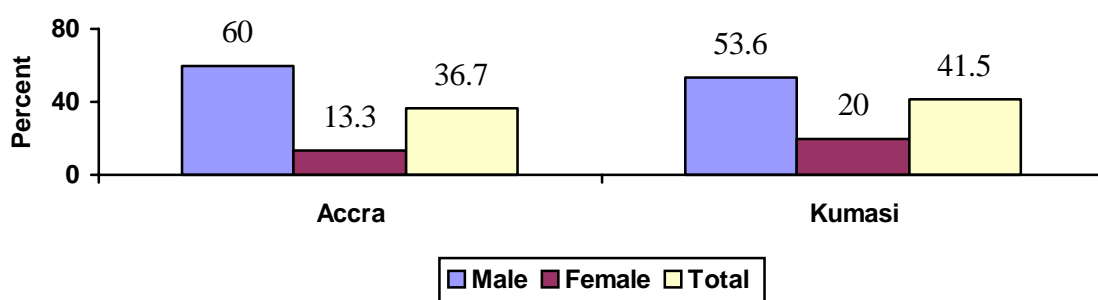


Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The migrants were further asked about the use of any method to specifically protect themselves against STIs. The responses presented in Figure 2 suggest rather ironically considering that

although almost all users of family planning had mentioned condoms, not a corresponding proportion of them reported to using any method to protect themselves from STIs. This may suggest that to a large extent, many of the migrants do not know that condoms protect them from STIs during sex. This clearly shows that many of these migrants are living in ignorance, a situation that constitutes some risk to the reproductive health. It is however quite welcome that although they are not aware of the protection condoms provide them against STIs, they are nonetheless using them. Perhaps intensified education among them could increase their conscious and effective use of condoms to protect themselves from both unplanned pregnancies and STIs including HIV/AIDS.

Figure 2. Percent of Child Migrants Using any Method of Protection against Sexually Transmitted Infections



Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

In sum, it has been shown that only a small proportion of the respondents participated in providing responses regarding issues of sexual and reproductive health. Yet, among the few that responded, most of them practised first sex as a result of mutual consent. With almost all the sexually active among them reporting the use of condoms, their reproductive health is largely protected although many of them were not consciously aware that condom use is a protection against STIs.

The Views of Child Migrants

Two main questions were asked to elicit the assessment of the child migrants regarding their living conditions. These were whether or not they had regretted ever migrating and the reasons for their response. From Table 33, we note that less than 30% of the migrants in Kumasi reported that they had regretted ever migrating from their home areas. The figures for Accra are however, higher: 37% among males and 48% among the females. There were also others who were either not sure or felt it was too early for them to make a decision. Perhaps, these were the most recent migrants who were yet to make an assessment of the situation. Overall however, one thing is certain in that close

to two in three of them especially in Kumasi have not regretted ever embarking on the migration. This suggests that the phenomenon of child migration has already gained grounds perhaps due to the benefits the actors have been enjoying from the movements.

Table 33. Views of Child Migrants on Whether They Have Regretted Migrating (%)

Response	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Yes	37.2	48.2	45.1	26.8	26.0	23.3
No	54.6	41.3	45.1	60.6	69.3	65.1
Too early to decide	4.7	7.8	6.9	8.4	6.7	7.5
Not sure	3.5	2.7	2.9	4.2	4.0	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	86	218	304	71	75	146

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Concerning the reasons presented by those who said they have not regretted migrating, almost all the reasons bother on better living conditions. These include the fact that they now have some job; they are learning a trade; have saved some money and hence consider life to be generally better at their current locations than their places of origin in the North. So far then, opportunities for jobs and money for one's upkeep are the key factors of consideration by the migrants (Table 34).

