

POST-MIGRATION OUTCOMES AND THE DECISION TO RETURN: PROCESSES AND CONSEQUENCE ON DEVELOPMENT

Abstract

Who and why return and its impact on development have received less attention in African migration literature. Therefore this paper examines migration and return decisions in the Ghanaian context, especially, since the introduction of government programmes in 2001 to encourage the return of skilled migrants who have the capacity to contribute their quota to the development agenda of Ghana. Structured questionnaires were used to gather information on the migration trajectories of 120 return migrants. This was followed by in-depth-interviews which primarily sought in-depth understanding on the decision making processes. The findings indicate that these migrants were motivated to return for two main reasons, namely, economic and social reasons. The economic reasons include availability of job opportunities in Ghana, availability of investment opportunities in Ghana and loss of job abroad. The social reasons include, decision to join family, feeling home sick and difficulty in integrating abroad. The paper concludes that pre-migration intentions may not always march with real migration outcomes because a lot of obstacles or opportunities may compel the migrants to adjust their initial plan. The migrant may decide to explore better opportunities, may move on to new goals or may return to the point of departure with the same plan. The paper recommends a developmental policy that will include needs assessment measure for categories of returnees based on their intentions for migrating and coming home.

Key words: Return migration, voluntary and involuntary return, Ghana, Motivation

INTRODUCTION

According to The United Nations report on migration and development,

Migration is complex because it is a process, not a single event, and because it can be repeated several times over the lifetime of an individual...migration may vary in character according to the individuals who move and whether, or how, the State controls such movement (United Nations 2006, 23).

Similarly, international migration is a complex global issue which affects every country in the world. As noted by Ghosh (2000, 4) and elsewhere, 'international migration is essentially a multidimensional phenomenon [because] it defies a unisectoral approach'. The magnitude of population movement on a global scale is increasing rapidly. The number of migrants who live in a country other than the one in which they were born has more than doubled from 191 million in 2005 (International Organisation for Migration 2005; United Nations 2006) to 232 million in 2013 (OECD and UNESCO 2013).

The occurrence of mass migration, including both regular and irregular movements, coupled with the growing complexity of migration systems led Lidgard (1992, 12) to argue that 'current immigration theories do little to explain the life span of these movements or predict future migrations'. It is thus not surprising when other researchers, such as Ghosh (2000), suggest that we need a new comprehensive, coherent, and internationally harmonized regime to manage international migration and in this situation, return migration.

In most cases, return migration of international migrants from Africa is explained in the context of the potential flows to reverse previous patterns of 'brain drain' into a 'brain gain' necessary for fulfilling the development aspirations of African countries (Gibson and McKenzie 2011; Teye et al. 2014). In Ghana, only a handful of researchers have, however, dealt with certain

aspects of return migration. Some have assessed the effect of long distance migration on return and development in the countries of origin (Anarfi et al. 2005; Asare 2012), while others have also examined the extent to which the return migration process contributes to the development of the home country as well as the networks (example, Anarfi et al. 2010; Grant 2009) and challenges associated with return migration (Kyei 2010; Setrana and Tonah 2014; Taylor 2009). Among these limited number of studies, there is also yet few studies (example Wong 2013) on exploring the post-migration outcomes and return decisions for development.

Therefore, this paper contributes to the knowledge on return migration by unravelling in-depth understanding of the return decision and analysing comparatively the migration and return decisions for development. First, the paper provides a theoretical and empirical discussion on why migrants return. This is followed by a presentation of the research methods, study population and their characteristics and the final part identifies and analyses the motives for return. This paper sums up with a conclusion and policy recommendations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON RETURN MIGRATION

The process of return migration is usually conceptualized under four main theoretical perspectives. The review will focus on selected theories of migration and particularly the Neoclassical (NE) and New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) which are the theoretical frameworks that will be used to analyse the drivers of return migration.

