

THE MAJOR ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES OF RURAL MIGRANTS IN TAMALE, GHANA: ROLES IN URBAN DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

There is a fundamental notion that rural urban migration translates to growing urban poverty levels in the country including Tamale, as a result their activities are often described as menial and perceived to be non-profiting making, and do not contribute to the economy. This study therefore sought to find out the major migrant economic activities in Tamale and their roles in the development of the urban economy. Both primary and secondary sources of data were used as sources of information for the study. Primary data was obtained from migrants' households and participants of the major economic activities found in the study. Key informant interviews were also held with the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly (Development Planner) and Assembly Members in the case areas. The study revealed that the major economic activities of migrants' were Head Porting, Sack Trading and Tricycle Riding. It was also found that these migrants' activities contributed to urban development by creating of job opportunities, service and labour provision, poverty reduction, increase and expansion of trade and revenue generation. The study concludes that rural migrants' and their economic activities play a role in urban development.

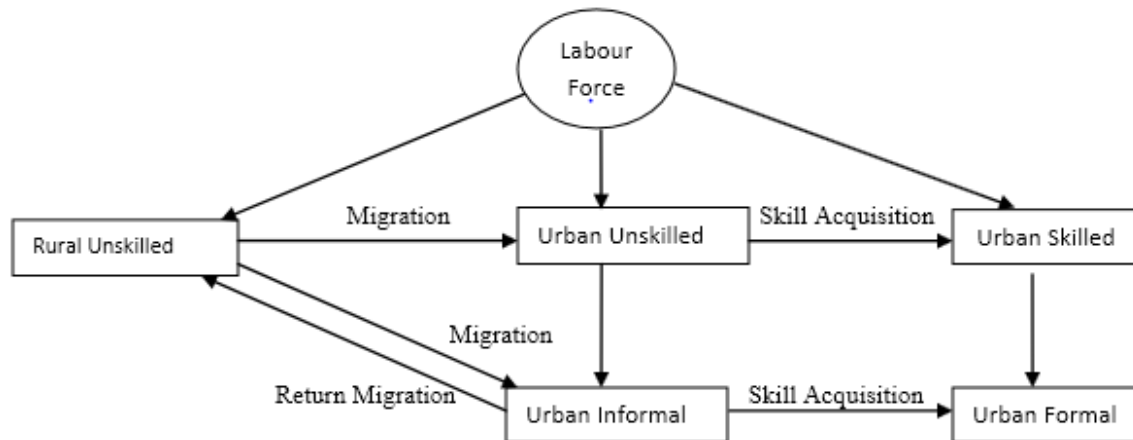
Keywords: Rural-urban Migration, migrants', Informal economy, Economic Activities, Urban development

INTRODUCTION

The processes of liberalization, privatization and globalization, have enhanced the pace of internal migration of skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers from rural to urban areas (Pattanaik, 2006 cited in Alam & Misra, 2014). However, the experience of developing countries reveals that the modern urban sector, especially better organised ones, due to its emphasis on capital intensive techniques in production absorb partially the enormous growth of the urban workforce (Harris, 2003 cited in Piu, Bino & Pathan, 2009) and ensuring decent working conditions, while a substantial part of the increased labour force due to rural urban migration are absorbed in informal work in the unorganised informal sector because they are not able to secure careers in the official sector be they skilled, semi-skilled or unskilled migrant labour. Therefore making the contribution of the migrant workforce especially in the informal economy to urban development immense (Ibid). Their major reason for joining informal sector is to utilise whatever limited skills they have to make sufficient take-home pay to sustain their lives daily (McCatty, 2004). Again, employment opportunities are better in the urban informal sector than the urban formal sector because, the urban official sector demands certain basic human capital requirement from the migrants (Chakraborty, 2014) which is often difficult to find usually because of their limited education.