Table 34. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants Who Have Not Regretted Migrating to Current Location by Reason

Reason	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Present location better than home	6.8	7.8	7.4	2.0	7.3	4.8
Okay with present work	8.5	2.2	4.7	10.0	1.8	5.7
Happy learning a trade	16.9	3.3	8.7	6.0	3.7	4.8
Have a job	23.7	18.9	20.8	12.0	10.9	11.4
Came to look for money	10.2	16.7	14.1	10.0	1.8	5.7
Can take care of family	16.9	17.8	17.4	20.0	12.7	16.2
Have saved some money now	10.2	25.5	19.5	40.0	58.2	49.6
Other	6.8	6.7	6.7	0.0	1.8	0.9
No specific reason	0.0	1.1	0.7	0.0	1.8	0.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	59	90	149	50	55	105

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

In contrast, those who reported to have regretted migrating were critical about issues pertaining to living conditions. These were persons who thought they were not making enough money as they had anticipated; they were facing financial problems; they had no jobs; work was difficult, they are not

satisfied with present income or they found life generally difficult at their present location. In sum, all the reasons pertain to living conditions.

Table 35. Percent of Child Migrants Who Have Regretted Ever Migrating by Reason

Reason	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
No money as anticipated	14.8	15.9	15.7	-	-	-
Face financial problems	3.7	7.9	7.2	-	-	-
Miss family at home	0.0	4.8	3.9	17.6	11.8	14.7
Hate present work	7.4	2.4	3.3	-	-	-
Very difficult to live here	18.5	18.2	18.3	-	-	-
Lack of job	7.4	15.9	14.4	-	-	-
Not satisfied with present income	3.7	4.0	3.9	17.6	17.6	17.6
Work is tedious	7.4	12.7	11.8	5.9	29.4	17.6
Other	37.1	17.4	20.9	53.0	41.2	47.1
No specific reason	0.0	0.8	0.6	5.9	0.0	3.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	27	126	153	17	17	34

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Finally, while close to half of the migrants in Kumasi are emphatic that they would advise their age mates and other siblings at home to also migrate to join them, just about a third of their friends in Accra think the same way. It therefore, would appear (Table 36) that to some extent, living as a child migrant in Kumasi may be more economically lucrative compared to Accra where more than half of the migrants were of the opinion they would not advise their siblings at home to also join them. The life of the child migrant can therefore, be assumed to be a mixture of costs and benefits of varying degrees depending on conditions of the destination area.

Table 36. Percent Distribution of Child Migrants as to Whether They Would Advise Their Age Mates or Siblings at Home to Also Migrate

Response	Accra			Kumasi		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Yes	32.2	29.2	30.0	47.8	48.6	48.2
No	57.1	56.9	57.0	43.5	33.3	38.3
Not decided	10.7	13.9	13.0	8.7	18.1	13.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number	84	216	300	69	72	141

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The fundamental issue perhaps is a comparison of living conditions at home and their present destination. It is however, interesting to point out that in spite of a majority of migrants particularly in Accra indicating they regretted migrating and hence would not advise their friends and siblings to

also join them, they nonetheless did not express their desire to return to their places of origin in the North. By all standards therefore, these migrants consider the potential benefits of their stay in Accra or Kumasi to outweigh the costs, hence their determination to live on in spite of the enumerated problems they face.

Multivariate Analysis of Child Migration

Four dependent variables were selected for further analysis at this stage. These are analysis of daily income earned, savings made at any time, amount of money sent home at any time and the possibility that a child migrant would make any remittances home. The rationale behind these analyses was to examine the variation of the child migrants by some important background characteristics and factors that are considered to affect these dependent variables of interest.

As already outlined, a test of mean (T-test), Anova (F-test) and logistic regression analyses were made to examine the variation of the migrants with respect to the dependent variables against the background of the independent variables. The interpretation of the results should be done considering that education, marital status, type of work engaged in and sleeping place at night, the child migrants had similar characteristics. In all, the analysis has been done with a 95% level of confidence i.e., $p = 0.05$.

Daily Income Earned

Table 9.23 shows the results of both T-test and F-test analysis of daily income earned by the child migrants according to some characteristics as independent variables, namely; place of enumeration, sex, age, education, type of work engaged in, sleeping place at night and duration of stay at destination area.

