

Reintegration Experiences of Internal Return Migrants in the Wa Municipality, Ghana

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Abstract. In Ghana, studies on returnees' reintegration are mostly limited to international return migrants from western countries. Re-integration of internal return migrants has not attracted much research. This paper explores the reintegration experiences of internal return migrants resident in the Wa Municipality. Using the mixed method approach, the study surveyed 150 return migrants and interviewed 10 key informants. The results indicated that the main challenges associated with reintegration of returnees were frequent family demands, unemployment and low incomes. To mitigate these problems, some of the returnees had to relocate from their previous places of abode while others engaged in illegal artisanal mining activities. A chi-square statistic test revealed a significant association between returnees' challenges of reintegration and their length of stay, age, level of education and marital status. Consequently, most of the returnees expressed their desire to re-migrate perhaps due to the difficulties they faced in their reintegration process. The study recommends that relevant stakeholders such as the district assemblies, NGOs and religious bodies should develop programmes to assist returnees with skills training and start-up capital/loans to enable them reintegrate into their communities to avoid unemployment.

Keywords: *Reintegration, Return migrants, Southern Ghana, Wa Municipality*

1. Introduction

The three northern regions of Ghana have the highest number of rural out-migrants in the country but has less than 20.0% of the national population since 1970 (GSS, 2008, 2012; 2014). This phenomenon is due to north-south migration which has been generally attributed to low socio-economic development and unfavourable physical characteristics in the north compared to the south (Van der Geest, 2011; Awumbila, Owusu & Teye, 2014; Tanle, 2014). From the perspective of Oppong (1967), Nabila (1975), Awumbila (2007) and Tanle (2014), the consequence of uneven development between the north and south is the widespread impoverishment in the north and the relative buoyant economy in the south.

This was partly due to the British colonial administration which initiated compulsory labour recruitment from the northern territories of the then Gold Coast (now northern Ghana) to satisfy the need for cheap labour in the mining, timber, cocoa and oil palm plantation areas in the south (Nabila, 1985; Abur-sufian, 1994; Anarfi et al., 2003; Van der Geest, 2010). That is, there was a deliberate policy that designated northern Ghana as a labour reservoir for the southern mining areas such as Obuasi, Konongo, Prestea and Tarkwa. Thus, chiefs and other opinion leaders were mandated by the then district commissioners to recruit able-bodied men as labourers for the mines, cocoa farms, the army and construction works in the forest and coastal areas (Benneh, 1976; Lentz, 2006; Tanle, 2010).

This was followed by voluntary seasonal migration of mainly young people from the north to the south during the long dry season in the north (Anarfi, Kwankye, Ababio & Tiemoko, 2003; Tanle, 2010). Other factors which influenced north-south migration are population pressure on the land leading to less land per farmer, land ownership problems, inadequate agricultural resources like credit for small farmer holders, underdeveloped rural industry, absence of social amenities, increased deprivation and lack of entitlements in rural areas (GSS, 2004; Anarfi & Kwankye, 2005; Abdul-Korah, 2006).

The three northern savannah regions are among the poorest regions in the country (GSS, 2008, 2014). They continue to lag behind other regions in terms of development especially in education, health and infrastructure. While the state of health and medical facilities leaves much to be desired in the face of hunger, malnutrition and diseases that are prevalent, the area is also characterized by low level of school enrolment and high school dropout resulting in high rate of illiteracy and early marriages (GSS, 2004, 2012). In the Upper West region in particular, where this study was conducted, about 83% is rural with limited livelihood options (Akyeampong, Fobih & Koomson, 1999).

It is noteworthy, that northern Ghana had attracted, and continues to attract, development interventions by government, foreign development partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (GSS, 2012). Some of the major notable development interventions in the past included the Upper Region Development Project (URADEP), the Farmers Company Service Ltd (FASCOM), the Tono and Veia Irrigation Projects, the Northern Region Rural Integrated Projects (NORRIP), and the Upper West Development Project (UWADEP) among others. The latest major interventions by government are the Savannah Accelerated

Development Authority (SADA) and the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP). With the emergence of SADA, many have been optimistic that the inclusive and diverse programmes under it were sufficient to surmount many decades of neglect of northern Ghana, which led to the recurring out-migration of the youth to southern Ghana.

North-south migration in Ghana has gained increasing academic research interest (Hashim, 2007; Kwankye, Anarfi, Tagoe & Castaldo, 2009; Van der Geest & Dietz, 2010; Wouterse, 2010) particularly on the patterns, determinants and implications for both areas of origin and destination (Awumbila et al., 2008; Yendaw et al., 2016). Apart from these studies, there are a number of other studies (both past and present) on north-south migration which have examined the migration trend of children and young females from the northern parts of Ghana to the southern cities, particularly Kumasi, Accra, Tema and Secondi-Takoradi to engage in menial jobs such as the '*kaya yei*' business (the term '*kaya yei*' (Singular '*Kaya yo*') refers to women who engage in carrying wares for a fee (Yendaw et al., 2016).

However, in many of these studies, issues concerning permanent return migration and returnees' reintegration experiences are mostly glossed over despite the fact that most internal migration flows in Ghana are largely transient which usually culminate in return migration. This has resulted in the dearth of literature on the theoretical and empirical bases for understanding internal return migration and reintegration processes of permanent return migrants in the country. The few studies which have attempted to interrogate the issue of returnees' reintegration in Ghana are mainly centred on international return migrants (Black & Gent, 2004; Kyei, 2013; Mensah, 2012; Yendaw, 2013; IOM, 2015). Meanwhile, an understanding of the dynamics of permanent voluntary return migration and returnees' reintegration is an important topic that requires empirical research for its policy relevance to the development of northern Ghana. One of such policies is the desire of various successive governments to reverse the north-south migration trend.

