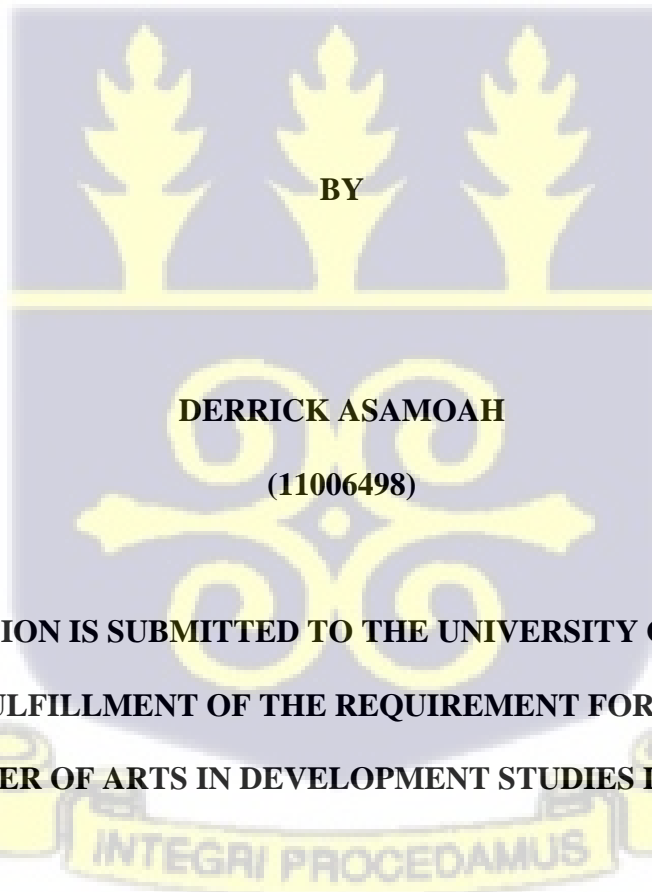


UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

**YOUTH MIGRATION, AGRICULTURE LABOUR AND RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN
THE ADA WEST DISTRICT OF GHANA**



**THIS DISSERTATION IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF
MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES DEGREE**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that, apart from the references to other people's works that have been duly acknowledged, the dissertation, "Perceived Effects of Youth Migration on Agriculture and Rural Development: A Case Study of Ada West District," is the result of my fieldwork activities carried out at the Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research (ISSER), under the supervision of Dr. Gertrude Dzifa Torvikey, and that this dissertation has neither in whole nor in part been presented anywhere for the award of a degree.



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Date



ABSTRACT

The interplay between migration and agricultural labour is a critical determinant of the sustainability of agricultural production in rural areas. The migration of household members and economically active youth can either alleviate or exacerbate the labour constraints faced by agrarian communities, profoundly. The complex relationship between migration and agricultural labour underscores the need for a comprehensive understanding of its implications for rural communities and their agricultural labour availability. The general objective of this study is to examine the implications of youth migration on agriculture production and rural development in the Ada West Municipality of Ghana. The study's specific objectives encompass identifying distinct agricultural labour systems, assessing the influence of youth migration on labour availability, and assessing the effects of migration and migrants on agricultural investment and rural development. The study employs the Lee's Push and Pull theory and the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) as the theories underpinning the study. Lee's Push and Pull theory posits that youth migrate from their origin areas due to unfavourable conditions such as unemployment, poor crop yields, and famine, among others, and migrate to destination areas due to factors like employment opportunities and improved living standards. The NELM theory, on the other hand, suggests that youth migration is driven by the pursuit of economic opportunities, the desire to overcome financial constraints, and the desire to help or assist the remaining household members that remain in place of origin through the sending of remittances.

The study employed a descriptive qualitative research approach. Toflokpo and Ada Luta communities in the Ada West District of the greater Accra region were sampled for the research.

The target population including development planning officers, assembly members, traditional

leaders, youth groups, and heads of migrant households were purposively selected for various interviews.

The study identified a complex relationship between youth migration of different forms and agricultural labour availability. The complexity shows in the family labour regime which is prevalent in the area. With this, the out-migration of economically active youth necessitates the use of hired labour for some tedious tasks on farms. The research shows that the outmigration of youth affects agricultural production. However, many youth engage in seasonal migration and therefore return during farming to engage in agricultural production. The return of youth for seasonal agricultural makes labour available. But the permanent migration of educated youth has an adverse effect on agricultural labour availability. In terms of patterns of migration, many youths out-migrate in the dry season where livelihoods become constrained. While seasonal migration aids labour availability, concerns arise over enduring shortages due to permanent migration, highlighting the critical impact of youth migration on the sustainability of agricultural labour in the Ada West District. The study also reveals that remittances from migrants significantly contribute to economic support, varying across households. Migrant youth actively enhance agricultural productivity through funding, the introduction of modern agricultural techniques to their communities and the positive contributions to community development projects.

The study recommends that communities establish farmer cooperatives to pool resources and labour, making it easier for households to manage labour shortages during peak farming seasons. These cooperatives can also negotiate better prices for agricultural inputs and collectively market their produce. In addition, it is imperative for the District Assembly and the government to ensure that livelihoods are sustained throughout the year so that the pervasive youth outmigration can be mitigated.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research work to God Almighty, my parents, Chris Peprah and my siblings—Festus, Prisca, Lordia, and Lordina—for their unending love, resources, and motivation during this academic journey.



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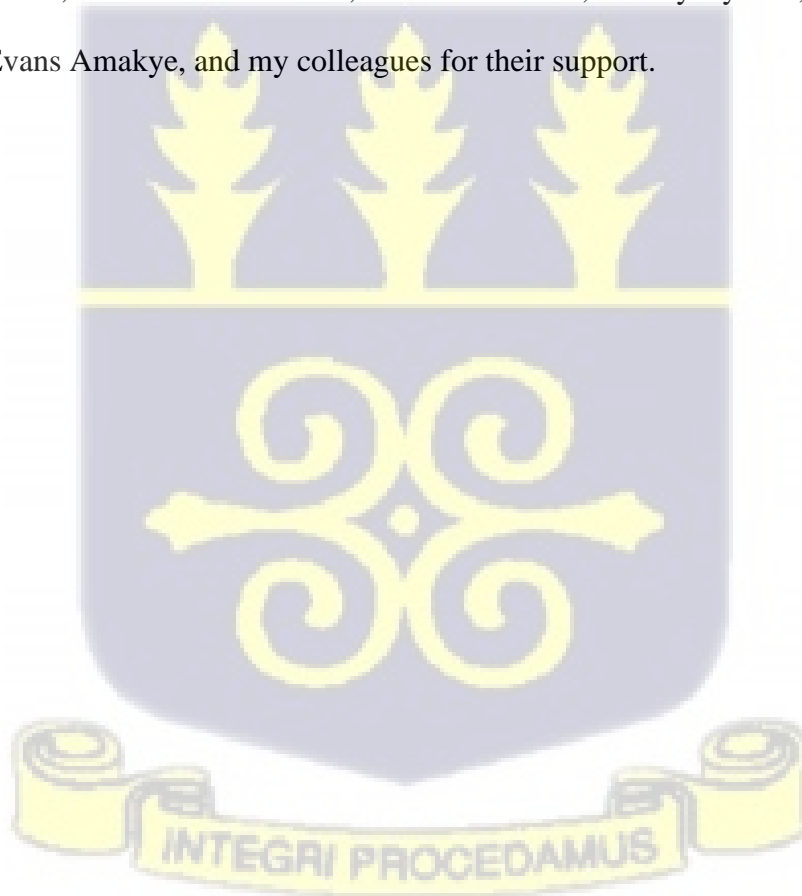


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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COCOBOD – Cocoa Board

FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization

GDP – Gross Domestic Product

GSS - Ghana Statistical Service

GLSS - Ghana Living Standard Survey

IFAD - International Fund for Agricultural Development

ILO – International Labour Organization

ISSER - Institute of Statistical Social and Economic Research

MoFA- Ministry of Food and Agriculture

NELM – New Economics of Labour Migration

UN – United Nation

UNDESA - United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs



CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The relationship between migration, agricultural labour, and rural development is complex and has been at the centre of several scholarly studies over the years. The studies have several strands, encompassing various dimensions such as the economic impact of migration on agricultural labour markets, the social implications for rural communities, and the overall effect on rural development policies and strategies (Khanna, 2020; Taylor et al., 2016; Tacoli et al., 2015; Corrado et al., 2016). On one part, migration can affect agricultural production positively through remittances that migrants send to their households in their communities (Redehegn et al., 2019; Kangmennaang & Bezner-Kerr, 2018). Migrants can invest the remittances, both in kind and cash, in agricultural development. There is also a segment of the debate that focuses on the contribution of migrants to agricultural labour availability and agricultural development in general. This is the case for Ghana and cocoa and oil palm production, as discussed in several scholarly works (Rumi et al., 2022; Rau et al., 2024; Kissi & Herzig, 2024; Khatun et al., 2020; Agyei-Sasu, 2023; Asante, 2021; Amfo et al., 2021; Gyapong, 2020; Amanor et al., 2020; Dzanku et al., 2021). On the destination side, the migration of able-bodied men and women has been seen as negative in some areas as it causes labour scarcity, which affects agricultural production especially in rural and farming areas (Afifi et al., 2016; Qin & Liao, 2016).

Throughout history, migration has been a common feature of every aspect of human society. An overwhelming majority of migrants move within their own countries, as estimated by Holzmann et al. (2016), while about 281 million people live in countries other than their country of citizenship

(UNDESA, 2020). This evidence is further backed by a study conducted by Nori and Farinella (2020), which indicates that it was estimated that globally, there were 763 million internal migrants. Migration in most developing countries, especially Ghana, has become an important adaptative and livelihood strategy in reaction to diverse social events, structural change, and adjustment in developing countries (Awumbila et al., 2014). Most people migrate to rural areas, urban cities, and other countries in search of better lives. Moreover, in many cases, a lack of white-collar jobs as well as a lack of basic amenities such as water, electricity, good roads, and schools, among others, in rural areas lead to a mass movement of youth from the rural areas to other areas (Pam, 2014). The phenomenon of youth migration has been identified as a significant contributor to the changes in farm labour supply, which in turn has a direct impact on the productivity of the agricultural sector (Mueller et al., 2018; Ibrahim et al., 2022).

Youth outmigration is concerning as the youth population serves as an essential link between the present and future and also provides a significant source of labour (Adepoju & Olarinde, 2019). The contribution of young and economically active people providing farm labour is a crucial element in enhancing agricultural productivity in rural regions. Given the reliance on human labour in agriculture, particularly in remote areas with limited technological advancements, the availability of labour is important in enhancing agricultural production. Due to the nature of farm operations and the low-income status of farmers, family labour is predominantly utilised, with the youth being the primary source of such labour (Ango et al., 2014; Losch et al., 2016). According to Aworemi et al. (2011), the migration of youths from rural areas to other areas can be attributed to factors such as poverty, limited employment prospects, and insufficient social infrastructure.

The agricultural sector serves as a fundamental pillar in the economic development of numerous African nations, including Ghana. Ghana possesses fertile soils and a reasonably even distribution

of rainfall, resulting in agriculture playing a significant role in the country's economy. However, the migration of the youth from rural areas has resulted in a significant demographic trend, characterised by a dearth of available labour force, which has contributed to the issue of food insecurity (Yeboah, 2020; Tamang et al., 2014). As emphasised by Adaku (2013), youth migrants from rural areas in Ghana over the years have increased and had a significant impact on agriculture and rural development. It is important to note that agriculture in Ghana has been essential for food security and remains one of the largest contributors to Ghana's GDP, accounting for 19.71 percent (Ghana Statistical Service, 2023) and a major source of employment for the majority of the rural population. Rural areas in Ghana account for the vast majority of the country's agricultural output. The agricultural output of developing nations, in particular, stands to suffer from the migration of the youth (Mahama, 2014). Due to its status as a developing nation, Ghana relies heavily on agricultural exports and imports for both survival and economic growth (World Bank, 2014). When these able-bodied youth migrate, the women, children, and elderly who remain may be unable to compensate for the lost labour, which may have a severe impact on agricultural production.

Youth migration in Ghana provides both opportunities and challenges (Nori and Farinella, 2020). Studying the impact of youth migration on rural development, particularly the growth of agriculture, leads to two contradictory conclusions. On the one hand, some scholars argue that migration has positive effects, such as improved productivity, higher pay in rural regions, and increasing labour shortages (Nicholls, 2014). Nicholls identifies the potential benefits of land consolidation and declining land values as advantageous factors for rural areas. Berge (2016) observed that migration from rural areas has the potential to enhance labour reallocation, particularly in countries with regional resource disparities, thereby augmenting the efficiency of

resource utilization. According to Tadaro and Harris (2017), in economies like Ghana, which have abundant land resources, the positive marginal product of labour in agriculture suggests that youth migration may lead to a decrease in agricultural output. The transfer of money, knowledge, and skills in the form of remittances has the potential to alleviate credit constraints and mitigate risks in agricultural production for rural communities and migrant households. However, a negative effect of youth migration would emerge when rural origin communities compete for human capital in agricultural labour because of the absence of household members due to migration, thereby further tightening the existing constraint on investment in high productivity (Mini, 2020; Alfa et al., 2022).

1.2 Problem Statement

Agriculture has long been a key driver of Ghana's economy, creating employment opportunities and contributing significantly to the country's GDP. However, Ghana's agriculture sector is predominantly small-scale and labour-intensive, relying heavily on manual labour for planting, harvesting, and processing crops. The availability and accessibility of labour are therefore critical for ensuring the sustainability and productivity of the sector. In recent years, there has also been a growing trend of youth outmigration into agricultural areas in Ghana. Migration is observed globally as a strategy for diversifying livelihoods and generating income, whether it occurs within or across national borders (Eshun et al., 2019). According to Tanle's (2020), there exists empirical evidence indicating that low-income households in some developing nations, such as Ghana, resort to migration as a means to cope with their state of relative deprivation. This situation has

significant implications for agriculture production, which is labour-intensive and requires a steady supply of labour.

Ada West Municipality is located in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana and is known for its fertile lands, which makes it a hub for agriculture. In Ada West Municipality, there is a growing trend of youth migration that has the potential to impact agricultural labour availability and accessibility. While some youths migrate out of the municipality in search of better opportunities, others migrate into the municipality to engage in agriculture. The outmigration of youth from Ada West Municipality can lead to labour shortages in the community, particularly in the agricultural sector, where young people make up 54.9 % of the labour force (GSS, 2021). This can result in decreased agricultural production and a decline in the economic viability of the community. The loss of young people from the community can result in a decline in knowledge transfer from older to younger generations, hindering the preservation and dissemination of traditional agricultural practices. Additionally, the absence of youth often leads to a reduction in the adoption of new agricultural practices and technologies, as younger individuals tend to be more open to innovation and change. Thus, their migration negatively impacts both the continuity of traditional knowledge and the community's ability to embrace modern advancements.

On the positive side, in-migration can bring new labour resources to the community, which can increase the availability of labour for agricultural activities. This increased labour availability can result in increased agricultural production, leading to improved food security, income generation, and overall economic growth in the community. In-migration can also bring new knowledge, skills, and technology related to agriculture, which can improve productivity and efficiency in the sector. New migrants may introduce new crops, livestock breeds, and farming practices that can enhance agricultural production and diversify the local food system. This two-way dimension of

migration has the potential to create both positive and negative effects on the availability and accessibility of agricultural labour in the area (Ibrahim et al., 2022). Therefore, there is a need to assess the effect of youth migration on agriculture labour availability and accessibility in Ada West Municipality, taking into account the two-way dimension of migration.

There have been several studies on the effects of youth migration on agricultural production and investment (Duda et al., 2018; Abeje, 2021; Anyanwu et al., 2018; Villaronte et al., 2022). Research evidence suggests that there are differing perspectives on the actual agricultural development aspects of youth migration in Ghana. Some of these studies have focused on the negative effects of youth migration, such as reduced labour availability and declining investment in agriculture. On the other hand, the migration of young people can result in the transfer of knowledge, skills, and technology to rural areas, which can enhance agricultural production and profitability (Tanoh & Osei-Assibey, 2019; Awuse et al., 2020; Kuyini et al., 2020). Furthermore, the income earned by migrants can be channelled back to rural areas in the form of remittances, which can boost the local economy and improve food security. Despite the numerous studies conducted on the effect of youth migration in Ghana, limited research has been conducted on this topic in Ada West Municipality, which is geographically very close to Ghana's capital, Accra. In addition, its economy is agrarian.