Table 37. Results of Test of Mean and Anova Analysis on Daily Income Earned by Child Migrants by Selected Background Characteristics

Background Variable	Mean Income Earned (in Cedis)	P-Value	Number
Place of Enumeration		.001	
Accra	21,528.43		299
Kumasi	32,522.06		136
Sex		.000	
Male	33,238.41		151
Female	20,566.90		284
Type of work engaged in		.004	
Porter	22,280.65		310
Others	31,624.00		125
Sleeping place at night		.000	
Home	39,471.70		106
Street/Other places	20,291.79		329
Age*		.000	
< 10	17,500.00		2
1-14	17,190.91		110
15-19	21,721.99		241
20-24	45,172.84		81
Education*		.016	
No education	22,898.68		227
Primary	23,828.95		152
JSS/Middle and higher	36,000.00		55
Duration of Stay*		.000	
< 1	17,432.20		236
1-2	23,756.41		78
3-4	30,964.91		57
5+	50,813.56		59

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Note: * Anova Analysis

₵9,100.00 = US\$1.00

From Table 37, we find that mean income earned by the child migrants varies highly significantly by all the independent variables. Child migrants in Kumasi earn higher incomes than those in Accra. Similarly, males earn more incomes than females. Again, at a high statistical significance of 100% level of confidence, daily income earned appears to relate directly with the age of the migrant where older migrants earn higher daily incomes relative to their younger counterparts. We again note that daily income earned relates directly with the migrant's education while migrants who work as porters earn lower incomes than their friends engaged in other jobs. There is also a statistically significant variation between migrants who spend the night at home and on the street, the former being twice better. Furthermore, quite expectedly, the longer the migrant stays at the destination area, the higher their mean earnings.

Savings

The results of the analysis with respect to savings made by child migrants on their earning any time are presented in Table 38. The results indicate that mean savings vary significantly by sex, type of work engaged in and amount of income earned at 100% level of confidence. For example, in terms of sex, the results show a higher mean savings among the males compared with the females. In fact, the mean earnings among the males appear to be almost twice that of the females. This is to be expected considering that in Ghana, males on the average tend to earn higher incomes than females. We however, note that child migrants who work as porters or *kayayee* have a much lower mean savings relative to their counterparts in other occupational groups. In spite of this, majority of the child migrants are involved in *kayaye*-related jobs from which small incomes are earned.

Table 38. Results of Test of Mean and Anova Analysis on Savings by Child Migrants With Respect to Selected Background Characteristics.

Background Variable	Mean Savings Earned (in Cedis)	p-value	Number
Place of Enumeration		.497	
Accra	14,160.87		230
Kumasi	16,658.27		139
Sex		.005	
Male	21,948.82		127
Female	11,508.26		242
Type of work engaged in		.010	
Porter	12,247.17		265
Others	22,375.00		104
Remittance sent home		.982	
Yes	15,165.37		257
No	15,254.72		106
Income earned*		.000	
< 10,000.00	4,912.98		121
10,000.00-19,999.00	9,800.00		70
20,000.00-29,999.00	12,483.61		61
30,000.00-39,999.00	13,812.50		32
40,000.00-49,999.00	18,333.33		27
50,000.00+	41,255.32		47

Note: * Anova Analysis

₵9,100.00 = US\$1.00

It is also noted that as expected, the quantum of money saved relates directly with the amount of money earned. The relationship is also highly significant statistically at 100% level of confidence. On the other hand, although the mean savings among child migrants in Kumasi are higher compared with those in Accra, the variation between the two groups of migrants is not statistically significant. Similarly, there is virtually no variation between migrants who indicated they send remittances home

and their colleagues who said they do not with respect to savings made at any time. This suggests that the tendency for the migrants to send home remittances does not depend on the savings made but instead on the individual migrant's own determination to send home remittances.

Remittances

Table 39 shows that the results of the analysis regarding the variation among the child migrants with respect to the mean amount of money sent home as remittances at any time. From the results, only two of the independent variables produced statistically significant variation between the migrants namely; place of enumeration and marital status. By place enumeration, child migrants resident in Kumasi tend to have a higher mean of amount sent home as remittance. This is consistent with the earlier observation made regarding a higher income earned by migrants in Kumasi than in Accra. At the same time, ever married child migrants tend to remit home a much higher amount of money compared with the never married. This may be due to the possibility that ever married migrants are more likely than the never married to have children left behind at home for whom they may be obliged to send home remittances for their upkeep.