To fill this gap of knowledge therefore, this study assessed the reintegration experiences of permanent return migrants resident in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to provide answers to the following research questions: What are the demographic characteristics of those who return? What are the motivations for permanent

return? What are the challenges involved in reintegration? What strategies do returnees use to mitigate their reintegration difficulties? Do some permanent returnees intend to re-migrate in future? In addressing these research gaps, the study was guided by the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of permanent return migrants and challenges associated with their reintegration in the study area. This hypothesis is based on the fact that the degree of success in returnees' reintegration according to Chirum (2011) largely depends on their socio-cultural and demographic characteristics.

2. Conceptual Issues

According to Goldscheider (1971) migration is defined as any permanent change in residence; it involves the detachment from the organization of activities at one place and the movement of the total round of activities to another. Internal out migration is defined as a temporary, semi-permanent or permanent change of residence to a place outside the native region but within the country. Permanent return migration, which is the main focus of this study refers to the act of a person returning to his or her country or community of origin after having been a migrant in another country or community and who intends to stay in his/her own country or community for at least one year (UN Statistics Division, 1998; King, 2000).

International Organization for Migration-IOM (2015) defines reintegration as the re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a person into a group or process, for example, of a migrant into the society of his or her country/community of origin or habitual residence. Reintegration according to Anarfi and Jagare (2005) and Cassarino (2008) is a process that enables the returnee to participate again in the social, cultural, economic and political life of his or her community of origin. In this study, the social aspects of returnees' reintegration include participation in organisations, relationships and acceptance with family and friends (such as respect within the household), access to information sources, and societal acceptance. Cultural reintegration deals with returnees' participation in religious or cultural events, and participation in the norms and values of the society. As regards economic reintegration, it refers to the occupational and employment status of the returnees and their ability to afford a certain standard of living. It also includes entrepreneurial activities and local investments opportunities. Finally, political reintegration of return

migrants refers to their participation in the political process of their country or community of origin upon return (Cassarino, 2004).

Taft (1979) and Ammassari (2004) also explained returnees' reintegration as the original learning of migrants to adapt to the situations upon return to their original communities of childhood. For Taft (1979), the term reintegration often refers to emotional stability and freedom from internal conflicts and tensions thus, freedom from psychoneuroses (Taft, 1979). Gmelch (1980) and Kyei (2013) however, observed that returnees' reintegration is a process which involves a number steps and livelihood choices known as reintegration strategies. These strategies according to Cassarino (2008) are the full range of activities which return migrants adopt to ensure successful reintegration. Reintegration in this view is multidimensional, encompassing many different elements such as cultural orientation, social networks, self-identification, and access to rights, institutions and the labour market (Ammassari, 2004, Cassarino, 2008).

2.1 Reasons for Return Migration

According to Hirvonen and Lilleør (2015), return migration usually take place after a single long migration spell. That is, the term return migration refers to a permanent or semi-permanent return to the place of origin (King, 1986 cited in Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015). Return migration is therefore distinct from other forms of migration such as seasonal, temporary, or circular migration, which are pigeonholed in the literature by systematic and regular movements between place of origin and destination (Skeldon, 2012; Constant, Nottmeyer, & Zimmermann, 2013).

Theoretically, in the Harris-Todaro framework, a return migrant is viewed as an "unsuccessful" migrant; someone who failed to find a formal job in an urban area (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015). That is, for Harris and Todaro, the magnitude of return migration is a reflection of fluctuating conditions of the urban labour market. Contrary to this view, the literature on return migration has examined other non-economic variables as determinants for return. According to Wang and Fan (2006) and Dustman (2003), the economic "success-failure" dichotomy is insufficient for understanding return migration, and thus needs to be understood in a larger institutional context of the family.

Following from this line of inquiry, King (2000) and Piotrowski and Tong (2010) observed that the decision to migrate back home involves a mixture of professional and personal motivations at both places of origin and destination. For

instance, Hirvonen and Lilleør (2015) noted in their study of internal return migrants in rural Tanzania that social and family factors remain important for some potential returnees. In a similar study by Piotrowski and Tong (2010) in rural Thailand it was discovered that factors such as marriage, parenthood, and obligations to ageing parents strongly motivate migrants to return from destinations. According to Schoder-Butterfill (2004) and Piotrowski (2009), in many developing countries, prospective migrants sometimes face the difficult choice of travelling to some distant locale to take advantage of better economic opportunities mainly because of lack of formal childcare options, and the inability of parents to afford to take children to another destination. In such instances, migrating parents are often obliged to leave their children with extended family members which poses a challenge, since the separation of parents and their young children can be detrimental to the parent-child relationship (Dreby, 2007), and may cause migrant parents to return home (Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). Other factors are related to migrants' stage in the lifecycle, as age brings changing needs and preferences (Knodel et al., 2007; Baldock, 2000). They may return to get married, to care for elderly parents, or to take on particular family related responsibilities (Smith, 2000).

There is also a substantial body of literature on international return migration. One of the earliest contributions in this literature is King (1978) that offers a framework for examining return migration. A series of in-depth interviews carried out with physicians further shed light on the phenomenon. According to Ganguly (2003), family-related reasons predominated, especially going home to care for aged parents followed by issues of discrimination at the destination. Similarly, a study by Iredale, Rozario and Guo (2003) on return migration amongst skilled migrants in four Asian countries found that individual decisions to return home are made in response to a careful weighing of personal factors, career-related prospects and the economic, political, and environmental climate.