In effect, the choked employment opportunities in urban areas allows the mass of the workforces (rural migrants') in the urban labour market to create their own self work and begin their personal commerce, or work for small family unit operated businesses to the extent that their capital and skills permit (Alam & Misra, 2014; McCatty, 2004). As a result, most of this informal employment is now recognised to be conducted on own-account basis (ILO, 2002b; UN HABITAT, 2015). The self-employed migrants' engage in a diversity of deeds such as bundling, motorway retailing, and selling food. Some migrants' find careers as carpenters, barbers, mechanics, maids, personal servants and artisans. Other migrants' have muddled through and are able to thrive as entrepreneurs with a number of recruits making high incomes earnings (Addison Wesley, 2003 cited in McCatty, 2004). Accordingly, the International Labour Organisation (2002a) for example, states that the informal economy represents "an incubator for business potential and transitional base for accessibility and graduation to the formal economy". Also according to the I.L.O, the informal self-employed workers display "real business acumen, creativity, dynamism and innovation" in all their entrepreneurial endeavours across the labour market. Below is a schematic framework of rural-urban migration and the inter-sectoral movement of labour Force

Figure 1 Schematic Framework of Inter Sectorial Movement of Migrant Labour Force



Source: (Chakraborty, 2014)

From the schematic framework above, it is customary to believe that the rural labour force is by and large unskilled in nature and is therefore not required in the urban formal sector. As a result, initially labour forces work in the rural informal sector and after migration too, they find themselves in the urban informal sector. But it is merely a halting place for some of them. Through a process of learning and apprenticeship, they acquire skill and this skill turns them into urban skilled labour force. Soon they become capable of getting jobs in the urban formal job market (Chakraborty, 2014) even though this is debatable, because some of the migrants' upon acquiring the necessary skills and experience would not want to be employed in the formal sector, therefore, would not in any day think of, or seek such a move. Others who are unsuccessful in acquiring the required skills return to the rural areas provided they have firm rural base (Chakraborty, 2014), which is very rare in this part of the world especially Ghana because unsuccessful migrants' in the city would not wish to go back to their rural origin because of the believe that he or she would be regarded as a failure and a lazy person if he or she goes back to the rural area. Hence migrants' in cities would prefer to be in the city than to leave for their rural origins even if they do not succeed.

Despite the limited or lack of formal employment, many have found a rural-urban move advantageous, and workers have created their own income generating activities in the urban informal economy as reviewed above, where there are few barriers to entry – in terms of, for example, few capital requirements, low levels of technology, simple division of labour, and minimal differentiation in the ownership of the means of production (Tokman, 1989). Therefore the informal sector acts as a channel for extra labour to evade poverty and unemployment (McCatty, 2004). Also, as a significant part of the urban society, rural migrants' not only generate demand for goods and services as consumers but also, they provide tax revenue as

taxpayers, according to Zang & Meng (2013). Further, Zang and Meng stated that as taxpayers, rural migrants' contribute to the increasing revenue for local governments' and if city governments make use of any such additional tax revenue to provide more public facilities and services, surely there would be development. However, many people especially the middle and upper class urban inhabitants' see migrants' as people living in substandard conditions in the poorest urban sector (Grau and Aide, 2007). This observation by Grau and Aide is not any different from people of similar classes in Ghana. In Ghana, just as found in (Ibid) there is the fundamental notion that rural people translates their rural poverty to growing urban poverty levels in the country including Tamale and their activities are often described as menial and perceived to be non-profiting making. Therefore do not contribute to the economy of destination areas. As such this paper sought to find out the major economic activities of rural migrants' and their roles in development.

Profile of Study Area

Tamale is among the 26 districts found in Northern Region. It is situated in the central part of the Region and shares boundaries with the Sagnarigu District to the North-West, Mion District to the East, East Gonja to the South and Central Gonja to the South West. Tamale is strategically located in the Northern Region and by this strategic location, the Metropolis has a market potential for local goods from the agricultural and commercial sectors from the other districts in the region and the southern part of Ghana (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). Geographically, the Metropolitan area falls within longitudes 0° 36 and 0° 57 west and latitude 9°16 and 9° 34 north.

Demographic Features

According to the Population and Housing Census (PHC, 2010) cited in Ghana Statistical Service (2014), the population of Tamale Metropolis stands at 223, 252. The number of females is 112,143 (50.2%) and the number of males is 111,109 (49.7%). Due to its central location, Tamale serves as a hub for all administrative and commercial activities in the Northern region, doubling as the political, economic and financial capital of the Northern region. Hence, the Metropolis could be a growth pole for the three northern regions attracting both population (skilled, semi and unskilled) and economic development in the area.