Table 39. Results of Test of Mean and Anova Analysis on Remittances by Child Migrants With Respect to Selected Background Characteristics

Background Variable	Mean Remittance Sent (in Cedis)	p-value	Number
Place of enumeration		.077	
Accra	201,529.41		170
Kumasi	267,170.00		100
Type of work engaged in		.192	
Porter	241,454.55		187
Others	190,662.65		83
Migration decision making		.887	
Migrant	223,536.91		149
Other person	228,677.69		121
Marital status		.031	
Never married	211,464.14		237
Ever married	329,090.91		33

* Anova Analysis

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

The respondents were further examined using logistic regression analysis regarding the likelihood or otherwise that they would send home remittances. The results are presented in Table 40. From the table, although some variations are observable among the categories of each background variable, the variations are mostly statistically not significant. The only exceptions are duration of stay and

person making the decision to migrate where with respect to the former, the tendency for a migrant to send remittances home increases with longer duration of stay at the destination area. On the other hand, the possibility of a migrant remitting home is lower when the initial decision to migrate is taken by other persons including relatives and friends than when the decision to migrate is by the migrant himself or herself. The overall prediction of possible remittance by the child migrant by the variables included in the model is 63.6%, suggesting that there are some other factors that explain remittances, which the study could not take account of.

Table 40. Results of Logistic Regression Analysis on the Possibility that Child Migrants Will Send Home Remittances by Selected Background Characteristics

Independent Variable	B	Standard error	p-value	Exp. (B)
Place of enumeration				
Kumasi (RC)				
Accra	-.511	.268	.056	.600
Sex				
Male (RC)				
Female	-.118	.324	.715	.888
Age				
< 10 (RC)				
10-14	-.038	1.441	.979	.963
15-19	.076	1.435	.958	1.079
20-24	-.250	1.490	.867	.779
Education				
No education (RC)				
Primary	.110	.245	.654	1.116
JSS/Middle and higher	.438	.387	.257	1.550
Marital status				
Ever married (RC)				
Never married	.542	.420	.197	1.720
Type of work engaged in				
Other (RC)				
Porter	.224	.314	.477	1.251
Duration of Stay				
< 1 (RC)				
1-2	.003	.292	.991	1.003
3-4	.933	.385	.015	2.541
5+	1.247	.479	.009	3.479
Migration decision making				
Migrant (RC)				
Other person	-.544	.248	.028	.581
Sleeping place at night				
Home (RC)				
Street/Other	-.217	.278	.434	.805
Income earned				
< 10,000.00 (RC)				
10,000.00-19,999.00	.567	.300	.059	1.762
20,000.00-29,999.00	.446	.313	.154	1.563
30,000.00-39,999.00	1.904	.584	.001	6.713
40,000.00-49,999.00	.823	.473	.082	2.277
50,000.00+	.256	.405	.528	1.292
Constant	.398	.492	.790	1.488

Overall Prediction: 0.636

RC = Reference category; <9,100.00 = US\$1.00

Source: Autonomous Child Migration Survey in Accra and Kumasi

Discussion

The study has revealed a lot of interesting results. From the quantitative analysis, it is quite obvious that the phenomenon of child migration from Northern to Southern Ghana entails costs and benefits. Although more than half of the child migrants interviewed are within 15-19 years and therefore may not be considered too young, it was reported from the in-depth interviews with parents of current child migrants that a number of them migrate for the first time aged less than 10 years with females dominating the migration. From the study, it has been noted that child migration from the Northern to Southern Ghana is dominated by females in the Northern Region but by males in the Upper East Region.

It appears migration of children from the Northern to Southern Ghana is become a universal phenomenon as almost every household is reported to have a child member in Southern Ghana. For example, an elder at one of the sending communities in the Northern Region noted that 'There is no house in this community from which a child has not migrated to the South.' An Acting Chief of one of the communities also remarked that 'they are going from all households. If any child remains, others say he/she has remained to be eating large quantities of food'.

One thing that has come out from the analysis is that most of the child migrants have little or no education and therefore barely have any employable skills. Incidentally, it is in the quest for jobs outside their home communities that most of them have had to migrate. From the in-depth interviews with parents of child migrants at the place of origin, the fundamental problem acting as a push factor for the migration of children is poverty. There was almost unanimous agreement on the fact that there is no work at home for the children and as parents are unable to take care of them, the only option left is for them to leave for what they perceive as greener pastures down south. As one of the parents put it, 'It is the suffering we experience now, if they don't go and look for work they may end up as thieves.'