The term ‘transnationalism’, which was first used in international relations studies to explain the activities and influence of transnational actors such as multi-national corporations

and international NGOs, was borrowed into migration studies in the late 1980s to highlight the dynamics and maintenance of regular migration linkages between sending and receiving countries and to the back-and-forth movement across borders (Cassarino, 2004). The literature on transnational migration is traced to Nina Schiller et al (1992). It is a conceptual approach that explains the double or hybrid identities and cross-border activities of migrants (Cassarino, 2004). This behaviour, which was probably not part of early forms of migration, characterises modern patterns of movements. However, this theory is inappropriate because, it endorses circular than return migration. It views migrants as individuals who may not return definitely to their country of origin or to their parents' birthplace and therefore does not explain factors for their return.

Structural theories emphasize the importance of the home country's socioeconomic and political context as important factors that affect the ability of returning migrants to utilize the skills and capital they acquired abroad (Diatta and Mbow, 1999; Thomas- Hope, 1999). Structural theories do not consider the decision to return to be related to a successful or failed migration experience, but rather focus on the ability of return migrants to be productive after arriving. They emphasize the "reality" of the home economy (Cassarino, 2004) and stress the importance of local contextual factors, for example, family and organisation networks. This theory was not extensively employed because it pays little attention to how migration experience factors, particularly at the destination country influence migration flows.

The neoclassical perspective has been used to explain return migration processes, in general, and those of skilled migrants, in particular (Borjas, 1989). According to the neoclassical migration theory, the migration process is motivated by wage differentials between origin and destination countries (Massey *et al.*, 1998). The attraction to higher wages in destination countries causes migrants to extend the length of their stay abroad in an effort to maximize their

wages. Within this framework, return migration is seen as a consequence of failure (Borjas, 1989). In other words, assuming that there are no changes in wages at the origin or destination countries, migrants only return to their places of origin if they fail to derive the expected benefits of higher earnings abroad (Constant and Massey, 2002; Cassarino, 2004). A few studies provide evidence on neoclassical explanations of the causes and consequences of return migration. Cohen and Haberfeld (2001), for example, find that although returning migrants had a lower predicted probability of success in the US labour market than migrants with similar schooling levels who remained, returning migrants had higher levels of schooling than migrants who did not return. However, Reagan and Olsen (2000) find no skill bias in their analysis of the composition of returning migrants from the US. Similarly, Colton (1993) describes some Yemeni return migrants from Yemen as “failed” because they were not able to work or save while abroad. Among returning African immigrants, anecdotal evidence suggests that some returning migrants may have had very little success while living abroad. For instance, Carling (2004) identifies a group of returning Cape Verdean migrants he refers to as “empty-handed returnees” who returned looking no better off than they were before they migrated..

In view of the limitations of the above theories, I relied heavily on the NE and NELM theoretical frameworks. The New Economics of Labour Migration theory (NELM) conceptualizes migration as part of a defined plan conceived by migrants before their departure from their countries of origin (Galor and Stark, 1990; Stark, 1991). The original plan involves the eventual re-migration to their home countries after accumulating resources abroad. Consequently, potential returning migrants are highly motivated to gain additional skills and increase their savings while abroad, since these resources are expected to make them more productive in their countries of origin after they return (Cassarino, 2004). In terms of

employment outcomes, the NELM is likely to predict a greater probability of employment among returning migrants so far as they may have acquired more skills and capital while living abroad. Increasingly, recent studies are showing some support for the NELM theory in their analyses of the socioeconomic outcomes of returning emigrants. For example, among African countries there is some evidence pointing to a greater level of entrepreneurship among returning migrants that may be associated with savings accumulated abroad (Ammassari, 2004). Alberts and Hazen report that the Tanzanian students in the US believed that obtaining a degree from a university in the US would significantly improve their job prospects after they return home (Alberts and Hazen, 2005). Also, Vreyer et al. (2009) identified that education among Western African French Countries (WAEMU) migrants who return from the Organisation of Economic Co-operation of Development (OECD) countries is higher and therefore increases their participation in the private and public sectors (Vreyer et al., 2009).