Employment Sector

This sector indicates the subdivisions in which persons work and the statistics are revealed in Table 1 below. From the total population employed, 83,229 personnel, 11.3% are in public

(government) sector while 83.2% are in private informal sector. A small number of persons are in NGOs (local and international) amounting to 0.5%. In the private informal sector, 47% are males while 53% are females. Semi-public/parastatal has an insignificant percentage of 0.1.

Table 1: Employed population 15 years and above by employment sector and sex

Employment Sector	Both sexes		Male		Female	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	83,229	100.0	42,624	100.0	40,605	100.0
Public (Government)	9,413	11.3	6,625	15.5	2,788	6.9
Private Formal	3,992	4.8	2,996	7.0	996	2.5
Private Informal	69,261	83.2	32,617	47	36,644	53
Semi-Public/Parastatal	124	0.1	100	0.2	24	0.1
NGOs (Local and International)	391	0.5	247	0.6	144	0.4
Other International Organizations	48	0.1	39	0.1	9	0.0

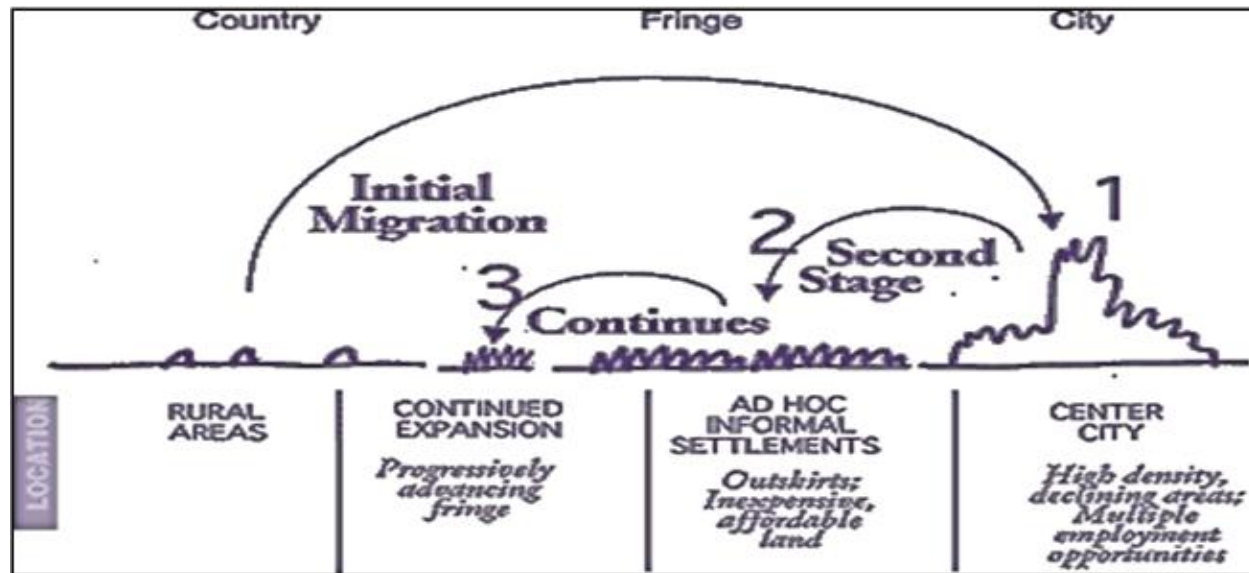
Source: GSS: 2010 P.H.C. in Ghana Statistical Service (2014)

METHODOLOGY

The survey strategy was used to gather responses in the study. The research made use of both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data were gathered through face to face interviews using both open and close ended questionnaires from households while interview guides were used to collect data from key informants. In addition, participant observation was used to identify the right informants in the activities (“Kayayei”, Sack Trading and Tricycle Riding) which were identified as migrants’ major economic activities followed by a focus group discussion using a Focus Group Discussion guide to collect data from migrants’ found trading in the major economic activities. Also direct observation was employed to observe the major economic activities of the migrants’ in the metropolis especially their mode and places of operations. However, secondary data used were sourced from journal articles, conference papers and other documented sources related to rural urban migration, and concepts which were relevant to the topic under study.

Drawing on Turner’s trajectory of rural urban migrants’ as illustrated below in Figure 2, four communities around the city centre namely: Aboabo, Sabonjida, Tishigu and Moshi Zongo were purposively selected and used as case areas for the study.