Again, another lamented: 'We were suffering here, there was no proper yield from our crops again and I decided that he should go and work and also learn a lesson. It was because of poverty that I asked him to go.'

Furthermore, another explained the situation as follows: 'We have no work here. After farming, we all sit idle, since they are children and we saw it necessary to let them go so that they can buy their needs like clothing and home materials and utensils.'

This is quite an indication that poverty is actually to blame for the migration of children from the North. On account of this, most of the parents could not hide their connivance with the children to the extent that in several cases, the parents even prompted their children to migrate. In fact, information gathered from some of the parents confirmed that although in some cases the children ran away without the knowledge of the parents, in most cases, parents were well aware and even paid for their transport down south. Unfortunately, several of the children had to leave school in order to migrate, resulting in the curtailment of their education.

The influence of their peers also came up as a push factor. To most of the parents, when children see other colleagues returning home from the South with items like clothing and utensils, they also yearn to go in order to acquire some of those items. For many of them therefore, they plan to embark on temporary migration and to return home after they have been able to acquire the basic needs that would enable them to get married. However, some end up staying longer because their dreams are often not met.

From the perspective of the parents, they are not very happy that their children are going at these young ages but to them, there is no choice. One parent who recounted that her daughter migrated first to Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso at the age of nine years, returned home and after three years went to live in Accra summed up her feelings thus:

We are not happy for our children to go but because of the suffering there is nothing we can do in spite of the several odd stories of hardships they are often subjected to. There are some of our daughters who have been there and when they return it is sad to see them as some come with pregnancies resulting in suffering on their part. Among we the Mamprusi here, if your daughter marries, you can send for your son-in-law to come and help on the farm during the rainy season. But if your daughter goes and comes back with pregnancy, you don't know who has impregnated her and you will also bear the cost of taking care of her unborn child. If I am able to provide their needs they will not migrate down south.

A Chief corroborated the foregoing point by stating that:

Child migration affects education of the children. Some of the children return with pregnancies, which indicates they engaged in prostitution. But some of them return with their utensils ready for marriage while some return with sewing machines. We the family members only benefit from a loaf of bread. I do not think migration has any benefit for the family and no benefit for the community. The only solution to migration is to create jobs.

This suggests that some of the parents are well aware of the problems their children are confronted with when they migrate but cannot restrain them due to poverty.

Quaicoe (2005), in an article captioned 'Woes of the *Kayayoo*' states that 'female head porters (*kayayoo*) who flocked into the big cities, especially Accra and Kumasi, from the northern part of the country are faced with a myriad of problems'. She lists some of the problems to include poor housing facilities, poor health care, inadequate sanitation facilities and the harassment from their male colleagues. Besides, according to her, the girls are raped in the evenings on account of the insecure sleeping places they are obliged to use. As a result, she recounts that many of them become single mothers while others become infected with HIV. Clearly, this constitutes a major cost of the migration of children especially when they are girls.

It must be noted that from the account of the children, the impression is created that a lot of remittances are sent home while they work at their destination areas. However, the account of the parents at home appears to be quite different. This is because while the migrants reported to send home monies as remittances ranging between ₵200,000.00 and ₵400,000.00, many of the parents of current child migrants mentioned items like utensils, clothing sent home by their children who have migrated. A few of them reported their children to have been sending monies, which are by far less than those quoted by the migrants interviewed in Accra and Kumasi. The large imbalance between the reports of the children and parents back at home is difficult to explain. It may however be due to the fact of the children creating an impression that they are doing well at their destination areas while for the parents, perhaps they want to paint a picture that they are still poor in order to attract some public sympathy.

The study further has clearly brought out the fact that income earned relates positively with the age of the migrants, considering that older migrants earn higher incomes than the younger ones. This is perhaps due to the fact that many of the jobs they get themselves, as for example carrying loads as *kayayee*, require the use of strength, which is usually guaranteed by the higher age of the migrant. It is also consistent with the observation that such strenuous jobs are more appropriate for the males because they are stronger than the females and that perhaps explains why the males tend to have higher incomes compared with the females.