Based on these theoretical frameworks, I examine the factors that inform migrants' decision to return to Ghana from developed countries.

REASONS FOR RETURN MIGRATION

Reasons for returning to the home country are motivated by several factors; these include individual, economic, political and social factors (King, 2000). The literature identifies the economic factors as both pull and push factors. Examples of the pull factors are higher wages, economic development, while the push factors are redundancy or an economic downturn in the country to which migrants had emigrated and investments back home (ibid). The social factors also have two dimensions, push and pull mechanisms. The Push factors include difficulties integrating in the host country, racism, loss of job opportunities, and death of spouse in the host

country. On the other hand, the push factors for returning may be influenced by the privilege for one to enjoy an improved status upon return, perhaps, through business ventures, donations to community projects, or simply the building of a luxurious new house (King, 2000; Gmelch, 1980).

Another causal factor is personal or family reasons, most of which involve kinship and social ties pulling the migrant back to the home area. King (2000) explains four life-stages that could influence the desire to return home: single emigrants may return to find a spouse; migrants who emigrated with young children or who had children whilst abroad may return for their offspring to be educated in the “home” country and its culture; adult migrants might feel obliged to return to look after elderly or sick parents; and migrants may return when they reach retirement. These four life-stages identified by King are also found in other studies in Ghana by Anarfi et al. (2005); Setrana and Tonah (2014). In their findings they also mentioned that Ghanaian returnees come home either to take care of the elderly or during retirement. Other studies by Dankyi (2013) also confirm the fact that Ghanaian emigrants though prefer to raise their children in Ghana, also would like their offspring to gain a migrant status abroad where infrastructure is perceived to be better. The challenge with all these studies is that migration and return decisions have not been explored together in detail to find out the outcomes of these decisions– hence the focus of this paper.

Finally there are political causes. These range from forced expulsion to incentives for voluntary return. Many receiving countries have instituted restrictive policies that are preventing or resulting in a more cumbersome situation for families to reunite, change jobs, receive social protection as well as enjoy certain citizenship benefits (King, 2000; Anarfi et al 2005; Tonah, 2007).

METHODS AND DATA

Ghana, like most African countries, has no universal registration of returnees on which to base a random sample. However, Anarfi (2003) found that returnees largely mirrored national demographics overall and thus an effort was made in this study to find a balanced sample with regard to age and sex. Seventy-eight percent of the respondents are between the ages of 30 and 54, with some younger and older returnees. A little less than half of the respondents are females (about 38%). A representative ethnic mix was a more difficult task because of the diverse groups as well as the absence of records on ethnicity of emigrants or returnees. The study also improved on the quality of work by purposively selecting four sites; namely, Accra and Kumasi Metropolitan Areas and Dormaa/Berekum and New Juaben Municipal Areas. The international migration literature (see Anarfi et al., 2000; Taylor, 2009) cite these locations as the established migration flow regions in Ghana.

The study used the snowball technique in selecting its respondents, which has advantages and setbacks. In order to have as much diverse responses as possible, key informants with in-depth knowledge of the survey areas were recruited to assist the researcher to identify returnees. In the first round of the survey, 14 returnees were selected. Through chain referrals by the 14 respondents in the first wave and personal contacts, the researcher finally achieved a sample size of 120.

The study recruited 120 respondents to participate in the survey. The survey asked questions relating to the migrants' socio-economic circumstances before and after return. The survey instrument was pre-tested to help establish stability, consistency and content validity of the questionnaire. It was self administered and the advantage was that all questions which were

relevant to respondents were answered. At the end of the structured questionnaires, respondents were asked to give their consent by providing their contact details for further in-depth interviews. Twenty-five of such respondents were selected based on their sex, age and mode of return. The qualitative information was a follow-up on the structured questionnaires and focused primarily on post-return experiences.