There is a notable gap in the existing literature, which has predominantly employed quantitative methods, providing a limited understanding of the nuanced, lived experiences and perspectives of those directly affected. This study seeks to address this gap by adopting a qualitative research approach, which is uncommon in this field, to provide a deeper and more contextualized understanding of the impact of youth migration on agricultural labor availability and investment. By focusing on the qualitative aspects, this research aims to capture the voices and experiences of

the community members, including the remaining youth, older farmers, and families left behind. It will explore how the migration of young people affects not only the immediate labor force but also the long-term sustainability and innovation in agricultural practices. The study's unique approach will provide insights into how remittances from migrated youth influence agricultural investment decisions and the adaptation strategies employed by those who stay.

This paucity of research can lead to a one-sided understanding of the phenomenon, which may result in ineffective policies and strategies to manage youth migration in the municipality. Without a thorough understanding of the actual impacts of youth outmigration, policymakers may fail to develop policies that encourage youth to return to their rural communities or invest in agriculture. Therefore, there is a need for research on the complex impacts of youth migration on agricultural production. By adopting a more comprehensive approach to studying youth migration, we can create opportunities to maximize its potential benefits while minimizing its negative effects.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of this study seeks to examine the implications of youth migration on agriculture production and rural development in the Ada West Municipality of Ghana. The specific objectives are:

1. To identify the agricultural labour systems in Ada West District.
2. To examine youth migration on agricultural labour availability in the Ada West District.
3. To examine the effects of youth migration on agricultural investment and socio-economic development in the Ada West District.

1.4 Research Questions

This study, therefore, seeks to investigate the following specific questions:

1. What are the labour systems and regimes available to farmers in the Ada West District?
2. What is the effect of youth migration on agriculture labour availability and accessibility in the district?
3. What are the effects of youth migration on agricultural investment in the district?
4. What are the effects of youth migration on socio-economic development of the district?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study holds significant relevance as it contributes to the existing body of knowledge on migration, labour markets, and agricultural systems, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 1, 2, 8, and 10. By exploring the effects of youth migration on labour availability, agricultural production, and investment, it fills a crucial research gap and provides empirical evidence that enhances our understanding of the intricate relationships between migration patterns and the agricultural sector. The examination of youth migration within the agricultural context directly addresses SDG 2 (Zero Hunger) by shedding light on factors influencing agricultural productivity and food security in rural areas.

The study's relevance to practice lies in its potential to inform and guide various stakeholders involved in labour markets and agricultural industries hereby contributing to SDGs 1, 8, and 10. By investigating the impact of youth migration on labour availability, the findings can assist policymakers, labour market stakeholders, and agricultural practitioners in developing effective workforce planning strategies, addressing potential labour shortages, and implementing skill

development programmes. The study outcomes can also aid in identifying the challenges and opportunities associated with youth migration, enabling the design of policies and programmes to enhance agricultural productivity, attract and retain young talent in rural areas, and promote sustainable agricultural practices.

The study holds significant relevance to policy-making as it provides evidence-based insights that can shape and guide policy decisions related to youth migration, labour markets, and agriculture in line with SDGs 1, 8, and 10. The research outcomes can inform the development and implementation of policies aimed at addressing rural-to-urban migration imbalances, creating attractive rural opportunities, and promoting inclusive rural development. Additionally, the findings can guide policy interventions that enhance the productivity and competitiveness of the agricultural sector while ensuring the sustainable use of resources while ensuring the sustainable use of resources, thereby contributing to SDG 1 (No Poverty) and SDG 10 (Reduced Inequalities). Ultimately, the study's relevance to policy lies in its potential to inform evidence-based decision-making processes, leading to more effective and impactful policies and programmes.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The research is be divided into six chapters. The first chapter provides background information on the study topic as well as a problem statement for the research topic. The first chapter also outlines the research questions and objectives. A review of the literature is presented in the second chapter. The extant literature on the research is summarized in this chapter. This chapter also develops a conceptual framework for the study. The study's methodology is presented in the third chapter. This entails the research design, description of the research area, sample and sampling technique,

instrumentation and data collecting, and method of analysis. The results and discussion of the study is reported in chapter four. Chapter four contains the outcomes of the first and second specific objectives of the study. The fifth chapter covers the analysis and findings of the third specific objective. Finally, in chapter six, the study's summary, conclusion, and recommendations are presented



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature relevant to youth migration and its related effect on agricultural labour availability and agricultural productions. The chapter reviews theoretical literature on youth migration in Ghana, agricultural labour systems in Ghana, migration and agriculture, and its effect on labour availability and agricultural investment. The chapter also examines the theoretical underpinnings the study.

2.2 Migration in Ghana

People in the developing world use migration as a significant coping and adaptation technique to deal with a variety of events and structural changes (Awumbila et al., 2014; Deotti & Estruch, 2016). This indicates that there are many methods to classify migration, rather than it being a single process. Awumbila et al. (2014) argue that contextual factors influence migration as a social construct. The authors suggest that an individual's migration status is relative and can vary depending on the societal norms and expectations of a particular context. The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) classifies an individual as a migrant if they relocate and reside in their current place of abode for at least one year (GSS, 2008). Awumbila et al. (2014) argue that the aforementioned definition is limited in scope because it excludes individuals who migrate seasonally and typically stay at their destination for less than one year. According to Awumbila et al. (2014), the term migrant refers to an individual who has migrated and established a residence in a particular location for a minimum of six months. This definition includes both individuals who migrate temporarily or permanently due to seasonal factors and establishes a suitable time frame for evaluating the

welfare and perspectives of migrants in their respective places of residence. Both definitions are instrumental to the study due to their relevance to the context and the research objectives. The GSS definition offers stability and consistency for administrative and long-term planning, while Awumbila et al.'s definition provides flexibility and inclusivity for a deeper understanding of migration dynamics, particularly in cases involving seasonal or temporary migration patterns.

Awumbila et al. (2008) assert that migration in Ghana, as well as other parts of Africa, is predominantly informal, thereby posing challenges in obtaining precise migration statistics. Despite a dearth of records, the literature suggests that migration has played a significant role in the lives and livelihoods of both rural and urban communities for a very long time. Van Dijk et al. (2001) reported that Ghana has experienced a net inflow of immigrants for a considerable period, with the number of individuals entering the country surpassing those leaving. A decline in economic growth and political instability since the late 1960s disrupted this trend, leading to a setback in migration patterns. In recent years, Ghana has experienced novel migration patterns due to the forces of globalisation, shifts in the global political economy, and the country's economic and political stabilization. These factors have led to increased complexity and challenges in both internal and international migration. As a consequence, Ghana experiences changes in internal movement, immigration, transit migration, and emigration both within and outside of Africa at the same time (Mowforth & Munt, 2015).

According to GSS (2021), the regions of Greater Accra, Ahafo, Western North, and Western are the primary destinations for over 50% of internal migrants, and these regions have a significant proportion of migrants in their population. The Greater Accra Region attracted migrants to it at the highest rate (35.1%) among all the other regions. Ahafo (21.2%), the Western North (19.0%), and the Western (17.0%) regions followed it. In contrast, the northern and upper regions collectively

represent a mere 5% of the total destinations. Given that the greater Accra and Ashanti regions are the most urbanised in Ghana (Razak, 2017; Songsore, 2009), it is not surprising that these areas are sought-after migration destinations. Urban areas, both worldwide and specifically in Ghana, function as a centre for educational, social, and business development, making them an attractive location for migrants, particularly those from rural areas (UN-Habitat, 2014; Songsore, 2009). The process of urbanisation is occurring at a rapid pace in various regions of Africa, including Ghana. As urbanisation evolves within a nation, distinctions between urban and rural areas become more pronounced, underscoring the significance of comprehending the migratory trends between these two areas (Charles-Edwards et al., 2019; Farrell, 2018; Li et al., 2019).

2.3 Drivers of Youth Migration in Ghana

Various factors influence an individual's decision to migrate from their place of origin, typically a rural area, to a destination such as a city. The investigation of the factors that lead to the migration of individuals has garnered the attention of various fields within the social sciences (Bilsborrow et al., 2015). The assessment of migration motives and destination selection has become increasingly complex, as evidenced by variations in patterns, concepts, types, nature, and trajectories across time, space, and individuals (UN, 2015; Jansen, 2017). The majority of scholarly investigations into the origins of migration have indicated that the "push" or "pull" factors are fundamental and are closely associated with both economic and non-economic factors that influence the decision-making of migrants. Push factors, such as conflict, famine, crop failure, and other reasons, are considered to be the circumstances that compel migrants to leave their place of origin. Studies have found push factors to be more prevalent than pull factors as a cause of migration in developing

countries. The agricultural sector serves as the primary economic foundation for rural regions. However, in instances where land productivity decreases and environmental conditions are unfavourable for sustaining the livelihoods of rural inhabitants, it compels them to migrate from rural areas to urban centres (Bilsborrow et al., 2015).

A pull factor refers to a compelling aspect of the destination that motivates an individual to migrate. According to scholars, there exists a phenomenon known as the "Bright Lights" syndrome among the youth, particularly those residing in rural areas, which entails their migration to urban centres in search of improved opportunities. Scholars attribute youth migration to various pull factors, including increased employment opportunities, an improved standard of living, access to social services (such as healthcare, education, electricity, and piped water delivery), an enhanced sense of safety, recreational opportunities, and proximity to relatives and acquaintances. According to Aklilu and Tadesse (2013), urban areas serve as hubs for various amenities, including but not limited to higher salaries, sophisticated soft and hard infrastructure with intercity connectivity, and enriched cultural expression and lifestyle.

Reed et al. (2010) conducted a study in Ghana, which revealed that various factors at the household level influence migration patterns. These factors include the gender, age, and educational attainment of the household head, male-to-female ratios, youth and elderly dependency ratios, home ownership, and household size. Reed et al. (2010) demonstrated that migration propensity is positively associated with female household heads and younger heads of household. Additionally, for women, an increase in the income ratio has a greater impact on migration than an increase in the unemployment ratio. Numerous research studies have indicated that young household members may engage in labour migration as a means of diversifying the household's risk, as well as in anticipation of higher future returns or to fulfil personal aspirations (Duplantier

et al., 2017; Rao et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2023; Simelton et al., 2021; Maharjan et al., 2021; Biswas & Mallick, 2021; Tang, 2020; Fan, 2021; Tanle & Ogunleye-Adetona, 2020; Habib et al., 2023). Rural youth are notably prone to migration as a result of the dearth of profitable employment and entrepreneurial prospects within the agricultural and associated rural economic sectors.

2.4 Agriculture in Ghana

Many African nations, like Ghana, depend heavily on agriculture for their economic well-being. Ghana possesses fertile soils and receives a reasonably equitable distribution of rainfall, resulting in agriculture playing a significant role in the country's economy. The agricultural sector in Ghana plays a crucial role in providing employment opportunities for a significant portion of the economically active population. The sector's contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has been showing a consistent declining pattern. In 2015, it accounted for 20.3 percent of GDP, but by 2021, that figure had dropped to 19.71 percent (GSS, 2023).

The expansion of farm sizes, the adoption of mechanised production methods, and an increasing focus on commercialization primarily attribute to the agricultural development in Ghana. The aforementioned process of transformation has resulted in the emergence of novel labour structures, exemplified by heightened levels of migration and expanded employment opportunities within the realm of commercial agricultural production (Diao et al., 2019; Yaro et al., 2021). According to Andoh (2010), Ghana possesses a competitive advantage in the agricultural sector as the country grows both traditional and non-traditional crops. The primary driver of growth since 2001 has been the notable increase in productivity within the cocoa sector, which accounts for approximately 30 percent of the overall agricultural growth (World Bank, 2007). The notable increase in global cocoa prices and the assistance provided to farmers by COCOBOD primarily contribute to this

expansion. Kolavalli and Vigneri (2011) reported that COCOBOD provided farmers with assistance by granting them access to high-quality fertilizers and implementing large-scale spraying activities on cocoa farms.

Despite its declining contribution to the national GDP, the sector continues to maintain the highest proportion of employed individuals within the labour force (Yeboah & Jayne, 2020; Jumpah & Ampadu-Ameyaw, 2020). The government's agricultural sector policies and other frameworks, namely FASDEP I & II and METASIP I & II, have consistently placed emphasis on specific areas within the sector that possess the potential to generate significant economic impact. Nevertheless, persistent challenges continue to confront the sector. The agricultural sector faces a number of challenges, including the ageing demographic of farmers, inadequate seed quality, excessive reliance on rainfall, limited access to credit and agricultural inputs, insufficient extension services, postharvest losses, declining soil fertility, and the emerging issue of climate change (MoFA, 2015).

2.5 Agricultural Labour Systems in Ghana

Agricultural labour, also known as farm labour, is perceived as encompassing a diverse array of human activities that are essential in the practice of farming. The activities conducted on a farm are typically associated with the cultivation of soil as well as the raising and harvesting of agricultural products. These activities also encompass the operation, management, conservation, improvement, and maintenance of the farm and its tools and equipment. In certain contexts, the term "agricultural labour" may encompass the various services procured to replace unpaid or hired farm labour, including labour or human services obtained through farm labour contractors, mechanics, repair services, and other sources (Nguyen, 2020). This study employs a

comprehensive definition of farm labour, covering all human services performed on a farm under the employment of the farm householder.

Farm labour covers various types of labour utilised in agricultural production, including hired, contracted, exchanged, and unpaid family labour. The term "family farm labour" typically pertains to individuals who provide unpaid or non-wage labour within a family-operated agricultural operation or an economic entity overseen by a family member or relative. This individual has the potential to assume the role of a housewife, an elderly person within the household, a child, or any other relative residing in the extended family unit. Uncompensated family labourers do not receive monetary remuneration but instead receive sustenance and lodging from the family. Developing nations have a higher prevalence of unpaid family workers, particularly in regions where subsistence farming is practiced, and among women and children, who are the most vulnerable members of the population (Akinyemi et al., 2016).

The term "hired farm labour," also referred to as paid labour or wage labour, pertains to the socioeconomic dynamic between an employee and an employer in the agricultural sector. In this arrangement, the worker offers their labour power in exchange for compensation, as outlined in a formal or informal contractual agreement (Steinfeld, 2009). The ILO statistical conventions also document the occurrence of this idea, which arises when there is a presumed relationship between an employee and an employer. Individuals engaged in paid employment positions, known as wage workers, maintain either explicit (written or oral) or implicit employment agreements that provide them with fixed compensation. Employers do not directly base this compensation on the revenue of the individual or household they are employed by (ILO, 2006). Nevertheless, the agricultural industry is distinguished by its reliance on casual labour and the prevalence of multiple occupations, including seasonal work off the farm, full-time work on the farm, and exchange work.

Consequently, the direct application of this concept to the agricultural sector is not a straightforward process. The term "wage labour" as used in this study pertains to individuals who engage in employment under the supervision of another individual, in any type of work, and receive remuneration in the form of either tangible goods or monetary payment (Oya & Pontara, 2015).

The majority of agricultural labourers who receive wages are engaged in seasonal work, typically hired on a casual or temporary arrangement. Casual work, in the context of employment, pertains to remunerative activities that are compensated either on a daily basis or upon the fulfilment of a designated assignment. Temporary workers engage in employment for a finite duration. Employers typically do not provide casual and temporary workers with unemployment benefits, social security, paid holidays, or maternity leave. Individuals engaged in casual employment more frequently lack these benefits, although a significant proportion of permanent employees also do not possess them. Migrant agricultural labourers frequently engage in employment arrangements characterised by casual, seasonal, or temporary work and occasionally assume full-time positions (Koncar, 2022).

In the context of Ghana, a range of labour sources hold significance, encompassing family labour, hired labour, landowner-caretaker relationships, communal labour support, government labour subsidy programmes, and private labour. The development and growth of agricultural production in Southern Ghana have been greatly influenced by unpaid family labour, hired labour, and landowner-caretaker relations (Amanor, 2010). According to Torvikey (2021), migrant labourers have historically been the major source of hired labour and landowner-caretaker relationships for managing farms. Despite demographic changes and institutional factors, migrant labour continues

to play a significant role in Ghana's agricultural sector, particularly in hired labour and sharecropping arrangements.

Landowners and caretakers in the cocoa-producing regions of Ghana structure their relationships through verbal agreements, establishing the terms "Abunu" and "Abusa" (Amanor 2010; Barrientos 2014). The practice of Abunu involves the division of responsibilities and benefits between the caretaker and landowner. The caretaker assumes the financial burden of production on untapped agricultural land, while sharing the income generated from cocoa sales equally with the landowner at a ratio of 1:1. The Abunu sharecropper exercises complete autonomy in making production decisions and exclusively reaps the benefits derived from intercropping cocoa with other staple food crops. On the contrary, the term "abusa" denotes the act of partitioning or separating into three equal parts. A caretaker manages a fully mature cocoa farm for a specified duration in this particular model. The distribution of income follows a ratio of 1:2, where the landowner receives two-thirds and the caretaker receives one-third. The landowner is expected to bear full responsibility for the expenses associated with production and exert authority over the decision-making processes related to production. Additionally, there is another group of caretakers, typically comprised of young migrants, who engage in seasonal employment on farms under negotiated agreements with landowners. It is important to note that these landowners may not necessarily belong to the Abunu or Abusa communities.