Furthermore, the finding that migrants who have stayed relatively longer earn higher incomes than those who are relatively new at the destination areas should be understood in the context of the

relatively more experience gained with higher duration at the destination area. Therefore, such persons are able to manoeuvre their way in the city.

One other interesting but important issue that should be highlighted is the fact that although from the quantitative analysis the child migrants did not appear to be at serious risk, the reports by parents from selected communities in the Northern Region pointed to the fact that many of the young girls are exposed to such risks. The most mentioned concern regarding the migration of children from the point of view of parents at home was that some of them often returned home sick and even pregnant but had no husbands to take care of them. This clearly suggests that some of them get engaged in unprotected sex and therefore expose themselves to sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and even HIV/AIDS. To many of the parents whose children have migrated, this is their greatest concern although they are aware they are occasionally raped, robbed by thieves and have accommodation problems.

In spite of these concerns, there was a general fear among some of the parents that the children would be repatriated. For example, in one of the communities in the Northern Region, some of the respondents showed some resentment about the study out of fear that the findings could lead to the repatriation of the child migrants in Accra and Kumasi.

It is also noteworthy that the incomes earned by migrants who work as *kayayee* are lower compared with their counterparts engaged in other jobs. Yet, from the quantitative analysis, majority of the migrants especially the females are engaged in *kayayee*. The implication is that as the population of *kayayee* increases with more and more children embarking on migration down to Accra and Kumasi, the services of these children are likely to become cheaper and consequently, their overall incomes would reduce. When this happens, it would result in their further impoverishment, thereby defeating the very purpose for their embarking on migration.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The study has brought out important observations, which have far-reaching implications for policy formulation in Ghana. These conclusions have been reached from the analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative data collected for the study.

In the first place, it has been shown that north-south independent child migration in Ghana is quite widespread, with almost every house in the Northern Region in particular reported to have some child migrants to the South. Although the north-south migration has been of historical origin resulting from the spatial imbalance in socio-economic development between the South and the North, independent child migration is of recent evolution. Majority of the child migrants have stayed at their place of destination for 5 years or less and the largest proportion concentrated within the age group 15-19 years. Females compared with males also dominate the process.

The fundamental reason for the migration of the children is economic i.e. poverty and the hope that their moving out would bring some economic relief to both the migrant and the entire household. Consequently, the decisions are not entirely those of the migrant but often the entire family.

Independent child migration has both costs and benefits. There are costs pertaining to the risks many of them are exposed to especially with regard to their reproductive health. While some are reported to become single mothers as a result of pregnancies through rape, others become infected with STIs and HIV. Thus, instead of contributing to the household income back home, they return as a burden to the already poor household left behind.

Another area of cost that came out of the study relates to the education of the child migrants as many of them leave school to embark on migration to the South. For example, according to the Child Labour study, as high as 46% of the street children in Ghana had no education, 26% among the males and 64% among the females (GSS 2003). Ironically, on account of their lack of employable skills due to their low education, many of them are unable to get jobs that attract high incomes and are forced to accept lowly paid jobs with irregular incomes. It therefore would appear that sacrifices they make through withdrawing from school to embark on migration to Accra and Kumasi are not adequately compensated for by the kind of jobs and incomes they get to do at the destination areas.

In spite of these costs, some incomes are earned and remittances made to support the families back home. Although the incomes and remittances made may not be adequate, the fact that more and more of them continue to migrate would suggest that in spite of the costs, families and children in the three Northern regions still see migration to the South as a better opportunity to live better lives than if they were not to migrate. It thus, suggests that the north-south independent migration of children in Ghana has gradually become an intrinsic component of the lives of the average household in the North. It is important then that policies and programmes are evolved to ensure that the costs of the

migration of these children are reduced while maximising the benefits. Against the foregoing conclusions, the study makes a few relevant recommendations for the way forward.

The government should target the three Northern regions as a special case in its poverty reduction programme. The North is endowed with sheanuts from which sheabutter is processed. From the study, it became clear that some of the young girls engaged in the sheanut trade to secure their transport fare to embark on migration down south. It is therefore possible that if this trade is given special attention as one of the Presidential Special Initiatives (PSIs), it would be a more lucrative source of income for the young girls such that they could stay behind at their places of origin and work in the sheanut and sheabutter industry.