PROFILE OF STUDY POPULATION

Most of the respondents were within their productive ages with an average age of 42.40 years with males dominating (63%). The educational level of return migrants is generally high with 61% having either university or diploma certificate. Out of the total of 120 respondents, 54% either furthered their education or earned some kind of knowledge or skills abroad. Respondents were found in all sectors of the Ghanaian labour market with majority (23%) of the skilled returnees working in the educational sector as lecturers, researchers and high school teachers. Other skilled returnees were involved in banking, administration, sales/marketing and health. This is attributed to the high unemployment situation in the country and the fact that recruitment of skilled personnel appears limited to the teaching and telecommunication sectors as well as some non-governmental organisations (Anarfi and Jagare 2005). Most of the low or unskilled returnees are engaged in trading/businesses (29%) including, mechanics, drivers, traders, masons, hairdressers and tailors. Eight percent (8%) are farmers while 5% have no income earning activity- it must be stressed that included in the latter category was a student and a housewife (refer to Table 1) . More than half (69%) of the respondents were married, while the

rest were single (22%), separated or divorced (8%) and widowed (1%). About 87.5% returned voluntarily while 10.8% were involuntary¹ return migrants.

Table 1: Socio-economic and demographic characteristics of return migrants surveyed

Characteristics	Frequencies	Percentages
Gender		
Male	75	62
Female	45	38
Total	120	100
Age(in years)		
15-24	2	2
25-34	29	24
35-44	44	36
45-54	30	30
55-64	11	9
65+	4	3
Total	120	100
Education Level		
Tertiary	75	62
Secondary	40	33
Primary	3	3
No Formal Education	2	2
Total	120	100
Employment Status		
Education	28	23
Banking	5	4
Health	6	5
Administration	9	7
Managerial	6	5
Communication/ICT	6	5
Trading/Business	35	29
Farming	10	9
Security	2	2
Consultancies	7	6
No income Earning Activity	6	5
Total	120	100

Sample Size: 120

¹

involuntary returnees are not mentioned in the discussion because the number is too small for statistical analysis.

Source: Survey Questionnaire, August, 2011- January, 2012

MIGRATION HISTORY OF THE RETURN MIGRANTS

The Return migrants had stayed in different countries in Europe and North America with majority coming from the United Kingdom (41%). This could be due to the common language and similar educational systems of Ghana and Britain, her former colonial master. The average time spent abroad was about 9years with a minimum of one year and a maximum of forty-four years.

Table 2: Migration Trajectories of the return migrants surveyed

Migration Trajectories	Frequencies	Percentages
Country of Destination		
UK	49	41
Italy	23	19
USA	14	12
Germany	8	7
The Netherlands	7	6
Israel	4	3
Others	15	12
Total	120	100
Number of Years Abroad		
1-5years	51	43
6-10years	36	30
11-15years	17	14
16+years	16	13
Total	120	100
Mode of Return		
Voluntary	107	89
Involuntary	13	11
Total	120	100
Number of Years on Return		
1-5years	70	58

