

Rural - Urban Migration In Ghana: Policy Implications

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Abstract: The study examines policy implications of rural urban migration on urban settlement in Ghana. The target population for the study was Migrants in the Ashiedu Keteke District of the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. A sample of fifty (50) respondents who are in-migrants within the Agbobloshie community were selected. A set of questionnaire was developed to collect data for the survey. The data gathered was analyzed using simple descriptive statistics. The findings of the research indicated that people from the rural areas migrate to urban areas, and the main reason why they migrate to the cities is because of poverty and unemployment in the rural areas. It is often the economic active group who migrate to the urban areas in search for greener pastures; however they encounter economical, unemployment and accommodation problems when they migrate to the urban areas as well. The study recommended that the government create employment opportunities, strengthen the GYEDA and NABCO Schemes and credits should be made available to improve agriculture in the rural areas and the youth in rural areas should be sensitized to undertake their own development.

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Migration is a common phenomenon in Ghana. According to the Ghana Statistical Service, a little over half (52 %) of the population aged 7 years and older in Ghana are migrants. In terms of sex, the difference between males and females are marginal except in rural savannah where proportion of female migrants (47%) is much higher than that of males (37.6%) (Ghana Statistical Service, 2008). Just like human beings, animals also migrate; animals like tortoise and millipedes are gradually leaving our societies.

Most often people who migrate relocate themselves to the urban areas, some also go to the rural areas, but however this is not very common. Among the regions in Ghana, the Greater Accra region has the largest proportion of in-migrants and economic considerations causes 41 percent of migration (Ghana Statistical Service, 2008). The general objective for the study is to examine policy implications of rural urban migration on urban settlement in Ghana ;a study of Agbobloshie.

Specific objectives are;

- ✓ To identify reasons why people migrate from the northern part of Ghana to settle in Agbobloshie
- ✓ To ascertain the characteristics of the migrants in Agbobloshie

- ✓ To find out if the migrants have achieved their aim of migrating to Accra and if not what are the reasons accounting for that.
- ✓ To find out the occupation of the migrants in Accra
- ✓ To assess policy implications of such migration.

II. METHODOLOGY

The study took the form of a quantitative description of the case study. The quantitative approach was chosen as a result of its advantage of analyzing and offering explanations based on the percentages gotten from the study.

The target population comprised of both males and females from different age groups; the purpose of selecting the respondents from the two sexes was to ensure diversity of ideas and to ensure that the results represent the entire population.

The sampling method used for the study was the Non-probability sampling method. With regard to the Non-probability sampling method, Accidental sampling was employed to select 50 in-migrants within the Agbobloshie community. This method was used to select migrants who were willing to be interviewed.

A. SOURCES OF DATA

The sources of data used were primary and secondary data. In-depth interview guides were used to obtain information from the respondents with respect to the topic and the area under study. Structured and semi structured interviews were also used to gather information. Personal observation was used to gather information to have a clear idea of the living conditions of in-migrants. This helped in cross checking what the respondents said and what was really happening.

Relevant literature on the problem was consulted from documentary sources to facilitate the comprehension of issues on the ground. Information from textbooks, theses, journals and essays were consulted.

Data collection was done using a semi-structured interview guide through face-to-face narrative interviews. This data technique was used because the interviewer could assess the mood of the people and could appraise the validity and reliability of the answers (P. A. Twumasi, 2001)

The data was analyzed using inferential and descriptive statistics. Inferential and descriptive statistics used using the frequency distributions such as bar charts, pie chart and percentage divided bar charts.

The questionnaire was in four (4) separate parts; the first part was concerned with the general information of the respondents, such as their ages, sex, educational attainment, occupational and marital status and their religion. The second part gave the various reasons why migrants choose to live in urban areas. The third part was about the extent at which migrants are able to meet their needs, and the final part explained the constraints of migrants in urban areas.

For the purpose of clarity, pie charts, bar charts and tables were used to present the outcome of the study. The respondents under study were in-migrants. There were a total number of fifty (50) questionnaires administered.

III. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section reviews relevant works done in the area of the study under consideration.

A. RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION IN GHANA

Just like many developing countries, Ghana also has the problem of uneven development and distribution of basic social amenities between rural and urban areas. Educational facilities for higher learning, quality health care, major sports and entertainment facilities, telecommunication, and the modern economy, are all in the capital cities. According to Kwaku Twumasi-Ankrah (1995), the disparities that existed during the colonial administration still persist after more than five decades of political independence and implementation of many rural development programs by different national governments. As a matter of fact building of better roads and transportation systems have only served to facilitate migration from the rural areas. In Ghana, as in many other African countries, the disparities in the distribution of resources help

to explain why people move to the cities. (Kwaku Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995).

a. *THE PUSH-PULL FACTORS*

Most of the rural-urban migrants of today move in response to the "push" factors from rural living and the "pull" factors of the industrious and commerce of the urban areas (Caldwell, 1969; Frazier, 1961). The educated person in Ghana is perceived as someone who belongs to the city (Caldwell, 1969). It has been said that the school curricula have undermined the traditional rural order by failing to teach the requisite skills for adaptation to the indigenous social environment. Education at all levels have turned it's recipients to town-life. However, the lack of prestige for farm work, the social degradation and stigma associated with rural living, lack of appropriate jobs, and the scarcity of social amenities affect the "educated" and the "uneducated" alike. The social background of the rural-urban migrants in Ghana is therefore mixed. It is made up of people with different preparations for city life; some have enough resources for their basic necessities, while others have none at all, they sleep on the streets of Accra (Kwaku Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995).

b. *MIGRANTS' CONTRIBUTION TO RURAL AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT*

Rural-urban migrants can contribute directly or indirectly to rural and urban development in many ways. Urban employment brings economic and material gains to many migrants. Through Migrants' voluntary tribal associations, to which some of them have great attachment and commitment, migrants, especially the successful ones, can help in the planning and implementation of various projects at their home towns and villages. In many cases, the tribal associations have contributed to projects including the installation of street lights, building and maintenance of roads, streets, schools, clinics and health posts, wells and other sources of water supply. In some cases these migrants are able to send remittances back home to support their families. (Kwaku Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995). In the Urban areas, migrants contribute to the development of the Cities by working hard.

c. *THE EXTENT OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION IN THE ACCRA METROPOLIS*

Urbanization in Accra is at an annual rate of 4.2% according to the World Bank and it is still increasing with a heavy rural-urban drift to the city due to the comparative advantages of the Metropolis. The Accra Metropolitan Assembly reports that the phenomenon has resulted in upspring of slums and haphazard development due to the gross inadequacy of low-income housing and accompanying infrastructure for the increasing population. According to the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, about 90% of the populace of the slum dwellers falls within the low to very low income brackets. This has led to the many slums that are currently present in the city. There are about twenty- nine (29) slum communities in Accra. Some illegal settlements in Accra are

Abuja, Sodom and Gomorrah and Babylon. (AMA Medium Term Development Plan, 2010).

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

In-migrants choose to live in the cities when they migrate from their places of origin for various reasons.

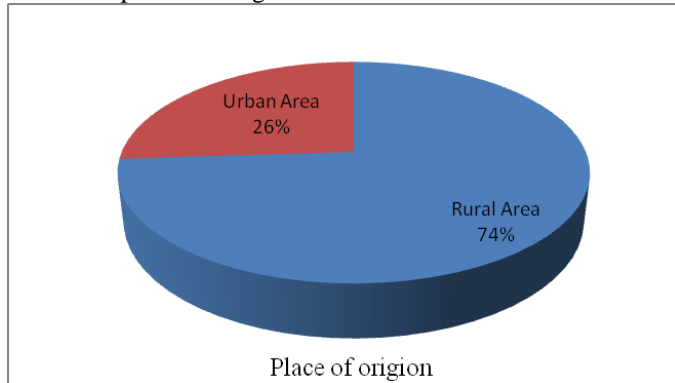


Figure 1: Place of origin

Table 1 show that 74% of the respondents migrated from the rural areas, whereas 26% of them migrated from urban areas. This implies that most people who move to the cities are from the rural parts of the country and there could be various reasons why they move from the rural areas to the cities.