With respect to the child migrants already in the cities in southern Ghana, the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs (MOWAC) should have a programme that focuses on these child migrants. The Ministry could embark on a programme to retrain them to be equipped with employable skills to enable them have relatively more lucrative jobs especially in the area of self-employment.

In the analysis from the study, it was found that some of the migrants indicated they have regretted migrating. Such persons could be identified and assisted to go back home to settle down to some business after retraining. Already some non-governmental organisations have been involved in the retraining and subsequent 'repatriation' of some child migrants in Accra. However, this is on a much smaller scale. It is therefore about time the MOWAC gets into the programme to implement it on a large scale in order that this large pool of potential human resources could be better equipped for their real and useful integration into the economy especially at their places of origin. Already, the migrants are in some form of informal groupings with their leaders. These groupings could form the basis for reaching out to them to facilitate their registration, retraining and subsequent 'repatriation' for those desiring to go back home.

One critical area of cost identified in the study has been with respect to the reproductive health of the child migrants particularly the girls among them. Although in Ghana, there are on-going efforts by the Ministry of Health and the Ghana AIDS Commission to address HIV/AIDS and other reproductive health related problems in the general population, these programmes should be refocused with some special attention given to these vulnerable child migrants. At the moment, it appears much concern is expressed regarding the risks commercial sex workers pose to the success of HIV/AIDS prevention programmes. Though this concern is valid, the nation should not lose sight of the several persons

who are not engaged in commercial sex as a main source of livelihood but are still exposed to the HIV and STI risks. One of these groups is the female group of child migrants in the cities. It is therefore recommended that child migrants in the cities should be targeted with sustained public education on their reproductive health in general and on HIV/AIDS/STI in particular. Since, their reproductive health risks are obviously linked to their economic vulnerability, such reproductive health public education programmes should be integrated into the skill-provision training programmes that have already been recommended.

It is also important to have a programme that targets parents and potential migrants at the sending areas to sensitise them on the costs and benefits of child migration. This is based on the finding that in most cases parents actively are involved in the decision-making process as to whether or not the children should migrate. The District Assemblies in the sending regions should not devote a proportion of their Common Fund to such sensitisation efforts in encouraging some level of education, for example, up to the Senior Secondary School level to be attained before migration. Apart from such a programme guaranteeing the would-be migrant an opportunity of relatively better jobs or for further training at the destination area, it would also ensure that if they migrate eventually, it would be at an age when the migrant would have attained some appreciable level of maturity to be able to cope with independent living at the destination areas. This way, their vulnerability and consequently the costs of the migration would be reduced.

In the area of research, it is important to have a follow-up study into the adjustment and re-integration of the return child migrants into the society back at home after their return. It would further provide a unique opportunity to examine the differences between return child migrants and their counterparts who have never migrated before. This is very important and should precede any programme aimed at assisting child migrants who desire to return to the sending areas to do so. Such a study would be able to find out what the return migrants would require to be completely re-integrated socio-economically and culturally into the societies they have left behind. The study could also take a more comprehensive analysis of child trafficking as it relates to the north-south migration phenomenon.

District Assemblies could undertake studies at the district level in order to be able to provide the needed support. At the same time, the MOWAC's poverty alleviation funds could be channelled to assisting migrants who are desirous to return to their communities of origin. Already, the *Daily Graphic* of 21 June 2005 reports that 1,687 children of between five and 10 years who were trafficked to work under harsh conditions on the Volta Lake at Yeji, a fishing town in the Volta Region have

been rescued by the MOWAC under rescue operations dubbed 'Bring Them Back Home'. Meanwhile, Parliament should hasten to pass the Human Trafficking Bill which seeks to bring parents and intermediaries and persons engaged in child trafficking before the law.

Finally, a national debate should be initiated on independent child migration particularly from the North to Southern Ghana as a basis for formulating policies and programmes that would mitigate the costs associated with it while increasing its benefits. This could be achieved when as a nation, we place the phenomenon of north-south child migration as one of the priority areas on our national human development agenda. The national Parliament should as a matter of urgency, initiate the debate to facilitate the formulation of specific policies on child migration. Depending on the importance that would be attached to the national debate, north-south independent child migration would be more of a benefit not only to the migrant but also the family back at home and the nation at large.

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