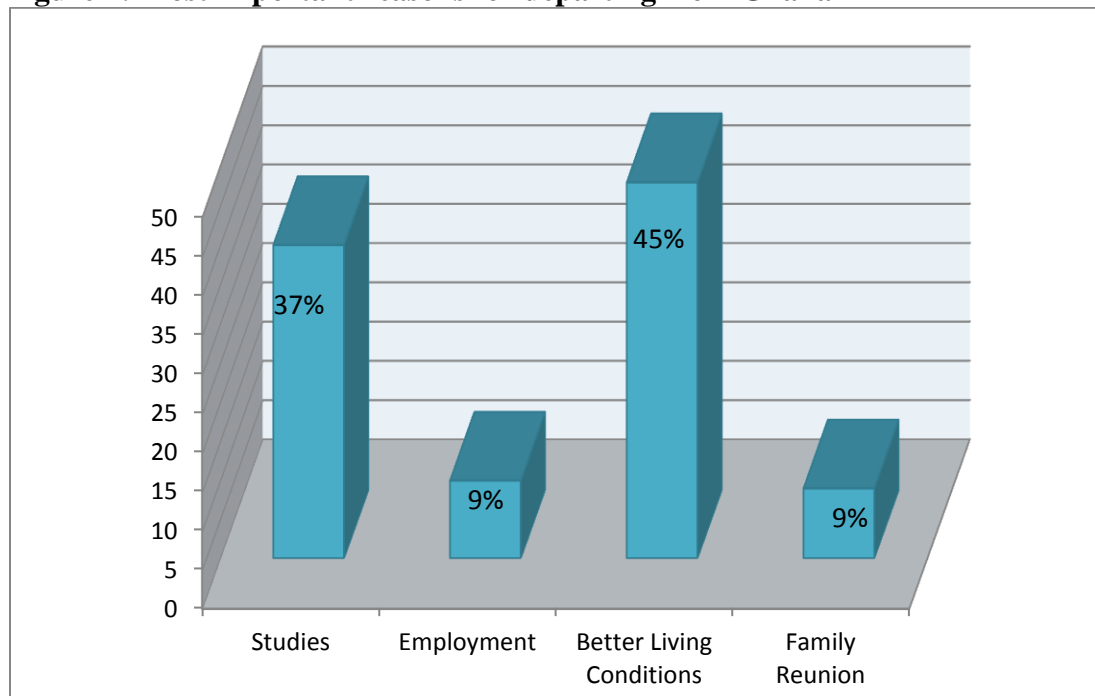
6-10years	24	20
11-15years	15	13
16+years	11	9
Total	120	100

Sample Size: 120

Source: Survey Questionnaire, August, 2011- January, 2012

Figure 1 demonstrates the crucial reasons why return migrants migrated out of Ghana. The most important reason that motivated respondents to migrate out of Ghana was to find better living conditions (45%), followed by studies (38%), employment (9%) and family reunion (9%). The historical analysis of Ghanaian international migration shows that migration has been a means by which Ghanaians improve their human capital and better their living conditions (see Anarfi et al., 2003; Awumbila et al., 2008). This finding is also evident among these respondents, since many of them had aims to secure better living conditions, better income or pursue further education abroad. Only 9% travelled with the aim of joining their families abroad.

Figure 1: Most important reasons for departing from Ghana



Source: Survey Questionnaire, August, 2011- January, 2012

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Motivation For Return

This segment of the study outlines the reasons why migrants returned, as well as, the association between these reasons and some characteristics of the return migrants. It also finds out if there is a relationship between initial migration intentions and return motives. Although, the focus is on voluntary returnees, insights gained on involuntary returnees during the survey are also analysed.

Respondents were asked to choose the most important reasons that motivated their decision to return. Following the responses, the study identified two main reasons that motivated migrants' decision to return to their home country. Namely, economic and social motives (refer to Table 3).

Table 3: Most important reasons for returning home

Motivation for Return	Frequencies	Percentages
Economic Motives		
Availability of Job Opportunities in Ghana	33	31
Availability of Investment Opportunities in Ghana	18	17
Lack of Job abroad	17	16
Social Motives		
Decision to join the Family	17	16
Feeling Home Sick	14	13
Difficulty with integrating abroad	8	7
Overall Total	107	100

Sample Size: 107 (89%) out of 120

Source: Survey Questionnaire, August, 2011- January, 2012

The most important economic reason chosen by respondents was the availability of job opportunities in Ghana (31%), followed by the availability of investment opportunities in Ghana (17%) and the loss of job abroad (16%). On the social motives precipitating their return, 16% of respondents attributed it to a “decision to join the family” in Ghana, 13% felt “homesick” while 7% had “difficulty in integrating abroad”. During in-depth interviews, respondents could not hide their emotional feelings. They expressed them through statements such as; “you need to remember your home whenever you travel out of your home” and “Home is home” (Fieldwork, August, 2011- January, 2012). Indeed this finding confirms Manuh’s (2001) description of “home is home”, as a place of “quietness and rest”. At least, some return migrants find it helpful to be with their families back home, than to spend the rest of their lives in a lonely host country.