2.5 Migration and Agriculture

As of present, the global rural populace has reached approximately 3.4 billion individuals. However, projections indicate that this figure will decrease to 3.1 billion by the year 2050 (Jing et

al., 2020; Perera et al., 2023). While the process of urbanisation is rapidly taking place in Africa and Asia, it is noteworthy that nearly 90% of the global rural populace continues to inhabit these regions. On the other hand, agriculture is the main source of income for most people living in rural areas (Chen et al., 2017; Azam & Shafique, 2017). Furthermore, natural disasters and civil conflicts often limit the rural populace's access to resources and sustainable livelihood opportunities, leading to food insecurity and poverty. In circumstances where local alternatives are scarce or non-existent, socioeconomically disadvantaged families residing in rural areas may frequently consider the option of sending "responsible" family members to urban centres to seek remunerative employment opportunities. There is still little agreement in the literature on the relationship between migration and development in terms of rural development. The aforementioned evidence suggests that rural agriculture is not typically subject to a paradigm shift as a result of migration, but rather that migration frequently serves as a crucial factor in sustaining the livelihoods of rural populations (Tanle et al., 2020; Nzima et al., 2017).

The phenomenon of seasonal migration facilitates optimal utilisation of labour, as individuals who experience underemployment during the agricultural off-season can secure employment in urban or other regions, consequently leading to a rise in their earnings. McCarthy et al. (2006) found that the nature of migration, namely seasonal, circular, or permanent, influences the allocation of resources towards various agricultural activities by migrant households in Albania. This allocation is determined by factors such as labour and capital requirements, as well as physical and human capital endowments. The trend of permanent migration has exhibited a proclivity towards the promotion of livestock production, whereas temporary or seasonal migration has resulted in a decrease in livestock ownership but a corresponding rise in fruit cultivation. Conversely, persistent migration can result in a shortage of a crucial agricultural workforce in rural regions during

farming periods (Agidew & Singh, 2018; Giller et al., 2021). Over an extended period, transnational migration, particularly migration that does not take place between neighbouring countries, typically results in migrants being unable to return to their homeland to participate in agricultural pursuits and work opportunities during the farming season.

Circular, seasonal, and short-term movements intricately link migration patterns in Africa to the agricultural seasonal calendars. Both inter-country and intra-country contexts observe migration patterns (FAO et al., 2018). According to de Brauw and Bulte (2021), the increasing mechanisation and industrialization of farming operations have resulted in a decline in labour demand, leading to the emergence of migration patterns. Common perception characterises migration as a unidirectional phenomenon, with individuals predominantly moving from rural to urban regions within the framework of societal change. Migration plays a significant role in the phenomenon of urbanization. However, the relationship between agricultural transformation and migration is intricate, and the understanding of internal migration processes is incomplete due to insufficient data. According to the findings of Cattaneo and Robinson (2019), there exists a correlation between the extent of internal migration and the economic development level of a given economy. The advancement of the agricultural sector has yielded positive outcomes such as improved livelihoods for individuals residing in rural areas and enhanced educational opportunities. Consequently, this development has prompted individuals to relocate to urban regions in pursuit of more favourable employment prospects. One possible consequence is a decline in productivity and output within the agricultural sector due to the departure of young individuals, leaving behind an ageing agricultural labour force (Diao et al., 2019; World Bank, 2007).

2.6 Effect of Youth Migration on Labour Availability

Migrants from agricultural communities, whether young or aged, have significant impacts on both their home and destination areas. Young migrants often leave in search of better education and employment, resulting in a labour shortage in their home agricultural communities, which can hinder farming activities and the adoption of new technologies. Older migrants might move to be closer to family or for healthcare reasons, leading to a loss of experienced labour and traditional agricultural knowledge. The migration of youth, in particular, has profound implications on labour availability, as their absence reduces the workforce needed for intensive farming tasks and the implementation of innovative agricultural practices, potentially stalling agricultural productivity and community development.

The agricultural sector in numerous developing nations, such as Ghana, continues to rely heavily on manual labour. The utilisation of labour is a crucial factor in facilitating agricultural progress, particularly in cases where the food system is of paramount importance. According to Kamuzora's (1998) micro-level farm survey conducted in Africa, farmers have identified labour shortages as a major constraint on their output. The aforementioned phenomenon has a tendency to impact the amount of labour necessary for the upkeep and perpetuation of the constituent elements comprising the food system in rural locales. The advancement of technology, access to information, and affordable transportation have led to the widespread adoption of rural outmigration as a mechanism (Gelb & Krishnan, 2018). More opportunities for rural-urban migration have arisen as a result of the commercialization of agricultural commodities in many metropolitan areas of developing countries (UNDP & MARD, 2012). The pattern of outward migration, driven by specific pull factors, has had a significant impact on the availability of labour required for agricultural production, particularly in the domains of weeding, planting, harvesting, and transportation of

crops from the fields. The sustenance of these crucial elements of the food system necessitates a significant amount of labour. The availability of labour for planting is partially offset by the involvement of women and children in certain planting activities (Akter et al., 2017; Antwi-Agyei et al., 2018; Klasen, 2019). However, the authors observed that the scarcity of labour for weeding farms has emerged as a significant challenge, particularly in the context of substantial outmigration from rural areas, as men are primarily responsible for clearing farmland.

Several significant impacts demonstrate the link between migration and agricultural production. There are two potential effects of migration on agricultural output: the first is the loss of labour due to migration, which might increase the labour constraint for agricultural output, and the second is the money received in the form of remittances from migrants, which could reduce credit constraints and help in investments in agricultural production (Ojo et al., 2022). The impact of these two factors on agricultural revenue could be either positive, negative, or neutral. The presence of a notable impact would imply that agricultural output is improved by migration, while a detrimental impact would indicate that the departure of labour due to migration results in a decline in agricultural productivity. Nevertheless, the discovery of a significant impact lends support to the New Economics of Labour Migration Theory (NELM), as stated by Rozelle et al. (2009). Migration has been a longstanding component of the economy, dating back to the theories of supply and demand and individual rationality. Therefore, it is evident that migration is not a recent phenomenon. It seems likely that agricultural households that have experienced labour loss due to migration will be capable of adjusting to labour scarcity. The current strategies for adaptation encompass the adoption of agricultural practices that require less manual labour, such as the cultivation of less labour-intensive crops and the implementation of mechanisation techniques (Liu et al., 2023; Paudel et al., 2019). Mechanization has been observed to exhibit

inefficiency in scenarios where there are decentralized small plots, which is a prevalent situation in numerous regions of Africa. This inefficiency has resulted in agricultural labour productivity falling below its potential (Dokubo et al., 2023; Losch, 2016). The extant body of research on the correlation between migration and agricultural households at the point of origin of migration has yielded a range of perspectives.

The migration of physically capable men and women results in a depletion of the workforce in rural regions. The trend is a contributing factor to the decline of agriculture in rural communities. Internal migration, rather than migration to developed nations (De Haas, 2007; Johnson & Litcher, 2019; Lucas, 2015), is often associated with the phenomenon of rural and agricultural decline. This occurrence can be attributed to the anticipation of significantly increased remittance inflows to the localities of origin and households as a means of offsetting the labour force reduction. These remittances bolster various facets of the food system, including cultivation, reaping, packaging, transportation, and other sectors of the economy. The migration of the rural labour force can result in a decline or abandonment of agricultural activities (Amrevurayire & Ojeh, 2016; Blair et al., 2018; Giller et al., 2021; Khanal et al., 2015). The departure of a large number of rural labourers has a negative impact on agricultural output, as the responsibilities that would have been undertaken by the younger generation are now left to be carried out by the elderly and children (Jayne et al., 2017). In the event that a migrant household's maximum farm output is positive, the production of crops will experience a significant reduction upon the departure of the migrant(s) from the household.

The interconnection between rural labour and migration holds great importance in the sustenance and enhancement of certain facets of food systems, such as weeding, planting, harvesting, and transportation. The nature of this migration is contingent upon a multitude of factors, with the most

pivotal among them being the push and pull factors, as posited by Dawson et al. (2016). The push-pull phenomenon is responsible for inducing farmers to abandon their agricultural holdings. Challenging circumstances primarily linked to the primary sector, which encompasses agriculture and its associated activities, including those pertaining to food systems, constitute the push factors. The challenging circumstances that farmers face consist of precarious agricultural practices that are subject to seasonal and unpredictable weather patterns, persistent declines in agricultural prices, limitations on water resources, and a lack of accessible markets for their produce (Chandra et al., 2017; Sims et al., 2017). The pull factors pertain to favourable circumstances in the non-primary sector, such as stable remuneration in non-agricultural businesses, which are predominantly concentrated in urban areas, and serve as an attraction for farmers, leading to their departure from agriculture.

2.7 Effect of Migration on Agricultural Investment and Development

Remittances provide food for many rural poor families, making them an effective tool for overcoming challenges including low agricultural production and the inherent dangers and volatility of farming operations (Chamberlin et al., 2020; Hermele, 2021; Al-Maruf et al., 2022). The allocation of migrant income towards agricultural and non-agricultural ventures, as well as heightened consumption, has the potential to generate employment prospects both directly and indirectly (Dessalegn ee al., 2023; Selod & Shilpi, 2021). IFAD (2008) suggests formulating policies to enhance the social, economic, and financial relationships between migrants and their respective communities or nations of origin. The effects of migration and remittances on agriculture and rural employment are primarily determined by the expenditure, investment, and labour allocation patterns of migrant households (Al-Maruf et al., 2022; Selod & Shilpi, 2021). These impacts are further influenced by the multiplier effects of remittances and shifts in the

labour, goods, and services markets. Remittances may sometimes be a means to make up for labour shortages, but other times the amount sent might not be enough to cover the negative implications of labour shortages (Sobczak-Szelc & Fekih, 2020).

Remittances provided by migrant family members have the potential to alleviate the capital constraints experienced by impoverished households. The act of migration may potentially stimulate agricultural intensification, provided that the remittances received are utilised to procure agricultural inputs like labour-saving equipment, livestock, seeds, fertilisers, and labour (Brewer et al., 2022; Chan & Myint, 2015; Sikder & Higgins, 2017; Kapri & Ghimire, 2020). According to Ochieng et al.'s (2017) research, households that receive remittances have the ability to allocate more resources towards agricultural production or pursue new investment opportunities. This is particularly evident when migrant family members return home with enhanced skills and financial resources. Rural households in Albania that receive remittances typically reallocate their on-farm investments from crop production to livestock production. Notwithstanding the decrease in the labour force, agricultural revenue appears to remain stable despite the occurrence of migration. Furthermore, the increased investments in livestock have contributed to the overall rise in income. Research has revealed that households with migrant members residing in other countries exhibit a substantial reduction in the number of hours dedicated to agricultural production.

According to Zhang et al. (2019), in rural areas of China, remittances serve as a form of compensation for the labour that is lost, thereby making a direct contribution to household income and an indirect contribution to crop production. Rural-urban migration in Ghana adversely impacts the initial household farm income. However, with the passing of time, the remittances received from migrants tend to serve as complete compensation for the lost labour. Moreover, researchers have found that these remittances significantly contribute to the overall household income and

stimulate the growth of both farm and non-farm production (Sikder & Higgins, 2017). The impact of migration and remittances on agricultural production and income extends beyond their immediate effects on farming operations (Kapri & Ghimire, 2020). Redehegn et al. (2019) suggested that remittances could potentially have an adverse impact on farm productivity due to various factors, such as the migration of the most productive household members, who are typically the youth, and the likelihood of less efficient household members left behind substituting labour for leisure. However, empirical evidence indicates that remittances in the agricultural sector are allocated towards productive investments only to a small extent (Jena, 2018; Liu et al., 2020; Miluka et al., 2020; Nguyen et al., 2019).

Rozelle et al. (2019) conducted a study to examine the relationship among migration, remittances, and agricultural production. The results indicated that migration has a notable adverse impact on yields, while remittances are positively associated with migration, supporting the NELM theory. However, the unfavourable effect on agricultural production may discourage labour migration (Sennuga et al., 2021). In contrast to previous findings, Taylor's (2012) research revealed that migrants served as financial intermediaries by transmitting remittances to alleviate the limitations on agricultural investments. This had a notable positive effect on agricultural production, indicating that households would have substantial future motivations to engage in migration under these circumstances. Sindi and Kirimi (2006) conducted a study in Kenya utilising panel data from rural households, which provides further support for the NELM theory. The findings indicate that migration is linked to adverse effects on crop income due to labour loss. However, the study failed to uncover evidence suggesting that the negative effects of labour loss are mitigated, either partially or entirely, by remittances from migrants. Mendola's (2008) study aimed to investigate the impact of migration on the adoption of new technologies by rural households in their place of

origin. The findings revealed that international migration, which was deemed "high-return," had a favourable influence on households' investment in new agricultural technologies. However, internal migration, encompassing both temporary and permanent migration, had an adverse effect on investment and productivity in agriculture.

2.8 Theoretical Underpinnings/Perspectives

This section details the theoretical frameworks utilized in this study to understand the effects of youth migration on labour availability and agricultural investment. The study employed Lee's push and pull theory and the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) theory to provide comprehensive insights. Lee's model was instrumental in understanding the patterns and motives behind youth migration, highlighting the push factors that drove young individuals away from agricultural communities and the pull factors that attracted them to urban areas. On the other hand, the NELM theory emphasized that youth migration was often motivated by the prospect of remittances, which served as an adaptation strategy for households. These remittances subsequently led to increased agricultural investment, as families used the financial inflow to improve their farming practices and technologies. Both theories were applied in the study to elucidate the complex dynamics of youth migration and its implications for agricultural communities.

2.8.1 Lee's Push and Pull Theory

The understanding of youth migratory patterns is crucially dependent on conventional push-pull factors. Lee (1966) and De Haas (2008) argue that immediate factors such as economic,

environmental, demographic, and political considerations influence migration determinants. The migration phenomenon is underpinned by the push-pull model, which posits that individuals are compelled to migrate from their origin areas due to unfavourable conditions such as unemployment, poor crop yields, and famine, among others. On the other hand, individuals migrate to destination areas due to factors like employment opportunities, higher income levels, and improved living standards.

Socio-economic conditions are the primary determinants of the attraction and repulsion of individuals towards specific destinations (Malmberg, 2021). The prevailing socio-economic circumstances include an increase in rural population growth, which exerts Malthusian pressure on the finite natural and agricultural resources, and favourable economic conditions, such as raised wages, that pull migrants towards urban and industrialised centres (King and Schneider, 1991; Schwartz and Notini, 1994; Skeldon, 1997). Scholars widely regard the push-pull model as significant because it encompasses all the necessary factors for migration decision-making (De Haas, 2008). However, some scholars have criticised this theory, arguing that it may oversimplify and be overly deterministic (Skeldon, 1990; de Haas, 2011). De Haas and Fokkema (2011) argue that the portrayal of migration as a singular event rather than a complex process is inadequate, as the theory neglects to consider evolving motivations and altered decision-making along the way. Despite the criticisms, certain scholars contend that the push-pull model is the most effective approach for examining labour migration, owing to its integration of various theoretical frameworks (Bauer & Zimmermann, 1998).

Researchers such as King and Schneider (1991) and Zachariah et al. (2001) have highlighted various factors that contribute to the migration phenomenon, including demographic stress, limited availability of land due to population excess, environmental degradation, and wage differentials.

The migration of youth from rural areas can be attributed to several factors, including limited availability of land, unfavourable weather conditions, and poor harvests. Many individuals cite these factors as reasons for migration, viewing them as a means to mitigate risk and diversify livelihoods. Despite the negative factors that compel individuals to migrate from rural areas, urban centres possess attractive characteristics that pull young people to migrate for better opportunities and an improved quality of life. The intervening factors are a different set of conditions that migrants who choose to migrate from rural areas face (Lee, 1966). Lee (1966) posited that intervening variables such as migration distance, financial costs, cultural ties, and emotional attachments to a place are significant factors to consider. The influence of migration decisions, despite push-pull factors, is contingent upon the variables in question.

Lee's push and pull theory offers a comprehensive framework for understanding the migration patterns of individuals, particularly youth, from agricultural communities. One of the primary advantages of this theory is its ability to categorize and explain the diverse factors that influence migration decisions, including economic, social, and environmental aspects. By identifying specific push factors such as unemployment, poor living conditions, and lack of opportunities in rural areas, alongside pull factors like better job prospects, education, and quality of life in urban centers, the theory provides a holistic view of migration dynamics. This clarity aids policymakers and researchers in developing targeted interventions to address rural outmigration. However, a notable limitation of Lee's theory is its somewhat simplistic binary classification of push and pull factors, which might not capture the complex and multifaceted nature of migration decisions.