Furthermore, Tiemoko's (2004) study of African migrants also indicates more emphasis on family factors. Carrying out in-depth interviews on migrants in London and Paris, Tiemoko (2004) found that family was one of the most important factors influencing return. At the same time, returnees cited family-related problems as one of the most common difficulties they encountered, and the expectation of such problems delayed the return of some migrants (Tiemoko, 2004). Some migration scholars have also examined the relationship between

integration and assimilation and return (Hoffmann-Nowotny, 1973; Esser, 1980). Hoffmann-Nowotny (1973) and Esser (1980) have also claimed that return migration occurred because migrants were unable to integrate or assimilate into the host society.

Thomas-Hope's (1999) study of migrants returning to Jamaica, for example, noted that the decision to return involved a combination of two sets of factors: the personal and domestic circumstances of the individual and his or her family and perceived conditions in the place of origin such as comfort level, cost of living, opportunities for investment, political stability and attitudes towards returning migrants. Existing empirical evidence on Ghanaian return migrants also shows that social and family-related reasons are of particular importance (Yendaw, 2013). Strong family ties, the wish to re-join family and friends, homesickness, problems of adjustment at the destination, and the desire to enjoy an improved social status back home are significant reasons for return migration (Ammassari & Black, 2001 cited in Yendaw, 2013). The above evidence from the international return migration literature though not on internal return migrants confirm some of the findings obtained by Piotrowski and Tong (2010) and Hirvonen & Lilleør (2015) who studied internal return migrants in rural Thailand and Tanzania respectively.

2.2 Challenges Involved in Reintegration

The existing literature provides paradigms of the reintegration problems returnees face once they are back to their communities of origin. In a study by Chirum (2011) and Gmelch (1980), it was discovered that the need to establish new friends, a slow pace of life, lack of social services, and lack of employment opportunities were the major deterrents to full integration for the majority of returnees to Western Ireland. Eikaas (1979) also observed that fear of social disgrace by those who had not done well at their various destinations, lack of job availability, changed personalities, and climatic conditions were the main barriers to reintegration among returnees to the Caribbean. A similar study by Levine (1982) also found that low standard of living, housing shortages, a long wait for jobs, and family conflicts were the major re-integration problems for most Southeast Asian returnees.

Another investigation by Marmora and Gurrieri (1994) of Rio Della Plat, indicates that individual attributes are among the major factors related to post-return resettlement challenges for most returnees. For example, in Namibia, Preston (1994) found that the inability of the majority of returnees to speak fluent

English was the major deterrent to obtaining education and jobs. Many studies have also highlighted the sense of disappointment, isolation and feelings of alienation and not-belonging experienced by return migrants as major challenges returnees encounter (Constable 1999; Long & Oxfeld, 2004; Christou 2006). Cerase (1974) has also investigated the reintegration experiences of Italian migrants from the US in the 1960s and 1970s and found that the longer the time spent away, the more difficult the reintegration in Italy and those who spent less than ten years in the US faced fewer difficulties.

A study by McGrath (1991) reveals that return migrants remained a separate and distinct community in the literature of migration. McGrath (1991) added that most returnees faced a range of different reintegration problems including: the poor economic situation and lack of employment opportunities; the unfriendly attitude of locals; and the inefficiency and slow pace of business activities. McGrath (1991) further observed that more than a quarter of returnees definitely intended to re-emigrate due to the problems faced. Zachariah and Rajan (2011) also indicated that indebtedness and unfavourable financial status of return migrants are some of the main challenges in the reintegration process of returnees. The Financial situation after return and debt problems and access to money are obviously of crucial importance for setting up or revamping a life back after return. In another study, Rajan and Narayana (2010) in Kerala, found unemployment as a key disincentive for returnees' reintegration indicating that the state was ill prepared to receive returnees. As a result, many returnees who could not withstand these difficulties according to Rajan and Narayana (2010) were compelled to re-migrate.

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Return Migration and Reintegration

Return migration and reintegration as a sub-process of migration has been theorised by various approaches and schools of thought which offered contrasting sets of propositions stemming from but not limited to the Neo-classical Economics (NE), the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM), Structuralism, Transnationalism and Social Network Theories. According to the neo-classical perspective, migration is motivated by wage differentials between origin and destination areas, in which case migrants generally move from areas with suppress wages to those with higher wages (Borjas, 1989). Using this framework, Thomas (2008) and Hirvonen and Lilleør (2015) argue that migrants will only return home if they fail to derive the expected benefit of higher earnings at the destination. For the

NE approach, return migration cannot but under conditions of failed migration projects. Meanwhile, the question is, does it mean migrants who achieve their migration objectives do not return home?

In contrast to the NE, the NELM Theory considers return migration as part of a defined plan conceived by migrants before their departure from their places of origin (Thomas, 2008; Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). Adherents of this theory argue that the original plan of migrants includes designing an eventual return to their areas of origin after accumulating sufficient resources. Therefore, most migrants leave home with the intention of acquiring skills, savings, and other resources that would be useful to them upon their return home (Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). The time at the destination is often considered a temporary enterprise, and most migrants are said to return home soon after they have achieved their goals (Ammassari, 2004). With this assumption, it is thus expected that migrants who return to their origin communities are assumed to be only success returnees (who have accumulated the needed resources for their smooth reintegration). But the question is does this mean that return migration does not subsume failure returnees or does it mean that migrants who return to their communities of origin is mainly due to economic factors?