Respondents, during interviews, elaborated more on their reasons for choosing the social motives. Nancy, the wife of Edmond, who though had completed her Master's degree programme returned for the following reasons:

I came because my husband wanted me to come home with him. I thought about it. As a married woman I couldn't just abandon my children and husband like that. Who would take care of them? Had it not been that, I would have stayed in Germany. After all, the system is far, far better than Ghana's; our system is bad. I wonder! Anytime I visited, the differences were so obvious. Ghanaians don't follow or obey any laws (Nancy, interview in Accra, 9th November 2011).

For migrants whose children were already in Ghana, they explained that they were not sure if their children were receiving the best of care from caregivers. At the same time, those who had their children abroad found it tiring and expensive raising them abroad. The desire to spend more time with the nuclear family is another crucial expectation of some respondents. Spending more time with the family is central to ensuring a happy marriage and a unified family life. Such expectation of return is particularly ignited by the isolation that characterises migrants in the western world. It was observed that, the western environment, with its secluding and secular lifestyle, is viewed as not to be conducive, especially for return migrants' children's upbringing (Fieldwork, August, 2011- January, 2012). The respondents argued that though the host countries offered better facilities towards their children's academic development than Ghana, the moral development of their children could, however, not be guaranteed in such an environment. The concern for the moral development of children is seen as a form of social investment. Alternatively, other return migrants with children were of the view that training children in Ghana was much more preferable than their country of destination because they wanted their children to imbibe Ghanaian values.

Older return migrants said they returned home because they were more likely to receive better care from their extended families in Ghana than if they were to live abroad. Additionally, the respondents who were relatively old found solace in the reception and comfort that the elderly receive within the Ghanaian system as a greater incentive. Some respondents expected quality time and care from extended families because of their age. This is to be expected if contact with kinsmen were frequent and contribution towards festivities were regular whilst abroad. Particularly in the matrilineal lineage, taking care of aged uncles and aunties by nieces and nephews is expected from diligent family members. One of the respondents echoed these sentiments during the interviews;

If for nothing at all, in Ghana, when I am here, my grandchildren and nephews are around ... I can send them on errands anytime, ask them to fetch me water and cook for me, at least. Who will do this for me in Italy? I can only get help when I am admitted to the elderly home ('Teacher Burger', interview in Kumasi, 23rd January 2013).

Others also decided to return to inherit leadership positions in their families and communities. For example, in Dormaa, one of the study sites, there is a suburb called 'Burger Anane' Street. The researcher's interview with the return migrant revealed that the area was named after him. The respondent's real name is "Anane", but he says the title "Burger" was given to him by the community. This was because of the following reasons: first, he had returned from abroad; second, he returned with "flashy goods" [so much wealth] and, third, he had bought and settled on a large portion of land. Burger Anane was an accountant who left Ghana to Germany in 1990, with the aim of finding better living conditions for himself, his children and wife. Having earned enough money, he purchased this vast land and the street named after him. In 2005, he returned to Ghana to start and manage his own businesses.

On the other hand, some respondents indicated that they returned to Ghana because they were divorced. In order to avoid the shame from the Ghanaian Diaspora community, some decided to return to Ghana where they could begin a new life. Ghanaians abroad adhere to some cultural practices and behaviours such as the stigma of divorce (Manuh, 1998).

The desire among these return migrants to tap into the opportunities in Ghana should not be surprising, given the recent increasing economic growth, the relative political stability of the country and the recent discovery of oil (Awumbila et al., 2011). Alternatively, the decision to return due to homesickness and family reasons can be explained by the Ghanaian adage “remember your home when you travel out of home”. The adage signifies the obligation and the strong attachment demanded of Ghanaian migrants whenever they are abroad. On the contrary, the loss of job abroad could be linked to the recent global economic crises that have led to the closure of several industries in some parts of Europe and North America. This finding supports existing studies (for example, Anarfi et al 2003; Bohning, 1979; King, 2000) that argue that an unfavourable economic condition in the host country is one of the driving forces of return migration. Again, migration history has revealed that Ghanaian migrants have returned home in volumes in the past due to economic crises abroad. However, the difference identified in this study is that, at this point in time, more of the returnees are motivated based on attractive conditions at home instead of negative conditions in the host countries. Apart from this, return migrants’ difficulties in integrating abroad may also be due to the strict immigration policies in host countries that have restricted activities of migrants (Tonah, 2007).