2.8.2 New Economics of Labour Migration

In opposition to structuralist theory (the migration pessimists) and developmentalist theory (the migration optimists), the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) evolved in the 1980s and 1990s, mostly within the American academic milieu. The aforementioned methodologies appeared excessively rigid and deterministic in their ability to address the intricate complexities inherent in the interactions between migration and development. The NELM provides a more appropriate perspective on the relationship between migration and development by establishing a clearer link between the underlying explanations for migration and its resulting outcomes. This theory allows for the possibility of both positive and negative developmental outcomes. Stark's (1978 and 1991) work emphasised the importance of situating the actions of individual migrants within a broader social framework. Furthermore, Stark argued that decision-making should consider the household as the most suitable unit rather than focusing solely on the individual (Taylor, 1999).

Households undertake migration as a form of risk-sharing, according to the novel perspective. According to Stark and Levhari's (1982), it appears that individuals possess an increased ability to diversify resources, such as labour, in an effort to mitigate potential income risks when compared to households. As per the proponents of the household strategy approach, individuals engage in collective action not solely to optimise expected income but also to mitigate risks for the members of the kinship group (Skeldon, 1997; Meagher, 2001). The phenomenon occurs through the process of diversifying the sources of livelihood within households, as noted by Stark (1991) and Whitehead (1981). Families or households collectively make the decision to migrate, as posited by this approach (Krantz, 2001). Gadzar (2003) regards households or families as the primary entities responsible for decision-making. Tacoli (2002) argues that families often view migration as a strategy for achieving sustenance and diversifying risk in developing nations, rather than an

individual decision. This approach incorporates additional incentives beyond the pursuit of personal financial gain, which is a fundamental factor in the process of making migration decisions. According to Lucas and Stark (1985), migrant remittances function as income insurance for host families, making migration a household strategy in response to economic threats. Theoretically, this can elucidate the rationale behind individuals' migration patterns, even in the absence of significant disparities in income.

NELM incorporates migration as a household strategy for dealing with economic uncertainty by diversifying income sources and responding to market failures in labour, credit, insurance, and other markets. Remittances are explicitly considered because they support the concept of household interrelatedness and provide a direct link between migration's determinants and outcomes (Arango, 2017). Remittance, or the money that migrants send back to their families in their home country, is an important component of labour migration and can have significant impacts on the rural economy, including agriculture and food security. Remittances can play a crucial role in agricultural investment and production by providing households with additional financial resources to invest in farming activities. Migrants can use their remittances to purchase agricultural inputs, such as seeds, fertilisers, and equipment, which can increase agricultural production and improve food security in rural areas. Remittances can also support the development of small and medium-sized enterprises, which can create employment opportunities and stimulate economic growth. Migration can also result in the transfer of new knowledge, skills, and technologies from urban to rural areas, which can improve agricultural production and food security.

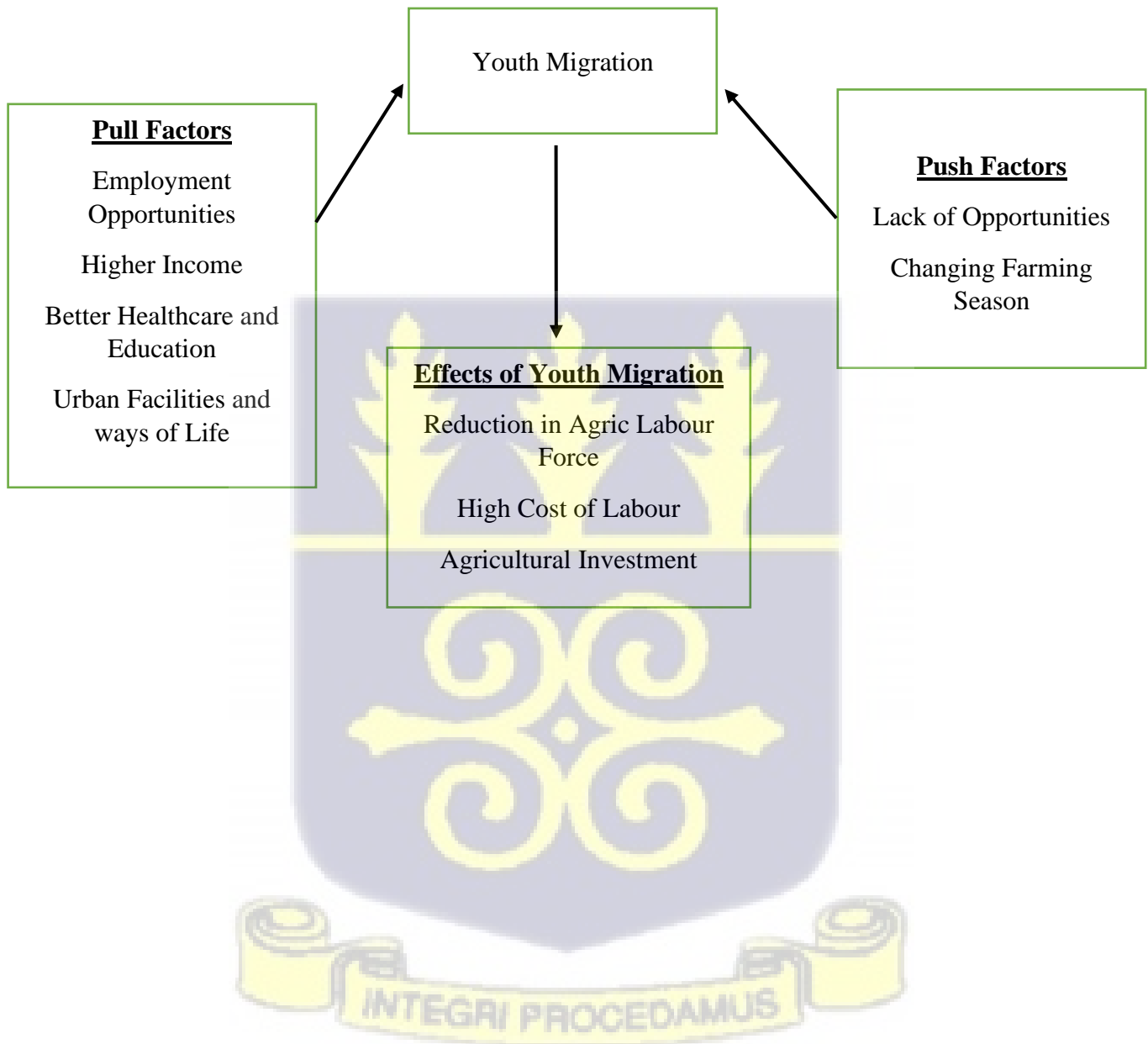
In addition to contributing to more stable and secure household livelihoods, NELM scholars contend that migration is critical in providing a potential source of investment capital, which is

especially important in the context of most developing countries' imperfect credit (capital) and risk (insurance) markets. Therefore, migration can help secure a livelihood despite various market constraints. The implementation of this measure would facilitate households' ability to allocate resources towards economically beneficial endeavours, thereby enhancing their overall standard of living. Recent research conducted in Burkina Faso (Hampshire, 2002; Wouterse, 2006) and Morocco (De Haas, 2006) suggests that internal and international migration within Africa should be primarily viewed as a way to enhance livelihood security by diversifying income, considering the relatively modest potential welfare benefits. Taylor et al. (1996) criticized prior research for overlooking the complex, often indirect, positive effects of migration and remittances on migrant-sending communities as a whole, including non-migrant households, due to its weak methodological foundations, poor analytical quality, or empiricist character.

The New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) theory offers a different perspective by emphasizing the role of remittances and the broader household strategy in migration decisions. One of the main strengths of the NELM theory is its focus on the economic benefits that migration can bring to the origin communities, particularly through remittances. These financial transfers can be crucial for improving agricultural productivity and investment, as families use the additional income to purchase better seeds, equipment, and technologies. This perspective highlights migration not merely as an individual choice but as a collective household strategy aimed at economic improvement. However, the NELM theory also has its drawbacks. It tends to idealize remittances and their potential for positive impact, sometimes overlooking the social costs and dependencies that can arise from relying on external income. Furthermore, the theory may not fully address the negative consequences of labour loss in the home community, such as reduced workforce availability and the potential decline in agricultural activities. By focusing

predominantly on economic factors, NELM might neglect the broader social and cultural impacts of migration.

2.9 Conceptual Framework



CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

The chapter explains the methods used in the research. This chapter details the research design, data collection and data analysis methods.

3.1 Research Approach

The study employed a qualitative research approach. Qualitative research is particularly suited for exploring complex and multifaceted phenomena such as migration and its impact on agricultural labour. Furthermore, qualitative research is grounded in the philosophical understanding that reality is multifaceted and social phenomena manifest in diverse ways of knowing. Some of the qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews, can capture the nuances and diversity of experiences and perspectives related to migration and agricultural labour. Qualitative research allows researchers to understand the social, cultural, and historical context of youth migration and its impact on agriculture labour in Ada West Municipality. By focusing on the lived experiences of individuals and communities, qualitative research can provide a rich and nuanced understanding of the context and factors that influence migration and its impact on agricultural labour. In-depth interviews were conducted because they provided a degree of flexibility, facilitated better understanding, and offered the prospect of gathering data that was both rich and detailed (Bryman, 2012). Qualitative research poses fewer threats to external validity because it studies subjects and participants in their natural settings (Leung, 2015). However, the major weakness of this method is the possible effect of the researchers' presence on the subjects being studied. The methodology

also allowed for situating the researcher as a youth, which was critical in understanding the many challenges faced by counterparts in rural areas that might affect their migration.

3.2 Research Design

The study also employed a descriptive design. Descriptive research aims to describe and document the characteristics, behaviours, and patterns of a particular phenomenon or population. The research design is primarily chosen to produce a detailed description of the processes, issues, and actions concerning the impact of youth migration on labour availability and agricultural development. By employing a descriptive design, the study obtained a comprehensive view of the labour dynamics and agricultural development influenced by youth migration. The strengths of a descriptive design lie in its ability to provide a comprehensive snapshot of the situation. By systematically collecting data on various indicators such as labour force source, participation, migration patterns, agricultural investment, and productivity, the study can paint a detailed picture of the effects of youth migration on labour availability and agricultural development.

3.3 Study Population

Researchers use the term "study population" to describe the larger group of prospective respondents from whom they draw a study's sample (Boateng, 2020). The study area for this research is located in the Ada West District, specifically in the communities of Toflokpo and Ada Luta. Ada West was chosen for this study due to its unique demographic and economic characteristics that provides a relevant context for exploring how the departure of young individuals impacts local farming practices and productivity. Additionally, the community's significant reliance on agriculture as a primary source of livelihood means that any changes in labour dynamics and agricultural investments are likely to have pronounced effects, making the

observations more pertinent and the findings more impactful. These communities were purposefully selected as they are actively involved in farming activities and experiencing youth migration, making them suitable for the research on youth migration, labour availability, and agricultural production.

Various key stakeholders who play crucial roles in the agricultural sector and are directly or indirectly affected by youth migration constituted the target population. The target population included development planning officers, assembly members, traditional leaders, youth groups, and heads of migrant households. By including these diverse groups in the target population, the research aims to capture a range of perspectives and experiences related to youth migration, labour availability, and agricultural production in the selected communities. This approach ensured a holistic understanding of the phenomenon and enabled the formulation of comprehensive recommendations and strategies to address migration and agricultural labour issues simultaneously.

3.4 Sampling Technique and Size

3.4.1 Sampling Technique

For the purpose of this study, it was essential to sample three groups of respondents (key informants, youth, and heads of migrant households). Assembly members and traditional leaders were selected using purposive sampling. This technique involved intentionally selecting individuals who hold positions of authority and influence within the community. Assembly members contribute to local governance and policy-making, while traditional leaders possess

cultural knowledge and play a significant role in community affairs. Including these key informants ensured the study captured the perspectives and decision-making processes related to labour availability and agricultural development affected by youth migration.

Youth groups were identified using purposive sampling. This involved specifically selecting and including representatives from youth organisations or groups actively involved in the community. The inclusion of youth groups is important as they provide insights into the experiences, aspirations, and challenges they face in their communities. Their perspectives were valuable for understanding the impact of youth migration on labour availability and agricultural production from a youth-centric standpoint.

The selection of heads of migrant farming households was done using purposive sampling. This technique involved purposefully identifying and including individuals who are heads of households with members engaged in migration. Heads of migrant households have firsthand experience with and knowledge of the effects of youth migration on labour availability and agricultural development. Their perspectives provide valuable insights into the socio-economic impact of migration on agriculture and can shed light on the challenges and opportunities arising from youth migration.

3.4.2 Sample Size

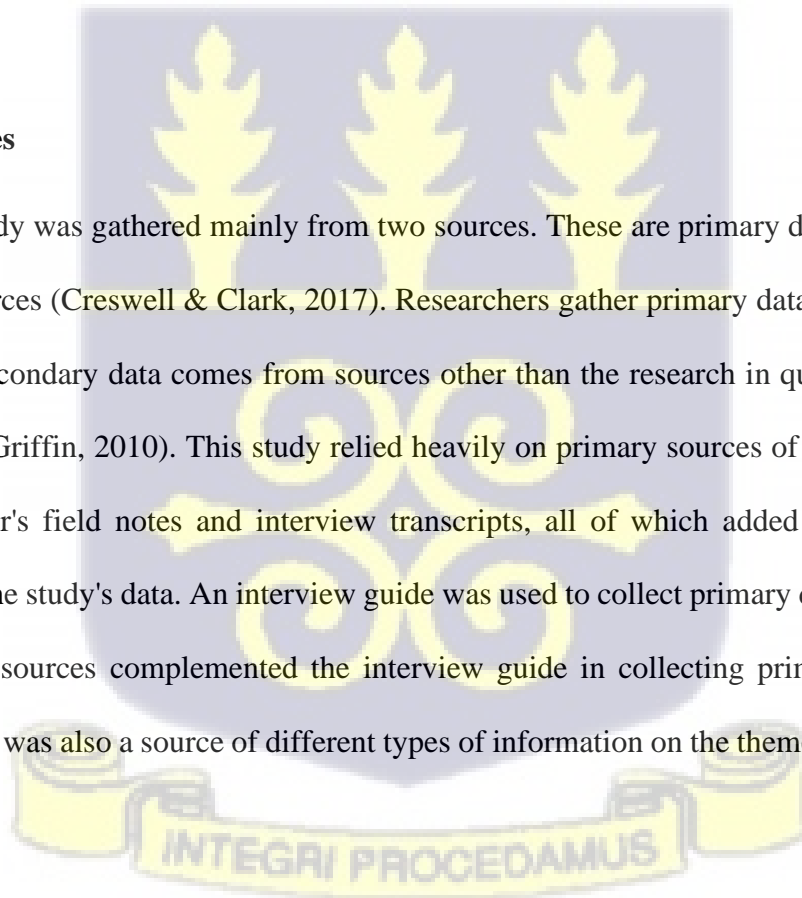
A sample size is a portion of a larger population (Creswell & Clark, 2017). It involves choosing people who are typical of the group being studied. A total of sixteen respondents were used for the study with an equal representation individuals from each community. For the purpose of the study,

eight key informants and eight heads of migrants' households were used. The eight key informants included two district planning officers, two assembly members, two traditional leaders, and two representatives from youth groups.

In selecting the sample, efforts were made to achieve gender balance. The study included a sample of female-headed households to ensure a more comprehensive representation of perspectives and experiences. Overall, the chosen sample size and composition ensure the inclusion of key stakeholders and perspectives necessary to understand the effect of youth migration on labour availability and agricultural development in the study area.

3.5 Data Sources

Data for this study was gathered mainly from two sources. These are primary data and secondary information sources (Creswell & Clark, 2017). Researchers gather primary data directly from the source, while secondary data comes from sources other than the research in question (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2010). This study relied heavily on primary sources of information, such as the researcher's field notes and interview transcripts, all of which added to the depth and authenticity of the study's data. An interview guide was used to collect primary data for this study. Secondary data sources complemented the interview guide in collecting primary data for this study. Finally, it was also a source of different types of information on the theme of migration and labour.