Structural theories on return migration, on the other hand, stress the importance of the social, economic, and political conditions at the origin of migrants, not only as major factors in the decision to return, but also as components affecting the ability of return migrants to make use of the skills and resources that they have acquired at the destination (Diatla & Mbow, 1999; Thomas-Hope, 1999). Unlike the other two theories above, structural theories of return migration do not consider the success of the migration experience as a key factor in the decision to return; instead they focus on the productivity of return migrants after arriving home. Structural theorists argue that returnees may not be able to reintegrate and consequently may decide to leave again if the 'gap' between their own norms and values and those at home is too large (Cassarino, 2004). Alternatively, returnees may also respond to expectations at home by spending their savings on consumption or unproductive investments which can affect their reintegration process negatively (Thomas, 2008).

Transnationalism compared to the NE, NELM and Structural approaches, provides a better framework for explaining return and reintegration. It sees reintegration as a process of re-adaptation which may not entail the abandonment of the identities migrants acquire while at the destination. While structuralists do not

envisage the maintenance of social ties between origin and destination during the migration period and after return, these links are at the heart of transnationalist theory (Cassarino, 2004). Migration and return are depicted in a positive way, and return is seen as part, but not as the end of the migration experience. According to this approach, migrants maintain regular contact with the origin community, for example through visits and transfers. At the same time they are also embedded in social networks at the destination, constituting links which are kept after returning to the origin society. These links allow for a better preparation of the return and a smooth reintegration after return.

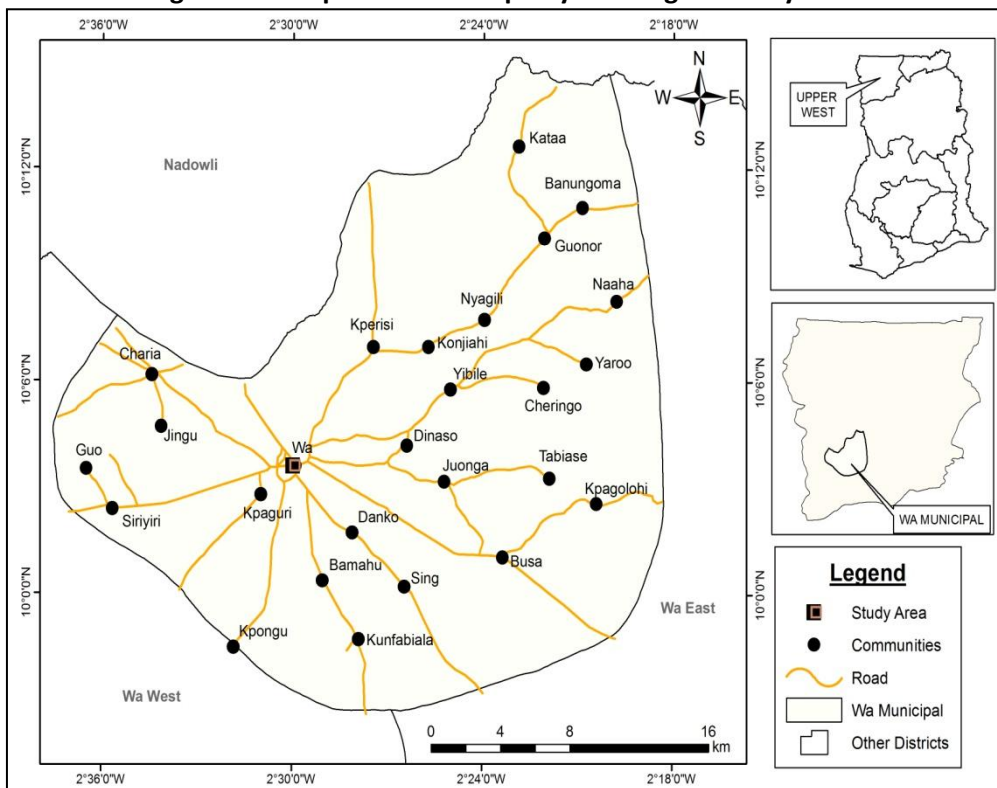
More importantly, there is less critical attention on any evidence supporting the challenges faced by returnees, particularly internal return migrants; hence, the focus of this study. Potter (2005) and Preston (1993) argue that upon return from a chosen destination, the migrant needs to be reintegrated into the original society as it will be unrealistic to assume that the social and economic milieu to which migrants returned, had not changed since they left their communities. However, N'Laoire (2007) observed that several factors determine the extent to which migrants would be estranged upon their return home. These include the age of the migrant prior to leaving home, the length of time spent at the destination, the nature of contacts with family members and friends back home among others.

There is no doubt that all the theories discussed above have contributed to shedding some light on the phenomenon of return migration and returnees' reintegration, but the structural and transnationalism theories guided the current study. This is because most of the issues discussed in their level of analyses relate to the objectives of this study. For example, structural theorists recognized the importance of returnees' reintegration and thus argue that most returnees may not be able to reintegrate and may decide to re-emigrate back if the 'gulf' between their own norms or values and those at home are too large to cope with (Cassarino, 2004). This implies that returnees face challenges in trying to settle into their communities. The Neo-classical Economics and NELM Theories on the other hand were less considered in the study because they mainly concentrated in explaining the causes of return migration. In addition, most of their basic assumptions dwelled on economic related factors without assessing the other socio-cultural factors which underpin the dynamics involved in return migration and returnees' reintegration.

