



UNIVERSITY OF HOHENHEIM

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**EFFECTS OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON RURAL LIVELIHOOD-
A CASE STUDY FROM AFIGYA SEKYERE DISTRICT OF THE ASHANTI REGION OF
GHANA**

BY

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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in two farming communities in the Afigya Sekyere District of the Ashanti Region of Ghana. In all 60 households and their respective migrants were surveyed. Random sampling was used to select the households. The purpose of the research was to find out the effects of rural-urban migration on rural livelihood by analysing the extent to which migrants maintain some connection with the family and kins in their home communities. These ties involve visiting, exchanging money, goods and useful information between migrants and those at home. The research also sought to find out if the migrants' decision to migrate had been influenced by any person be it friends, nuclear or family member. In addressing this issue the study took into account all the forms and pattern of migration, taking into consideration the various migration directions, economic and information exchanges between migrants and their households and the effects of migration on rural human capital. This will serve as guide to policy makers and NGOs to implement programmes aim at reducing rural poverty and improving living conditions of rural people.

In general, Three main types of migration were identified in the area and these include rural-rural migration, rural-urban migration and international migration. The dominant type was rural-urban migration which constituted about 85% and majority of the rural-urban migrants preferred living in cities than in small towns simply because opportunities in towns were considered to be far more greater. For instance, opportunities to be self employed as "shoe maker" or as a street hawker. Majority of the migrants were of the view that rural poverty as a result of the nature of agriculture was the major force behind out-migration. In an attempt to escape one or more of these problems, some household members used migration as a livelihood strategy. Only few who were better off migrated out of the rural area to enjoy urban life. It was evident from the study that employment or economic related reasons mostly underlay the decision to migrate to a particular place accounting for about 60%. Other reasons for out-migration were education, joining families and spouses, enjoyment of urban social amenities and avoidance of family problems.

Rural-urban migration was affected by age, sex and education. Migration concentrated in the younger ages of 18-30 for both males and females, and forms about 54% of the total migrants and the reason was that they are economically active segment of the population. The older segment did not actively participate in migration because of their unwillingness to break

family ties. Rural-urban migration was prominent among males than in females because of the fear of prostitution among female migrants and inability of females to adjust to harsh urban conditions during the early stages of migration. Education hastens contacts in cities for people to migrate easily and the more educated are compelled to move to cities for jobs that merit their qualification. Incoming migrants also received support from friends and relatives already in the urban centres in a form of food, housing and job finding.

The study showed that rural-urban migration had positive effects on rural households' health and education but deprived them of their useful labour. Migrants provided health support to the sick relative in a form of paying for hospital bills, drugs and other health related expenses and was seen by many households as a positive contribution of rural-urban migration in improving and saving life of family members. Another area of improving rural human capital was migrants' contribution towards improvement of rural households' children education in supporting them with educational needs and school fees. Migration resulted in loss of labour supply and this invariably deprives the family of the needed manpower in family production. Other households responded to labour shortage by using less labour intensive methods of production like machinery.

The types of economic activities identified between migrants and their households were remittances, partnership farming and investment. The remittances were in a form of money or durable goods like sound system, television sets, video cassettes etc. Remittances were for the upkeep and general welfare of the family which constituted an important means of improving rural households. Through remittances and other forms of contribution both in cash and in kind, migrants have positively supported the development and welfare of both nuclear and extended families. It is worth noting that through such remittances many households are able to cope with whatever situation or difficulties they encounter.

Migrants exchanged information about marketing, production and other issues they considered important with their households. Rural households were able to improve their production and marketing of their products as a result of the information received from migrants. The acquisition of new ideas as well as skills definitely made for the progress and development not only of the migrant's own family but also his community at large. It exerts a positive impact on individual life as well as on the social structure of the rural community. It

is therefore not surprising from the findings that the households saw the acquisition of new skills and new ideas as an important contribution of migrants to their development.