Figure 2: The trajectory of rural urban migrants



Source: Turner, (1968, p 354-363)

The target populations were rural migrant households and migrant participants in the economic activities identified as their major trades, at their work places, the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly and Assembly Members in the case areas. The sample size for the research was 30 households from each of the four case areas because, that according to Trochim (2006) cited in (Minjale 2014) is the recommended minimum sample size for a quantitative research. In all, 120 households were selected and analysed quantitatively using the snow ball sampling technique whiles four focus group discussions were held with the migrant participants of the major economic activities identified in the study, at their work places thus Kayayei (1), Sack Traders (2) that is [male Sack Traders (1) and females Sack Traders (1)] and Tricycle Riders (1) and analysed qualitatively together with the Metropolitan development planner and three (3) Assembly members who were purposively selected.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Rural Urban Migration and the Migrant Economic Activities

In the course of the researcher's survey for the study, it was established that migrants' were engaged in various forms of business and entrepreneurial activities. These activities were divided based on the usual Ghanaian notion that some jobs are solely for either women or men; hence making entrepreneurship in the informal sector gendered, confirming the findings of (Awumbila, Owusu & Teye, 2014). Women in all the case areas were predominantly working as food vendors, traders, and attendants in food bars, hair dressers and seamstresses. Also,

young women were largely into domestic services like washing of clothing and the sale of water. Men were working as artisans, butchers, drivers, mechanics and other trades. From the study, almost all the migrants' were in the informal sector (88.3% see Table 2) below. The study further found that they (migrants') did not attempt or even think for once, of being employed in the formal sector because of their lack of employable certificates contrary to Chakraborty (2014) in his Schematic Framework of Inter Sectorial Movement of Migrant Labour Force. Even with those who were in the formal sector (see Table 2), they were there without employable certificates as security men in schools and private organisations, with one lady working as a cook in a secondary school (Ghana Secondary School) and one person being a driver to a bank. However, only (5% see Table 2) of migrants' were unemployed, for various reasons including, old age, (still under training or apprenticeship) and one case of health reason recorded. Below is Table 2 showing the frequencies and percentages of migrants' in the various sectors of the urban economy.

Table 2: Work status of Migrants

Work Status of migrants	Frequency	Percentages (%)
Informal sector	106	88.3
Formal sector	8	6.7
Unemployed	6	5
Total	120	100

Despite the dominance of migrants' in the informal sector, the study revealed that some of the migrants' paid tax in the midst of the numerous challenges they faced in the course of their operations which imply that migrants' had a role to play in the revenue generation of the metropolis and that they cannot all the time be condemned. The Table 3 below shows the tax obligation of migrants:

Table 3: Tax obligation of migrants

Tax Obligation	Moshi zongo	Sabonjida	Tishegu	Aboabo	%
Yes	14	13	16	9	43.3%
No	16	17	14	21	56.7%
Total	30	30	30	30	100%

From the Table 3 above, 43.3% of migrants' paid tax while the majority of 56.7% did not pay tax. The study revealed that most of the migrants' were willing to pay tax, but were never

approached by any official to do so. Also, they did not know where to pay the tax. Regardless of the minority of the migrants' found to be fulfilling the obligation of paying tax to the assembly, their contribution would still add money to the revenue coffers of the Metropolitan Assembly.

As revealed in the study that the job opportunities for migrants' were varied in nature and cuts across all the sectors of the economy in the Tamale Metropolis especially in the informal sector where entry was not restricted, attempts by respondents in the study to pin point all the economic activities of migrants', was practically impossible. One of the assembly members had this to say:

From people's homes to institutions and all the way to the market, you can find rural migrants' employed there. Some are traders, mechanics, tailors, nannies, watch men, drivers etc .and even big people, The problem is if you don't know the person how do you tell whether or not, the fellow is a migrant or not.

Nonetheless, it was revealed in the study that "Kayayei", the Sack Traders popularly called "kpalan-kohariba" and the Tricycle Riders popularly known as "Shakar" or "Na-ee Na-ee" or Yellow -Yellow were the major economic activities of rural migrants' and were therefore identified as trades rural migrants' could often be related to in the Tamale Metropolis by all the respondents in the study (migrant households, the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly and Assembly Members in the case areas). Focus group discussions were therefore conducted (because the activities of each and every one of the trades were such that one could locate them in specific locations) in order to find out how their activities had contributed to the urban economy.