The other factors that influenced the return journey are political in nature, ranging from forced expulsion to incentives for voluntary return. All the respondents who ticked political causes were deportees. There were 13 (11%) of such respondents.

EXPLORING THE POSSIBLE LINKS BETWEEN THE “REASONS FOR MIGRATION” AND “REASONS FOR RETURN”

This segment outlines the most important reasons for departure from home and compares these reasons with the essential motives for return.

In exploring the reasons for “departing from” and “returning to” Ghana, the data shows that 26 out of the 33 (about 79%) migrants who migrated in pursuit of further studies, returned because of job opportunities in Ghana. These return migrants decided on their return at a time when they knew they could compete for the limited available jobs. Indeed, with reference to the background characteristics of these respondents, it could be said that their higher educational qualification and productive ages give them a chance in the labour market of the home country. Some respondents during the in-depth interviews said their frequent contact with ‘home’ made them discover that their classmates in Ghana had ‘made it big’ (secured lucrative jobs) with similar or even lower qualifications and therefore felt the need to return after the acquisition of similar qualifications. According to one interviewee;

...I knew my classmates were having better jobs, so I thought with my certificate I was assured of a better and dignified job (Akyaa, interview in Accra, 14th December 2011).

For respondents who returned home due to investment opportunities in Ghana, it was observed that their main motive which influenced their trip abroad was to obtain “better living conditions”. 11 out of 18 returnees (78%) migrated for this reason. The finding supports the NELM view that following the original plans, return migrants would find it prudent to return home after accumulating resources abroad that could help them continue to achieve their “better lives”.

For respondents who returned home due to loss of job abroad, two main motives influenced their trip overseas. These were, first, for want of better living conditions (6 out of 17, 35%); and second, to pursue further studies (6 out of 17, 35%). Some respondents expanded the description of loss of job to include temporary occupation, collapse of personal business or loss of job. In-depth interviews with some of the respondents indicated that menial jobs were usually not permanent while return migrants from Europe, especially, those from Italy and the UK, said they were laid off their jobs. This analysis supports the pull analysis that recent global economic crises have led to the closure of several industries in some parts of Europe. So, return is encouraged if these conditions turn against migrants in the destination country. This finding does not support the proposition by the NE that return migrants would only return when they experience loss of job abroad and have failed to achieve their travel intentions of having better life or employment. Instead, it is more likely that respondents weighed the cost and benefit of return and realised that with their level of education or accumulated capital, they could fare better in Ghana than abroad. One of the interviewees noted:

I am a certified accountant with a Master's degree in Accounting and Finance. I have worked for many years in British companies. Meanwhile, I could not achieve my dream of becoming the top most director of any of these companies ... So I had to start my own business ... it was good, until the world economic crunch [he was a property investor]. During this time, I kept asking myself again and again, is it worth living on someone's land without a lucrative job? (Acquah, interview in Accra, 11th December 2011).

Next are the social motives for returning. Among the respondents who returned home to join their families, the primary reason why they migrated out of Ghana was to better their lives (13 out of 17 returnees, 77%). For respondents who returned home due to homesickness, their reasons for migrating cut across the reasons: pursuing further studies (3 out of 14, 23%), employment (3 out of 14, 23%), better living conditions (3 out of 14, 23%) and family reunion (4

out of 14, 41%). In the case of respondents who came home because of difficulties in integrating abroad, 4 out of 8, (representing 50%) travelled out of Ghana with the aim of furthering their education. The aim of many of the respondents who returned with social motives, were motivated by economic reasons, prior to migration.