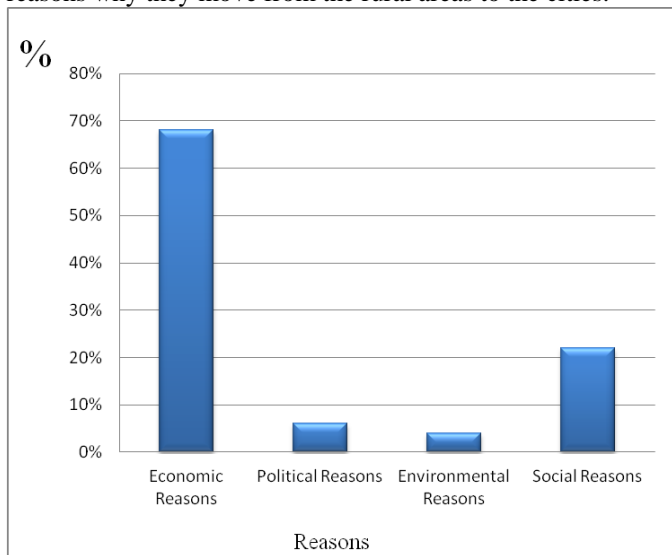


Figure 2: Reasons for migrating

From the sample size of 50 respondents selected, 68% representing 34 of the respondents said their main aim of migrating to the urban areas is as a result of economic reasons. They further explained that it is as a result of poverty and unemployment at the rural areas that prompted them to come to the cities to make a living. 22% of the respondents said they came to the city as a result of social reasons, and that include marriage, family ties and education. For 6% of the respondents, it is political factors that influenced them to move to the urban areas and these political reasons include civil wars and conflicts. 2 of the respondents, representing 4% said it is as a result of harsh climate and natural disasters that they found themselves in the city.

Since it is the youth, or the economic active group who migrate from the rural areas to the urban areas, there is a likely

possibility of these people migrating to seek for greener pastures; those who belong to the economic active group always have to work to support both the younger and the older population (dependent population) by sending remittances home, this explains why most people migrate for economic reasons.

Have you achieved your aim after migrating?	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	33	66
No	17	34
Total	50	100

Source: Field Survey 2018

Table 1: Whether Migrants have achieved their aim for migrating

From table 1, 66% representing 33 respondents said they have not been able to achieve their aim for migrating into the City and 34% said they have achieved their aim for migrating into the city. This implies that even though a lot of people always want to migrate to the Cities, most people are not able to achieve their aim of moving from the rural areas.

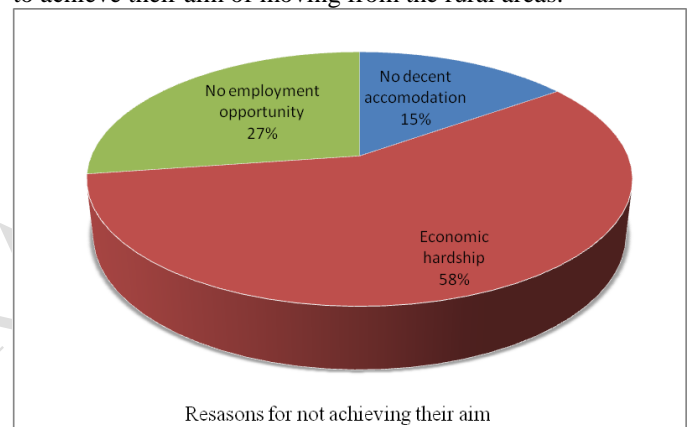


Figure 3: Reasons why Migrants have not achieved their aim

Amongst the 33 Respondents who said that they have not been able to achieve their aim of migrating into the urban areas, 58% representing 19 said the reason why they have not achieved their aim is because of the economic crises they find themselves in when relocated to the city. 27% said they have not achieved their aim because there are no employment opportunities available in the urban areas as well, and 15% said they have not achieved their aim because there are no decent accommodations available in the city.