3.6 Data Collection Instrument and Process

An interview guide was the data collection instrument that was used to gather details that are usually connected to the respondents' opinions, beliefs, and feelings (Pandey & Chawla, 2016). Interviews were chosen because they provided flexibility, improved focus, and the potential for rich, detailed, and in-depth information (Bryman, 2012). It allowed researchers to ask follow-up questions, monitor and judge the respondent's nonverbal behaviour and habits, and draw inferences about the respondent's personality (Creswell, 2014). To ensure that all of the relevant aspects of the study were discussed during interviews, a semi-structured interview guide was used as a point of reference.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the respondents. The objectives and research questions of the study informed the structure of the interview. On average, each in-depth interview lasted 30–45 minutes. Respondents were interviewed at times and locations convenient to them so that the process would not disrupt their regular routines. This gave the respondents enough freedom and room to bring out their views, intentions, and experiences on how youth migration affects labour availability and agricultural productivity. During the interviews, the researcher sought the permission of the participants in order to record the conversations. Field notes were also taken to cross-validate the recordings that were transcribed.

3.7 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the qualitative data collected in the study. Thematic analysis involves identifying, organising, and interpreting patterns or themes within the data. Audio recordings were transcribed verbatim. In a methodical and iterative way, the interviews

were first transcribed, thoroughly checked, and categorised per the main interview guide areas. For emphasis, direct quotes from respondents were employed to create a mental picture or emphasise what was said rather than drawing conclusions, which might not effectively reflect the message relayed by the respondents. In this study, thematic analysis was used to explore the labour regimes used in the communities within the municipality, the effect of youth migration on labour availability, the resulting economic effect on labour costs, as well as the positive aspects such as remittance and agricultural investment.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

In undertaking the study, several ethical considerations were observed. Ethical considerations help ensure that research clarifies any misleading issues and protects the safety of respondents or participants in the study (Akaranga & Makau, 2016). Before each interview, the researcher gave prospective respondents a clear statement of the research objective to help them understand the nature of the research and any potential risks or benefits. Before conducting the interview, respondents were asked for their consent, which was obtained either verbally or in writing, depending on their level of education. The research's objectives and methods were explained in the languages most likely to be spoken by the respondents (Dangme, Ga, Twi, and English). Participants were assured that their responses and identities would be kept anonymous and confidential. The identities of respondents were presented anonymously in the thesis with the use of pseudonyms. The use of pseudonyms ensured the confidentiality and security of any collected data and protected participants' privacy. Further, confidentiality was assured through the use of responses and information for only the purpose of this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussions of the study. The section presents the socio-demographic characteristics of the heads of migrant agriculture households. It also presents and discusses the results of the types of crops cultivated by respective households. The section provides and discusses the nature of youth migration, labour systems in the district, effect of youth migration on agricultural labour availability and agricultural reinvestment.

4.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Heads of Migrant Agriculture Households

Out of the twelve heads of migrant agricultural households sampled for the study, 67% were males. Regarding the age of the participants, the eldest respondent was 53 years old, while the youngest was 25 years old. The average age of the respondents is 39 years. Among the study population, a significant majority (83.3%) of the respondents reported being either in a monogamous or polygamous marriage. In terms of education, 67% of the household heads had no formal education. The rest of the respondents reported having attained formal education at various levels: basic, secondary, and technical education.

The district is agrarian in its structure. Therefore, almost all households sampled actively engaged in diverse forms of agricultural production. They cultivate a wide range of crops, including vegetables, fruits, cereals, and tuber crops. Maize, tomato, pepper, and cassava are some of the commonest crops produced by households. Some participants also integrate animal husbandry into their agricultural practices, raising poultry and small livestock.

4.3 Agricultural Labour Systems in Ada West

The Ada West District's agricultural landscape is inextricably associated with the multifaceted interplay of agriculture, migration, and labour. The migration of individuals and families in search of economic opportunities or other factors has a significant impact on the labour dynamics of the district. As people migrate, they inevitably leave behind or bring along their usual responsibilities in agriculture, which has a direct influence on the labour supply in their respective communities. These migration patterns have a significant impact on the decisions households make regarding their agricultural labour systems. Gaining insight into the connection between agriculture, migration, and labour is essential for understanding the complex and ever-changing labour systems in the Ada West District. The various agricultural labour systems would be covered in this section.

4.3.1 Family and Household Labour

In the Ada West District of Ghana, just like in many other rural areas, the use of family labour for agricultural production is highly prevalent. It is worth noting that the data gathered from interviews sheds light on the fact that in the Ada West District, a significant number of households heavily depend on family labour for their agricultural activities. This indicates that parents, children, and other family members are actively involved in a range of farming activities. The family labour system in these households is an approach that is practical. It guarantees that all members of the family participate in activities such as planting, caring for crops, and gathering the harvest. This approach is mainly motivated by economic factors and the availability of resources, making it a

budget-friendly and effective choice for these families. In these households, the focus is on working together as a team to ensure the farming tasks are completed with maximum efficiency. According to one interviewee, families can efficiently manage their agricultural demands by relying on the unity and shared responsibility within the family unit;

In our family, we solely rely on household labour to effectively manage our farm. Both my wife and children actively participate in the farm's daily activities, tending to planting, caring for the crops, and assisting with the harvest. For example, my wife takes care of planting and tending to the crops, while my children assist in harvesting. The combined efforts of my wife and children prove to be sufficient to meet the farm's needs, without requiring external labour. (Inusah, 49 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023)

Another respondent also mentioned this with regards to his household's contribution as labour for their farming activities;

For my household, the labour used for our farm is from this same household, let's say this family. My wife and I handle most of the work, but our two sons are currently in school, one at Ada SHS and the other at the university. During some weekends and school vacations, they come back to help us on the farm, which is a tremendous help. (Dzidzi, 33 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023)

The Unit Committee officer for Ada Luta electoral area confirmed the use of family labour for agricultural production as the most prominent in the Ada West District. In his remarks, he indicated that;

In our community, they often rely on family labour as the primary means of handling agricultural tasks. It's a common practice here, and it makes sense for many households. The reason is simple: it's cost-effective, and they can trust one another. When the work piles up during the busy season, their family members, including their children all come on board to get the work done. It's a flexible and adaptable system that suits their needs, allowing them to efficiently manage their farms. This approach isn't just about tradition; it's a practical choice that's been passed down and continues to work well for many families in their community. (Unit Committee Officer, 43 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023)

In numerous rural areas in Ghana, agricultural production heavily depends on manual labour, with limited mechanisation and minimal utilisation of wage labour. The focus on manual, family-based

agriculture points to the vital importance of household labour in the agricultural production system. The family-based approach emphasises the essential significance of household labour in driving farm expansion and serving as the foundation of the district's agricultural practices. The findings support the argument made by Naamwintome and Bagston (2013) that a large majority of households depend on family labour for their agricultural needs. It was observed that families regarded family labour as a reliable and cost-effective choice, making it the main labour system for their agricultural activities. The study highlighted the importance of cost-effectiveness and trust within family units as key factors influencing this dependence. These studies highlight the significance of family-based, household labour as a prevalent and essential labour system in rural Ghana.

4.3.2 Households' Reliance on Exchange Labour

Based on the interviews, it was found that a number of households found exchange labour to be an effective solution for their agricultural labour demands. In agricultural communities, the exchange of labour is a long-standing and collective tradition, where households unite to provide mutual assistance during times of necessity. This system embodies a reciprocal arrangement, where individuals willingly contribute their time and effort to assist others with different agricultural tasks, knowing that when their own farms require attention, the favour will be returned. In these tight-knit communities, the act of joining forces for exchange labour not only guarantees the essential cultivation and harvest of crops but also nurtures a feeling of togetherness, collective accountability, and the lasting power of social bonds. One participant acknowledged their utilisation of exchange labour by stating that;

In our household, farming is truly a collaborative endeavour, with the active involvement of not only our family but also the unmatched assistance of our friends and community. If you were to stay with us here, you would observe a collective effort on the farm, as it is a longstanding tradition that is deeply ingrained in our way of life. We help each other out, and our farming tradition is based on this collaborative support system. (Adjei, 47 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023)

Ekue, 37-year-old resident explain why he uses exchange labour as a source of agricultural labour system. He stated that;

When the workload on our farm becomes overwhelming, we lean on our dependable circle of friends and family, fully aware that when their time comes, we will reciprocate the support. Thanks to this tried-and-true system, we seldom need to hire outside help. It not only ensures an ample workforce but also proves to be cost-effective. Our shared commitment to helping one another not only lightens the load but also strengthens the bonds within our community. (Ekue, 37 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023)

The study's findings highlight the significant benefits of labour exchange systems within communities. Through the collaboration of friends and family, these systems provide a long-lasting solution to address the needs of agriculture during busy periods. It is worth mentioning that households can achieve substantial cost savings by reducing their dependence on hiring external labour. In addition to its economic implications, the practice of labour exchange also fosters stronger social bonds and community ties. The mutual exchange encourages a feeling of reliance and trust between individuals, ultimately leading to a stronger and more resilient community. In addition, this system frequently expands beyond close family circles, establishing a wider network of assistance and unity. Ultimately, the labour exchange system demonstrates its versatility and long-term viability by not only boosting agricultural productivity, but also fostering stronger social connections within communities.

4.3.3 Households' Reliance on Hired Labour

The research findings highlight the importance of hired labour for certain households in effectively managing their agricultural activities. This reliance is often linked to the migration of family members. During the interviews, it became evident that some household heads occasionally sought hired labour to compensate for the absence of family members involved in their farming endeavours. In addition, some households mentioned that they hired permanent labourers to fill the labour shortage caused by family members who had migrated. One individual, who played both roles as a household head and a key informant, shared their perspective on this matter:

Indeed, I do employ individuals to assist me with farm work. Farming is a demanding and labour-intensive endeavour, making it challenging to manage all the tasks single-handedly. Therefore, the need for hired labour becomes evident. While my children do occasionally lend a hand, most of the time, they are away from home, necessitating the engagement of hired labour, especially for tasks such as land clearing, planting, pesticide application and harvesting. This need for additional labour is particularly pronounced when cultivating yams, as yam farming demands a significant amount of manpower. (Adamu, 48 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/ 2023).

This conclusion is consistent with the work of Scoones and Mavedzenge (2018), who suggested that hired labour is an important source of labour for rural farmers, especially in situations where traditional farm labour sources—like household members or communal exchange labour, in which farmers pool labour and take turns working on each other's farms—prove inadequate or are unable to meet demand.

The study also investigated the extent to which households depend on hired labour, specifically looking at the influence of gender on the hiring of labour services. Household heads who utilised hired labour provided responses indicating that some male-headed households relied on hired labour for their farming activities, while others mentioned that they did not. The interviews made

a clear distinction between households run by men and those run by women. It was observed that male-headed households were more inclined to hire labour, while female-headed households tended to rely on other means.

Adiza, a 41-year-old woman from Toflokpo, explained that some female-headed migrant agriculture households choose not to hire labour for their farms due to limited financial resources.

This viewpoint is evident in the quote that follows:

Some of us lack the financial means to hire laborers for our farms. Consequently, if we believe that our physical capacity can manage just one or two acres, we focus on that. Ultimately, we work within our limitations. If we had the financial resources to purchase agricultural inputs or hire additional labour to assist us, we could engage in larger-scale farming. (Adiza, 41 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/ 2023).

Adiza's account sheds light on the impact of women's constrained capacity to hire additional help for their household farming tasks. This situation adds to the notable difference between men and women in terms of cultivating large areas of land. Subsistence farming for household consumption is primarily carried out by women. It is worth noting that this observation is consistent with the findings of Mishra et al. (2017), who argue that female-headed household farmers tend to manage smaller farms in comparison to their male counterparts.

4.4 Migration and Agricultural Labour

The relationship between migration and agricultural labour plays an essential part in determining the viability and long-term viability of farming in rural regions. The migration of family members can have a significant impact on the labour limitations experienced by farming communities,

greatly influencing their ability to efficiently cultivate and oversee their agricultural operations. When family members migrate for work, it can result in labour shortages during crucial agricultural seasons, which may have an impact on crop planting, cultivation, and harvesting. On the other hand, the money sent by migrants can provide much-needed financial support to the local agricultural sector, allowing for investments in modern farming techniques and tools. A thorough examination of the intricate connection between migration and agricultural labour highlights the importance of gaining a holistic understanding of its effects on rural communities and their food security. In order to gain a thorough understanding of how youth migration affects agricultural labour in the district, it is crucial to analyse the trends of youth migration and the factors that drive their migration. The study provides a vital context for evaluating the impact of this migration on agricultural production.

4.4.1 The Nature of Youth Migration in the Ada West Municipality

The migration patterns within the Ada West District paint a captivating story, characterised by unique movements and trends among its young population. Based on the responses received from the key informants, it is evident that the district undergoes a dual pattern of migration, encompassing both outmigration and immigration. Nevertheless, the departure of young people from the district seems to be more noticeable and impactful. A noticeable trend is the significant migration of young people from Ada West, with many of them leaving because they want to access better educational and employment opportunities in cities or larger towns. Many young people from the district often move to nearby cities, regional capitals, or even urban hubs further away in search of better educational opportunities, vocational training, or job prospects. The migration of young people brings about a significant change in the district's demographics, as a considerable

number of its younger residents move away for either a short period or permanently. This can greatly impact the social and economic dynamics of the community. Eku's response offers a detailed portrayal of the actuality of youth migration, showcasing a unique back-and-forth movement of young individuals. He mentioned that:

In the Ada West District, youth migration is an undeniable reality. We observe a distinctive two-way movement of our young population, where the out-migration trend is notably more pronounced, surpassing the pace of in-migration. Families, driven by a fervent belief in the prospects beyond our district, are increasingly encouraging their youth to explore opportunities, predominantly in the urban hubs of Tema, Ashaiman, and Accra. As we learn more about young people moving in and out, it becomes clear that youth migration really affects our community in Ada West. (Eku, 37 years old, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023).

4.4.1.1 Seasonal/Circular Migration

The research uncovers a notable pattern in youth migration within Ada West District, with a strong focus on seasonal youth migration. Specifically, it is common to notice the youth undertaking migratory journeys during the dry seasons. The migration pattern observed here follows a distinct seasonal trend, as the youthful population temporarily migrates during times when agricultural work is less demanding. The close interconnection between youth migration and agricultural labour is believed to be the main factor contributing to this phenomenon. During periods of reduced agricultural activity, youths are often motivated to explore alternative opportunities. On the other hand, during the periods of rainfall, these youths return to their hometowns in order to meet the increased need for labour during the farming season. During this period, their participation in farming activities becomes essential, and they enthusiastically contribute to many different tasks, such as land preparation, planting, and harvesting. Elikem, a 25-year-old youth, provided a description of the cyclical migratory pattern of the youth in Toflokpo;

In our town, you will find a lot of the youth who move around, some coming in, while others head out. When the rainy season arrives, we see a good number of young people

from other places coming here to work, particularly on our farms. They lend a hand when we need it most. But when the rains stop and it gets dry, it's often our own young folks who choose to leave. So, this youth migration, it goes both ways, people coming in during the rainy season and our own folks heading out when it's dry. It's kind of like a rhythm, you know? When there's work to be done here, they come, and when things slow down, they go. It's just how things work around here. Sometimes, those who leave find better opportunities in bigger towns and cities, and they send back some help for their families here. It's like a circle of support that keeps our community going (Elikem, 25 years old, Toflokpo, 06/07/2023)

Similar to Elikem, Ahiavi stated that;

It's true that lots of the youth here, they leave our town, especially when it's dry and there's no work around. They go to other places looking for jobs, because there just isn't enough work when it's dry. But what's good is, they do come back, especially when it's time for harvest. The youth leaving', it's a real concern, no doubt. But it's also a cycle. When times are tough and there's nothing' to do here, they go away, but when the fields are ready for harvest, they come back to help out, because this place is home. When they are away, some of them find jobs in those other places, and they send money back home to support their families. (Ahiavi, 50 years old, Toflokpo, 06/07/2023)

The findings highlight a noteworthy pattern observed in the Ada West District, where young people migrate in a predictable cycle that is strongly influenced by changes in the seasons and job prospects. This pattern is consistent with the existing research on rural youth migration in Ghana. For instance, the study conducted by Gough and Birch-Thomsen (2016) sheds light on the migration patterns of rural youth in Ghana's agricultural regions. Their research emphasises the common occurrence of seasonal migration, where young individuals from different areas migrate to farming communities during the planting and harvesting seasons. The finding also highlights the economic aspect of this migration trend, as young people who leave often seek better opportunities in cities. The economic motivation for migration aligns with the research conducted by Habeeb on the factors that drive youth migration in Ghana (Habeeb, 2020). It is observed that

the scarcity of job opportunities in rural areas and the appeal of urban employment attract young individuals to migrate to cities during the dry season.