Indeed the returnees had a well-defined plan prior to migration which was influenced more by a social than an economic motive. Alternatively it also explains the strong attachment Ghanaians have to the family, be it extended or nuclear.

The migration experiences that occurred during migration processes led to changes in original migration intention. The finding confirms du Toit's (1990) statement that migration is a process instead of an act or static event. So, pre-migration intentions may not always march with real migration outcomes because a lot of obstacles or opportunities may compel the migrants to adjust their initial plan. For this reason, the migrant may decide to explore better opportunities, may move on to new goals or may return to the point of departure with the same plan. The dynamic nature of migration experiences moves the argument beyond the 'calculated strategy' or 'set targets' based on economic factors as proposed by the New Economic Labour Migration.

For many of the deported returnees, two main motives influenced their trip overseas. These were to further their studies abroad (4 out of 13, 31%) and desire to better living conditions (5 out of 13, 39%). Only one respondent took the risk of reaching Italy via the desert; all the other respondents travelled with the right documents. They include three months tourist visas, student visas and working visas. Respondents said even after their documents had expired, and they found life difficult or were not able to obtain renewals, they kept on with their normal duties until they were arrested. In this instance, the goal of the migration could not be achieved because of circumstances beyond the control of the migrants.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, respondents were motivated to return for two main reasons, namely, economic and social reasons. The economic reasons include availability of job opportunities in Ghana, availability of investment opportunities in Ghana and loss of job abroad. The social reasons include, decision to join family, feeling home sick and difficulty in integrating abroad. Most of the respondents were motivated to return to Ghana because of the positive attractions such as improved economy and stable political situation. Again, the return decision is a complex and an overlapping situation which could hardly be categorised solely into economic or social. The paper concludes that pre-migration intentions may not always march with real migration outcomes because a lot of obstacles or opportunities may compel the migrants to adjust their initial plan. The migrant may decide to explore better opportunities, may move on to new goals or may return to the point of departure with the same plan.

In the view of the NELM and NE propositions, these voluntary returnees made cost and benefit analysis of both home and host country situation before taking a decision on whether to return home or not. However, the paper has shown that the decision to return is not only based on available incomes and accumulated skills or capital, but also on social reasons such as the family situation, old age and care. These social reasons could find explanation within the structural approach on return migration which stipulates that the family and home structures are influential in the return decision making. In other words, to these Ghanaian returnees, non-economic factors equally have a part to play in the return decision just as economic factors do. Secondly, based on the return migrant's accumulated resources, be it skill or capital, employment outcomes increases, thereby likely to have adverse effect on the national economy. On the other hand, the

social reasons, although are prestigious, may pose challenges to these returnees, as they attempt to satisfy their own expectations as well as the high expectations from the community and family.

Furthermore, the positive attractions such as job and investment opportunities in Ghana were dominant among these respondents in the return decision. This finding provides evidence that suggests that migrants are mostly returning for better opportunities in the home country and not only due to economic crisis or negative influences in the host countries as suggested in the literature (Anarfi et al. 2003; Awumbila et al. 2008, 2011; King 2000). Indeed, the structural approach on return explains that migrants who return home are attracted by the home country political or economic conditions favourable for them to utilize their acquired resources. By this, they invest their financial resources into either businesses or set up enterprises which has ripple effect on the economy of Ghana. Some of these returnees from the profile are also working in the formal sector and thereby transferring their knowledge acquired abroad for the improvement of some sectors of the economy.

The study, therefore, recommends that policy makers and the government - should develop a collaborative effort to institutionalise return programmes and policies. Governments of the country of residence of these migrants could be approached to support these endeavours. A comprehensive and collaborative migration policy is required since Ghana lacks a well-defined and articulated migration policy or a holistic policy on return migration although the International Organisation for Migration, various international agencies, development partners and researchers have addressed specific issues relating to this. The policy should include for example a need assessment measure for categories of returnees based on their intentions for coming home and how their skills and resources could be channelled for development

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