3. Profile of Study Area

Established in 1988, the Wa municipality is found in the Upper West Region of Ghana and is located between latitudes $1^{\circ}40'N$ and $2^{\circ}45'N$ and longitudes $9^{\circ}32'W$ and $10^{\circ}20'W$ (Figure 1). Like many areas in northern Ghana, the climatic condition of Wa Municipality is characterized by long, windy and hot dry season followed by short and stormy wet season (GSS, 2012). The vegetation of Wa Municipality is the Guinea Savannah grassland and the soils are generally poor. Consequently, the area experiences high unpredictable rainfall patterns imposing drought conditions with consequences on crop yield and food security.

Figure 1: A Map of Wa Municipality showing the study area



Source: GIS Unit, Department of Geography and Regional Planning, UCC (2014)

The total population of the Wa Municipality is 107,214 and forms 15.3 percent of the population of Upper West Region (GSS, 2014). Of this number, 49.4 percent are males while 50.6 percent are females with a sex ratio of 97.7 percent. The major ethnic group in the municipality, the Wala, operates a clan-based system

with clear division of labour along gender lines (Songsore & Denkabe, 1995). Furthermore, although formal education is widespread in the Upper West Region, school enrolment is generally low compared with other regions in the country (Blench, 2005). There are limited socio-economic opportunities in the Municipality compared to the southern part of the country while infrastructural facilities are generally poor, especially roads.

Thus, the unfavourable physical and socio-economic conditions in the Municipality account for out-migration of young people from the Wa Municipality to urban areas in southern Ghana in search of greener pastures. The Wa Municipality was therefore selected for this research mainly because figures for out-migration according to the 2000 and 2010 Population and Housing Censuses indicated that five regions including the Upper West are relatively large migrants' sending areas to southern Ghana, in the sense that about a fourth of the population of these regions live in other regions. Similarly, Geest (2004) and GSS (2012) also described the Wa Municipality as a major migrant sending area in Ghana.

4. Data and Methods

The study adopted the mixed method approach to research which included both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Data for this study were purely gathered from primary sources using structured and unstructured interviews. This was supplemented with secondary literature obtained from the Wa Municipal Assembly records, Ghana Statistical Service reports (2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2014) and published articles which treated different aspects of the study. The target population for the study was voluntary permanent return migrants aged 18 years and above who had ever travelled to and stayed at any part of southern Ghana for at least five years and had returned to the Wa Municipality within the last five years prior to this survey. A five year period was chosen because it was felt that five years was long enough to capture the reintegration experiences of returnees since time plays a critical role in migrants' reintegration (Gmelch, 1980; Ghosh, 2000; N'Laoire, 2007).

A reconnaissance survey undertaken in the study area using the snowballing technique revealed a sampling frame of 240 internal return migrants who met the inclusion criteria for the study. Out of that figure, a sample size of 150 respondents was computed using Yamane's (1967) formula for sample size

determination in social research. In addition, 10 key informants comprising five non-migrants and five returnees of both sexes who had stayed longer in the south were selected and interviewed.

The respondents were selected using the snowballing, simple random and purposive sampling techniques. First, the snowball technique was used to identify the 240 respondents who met the criteria for the study. Afterwards, the simple random sampling technique (specifically the lottery method) was then used to select the sample size of 150 return migrants. For the qualitative aspect of the study, the purposive sampling technique was used to select the 10 key informants for in-depth interview. One major flaw for using the snowball sampling technique is that sampling bias cannot be ruled out.

Interview schedule and in-depth interview guide were the main instruments used to collect quantitative and qualitative data respectively. An interview schedule was used instead of a questionnaire because most return migrants in the Wa Municipality are predominantly illiterates (GSS, 2002, 2012, 2014). Both instruments were structured into five main modules. Module A consisted of the background characteristics of the respondents, module B discussed the motivation for their return migration while module C explored challenges associated with their reintegration. The fourth module (module D), interrogated strategies returnees use to overcome challenges of reintegration while the last module which is module E examined their future intentions to re-migration. The instruments were pre-tested at Nadowli, which had similar socio-demographic characteristics as the Wa Municipality.

All issues relating to ethics such as confidentiality, privacy, anonymity, and informed consent were strictly adhered to. The data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative analytic techniques. The qualitative data were first edited, transcribed and analyzed using content analysis based on common themes while the quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21. Figures, frequencies, percentages and tables were used to present the data.

5.0 Results and Discussions

5.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 indicates that more than one third (34.0%) of the respondents were aged between 20-29 years and over half (52.0%) were males. The study further showed that about 51.0 percent of the returnees had no formal education followed

by those who attained primary education (29.0%). The majority of the respondents were mostly married (76.0%) and a few of them were widowed (5.3%). In terms of religious affiliation, 53 percent of them were Christians followed by those who were Muslims (35.0%). Over one-third (34.7%) of them were traders which confirmed results of GSS (2012) that most inhabitants of the Wa Municipality were into trading. About a quarter of the respondents were unemployed while 56.0 percent of them resided at their last destinations between 5-9 years. The present evidence where majority of the returnees were young adult males goes to confirm GSS (2012) reports on internal migration where most north-south migrants were relatively youthful.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Socio-demographics	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Age</i>		
Less than 20	41	27.3
20-29	51	34.0
30-39	31	20.7
40-49	20	13.3
50+	7	4.7
Total	150	100.0
<i>Sex</i>		
Male	88	58.7
Female	62	41.3
Total	150	100.0
<i>Education</i>		
No education	76	50.7
Primary	43	28.7
JHS/ML	21	14.0
SHS/TECH/VOC	6	4.0
Tertiary	4	2.6
Total	150	100.0
<i>Marital status</i>		
Single	13	8.7
Married	114	76.0
Divorced/Separated	15	10.0
Widowed	8	5.3
Total	150	100.0
<i>Current occupation</i>		
Artisans	10	6.7
Farming	42	28.0
Trading	52	34.7