4.4.1.2 Permanent Migration

The findings additionally point out an interesting migration pattern among the youth in Ada West District, characterised by a significant trend of permanently migrating to urban centres. This form of migration is mainly motivated by the desire for improved employment opportunities, which is often a result of the limited job prospects in the district. These youthful people who migrate permanently often settle in urban areas, prioritising the development of their professional paths and means of sustenance. This form of migration is different from the cyclical or seasonal migrations that were previously discussed. Young people who opt for permanent migration often settle in bustling cities, making only occasional visits to their hometowns. The unit committee officer discusses the prevalence of permanent youth migration in Ada West District;

In Ada West, some of the youth embark on permanent migrations to larger urban centres such as Tema, Ashaiman, and Accra, in search of better employment opportunities. This migration is often driven by the limited job prospects within the District. Once they establish themselves in these urban areas, their return to Ada West becomes infrequent, if at all, as they prioritize building their careers and livelihoods in the city. Instead, their primary engagement with their families back homes revolve around remitting financial support, which plays a crucial role in sustaining their households. (Unit Committee Officer, 43 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023)

This type of migration arises from a lack of job opportunities in the area, which pushes young people to search for better prospects in cities. This shift towards permanent migration indicates a shift from seasonal and circular mobility to a more stable way of life. Many young migrants choose to settle in bustling urban centres, where they can pursue their ambitions and create a fulfilling life for themselves. As a consequence, their return to Ada West becomes infrequent or non-existent. Previous studies in similar rural contexts have found that the nature of permanent migration is

consistent with the observations made. These studies highlight the significance of economic push factors and limited employment opportunities as the main drivers of youth migration to urban areas (Bell & Ward, 2000; Nelson et al., 2010). In addition, these findings highlight the essential part that remittances play in sustaining the financial stability of households that are separated due to rural-to-urban migration. This trend is commonly observed in such migration patterns.

4.4.1.3 Intra-District Migration

The study's findings uncovered a noteworthy trend of youth migration within the district. It is clear that the responses from interviews reveal a significant pattern of young people moving within the same district, particularly during the rainy season. During this period, numerous young people from different communities in the district embarked on migratory journeys to nearby areas in the district, where they enthusiastically engage as temporary workers on farms. This particular type of migration within the district, which differs from the usual seasonal migration, is mainly driven by the increase in agricultural endeavours in Ada West. A head of a household discusses the nature of this migration within the district;

Indeed, the migration of youth from one town to the other is a common occurrence in our community. As the rainy season approaches and agricultural activities surge in nearby areas, a substantial number of individuals from Ada Luta embark on journeys to these communities including Goi, Bonikope, Nakomkope, Koluedor, Matseko and Madavunu. There, they actively participate as casual laborers on farms. (Atiemo, 44 years, Ada Luta 06/07/2023).

The prevalence of this intra-district migration reflects the adaptable nature of rural livelihoods, where individuals are willing to travel within the district to access seasonal employment, even on a short-term basis. Such mobility is a prevalent characteristic in agricultural regions where labour demands are inherently tied to particular seasons. With the arrival of the rainy season, nearby areas experience a surge in the need for agricultural labour. This leads individuals to temporarily leave

their home communities. They willingly engage in casual labour on farms in the district, mainly motivated by economic rewards.

4.4.2 Reasons for Youth Migration in Ada West District

Young people's decision to migrate is influenced by a variety of factors, which are specific to their own circumstances and aspirations. Various factors, such as economic opportunities, education, family ties, safety considerations, lifestyle aspirations, and even environmental conditions, can all play a role in influencing the choice to migrate. It is essential to recognise and understand these motivations, as they greatly influence the nature and patterns of youth migration. The interviews yielded valuable insights into the factors driving youth migration in the Ada West District, as expressed by the heads of households.

4.4.2.1 Job Prospects in Urban Areas

Most of the respondents interviewed highlighted economic factors as the main reason behind youth migration. These factors include job prospects, lack of financial resources, and the desire to explore different opportunities. The finding strongly corresponds to the key attributes of youth migration in Ghana. According to Awumbila (2017), there are various economic factors that drive youth to migrate to urban areas. These factors include income disparities, poverty, limited employment prospects, restricted access to capital, and the desire for better opportunities for personal or household well-being. During an interview, Hakeem, a 25-year-old native of Ada Luta, succinctly conveyed his thoughts on the matter;

Luta is where most of us were born, and this is what we consider our home. There's no place better to live your life than your hometown, but unfortunately, there isn't much to do here. It's been about two years since I completed SHS, and I have been sitting at home

without any activities. At times, my parents view me as a burden because I can't contribute financially. Even if I could gather some small amount of money, I could start something, but there's nobody here to assist. Personally, I have plans to move and seek opportunities elsewhere. I'm just waiting for the right opportunity to acquire some funds, and then I will make my move. I am confident that when I do, I will find something to engage in (Hakeem, 25 years old, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023).

The finding above vividly illustrates the economic frustrations experienced by many youth in rural areas, placing significant pressure on them to migrate in search of better opportunities in urban centres. Much like Elikem, Alima, a 28-year-old return migrant from Toflokpo, also shared a similar perspective, stating:

The difficult living conditions in this community are a driving force behind the decision of many young people to migrate to Accra. In my case, I lost my father a few years ago, and since then, life has become incredibly challenging for me, my mother, and my younger siblings. The situation worsened after I gave birth. It was a tough situation, so I made the choice to migrate. Although my mother was initially hesitant to allow me to leave, I insisted on migrating for some time because I believed I could save money to support my family back home. Currently, I have learned the trade of hairdressing, and I operate a small shop in Ashiaman, offering home services as well. I periodically return to my hometown for family events like the one I am attending now, which is a family funeral. (Alima, 28-year-old, 13/07/2023).

The narrative provided above strongly supports the argument that migration is a strategic way of sustaining one's livelihood (Awumbila et al., 2014). It empowers young individuals to shape their future career paths by gaining financial resources to start businesses or by acquiring practical skills like sewing, jewelry-making, or hairstyling. By acquiring this knowledge, individuals are able to effectively address both their personal needs and the needs of their family and friends.

4.4.2.2 Changing Farming Season

Additionally, some of the responses highlighted that youth migration is influenced by changing farming seasons. This is an expected finding, considering the district's extended dry season and short rainy season, which compel people to seek fertile lands for agricultural activities and

employment opportunities in other regions of the country. Edem, a 37-year-old key informant in Luta, explained this aspect of youth out-migration as follows:

In our community, we only have one farming season, which occurs from May to September. After harvesting your crops in September, there are limited opportunities for the youth. If you're not careful, you might end up using all the income you earned from your harvest to feed your family. By the time the new farming season begins, you may not have the funds to cultivate the land. Therefore, immediately after the harvest, many of the youth opt to migrate to other urban centres in the country to seek employment and create opportunities for themselves. (Edem, 37 years old, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023).

4.4.2.3 Better Educational Opportunities

Also, other respondents indicated that some of the youth migrate to attain higher education. One of the key drivers of youth migration in Ada West is the pursuit of better educational opportunities. Many young individuals from the district seek to access improved education in urban centres, which often offer a wider range of educational institutions, courses, and resources. This quest for quality education motivates them to temporarily or permanently relocate to areas with more robust educational infrastructure, such as nearby towns or cities within Ghana. Inusah, a 48-year-old head of a migrant household from Toflokpo elaborated on this finding by stating that:

In this community, we have is just some few SHS institutions and no university. The maximum education you can attain in the village is up to JHS level and afterward, you have to move somewhere else to further your education. When my son completed his SHS here, he moved to Accra for his tertiary education at Accra Technical University. Ever since, he moved there, he does not want to return to live as he has settled at Accra. (Inusah, 49 years old, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023)

This suggests that their decision to migrate from rural to urban regions is influenced by their educational background. Since there is no tertiary education available in rural areas and some of the youth had completed their primary and secondary education, they might choose to migrate in order to further their education. According to Ajero et al. (2013), primary and secondary education reflect the point at which the majority of people leave their parents to pursue their education

because some of these educational institutions may not be accessible in the rural areas where they live.

4.4.2.4 Family Reunification and Marriage

For the study, marriage was one of the reasons for youth migration in Ada West. The youth, particularly females, migrate to join their spouses and to establish marital households in new communities or areas. The institution of marriage played a central role in shaping the migration patterns and decisions of these young individuals, reflecting the significance of family and relationship dynamics in the context of migration in Ada West. Furthermore, it was noted that some youth migrate due to marriage. Eku, a 37-year-old key informant from Luta, provided an intriguing insight into this aspect, stating;

Many of the youth, particularly females, choose to migrate from our community due to marriage. This practice has become a modern fashion where young women frequently leave their hometowns to establish families with their husbands, thereby forming new ties and connections in different locations. (Eku, 37 years old, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023)

These findings align with a study by Awumbila (2017), which identified various factors, including obligations to kin such as marriage or inheritance practices, as influential drivers of migration. Additionally, some individuals migrate for reasons such as experiencing urban life or seeking social recognition and acceptance.

4.4.3 The Effect of Youth Migration on Labour Availability

The significance of labour in agricultural output cannot be overstated, especially in developing nations where the level of mechanisation in agriculture is still considerably low. There is an obvious relationship between the presence of agricultural labour and productivity levels. The

phenomenon of youth migration has a noticeable impact on the labour supply in the agricultural industry, consequently influencing agricultural productivity. Most of the responses in the interviews made it clear that the migration of their household members had led to a shortage of labour within the household.

Youth migration is frequently associated with the departure of dynamic, energetic individuals who have long been essential to farming activities. Their immense physical strength, unlimited creativity, and remarkable ability to adapt to ever-changing agricultural practices have positioned them as indispensable contributors to rural economies. However, as individuals set off on their quests for improved opportunities, they create a vacuum in the workforce within their local communities. The implications of this labour shortage in the agricultural industry are significant. The remaining workforce in farming is often comprised of older generations and children. However, their ability to sustain farming activities is limited due to factors such as age and skillset. This demographic shift results in a noticeable decrease in agricultural productivity, along with a heartfelt battle for livelihoods. Adjei, a 47-year-old head of household shares insights on the impact of youth migration on the labour system in the community;

Loss of labour as a consequence of youth migration has had a disproportionately detrimental impact on agriculture here. Older people and children are essentially all that are left, and they have no way to support themselves through farming. You just have to look around to notice how the loss of young labour has caused some families to abandon farming. It has exacerbated the poverty that already exists in our homes and communities. (Adjei, 47 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023)

Adiza, a 41-year-old head of a household confirmed the assertion of Adjei when she affirmed that;

The land is right here, as you can see. Take a look around; there's ample land available. However, our primary challenge lies in the scarcity of labour on the farm. A significant number of our young people have chosen to migrate, leaving the responsibility to us, the older generation. Unfortunately, we lack the physical strength and endurance to engage in prolonged and extensive farming. While there's an abundance of land, the workforce is insufficient. If we had access to more labour, we could significantly expand our farming

operations, leading to increased maize production. The key constraint we face is the shortage of labour. (Adiza, 41 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023)

The respondents highlighted that the migration of young individuals leads to an overall reduction in the scale of their agricultural holdings. The aforementioned circumstance may be attributed to the old age of the remaining family members and their insufficient ability to employ labourers for agricultural purposes. The migration of youth therefore results in a decrease in the scale of agricultural production. A 53-year-old head of household disclosed that youth migration, specifically those in agricultural activities, causes a shortage of food in the household due to the shortage in labour. He explained that;

We engage in vegetables and sometimes watermelon farming, and the primary workforce for this task comprises the younger members of our community. However, when these young individuals migrate to urban areas, it poses limitations on the scale of our farms. In their absence, not only do we face constraints in terms of labour availability, but also the financial means to hire additional help for tasks like weeding become scarce. Consequently, our agricultural activities are often restricted to what can be managed by the remaining workforce within their physical capabilities. If these young members were present, they would have significantly contributed to expanding our farming operations, enabling us to cultivate on a larger scale. This, in turn, would result in increased yields and a surplus of both food and income, benefiting not only the community but also providing support to the very individuals who migrate in search of opportunities elsewhere. (Fred, 53 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023)

This loss has a significant impact on the traditional labour force, resulting in a shift where older adults and children become the main caretakers of farming activities (Findley & Phadera, 2017). As a result, some families are forced to give up farming entirely. The noticeable consequence of this phenomenon is the increase in unattended fields and uncultivated land, serving as a powerful testament to the importance of youth participation in agriculture (Stark et al., 1987). The decision to give up farming is particularly worrisome, as it has the potential to worsen the already elevated prevalence of poverty in rural communities.

The rise in the cost of hired labour can be attributed, at least in part, to the scarcity of available labourers, possibly due to out-migration. Based on the responses from the interviews, it was found that there has been a noticeable increase in labour costs, which can be attributed to the out-migration flows. This poses a significant challenge as a result of the ageing farmer phenomenon and the limited mechanisation of agricultural practices, which requires the acquisition of affordable labour resources for agricultural purposes. As a result, the individuals who stay in the community expect higher wages as a result.

Labour is an incredibly scarce resource in our area, and during particularly challenging periods, I find myself compelled to seek help from labourers who come from other areas as hired hands. At times, these labourers stay with us for several months, and I take on the responsibility of providing them with food. I usually engage their services for an entire farming season or, in some cases, for an entire year, depending on the demands of the season. It's a challenging situation to navigate, given the considerable costs involved. Yet, when confronted with such labour shortages, it becomes a matter of survival for us. (Atiemo, 44 years, Ada Luta 06/07/2023)

Kessie's (2016) study in the Kpando area also concludes similarly established a relationship between migration and labour cost. The impact of migration on wellbeing stems from the increased expenses associated with human labour, ultimately driving up the overall cost of food production. Interestingly, despite these challenges, farmers continue to enlist the assistance of hired labour for tasks that demand substantial manpower. These tasks usually involve activities such as transportation, weeding, harvesting, planting, and ploughing. This trend highlights the continual dependence on hired labour for labour-intensive agricultural activities, despite the financial burdens involved.

However, according to some key informants, the migration of their household members did not have a negative impact on the labour availability for their household farms. Dzidzi, a 33-year-old,

provided a thought-provoking perspective by clarifying that while the assertion is logically true, it doesn't necessarily hold true in practice. This idea was captured in the following quote:

The majority of young people in our community can be likened to seasonal migrants who return home to engage in farming during the rainy season. From my perspective, I believe that youth migration hasn't caused any labour shortages in any significant manner because they tend to leave the community only during the off-farm season and return when the farming season commences. If they were not to return during the farming season or stayed away for an extended period, then it might indeed reduce the workforce available for farm labour. (Dzidzi, 33 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023).

The case of Dzidzi illustrates two distinct forms of migration: seasonal and permanent. Dzidzi recognised the favourable effects of seasonal migration, as individuals come back to the community during the rainy season to participate in farming activities. However, he raised concerns about the potential for labour shortages resulting from permanent migration. Dzidzi's perspective emphasises the significance of migration as a means of providing security. During periods when farming is not possible, migrants choose to work in other areas and then come back to their hometowns during the farming season. They bring back valuable resources like goods or money that can be used to support agricultural production. This supports the argument made by Rademacher-Schulz et al. (2014), who observed that many migrant youths tend to go back to their home regions during the rainy season to help with agricultural activities.

Research on the link between migration and agricultural labour reveals that households rely on seasonal migrants for their activities, despite the benefits of migration for livelihood diversification. The actual threat to agricultural production lies in the phenomenon of permanent migration. However, an inadequate number of seasonal migrants in relation to the labour demands of the communities during the rainy season leads to an increase in labour costs, which negatively impacts agricultural production.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE EFFECTS OF YOUTH MIGRATION ON AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT AND LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Introduction

The third objective of this study focuses on the examination of the impact of youth migration on agricultural investment and local development through an in-depth analysis of remittance dynamics. The central aim is to understand how remittances, both financial and social, received by households in Ada West District influence agricultural practices and contribute to broader local development. A key avenue through which the repercussions of youth migration manifest in rural areas is the flow of remittances. These financial and social contributions from migrant youth to their home communities have the potential to shape agricultural investment and play a crucial role in local development. To assess the impact of youth migration on agricultural investment, a comprehensive understanding of the nature and types of remittances received by households is essential. Different forms of remittances, be they financial or social, exert diverse effects on the agricultural landscape. Financial remittances, for instance, directly contribute to capital formation for agricultural ventures, enabling the adoption of modern technologies, improved seed varieties, and sustainable farming practices. By assessing how these various remittance streams influence agricultural practices, the study aims to unravel nuanced mechanisms through which youth migration shapes rural economies.



5.2 Nature and Type of Remittance Received by Households in the Ada West District

The concept of remittances plays an instrumental part in shaping how we understand the mutually beneficial relationship that exists between migration and socioeconomic development. Based on responses gathered during the interviews, it was noted that the respondents receive remittances from their migrant family members. This observation is in line with the principles of the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) theory, which suggests that individuals remit money to their households as part of a long-term agreement between the migrant and the family. It's a reciprocal arrangement for the family's financial and in-kind support, rather than solely an act of altruism.