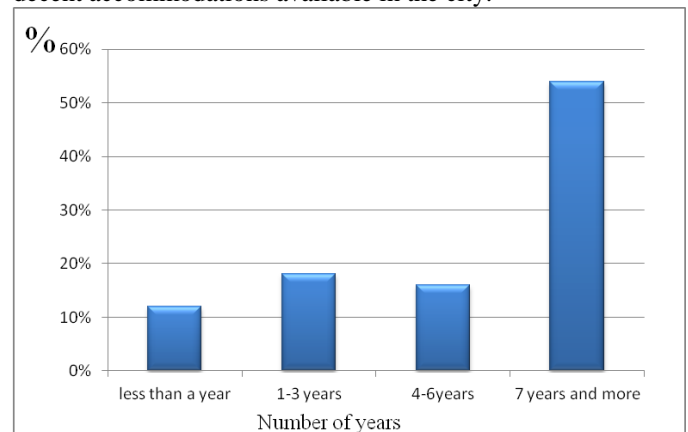


Figure 5: Number of years spent in the city

Table 2 and Figure 5 display the number of years

Migrants have lived in the City. From the table, 54%, representing 27 Respondents said they have lived in the city for seven (7) years or more. 18%, representing 9 Respondents have been in the City for 1-3 years, 16% have been in the study area for 4-6 years and 12% of the Respondents have lived in the study area for less than a year. This means that most Migrants in the study area have lived in the area for a longer period of time (7 years or more).

A. THE EXTENT AT WHICH MIGRANTS ARE ABLE TO MEET THEIR NEEDS

The objective of this section is to know how in migrants are able to meet their needs as they migrate to the urban areas.

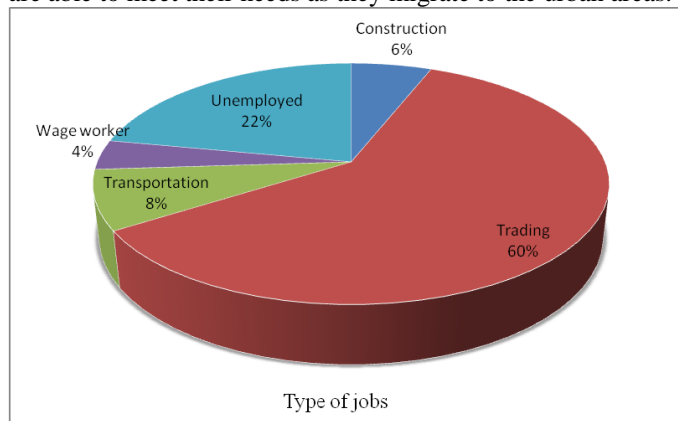


Figure 6: Occupation of Migrants

Sixty percent (60%), representing 30 Respondents are into trading, 22% of the Respondents are not employed, 8% are into Transportation, 6% are into construction work and 4% are wage workers.

Agboblshie is a trading community and so it is not of a surprise that most of the populace are traders, however the level of unemployment in the area is very serious. This explains the reason why 66% of the Respondents said they have not been able to achieve their aim of migrating into the city. Most of these migrants moved from their places of origin for economic reasons, but appears that even in the cities they encounter economic hardships because of unemployment and poverty.

From the study, 58%, representing 29 of Respondents are unable to save and 42%, representing 21 Respondents are not able to save. The inability of most of Respondents to save could be as a result of many factors or reasons.