Socio-demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Unemployed	39	26.0
Student	2	1.3
Public/civil servants	5	3.3
Total	150	100.0
<i>Duration of stay at last destination</i>		
5-9	84	56.0
10-14	34	23.3
15-19	15	10.0
20-24	9	6.0
25-29	3	2.0
30 and above	4	2.7
Total	150	100.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

5.2 Reasons for Return Migration

The literature on return migration revealed that migrants' reasons for return migration could have either positive or negative implications on their reintegration (Gmelch, 1980; King, 1986, 2000). In that regard, this section of the study explores the underlying motivations for the return migration of the respondents. Table 2 shows most of the respondents returned because of family related considerations (32.1%) followed by joblessness and low income (24.9%). The current revelations where most of the respondents returned as a result of family related factors run contrary the basic assumptions of the success-failure dichotomy espoused by the neo-classical economics and the new economics of labour migration theories which overly emphasized economic motives as the main determinants for return migration (Dustman, 2003; Wang & Fan, 2006). The evidence however lends credence to what Piotrowski and Tong (2010) and Hirvonen and Lilleør, (2015) had found among internal return migrants where social and family related considerations strongly motivated migrants to return from destinations (such as marriage, parenthood, and obligations to ageing parents). This also emerged in the in-depth interviews as a 26 year old female indicated saying: "Look my return to Wa was due to family pressure especially from my parents. They keep worrying me about marriage saying that all my colleagues are settled and you are in Kumasi roaming about. My father even threatened that if I don't come home he will disown me as his first daughter and so I was compelled to come home to get married. Anyway, I have no regret I have four beautiful children now. In any case I will not advice friends to travel there because Kumasi is not easy

if you are not strong” [26 year female returnee from Kumasi]. The findings further confirm the family strategy perspective that the family unit plays a crucial role in the decision to migrate and return (King, 2000; Yendaw et al., 2016).

With respect to sex and reasons for return, whereas females were numerous among those respondents who returned because of family-related reasons (37.5%) and joblessness/ low income (28.8%), their male counterparts were dominant among those who returned because of accumulated savings (21.4%) and health related challenges (10.4%). Similarly, while females (23.1%) were most probable to return because of adjustment difficulties, males demonstrated the highest likelihood of returning home due to discrimination/marginalization at the destination (4.5%). The fact that more males than females returned because of health reasons could be because males engage in more risky behaviours than females (Weeks, 1999). The following excerpt from a 35 year old female returnee also attest to the fact that some returned due to joblessness and difficulties in adjusting at the destination: *“I returned home as a result of some problems I faced in Accra. In fact, it was difficult for me to get a job and accommodation, cost of living was generally high and nobody was ready to assist. As for Accra my brother it is everyone for himself and God for as all.* [35 years male return migrant from Accra]. The present evidence where more than a third of the females were motivated to return home because of family-related considerations could be due to their maternal, domestic and conjugal roles which sometimes oblige them to return home (Schoder-Butterfill, 2004; Piotrowski, 2009; Yendaw, 2013).

Table 2: Reasons for Return Migration by Sex (N=150)

Reasons for return	Sex of respondents		% of Total
	Male	Female	
Joblessness/low income	20.1	28.8	24.9
Adjustment difficulties	19.3	23.1	20.9
Family reasons	24.3	37.5	32.1
Accumulated savings	21.4	6.7	16.5
Health reasons	10.4	1.0	2.4
Discrimination/marginalization	4.5	2.9	3.2

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

5.3 Reintegration Challenges of Return Migrants

The analysis shows that 86.0 percent of the returnees were confronted

with reintegration difficulties upon return with only a few (14.0%) who said otherwise. Among the former group, Table 3 indicates that more than a quarter cited frequent family demands (27.0%) as their main reintegration difficulty followed by those who lamented over joblessness and low incomes (22.3%). It was also revealed that as high as 22.1 percent of them complained about frustrations which affected smooth reintegration. The fact that frequent family demands featured strongly as the main reintegration difficulty among the respondents buttressed the structuralists' perspective that migrants after return are most likely to face reintegration challenges when they respond to expectations at home by spending their savings on family consumptions. These findings are also in tandem with previous studies by McInnes et al. (1998), Long and Oxfeld (2004), Christou (2006), Chirum (2011) and Cassarino (2014) who noted that return migrants upon return voluntarily or involuntarily encounter family-related challenges in trying to reintegrate into their origin communities. Likewise, the fact that excessive family expectations remained the key challenge of the return migrants in the study area could be attributed to the driving force behind their return which in this case was family considerations.

Table 3: Reintegration Challenges of Return Migrants

Reintegration challenges	Frequency	Percentage
Frequent family demands	74	27.0
Lost traditions and family entitlements	34	12.7
Difficulty establishing networks	18	6.8
Slow business environment	24	9.1
Joblessness & low incomes	59	22.3
Frustrations	56	22.1

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

*Frequency exceeds 129 because of multiple responses

A male non-migrant key informant narrated some of the difficulties returnees face whenever they come home: *"You see, when they come back like that they have to start all over because they are not aware of a lot of things back home. But the most serious challenges returnees face include too much expectations from their family members and friends, loss of networks and also some cannot even remember some aspect of their traditions"* [32 years non-migrant male from Wa]. On the same issue, a 27 year old female returnee shared her story on reintegration as follows: *"My brother, if you are connected to the president of*

Ghana tell him that we are suffering and we need jobs. In Wa here, it is difficult to find any job to do apart from farming and even the farming itself you need some money and access to land. I am currently helping my mother to sell vegetables in the market which doesn't fetch us any good money because sometimes people don't buy much and remember the business is for my mother and not mine. But if I was in southern Ghana, at least in a day someone could ask me to help carry his/her luggage or help in any other small job which could earn me some money. In Wa, such jobs do not exist. Life in Wa is frustrating my brother, because nothing works for me but I am waiting to see what God has for me" [27-years female return migrant from Accra].