The high proportion of households receiving remittances could reflect social pressure on migrants to send money back home and the occasional receipt of in-kind assistance from their originating households. Torvikey (2012) and Kwankye and Anarfi (2011) highlight the significant impact of remittances in Ghana, helping to alleviate the negative consequences of financial shocks on household welfare. Even when migrants themselves may not find migration particularly beneficial, sending remittances to their originating households remains a significant priority. This was encapsulated by Abiba, who explained:

My son set out to improve the difficult circumstances faced by our family back in our hometown. Regardless of the amount, he is committed to sending them whatever he can manage, ensuring we have something to sustain ourselves (Abiba, 39 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023).

Among the respondents who receive remittances, Adamu, a key informant in Toflokpo, affirmed in an in-depth interview that:

Sure thing! Among our migrant family members, sending money back home is quite common. You see, the exact amount sent each year can really vary from one household to

another, depending on the financial situation of the migrants and their specific circumstances. If I were to give you a rough estimate, I'd say it could be around 5000 Ghana cedis per year, on average. Now, these remittances play a vital role for families like ours who are back in our hometown. They help us deal with financial challenges and make our lives better. It shows just how committed our migrant family members are to improving our situation here. (Adamu, 48 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023).

The findings reveal that remittances are a significant aspect of the economic support provided by migrants to their originating households. This underscores the importance of remittances in contributing to the economic well-being of families left behind by migrants. Remittances serve as a form of financial assistance that helps alleviate the economic challenges faced by households in the migrants' hometowns. These funds are vital for sustaining livelihoods and supporting basic needs. Additionally, the variation in remittance amounts suggests that the level of support depends on the individual circumstances of both the migrant and the originating household.

5.3 The Effect of Youth Migration on Agricultural Investment in the Ada West District

The study sought to assess the extent to which youth migrants contribute to and support agricultural activities. The findings from the respondents strongly suggest that migrants play a significant role in farming, whether by providing in-kind contributions or through financial assistance. It's clear that the vast majority of the migrants play an active role in investing in agriculture. In an in-depth interview with a return migrant from Luta, now based in Ashiaman, it was disclosed that:

I can share from my own experience. You see, I'm a migrant myself, and I'm based in Ashiaman. I have got a farm here, but when I'm not around, my wife takes care of it. When the farming season rolls around and I can't make it back, I send money home for them to prepare the land and grow maize on my behalf. Currently, I've got about 4 acres of maize farm here in my hometown. (Faisal, 35 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023).

In addition to Faisal's perspective, Atiemo, another key informant in Toflokpo, also provided insights on this matter:

Yes, you will find that many of them do invest in farming, especially if they have trustworthy individuals back home who can oversee the farming operations for them. In such cases, it's quite common for migrants to send money back home to support agricultural activities. They see it as a way to make the most of the land and resources they have in their hometowns, even while they're away pursuing opportunities elsewhere." (Atiemo, 44 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023).

Atiemo's account offers valuable insights into the crucial contribution made by young migrants in facilitating financial support for agricultural endeavours in their home communities. The significance of trust between migrants and their households left behind cannot be overstated, as it plays an essential role in influencing migrants' choices to invest in agriculture. This discovery is in line with a study by Adaawen and Owusu (2013), which found that when migrants decide to invest in their home communities, their families frequently act as trustworthy agents to manage these investments while they are away.

It is important to mention that numerous studies have provided evidence that migration encourages investments in household farming in the areas of origin (Greiner & Sakdapolrak, 2013; Adaawen & Owusu, 2013). However, these studies have also highlighted that the percentage of migrants who actually invest in agriculture can be relatively low. Nevertheless, it's important to note that the decision of migrants to invest in agriculture is dependent upon the specific conditions and the profitability of agricultural activities in their hometowns. Within this context, the researcher sought information from Faisal regarding the motivations behind migrant youth's decision to engage in farming during their time away. His response offers valuable insights into this phenomenon.

Farming indeed presents a profitable investment opportunity here in Luta, but it often demands significant financial capital. That's why you'll find that some of our sons and

daughters choose to migrate in search of opportunities to make money. They then send these hard-earned funds back to their relatives back home to be used for farming. You see, to achieve higher yields, one needs to cultivate on a larger scale, and that, in turn, requires a substantial financial investment. Thus, migration becomes a means to secure the necessary resources to support their families and invest in agricultural activities that promise a better future. (Faisal, 35 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023).

The responses from the interviews highlight that those who invest in agriculture primarily provide financial capital, which is then used to hire labour, purchase fertilizers, and acquire other necessary farm inputs. As shared by Inusah, a 49-year-old participant, he explained that during the farming season, he receives money from his migrant son. This financial support enables him to hire labour and cover the expenses associated with using a ploughing machine to clear the land. In his own words:

My son sends me money during the farming season, which I use to rent a ploughing machine to clear the land and hire labour for tasks like planting and other essential activities. I can say that in the coming month, he will send me money to purchase fertilizer. This financial support greatly contributes to the success of our farming endeavours. (Inusah, 49 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023).

Similar to Inusah's experience, Adiza also shared her perspective on this matter:

The money sent home primarily serves essential agricultural purposes such as purchasing fertilizer, weedicide, or hiring labour to clear the land and provide crop spraying services. On occasions when the funds sent by our children are sufficient, we also invest in buying maize seeds for planting, further bolstering our farming efforts. (Adiza, 41 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023).

In addition, these responses emphasise the significant contribution of migrants in supporting their households' agricultural production. In addition, migrants make valuable contributions by sharing their expertise and experience in agricultural production, which includes innovative farming methods and the utilisation of diverse seed types. The qualitative responses provide insights into the valuable contributions contributed by people who have migration experiences from the study area towards agricultural investments.

During an interview with Faisal, a 35-year-old return migrant in Luta, he mentioned that upon his return, he introduced modern farming techniques like high yielding seedlings, precision farming, hydroponics, aquaponics, and vertical farming. He was confident that these developments would lead to plentiful harvests, surpassing what his household and fellow community members had previously cultivated. According to his own account:

During my time in the city, I learned advanced agricultural practices from colleagues and friends. I brought these techniques back to my hometown, and by adopting modern methods like efficient irrigation and high-yielding crop varieties, we significantly increased our yields. This knowledge has not only benefited my family but also inspired other farmers in our community, showing how urban farming practices can boost rural agricultural productivity. (Faisal, 35 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023).

Faisal's case is in line with the New Economics of Labour Migration Theory, which proposes that migrants often set out on their journeys with the aim of gaining knowledge, skills, financial resources, and other assets that will prove advantageous upon their return to their home communities (Mendola, 2012). Faisal's newly acquired expertise in agriculture aims to improve farm output by implementing high-yield seedlings and making strategic investments. Additionally, he serves as an agent for advancing agricultural methods in his local community. Overall, each of the instances given above showcases the different ways in which migrants support investments in household agriculture. The findings highlight the importance of both tangible assets, like financial resources, and intangible assets, such as knowledge, skills, and innovative ideas, that migrant youth contribute to their home communities. These contributions play a vital role in ensuring the continued viability of agricultural activities in the long run. In addition, these findings are in line with the New Economics of Labour Migration Theory, suggesting that remittances, whether in the form of social support or money, play a crucial role in assisting households in overcoming challenges in accessing credit by providing the required capital for agricultural production.

Remittances play a crucial role in eliminating financial barriers to investment and have a positive impact on boosting agricultural output.

5.4 Effect of Youth Migration on Local Development

In recent times, there has been a significant amount of discussion surrounding the impact of migration (De Haas et al., 2019). There is a range of perspectives on the effects of youth migration. Some people highlight the negative consequences it can have on migrants themselves, as well as their places of origin and the cities they migrate to. On the other hand, there are those who believe that with proper management, migration can bring about a number of positive aspects. Studies have indicated that, on average, the benefits of migration tend to surpass the negative effects, despite the complexities of its impact (De Haas et al., 2019).

5.4.1 Economic Development

Migration has been found to have a significant positive effect on the financial well-being of people. According to one of the household heads below, migrants brought about several benefits to their hometowns, leading to a ripple effect on local development:

Absolutely, it's worth noting that migrants often send remittances back to their home countries, and these actions have a profound impact on local development. What's more, many migrants prefer to bring their savings back with them at the end of the year when they visit our homes. This practice has a direct impact on the accumulation of capital within our community, which can then be reinvested in various local ventures, spurring entrepreneurship and further contributing to economic growth. They offer opportunities for families to enhance their quality of life, invest in education, and diversify their economic activities, ultimately creating a more sustainable and prosperous environment right here at home. (Abiba, 39 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023)

A significant finding that emerged from the interviews conducted in the two different towns was the effect of youth migration on the well-being of the remaining household members. Several

respondents described how youth migration can lead to a challenging standard of living, as it often reduces the overall family income. However, it is worth noting that some of the youth interviewed expressed a different perspective, suggesting that migration can also bring certain benefits to the households. This viewpoint challenges the prevailing narrative in much migration literature, which tends to emphasize the negative aspects of migration.

In addition, it is worth noting the significant impact of migration on the local economy, specifically in the district of Ada West. The agricultural industry, an extremely important sector, has faced a decline as skilled labourers have left. Nevertheless, migrants have not only offered financial assistance but have actively enhanced the welfare of the farming community. They are actively engaged in various activities such as clearing land, cultivating crops, acquiring land, removing weeds, and making investments in top-notch seeds, pesticides, fertilisers, and manure. The resulting surge in food production and financial stability has had a beneficial impact on other critical areas, including better access to healthcare and improved educational opportunities. A government official recognised the valuable contribution of migrants in rejuvenating the town's farming industry, which has led to its expansion and success.

There has been several instance where the youth return and make remarkable contributions. They've purchased land for their parents and embraced modern farming practices, including hiring tractors and using modern seeds and fertilizers. This shift towards modern agriculture is a game-changer, as farming gains prominence as an economic sector. These changes not only drive development but also ensure our community always has access to nutritious food. It's a win-win situation, benefiting both the community and these young individuals. Their return revitalizes farming and secures a more prosperous and food-secure future for our community. (Government Official, 33 years, District Office, 06/07/2023)

The assertion of the government official was confirmed by Abiba, a 39-year-old female head of a household who indicated that;

A close friend of mine who migrated generously provided financial assistance during the previous growing season. His support extended to covering expenses for weeding and purchasing fertilizers. In the preceding year, he contributed by funding the tractor for cultivating our two-acre plot, as his resources were limited at that time. His help has been invaluable, as it enabled us to overcome the challenges, we faced in managing the farm independently. Consequently, our harvest has significantly improved, and we often sell surplus produce, as we no longer consume the entirety of our yield. (Abiba, 39 years, Ada Luta, 06/07/2023)

The quotes provided above underscore the transformative impact of remittances channelled into agriculture, enhancing the economic well-being of local residents by enabling them to reinvest in fundamental essentials such as food security, healthcare, and education. These remittances act as a lifeline, bolstering the community's financial stability and nurturing its human capital. However, it's essential to acknowledge that the effects of migration on agricultural productivity within sending families are multifaceted and not universally positive. Some members of the community have articulated concerns that migration has, in certain cases, contributed to a decline in agricultural output. This decline can be attributed to various factors, including labour shortages, as migrants, especially the youth, seek employment opportunities in urban centres. Additionally, the allure of alternative sources of income outside of agriculture may lead to reduced investment and attention in the farming sector.

5.4.2 Social Development

The interviews highlighted several positive outcomes that are often associated with migration. The study examined a range of factors that were found to have a significant impact on agricultural activities. These factors included the financial support provided through remittances from migrants, which were used for various purposes such as purchasing fertilisers and chemicals, improving family social status, and supporting education for siblings left behind. Additionally,

remittances were also utilised for community development projects and alleviating land-related pressures.

Ahiavi, a 50-year-old resident, emphasised that when young adults find stable and lucrative employment outside their agricultural communities, they frequently become financial providers for their families. The change in their economic status can have significant positive impacts on the households they leave behind;

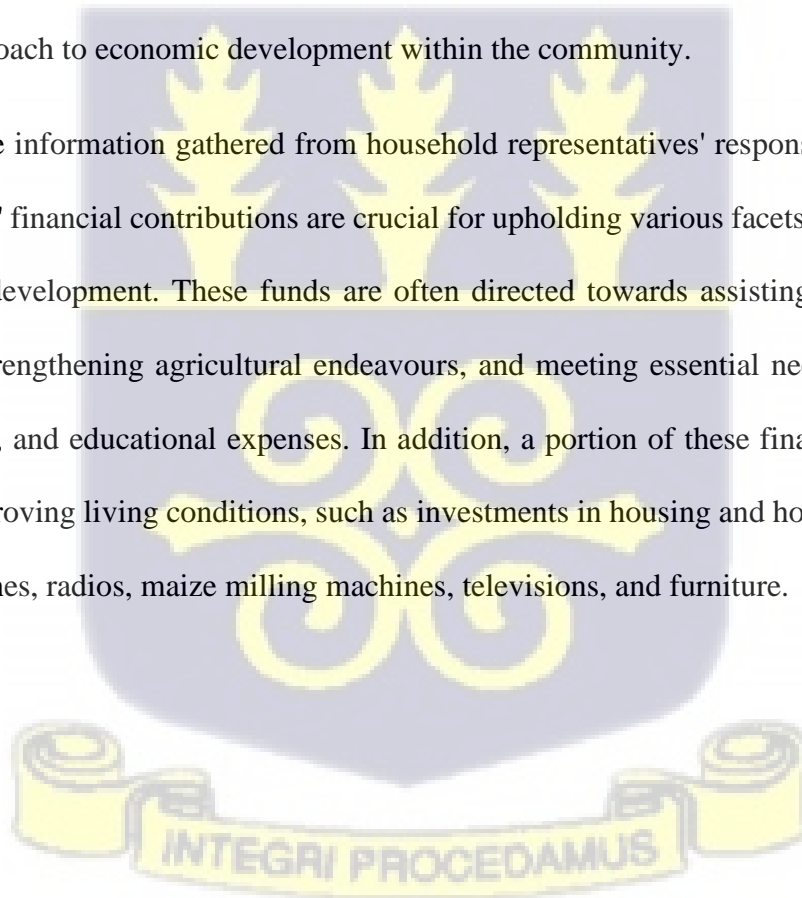
When individuals secure gainful employment, they often relieve their parents from engaging in strenuous farm work. Instead, they provide financial support by sending money regularly. This financial assistance is crucial for purchasing food and hiring additional labour to manage the farm. (Ahiavi, 50 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023)

The migration of youth within the district has had a complex effect on the cultural capital of the communities, impacting different areas such as education, knowledge, skills, the workforce, and the acquisition of material possessions like cell phones, modern housing, radios, televisions, motorbikes, and maize-milling machinery. The finding highlights the significant contribution of migrants to providing financial support for the education of their family members. This support goes beyond providing financial assistance for school fees and encompasses the provision of essential items like school uniforms, books, stationery, pocket money, and other educational necessities. These various contributions have successfully enhanced educational opportunities and improved the overall cultural capital within the community. According to a 48-year-old household head, he provides a clear example of how his son's migration has had a positive effect on the education of his siblings. This emphasises the valuable educational contributions made by youth migrants;

Ever since my first son went to Accra, he has been providing financial assistance for his siblings' education, including the purchase of exercise books and other school contributions. After acquiring his job, he can now aspire to educate his children through the income he earns there, without necessarily depending on farm produce. (Adamu, 48 years, Toflokpo, 13/07/2023).

Local household representatives attest to the fact that migrants bring worthwhile new ideas and information to their communities as a result of their exposure to and experiences in urban environments. This wealth of knowledge encompasses encouraging families to broaden their economic activities, emphasising diversification in areas like agriculture and entrepreneurship. This advice aims to reduce reliance on the declining agricultural sector and foster a more sustainable approach to economic development within the community.

According to the information gathered from household representatives' responses, it is clear that migrant workers' financial contributions are crucial for upholding various facets of family life and fostering local development. These funds are often directed towards assisting households with their income, strengthening agricultural endeavours, and meeting essential needs like obtaining food, healthcare, and educational expenses. In addition, a portion of these financial resources is allocated to improving living conditions, such as investments in housing and household amenities like mobile phones, radios, maize milling machines, televisions, and furniture.