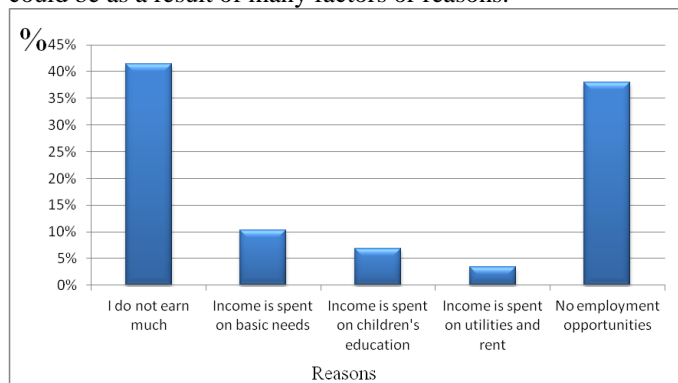


Figure 6: Reasons for Migrants' inability to save
Fort-one percent (41%) of the Respondents are not able to

save because they do not earn much income. 38% of the Respondents said they are unable to save because they are unemployed, 10% said their income is spent on their basic needs hence their inability to save. 7% said they are not able to save because their income is spent on their children's education and 3% said they spend their income on utilities and rent, that is why they are not able to save.

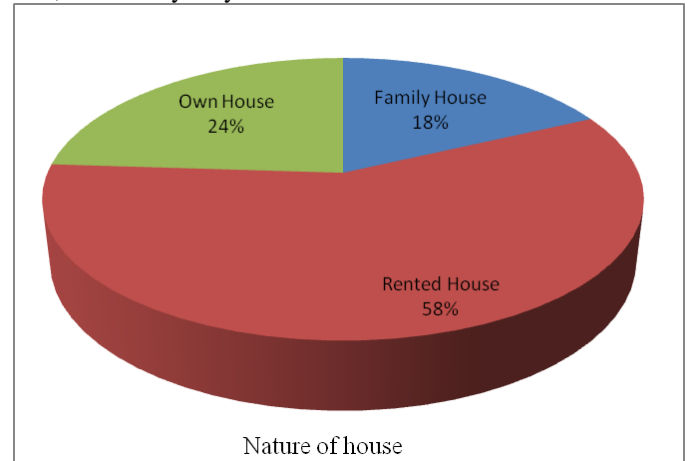


Figure 7: Nature of Migrants' House

58%, representing 29 Respondents live in rented houses, 24% representing 12 Respondents live in their own houses and 18%, representing 9 Respondents dwell in family houses. This means that most Migrants in the study area dwell in rented houses.

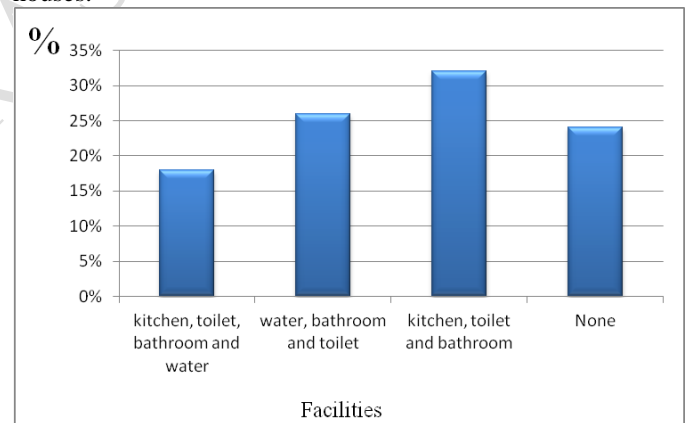


Figure 8: Types of facilities in Migrants' house

From figure 8, 9 Respondents, representing 18% said the types of facilities that exist in their house are kitchen, bathroom and toilet and water. 13 representing 26% said they have water, bathroom and toilet but they do not have water and kitchen in their houses. 16 representing 32% of the Respondents said they have kitchen and toilet and bathroom, but they do not have access to water, and 12 of the Respondents said they do not have any of these facilities in their houses.