5.4 Socio-Demographic Characteristics by Challenges of Reintegration

This section of the study sought to verify whether returnees' socio-demographics (e.g. age, sex, education, marital status and length of stay) have any influence on their reintegration. Thus, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between returnees' socio-demographics and the type of reintegration challenges faced was tested using a chi-square test of independence since the variables were categorical. The results in Table 4 showed that while a significant association between returnees' age and joblessness/low incomes was found ($\chi^2=13.097$; $p=0.011$), no significant relationship was observed between age and the other reintegration challenges stated. That is, joblessness/low income was higher with increases in returnees' age and those who were young (≤ 20 -29 years) experienced more joblessness/low incomes (76.8%) compared to those who were older. This evidence is consistent with national demographics where unemployment and low incomes are higher among the youth in Ghana (GSS, 2012).

Table 4: Socio-Demographic Characteristic by Challenges of Reintegration

Variables	Re-adjustment problems					
	Family Demands	Loss of traditions entitlements	Difficult forming social networks	Slow business environment	Joblessness & low incomes	Frustrations
	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)	(%)
<i>Age</i>						
Less than 20	25.7	17.7	38.9	25.0	39.3	30.5
20-29	35.1	32.4	22.2	33.3	37.5	30.5
30-39	18.9	32.4	22.2	8.3	12.5	22.0
40-49	16.2	14.7	5.6	20.8	8.9	13.6
50+	4.1	2.9	11.1	12.5	1.8	3.4
χ^2	*3.251	*4.120	*4.306	*7.953	*13.097	*0.713
P-value	*0.517	*0.390	*0.366	*0.093	*0.011	*0.950
<i>Sex</i>						

Male	60.8	58.8	61.1	54.2	64.3	49.2
Female	39.2	41.2	38.9	45.8	35.7	50.9
χ^2	*0.509	*0.009	*0.076	*0.191	*1.536	*3.608
P-value	*0.476	*0.925	*0.783	*0.662	*0.215	*0.057
<i>Education</i>						
No education	55.4	52.9	38.9	75.0	53.6	55.9
Basic education	29.7	32.4	33.3	16.7	17.9	30.5
Secondary/Higher	14.9	14.7	27.8	8.3	28.6	13.6
χ^2	*1.930	*0.474	*1.629	*6.742	*10.409	*1.974
P-value	*0.381	*0.789	*0.443	*0.034	*0.005	*0.373
<i>Marital status</i>						
Unmarried	29.7	20.6	33.3	20.8	23.2	28.8
Married	70.3	79.4	66.7	79.2	76.8	71.2
χ^2	*2.256	*0.440	*0.815	*0.250	*0.134	*0.936
P-value	*0.013	*0.507	*0.367	*0.617	*0.714	*0.333
<i>Length of stay</i>						
5-9	50.0	61.8	55.6	29.2	69.6	52.5
10-14	29.7	20.6	16.7	33.3	19.6	28.8
15-19	20.3	17.7	27.8	37.5	10.7	18.6
χ^2	*1.809	*0.985	*1.692	*9.789	*8.839	*0.372
P-value	*0.405	*0.611	*0.429	*0.007	*0.012	*0.830

Source: Fieldwork, 2015. Note: Alpha level = ≤ 0.05

Similarly, the results revealed a significant relationship between returnees' educational level and slow business environment ($\chi^2=6.742$; $p=0.034$) and unemployment/low incomes ($\chi^2=10.409$; $p=0.005$). For example, whereas 75.0 percent of returnees with no formal education encountered more difficulties with the nature of the business environment in the study area, only 8.3 percent of those with secondary or higher education complained of the slow pace of business activities in the area. Additionally, while unemployment and low income was higher among returnees with no formal education (53.6%), only 17.9 percent of those with basic education and 28.6 percent of those with secondary/higher education experienced unemployment and low income as challenges of their reintegration. The above findings are in congruent with results of Ghana Statistical Service (2012) reports where unemployment and low income is very high among young people with no or little education.

Even though sex of the respondents indicated no significant relationship with the kind of reintegration problems stated, it was observed that male returnees experienced more reintegration challenges than their female counterparts. For instance, with respect to respondents who experienced frequent family demands, males encountered more family dependency than females. This evidence is consistent with the traditions of most Ghanaian societies where males are seen as breadwinners of most families (GSS, 2012). A strong relationship was also observed between returnees' marital status and family demands ($\chi^2= 2.256$; $p=0.013$). This was expected because married couples are more likely to experience high family demands compared

to unmarried people. The reason being that marriage is selective of responsible adults and society expects married people to be more responsible than singles.

The study generally showed that returnees who stayed for a shorter period (5-9 years) at their last destinations encountered more reintegration challenges compared to those who stayed longer (10 years and above). In particular, the chi-square test results revealed a strong association between length of stay at last destination and unemployment/low incomes ($\chi^2=8.839$; $p=0.012$) and slow business environment ($\chi^2= 9.789$; $p=0.007$) where shorter stay returnees experienced more unemployment/low incomes and faced more difficulties in doing business as compared to those who stayed longer at their destinations.