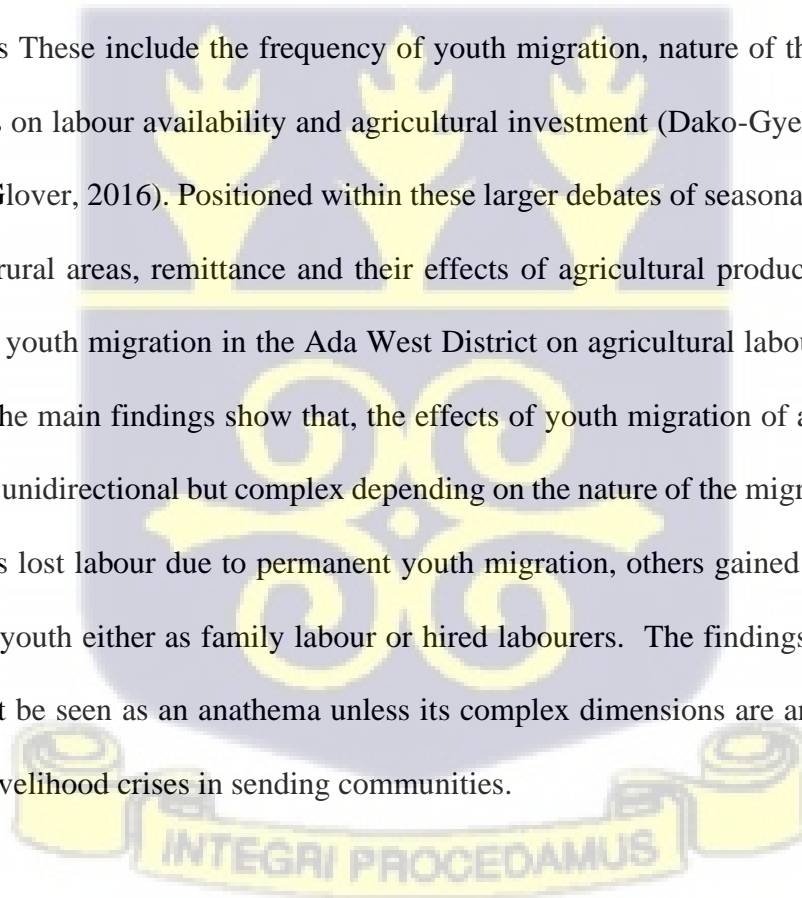


CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Introduction

This section presents the summary of key findings, conclusion and recommendation of the study as well as for future studies. The conceptual and theoretical underpinnings of the work emanate from global debates on the relationships between youth migration, labour availability, and agricultural development that has garnered significant attention over the last two decades. The discourse revolves around the migration, agricultural labour availability and development and their interrelationships. These include the frequency of youth migration, nature of their migration and the implications on labour availability and agricultural investment (Dako-Gyeke, 2017; Setrana, 2021 Edwin & Glover, 2016). Positioned within these larger debates of seasonal labour migration into and out of rural areas, remittance and their effects of agricultural production, the current research centred youth migration in the Ada West District on agricultural labour availability and development. The main findings show that, the effects of youth migration of agricultural labour in the area is not unidirectional but complex depending on the nature of the migration. Thus, while some households lost labour due to permanent youth migration, others gained labour seasonally due to return of youth either as family labour or hired labourers. The findings show that, youth migration cannot be seen as an anathema unless its complex dimensions are analysed in tandem with the wider livelihood crises in sending communities.



6.2 Summary of Key Findings

6.2.1 Family, Hired and Exchange Agricultural Labour Systems

The first objective of the study is to assess the agricultural labour system. Family-based agriculture became the most common method, as households heavily depended on the efforts of parents, children, and other family members for various farming duties. In addition, the study found that many households rely on exchange labour to fulfil their agricultural labour requirements. This system promotes a sense of togetherness and collective accountability among community members, guaranteeing the necessary cultivation and harvesting of crops while also offering financial benefits. In certain households, particularly those affected by family members migrating out of the community, the use of hired labour is crucial to filling the resulting labour shortage. Permanent labourers are hired to carry out physically demanding tasks like land clearing, planting, pesticide application, and harvesting. It is worth noting that there are noticeable disparities in the use of hired labour based on gender. Male-headed households tend to be more inclined to hire labour, while female-headed households show a different pattern. The existing gap is worsened by financial limitations, which restrict the capacity of certain households led by women to hire labour, resulting in unequal farm sizes between men and women.

6.2.2 The Complexity of the Interrelationship of Youth Migration Agricultural Labour

The nature of youth migration and the migration pattern in an area are important in understanding the impacts on agricultural production. The objective two of this research contextualised these different facets of the existing discourse. By delving into the phenomenon of youth migration in

the district, the study reveals a range of patterns, encompassing seasonal/circular, permanent, and intra-district movements. Findings from key informant interviews reveal the various factors that influence youth migration, including the allure of job prospects, shifts in agricultural cycles, better educational possibilities, and the desire for family unity. In addition, the study examines the impact of youth migration on the availability of labour in the agricultural sector. The migration of dynamic and inventive young individuals results in a gap within the traditional workforce, necessitating older generations and children to take charge of agricultural operations. This shift results in a significant decrease in agricultural productivity, the desertion of farms, and a rise in poverty levels in rural communities. The shortage of available workers leads to a rise in the expenses associated with hiring labour, highlighting the crucial importance of youth in supporting agricultural livelihoods. Simultaneously, seasonal migration facilitates the presence of a workforce during specific periods of the year. While acknowledging the positive aspects of seasonal migration, concerns are raised regarding the potential negative effects of permanent migration, leading to enduring labour shortages. The findings of the study indicate that the relationship between youth migration and agricultural labour plays a crucial role in shaping the outcomes and long-term viability of farming in the Ada West District.

6.2.3 Youth Migration, Agricultural Investment and Local Development

The third objective of the study is to examine the impact of youth migration on agricultural investment and local development. The findings draw attention to the essential significance of remittances in providing economic support to households by migrants. Remittances, whether in the form of money or goods, play an essential part in improving the financial situation of families

and easing their economic burdens. It is evident from the findings that the level of remittance support differs among households based on the financial situation of the migrants and their specific circumstances. Young migrants play a significant role in supporting agricultural investment by offering financial aid for various activities, including land preparation, buying fertiliser, and hiring labour. Migrant youth also contribute to increased agricultural productivity by bringing back modern farming methods, high-yielding seedlings, and innovative techniques. This is in line with the New Economics of Labour Migration Theory, which proposes that migrants develop knowledge and skills that can have positive effects on their home communities when they go back. The study emphasises numerous favourable results linked to migration, such as providing financial assistance for various agricultural endeavours, enhancing the social standing of families, supporting education, constructing houses, and contributing to community development projects. Although there has been a decrease in the number of skilled workers in the agriculture sector as a result of migration, migrants play an active role in enhancing the welfare of the farming community. They actively participate in land clearance, cultivation, and investing in agricultural inputs, which results in a boost in food production and financial security for their households.

6.3 Conclusion

In the pursuit of improved livelihoods and opportunities, youth migration from rural to urban areas is a phenomenon that has reshaped the demographic landscape of many communities. This study aimed to investigate the complex dynamics of youth migration and its diverse effects on agricultural practices, labour availability, and investments in origin communities. The findings provide valuable insights into the significant impact of youth migration on key aspects of rural

life.

A key discovery of this study highlights the important impact made by young migrants in sustaining agricultural endeavours within their origin communities. In spite of their physical absence, a large number of migrants actively support agriculture by exchanging cutting-edge farming methods and sending money back home. Their investments, whether in physical assets or intangible support, serve as a vital source of assistance for agricultural development. This empowers households to acquire the essential resources needed to enhance their productivity. The study also highlighted the complex relationship between youth migration and the availability of labour in agriculture. Although the migration of young individuals to urban areas can result in labour shortages, the presence of seasonal migration patterns and additional household members can help alleviate these impacts. Nevertheless, the lack of young workers participating in farming activities can lead to significant outcomes, such as reduced agricultural output, neglected fields, and heightened levels of poverty in rural areas.

Agricultural communities in rural areas face serious challenges as a result of the complex phenomenon of youth migration. This migration has significant socio-economic implications that require careful consideration and strategic planning. On one hand, youth migration often leads to a scarcity of labour in these agricultural communities, creating a void that can hinder farming activities and reduce productivity. The departure of young, able-bodied individuals results in higher labour costs and can strain the local agricultural workforce, which traditionally relies on youthful energy and innovation. However, it is essential to recognize the dual impact of youth migration. While the immediate absence of young workers presents challenges, the phenomenon also brings potential benefits that can transform agricultural investment and socio-economic development. Young migrants frequently remit financial resources back to their home

communities. These remittances can provide much-needed capital for agricultural investments, enabling farmers to purchase better equipment, adopt new technologies, and improve overall farming practices. Moreover, youth migration often leads to the acquisition of new skills and expertise. Migrants gain valuable experience and knowledge from their exposure to different agricultural practices and advanced technologies in urban or international settings.

6.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that communities establish farmer cooperatives to pool resources and labour, making it easier for households to manage labour shortages during peak farming seasons. These cooperatives can also negotiate better prices for agricultural inputs and collectively market their produce. The district should also put in place mechanisms to sustain the seasonal return of youth who want to engage in agricultural production as farm owners or labourers. In addition, the government can incentivize the adoption of mechanised farming by providing subsidies or low-interest loans for the purchase of farming equipment. Mechanisation can help offset labour shortages and improve overall agricultural efficiency. In addition, community leaders must recognise the dual nature of youth migration and develop strategies that harness its positive aspects while mitigating its negative consequences. These strategies should aim to retain youth in rural areas through opportunities for income generation and skill development while ensuring that those who migrate continue to support their home communities.

This study emphasises the need for comprehensive policies and support systems that harness the potential of migrant youth as agents of agricultural transformation in their home communities.

Efforts should be made to facilitate knowledge sharing, access to financial services, and the adoption of modern farming practices. By doing so, rural communities can leverage the benefits of youth migration to enhance their agricultural resilience, sustainability, and overall well-being.

Further research could focus on the role of technology and digital innovations in mitigating labour shortages caused by youth outmigration. Exploring the adoption of agricultural technologies, mobile applications, and digital platforms in rural farming communities could offer practical solutions.

Future studies should examine the gender dimensions of youth outmigration and its effects on agriculture. Investigating how migration impacts the roles and responsibilities of men and women in farming and household food security can provide a more comprehensive understanding of the migration and agricultural production interrelationships.



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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

INSTITUTE OF STATISTICAL, SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC RESEARCH

Research Title: Perceived Effects of Youth Migration on Agriculture and Rural Development in Ada West Municipality.

In-depth Interview guide for Key Informants

I am an MA student at the University of Ghana, Legon- Accra. This field project is being conducted as part of my studies and it seeks to investigate the perceived impact of youth migration on agriculture production and rural development. The project provides key stakeholders and the general public with fact-based information relating to youth migration and its implications on agriculture and rural development. I would be grateful if you could take time out of your busy schedule to answer a few questions. Be assured that the information provided will be treated confidentially and used for academic purposes only. Your participation in this study is very important but voluntary and you can withdraw at any point without any consequences. Thank you.

START OF INTERVIEW _____

END OF INTERVIEW _____

DURATION OF INTERVIEW _____

1. Please, can you tell me about yourself? (Probe for *age, level of education, marital status, role in the community, number of years at post, number of children, employment status, indigene or migrant? Etc.*)
2. In your opinion, how would you describe migration of the youth in the community (Probe for *factors that account for youth migration, age and sex of those who usually migrate, which destination cities/towns the youth often prefer, what work they do there, the effect of youth migration both positive and negative for the migrant, origin and destination communities*)

3. What are the agricultural activities prevalent in Ada West Municipality? (Probe for *the types of crops grown, livestock rearing practices, and explore the size and scale of agricultural operations, such as smallholder farming, commercial farms, or cooperative systems*)
4. What are the types of agriculture labor systems available in this municipality? (Probe whether *family labor, hired labor, exchange labor, etc (who are the agricultural laborers? Migrants, indigenes, youth, adults, women and men)*)
5. How easy is it to get access to agriculture labor in terms of cost and availability in this community? (*Probe for availability, cost and effectiveness*)
6. Do you think there is an agricultural labor shortage in this municipality? If there is, what factors account for the shortage of agriculture labor in the community?(*Probe for migration of youth, dislike for agricultural jobs, stigma, higher educational standards, poor remuneration, factors that could be used to address the agriculture labor shortage in the municipality*)
7. What is the extent of youth migration in Ada West Municipality? (Probe for *the noticeable patterns of both in-migration and outmigration*)
8. How has youth migration affected the overall availability of labor in Ada West Municipality? (Probe for *the noticeable changes in the number and composition of the labor force due to youth migration*)
9. Has there been any shifts or modifications in the existing labor systems as a result of youth migration?
10. What are the economic implications of youth migration on the labor market in Ada West Municipality? (Probe for *whether youth migration has affected labor cost and job opportunities*)
11. Do migrants from this household send money or goods or equipment to support agricultural projects? (*Probe for average amount sent in a year, type of goods sent and the project they often support, means of engaging migrants*)
12. Do youth migrants bring new ideas, technologies, or approaches that contribute to innovation in the agricultural sector?
13. Through the assistance of those who have migrated from this community, do you think the agricultural investment and production have improved? (Probe how the agricultural production is changing e.g., scale, profitability)
14. How is youth migration important to the rural development of this community? (*Probe for reasons, examples of initiatives supported by youth*)

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR HEAD OF HOUSEHOLDS

1. Please, can you tell me about yourself? (Probe for *age, level of education, marital status, years living in the community etc.*)
2. Can you provide a brief overview of the current socioeconomic characteristics of your household?
3. Could you please provide an overview of the current members of your household and their respective economic activities? (Probe for their age, occupation, educational background, and any other income-generating or socioeconomic activities they are currently engaged in)
4. In the past 10 years, have there been any members of the household who are no longer residing here? If yes, probe for *when they left, where did they go, why they left*)
5. Could you please provide detailed information about the agricultural activities within your household? (Probe for the *specific crops they grow, the varieties or types cultivated, the unique farming techniques they employ, their scale of production. Additionally, if fishing is part of their household's activities, please specify whether it primarily involves lagoon fishing, marine fishing, or both*)
6. What are the types of agriculture labor systems used in your household?
7. How does your household acquire the necessary labor for your agricultural activities? Could you please describe the sources or methods through which you secure labor to support your farming operations? (Probe whether *family labor, hired labor, exchange labor, etc; who are the agricultural laborers? (Migrants, indigenes, youth, adults, women and men)*)
8. How does the migration of youth members from your household affect the overall production and productivity of your household? (Probe for *the noticeable changes in the changes in the quantity or quality of agricultural output and labor availability?*)
9. How do you manage or adapt to the loss of manpower caused by youth migration to maintain or enhance the household's production levels?
10. How has youth migration affected the overall availability of labor in the community and the municipality as a whole? (Probe for *the noticeable changes in the number and composition of the labor force due to youth migration*)
11. What are the economic implications of youth migration on the labor market in Ada West Municipality? (Probe for whether youth migration has affected labor cost and access)
12. Do migrants from this household send money or goods or equipment to support agricultural projects? (Probe for *average amount sent in a year, type of goods sent and the project they often support, means of engaging migrants*)
13. Through the assistance of those who have migrated from this household, do you think the agricultural investment and production have improved? (Probe how *the agricultural production is changing e.g., scale, profitability*)

14. What recommendations would you suggest to ensure a sustainable availability of agricultural labor within the community, considering the challenges posed by migration?



APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR THE YOUTH AT THE ORIGIN COMMUNITY

1. Please, can you tell me about yourself? (Probe for age, *level of education, marital status, role in the community, number of children, employment status, indigene or migrant? etc.*)
2. What are the agricultural activities prevalent in this community? (Probe for *the types of crops grown, livestock rearing practices, and explore the size and scale of agricultural operations, such as smallholder farming, commercial farms, or cooperative systems*)
3. In your opinion, what are the types of agriculture labor systems available in this community? (Probe *whether family labor, hired labor, exchange labor, etc (who are the agricultural laborers? Migrants, indigenes, youth, adults, women and men)*)
4. Do you have any aspiration to migrate? (*If yes Probe for why the person wants to migrate and it was whose decision*)
5. What factors in this community influence the youth to migrate? (*Probe for push and pull factors*).
6. What is the extent of youth migration in this community? (Probe for *the noticeable patterns of both in-migration and outmigration*)
7. Do you think the absence of the youth as a result of migration affect agricultural production? (*Probe for impact on land use and labour availability*)
8. Do you think there has been economic implications of youth migration on the labor market in the community? (*Probe for whether youth migration has affected labor cost and job opportunities*)
9. Do youth migrants from this community send remittance to support agricultural projects? (*Probe for the types of remittances received and the project they often support, means of engaging migrants*)
10. Do you think the agricultural investment and production have improved as a result of the assistance or remittance received from youth migrants from this community? (*Probe how the agricultural production is changing e.g., scale, profitability*)
11. How is youth migration important to the rural development of this community? (*Probe for reasons, examples of initiatives supported by youth*)