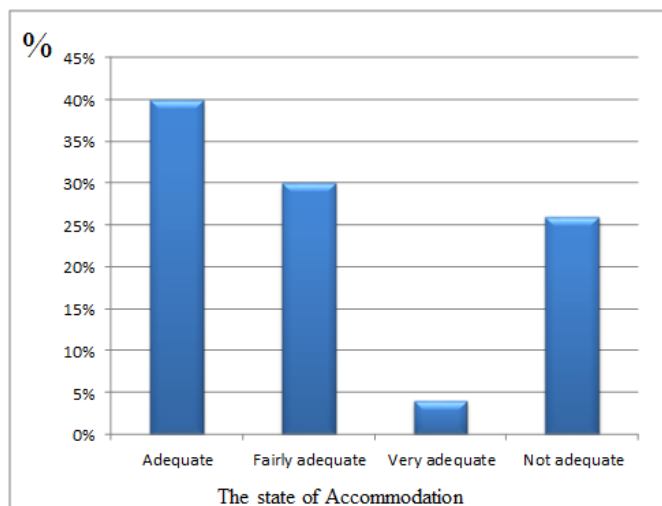


Figure 9: The state of Migrants' accommodation

Figure 9 show that 40%, denoting 20 of the Respondents find their accommodation adequate. 30%, representing 15 find their accommodation fairly adequate, 26% find their accommodation not adequate and 4% find their accommodation very adequate.

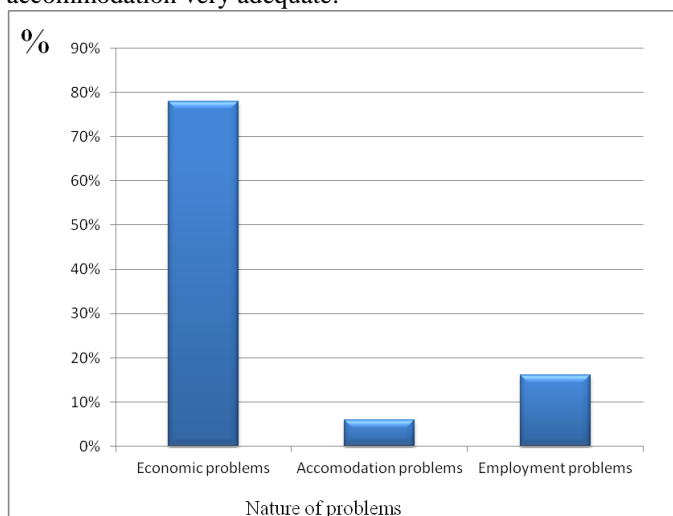


Figure 10: The problems Migrants encounter in city

From figure 10, 78% of the Respondents, representing 39 said the main problem they have encountered since they relocated to the urban area is economic problem. 16%, representing 8 Respondents said they are experiencing employment problems since they came to the city, and 6% making 3 Respondents said they are facing accommodation problems.

This signify that even though the people who fall within the economic active group migrate to the cities because of economic reasons, most of them experience the same problem even after moving to the city, and the effects of this problem is that most of them are likely to enter into prostitution, armed robbery and other social vices just to get money, and this goes a long way to affect other urban dwellers.