The findings of this study contradict results of previous studies by Cerase (1974), Gmelch (1980), King (2000) and Gosh (2000) who found more reintegration difficulties among migrants who resided longer at their last destinations. The main reason for the current evidence could be that perhaps migrants who stayed longer at their last destinations might have accumulated the needed economic resources for investment back home and are, therefore, less likely to encounter unemployment and low incomes. Moreover, those who stayed longer at their last destinations are more likely those who did not stay long to have weak social ties with family members back home and are less likely to yield to excessive family dependency.

5.5 Reintegration Strategies of Return Migrants

Table 5 highlights reintegration strategies internal return migrants in the Wa Municipality adopt to mitigate their reintegration difficulties. The analysis shows that most return migrants in the study area relocated from their previous places of abode (26.0%) to reduce excessive family demands while others were compelled to engage in illegal artisanal mining activities (19.0%) to meet basic needs. The study further reveals that about 15.0% of some returnees worked as casual labourers while others (14.0%) assisted in family businesses. In connection with the reintegration strategies of return migrants in the study area, two interviewees who were interviewed during an in-depth interview made the following sterling revelations: *“My brother, my main challenge now is too much family demands and how to make trusted friends. When you travel and return like this the family thinks you have made a lot of money and all their problems are always on you. Since I came, the pressure from my relatives is just unbearable and because of that I have moved away from my family house to rent elsewhere.*

Another problem is that you know when you are away from home for some years, you lose all your friends when you finally return and you have to start again. So what I do is that I attend all important social gatherings in my community in order to make friends and get along. For instance, I don't joke with Church activities, marriage and naming ceremonies and funerals. If you don't attend others funerals or naming ceremonies, nobody will come for yours'' [A 26-year female returnee from Accra].

Table 5: Reintegration Strategies of Return Migrants

Reintegration strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Relocation from previous residence	39	26.0
Attending social gatherings	10	6.6
Multiple livelihood activities	20	13.3
Casual labour	22	14.7
Petty trading	10	6.7
Illegal artisanal mining	28	18.7
Assisted in family business	21	14.0

Source: Fieldwork, 2015 *Frequency exceeds 129 because of multiple responses

The other interviewee intimated that: *"When I first arrived I had nothing to do because I could not save enough towards my return. Lucky on my side, I was introduced to a business man who gave me one of his mini-commercial buses to drive. So as I am talking to you now I'm a "Trotro" driver. Apart from that, I have made a small farm which I attend to every weekend. My brother, if you don't do more than one jobs you cannot survive in Wa"* [A 29-year old male from Kumasi]. The current quantitative and qualitative evidence confirm findings by Ammassari (2004), Anarfi and Jagare (2005) and Cassarino (2008) that most returnees reintegrate by engaging in various entrepreneurial activities and attending social gatherings in their communities to improve upon their status and build social networks.

5.6 Intentions to re-migrate

Intention to re-migrate is a common feature among some returned migrants. From the study, about two-thirds (62.0%) of them indicated they were not satisfied with their return and expressed their desire to re-emigrate in future. The current finding where a large percentage of the returnees reported their intentions to re-migrate in future could be due to the challenges associated with reintegration. This evidence goes to support what structural theorists observed about returnees' reintegration that return migrants may not be able to reintegrate

smoothly and may decide to re-migrate if the “gulf” between their own norms and values and those at home is too large to adjust to (Cassarino, 2004). In corroborating the returnees’ re-migration intentions, this was the observation made by a non-migrant key informant: *“Mostly, return migrants run back to southern Ghana when they face some difficulties in the cause of reintegration. You see they are used to money and modern lifestyles so they cannot stay here in Wa”* [55 years male non-migrant key informant].

6. Conclusion

This paper assessed challenges internal return migrants face in reintegrating into their communities of origin in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The study showed that nearly 60.0 percent of the returnees were males and were young (61.3%). This suggests that most internal return migrants in the study area are relatively young adult males whose human capital could be harnessed for the socio-economic development of the Wa Municipality and the region as a whole. The main determinant for their return was motivated by family-related factors (32.1%) which appeared to have had some negative implications on their reintegration. For instance, the majority of the returnees admitted that they faced serious challenges in reintegrating into their communities due to excessive family demands.

With the exception of sex, a chi-square test results revealed a significant relationship between returnees’ length of stay in southern Ghana, age, level of education and marital status vis-a-vis the kind of reintegration difficulties faced in the study area. In particular, returnees who had no formal education and were married and had stayed quite shorter at their destinations encountered more reintegration challenges compared to their counterparts who stayed longer at their last destinations. In order to overcome the challenges associated with reintegration, some returnees relocated away from their previous places of abode to reduce persistent dependency from family members. This suggests that the behaviour of families of returnees is critical for successful reintegration which validates the perspectives of the structural approach to return migration that the family organization and other contextual factors are necessary for a smooth reintegration of returnees (Thomas, 2008; Kyei, 2013). Thus, most of the returnees expressed their desire to re-migrate in future which perhaps might be due to the

challenges associated with their reintegration.

7. Policy recommendations

In the first place, families and friends of returnees should be educated by the Wa Municipal Assembly and other development partners on the negative implications of excessive demands on return migrants. Second, government and other relevant stakeholders involved in migration and development management should implement practical policy initiatives to assist return migrants to reintegrate successfully. For instance, returnees could be offered some skilled training and small loan facilities through Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC) to enable them establish economically to reduce unemployment. Third, return migrants could be educated to take advantage of the social policy interventions found in the Wa Municipality such as SADA and the National Youth Employment programme.

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