V. POLICY IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

A. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- ✓ From the study 82% of the sample size fell within the age range 15-59, therefore it is those who fall within the economic active group who are involved in Rural-Urban migration. Government policy and interventions by NGOs, Civil societies and development partners policies should be geared towards the economic active population.
- ✓ Fifty-eight percent (58%) of the Respondents were females because the study area is a trading community and 42% were males. It means that policy towards migrant in the study area should focus on young female to achieve its intended purpose.
- ✓ According to the study 38% of the respondents have Junior High School or Middle School Leaving Certificate and 10% have never been to school or had no form of formal education at all. Any policy to migrants from the north to Agbobloshie should incorporate adult education/non formal education plus skill training.
- ✓ The study revealed that 42% of the Respondents are self-employed, hence most of the migrants in the study area are more likely to afford their basic needs; however 22% of the Respondents are unemployed.
- ✓ From the study conducted, 44% of the Respondents are married and 12% are divorced, meaning that there is a likely possibility of parents being able to take care of the needs of their children and the entire household members.
- ✓ The study indicated that 68% of the Respondents were Christians, 28% were Muslims and 4% of the Respondents were Traditionalists.
- ✓ Also 74% of the Respondents in the study area migrated from the rural areas, whereas 26% of them migrated from urban areas. This implies that most people who move to the cities are from the rural parts of the country.
- ✓ The study revealed that 68% of the Respondents migrated to the city because of economic reasons, 22% migrated as a result of social reasons and 4% migrated because of harsh climate and natural disasters, indicating that most of the Migrants migrate to the urban areas because of economic hardships in the rural areas.
- ✓ From the study, 66% of the Respondents have not been able to achieve their aim for migrating into the city mainly as a result of the economic crises they find themselves in the city, and 34% have been able to achieve their aim for migrating into the city.
- ✓ The study showed that 54% of the Migrants in the study area have lived in the area for a period of 7 years or more.
- ✓ Also 60% of the Respondents are into trading, 22% are not employed, 8% are into Transportation, 6% of the Respondents are into construction work and 4% are wage workers.
- ✓ The study demonstrated that 58% of Respondents are unable to save and 42% are able to save. The inability of most of Respondents to save is because they do not earn much income.
- ✓ Also from the study, 58% of the Respondents live in rented houses, 24% live in their own houses and 18%

live in family houses; the facilities in most of the houses include kitchen, bathroom and toilet, but there are no potable water in most of the houses. However 40% of the Respondents find their accommodation adequate and 26% find theirs as inadequate.

- ✓ The study revealed that the living conditions of 64% of the Respondents have not been improved primarily because they are not able to earn much in order to send some remittances home to their families, however the conditions of 36% of the Respondents has improved mainly because they are able to provide their basic needs.
- ✓ The study showed that 65% of the Respondents have 1-3 children, 35% have 4-7 children and none of Respondents have more than 8 children. 81% of the Respondents are able to send their children to school and 19% are not able to send their children to school mainly because they are not of school going age.
- ✓ Also 60% of the Respondents think they have advantage over their counterparts in the rural areas, mainly because they earn much in the city as compared to those in the rural areas; however 40% said their counterparts in the rural areas have advantage over them mainly because they do not earn much in the city.
- ✓ The study finally showed that 78% of the Respondents are experiencing economic problems since they relocated to the city. 16% of the Respondents are experiencing employment problems and 6% are facing accommodation problems, meaning that migration does not necessarily reduce poverty.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings, the following recommendations are made:

- ✓ There is a need for the government of Ghana to address multiples of issues concerning migration in Ghana. To be able to curb rural-urban migration, the government must create employment opportunities to reduce mobility of labor and promote agriculture and farming in order to avoid poverty among people in the rural areas.
- ✓ Also the government should strengthen the GYEDA and the NABCO Schemes in order to engage most of the youth in the rural areas, since this would help reduce the rate at which the youth migrate to the urban areas.
- ✓ There is the need to sensitize the youth in rural areas regarding the effects of rural urban migration and how they can develop themselves by undertaking and controlling their own socio-economic development in order overcome poverty and inequality in the rural areas.
- ✓ There should be provision of credit facilities in rural areas to enable easy accessibility of finance; these Credit Facilities would be able to give the people small loans with low interest rates in order to encourage the creation of more industries in the rural areas to reduce mobility.

C. CONCLUSION

This study has discussed the various reasons why Migrants leave the rural areas, the extent at which they are

able to meet their needs and the constraints of these Migrants. Most Migrants in the study area migrate from the rural areas because of poverty and unemployment, however these Migrants encounter the same problem or even worse in the urban areas, and this is because migration does not necessarily reduce poverty, but rather increases inequality and poverty. These have various policy implications for the country and the world at large.

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