THE CASE OF 'KAYAYEI' (HEAD PORTERS)

The term "Kayayei" is a local term commonly used by the Gas (an ethnic group in Ghana). It is originated from two words; "Kaya" from Hausa which means goods and "Yoo" from Ga meaning woman or girl. These migrants' generally have little or no education and are unskilled (Kwankye, Anarfi, Tagoe, & Castaldo, 2009). Not until recently, head porting ("Kayayei") was only found happening in the big cities of the southern part of the country, but as of now, other cities in the country are also experiencing their presence too, including Tamale, where head porters are common to see in the city and continue to increase. The desire of female migrants' to be employed and make some income within the shortest possible time without the necessary skills and employable certificates to be employed by any organised institution has fuelled the phenomenon.

Identified typically by their large pans and crafted headgear in the metropolis, they carried loads of goods bought by clients or shoppers to clients preferred destination. Part of

their job also was to assist market traders in packing and tidying up vending sites among other duties as may be required of them by clients. Both rich and the poor requested their services. Habitually maltreated by their clients, “Kayayei” were often paid what clients thought they (“Kayayei”) deserved which was usually pocket-sized. They had limited or no education and originate from poor socio-economic families. This conforms to the study done by TUC (2012) that “kayayei” often come from poor social and economic background. This study found that migrant porters were between the ages of 17 to 40 mostly from other jurisdiction either than the Dagbon traditional area notably from the East and West Mamprusi Districts of Northern Region and Upper East Region. However, natives of Dagbon from peri-urban communities were observed to be increasingly joining the trade by commuting from their neighbouring communities to Tamale township on daily basis, which Focus Group participants described as alien to the people of Tamale and was further confirmed by the key informants of the study (TMA and Assembly Members) and some inhabitants in the Metropolis which the researcher engaged informal conversations with who were not part of the study. This new twist of events implies that the “Kayayei” trade is expanding and competition among actors is expected to become keener which probably could push some of the “Kayayei” out of business. Below are some of the porters in a group picture after a focus group discussion with them at the metro mass station in Tamale.



Plate 1 Section of “Kayayei” @ MMT Station



Plate 2 “Kayayei” and their head pans

Source: (Author, 2016)

Causes of Rural Urban Migration

The migrant “Kayayei” migrated to Tamale because of poverty and job opportunities as main motives for their migration to Tamale, while some of their Dagomba counterparts from nearby villages and communities engaged in this trade as a livelihood strategy to support their household. The discussions revealed that the majority of the “Kayayei” (9 out of 10) were not gainfully employed at their place of origin, except to help in their parents or family farms, which even more was challenging. For instance, migrants’ complained there was no money to cultivate in any significant proportion and also to take care of the farms, therefore making living conditions in their rural areas very difficult as their poor parents often allowed them (now “Kayayei”) to fend for themselves and also to provide for the parents as well. As a result of the pressure on them to provide for themselves, there were always so many influences that compelled them, both within oneself, the family and outside the family, mostly friends to migrate, all in an attempt to providing a solution of a sort to end their economic woes. Below is an account by one of the respondents on how a friend’s influence has brought her to Tamale:

Hmm, master it is not good to be poor. After my father got blind situations got worse. I was in J.S.S one by then. What to even eat self was a problem talk less of paying school fees so I had to stop schooling. My mother was trying her best for us though, but it was not enough to get the family out of hunger. Fortunately one of the already migrated females who doubled as a childhood friend in the village was home to attend her father’s funeral. However she was based in Tamale. So through interactions, she told me about the benefits of “Kayayei” and even listed some assets she had already acquired within a short period and asked if I was interested which I did not hesitate at all to say yes to. So after the funeral I followed her to come. That is how I came here and I have not regretted even though doing “kaya” is shameful, with a focused mind, one can succeed. I want be a seamstress one day

Below is also an account by one of the respondents on how family influence or pressure led to her migration:

As for me, my mother influenced my coming to Tamale. She constantly compared me to my elder cousin who came to Tamale to do “Kayayei” and in the long run realizing her dream to be a seamstress, and in effect helping to take care of her mother. Afterwards she (my mother) instructed me to also try my luck and reduce her suffering otherwise I should get married. So I took to do the “Kayayei” since some of my colleagues were already into it.

The above narratives implies that peer or family influence had an influence on migration decision which partly agrees with what Berg (2007) noticed, that peer pressure’ is a very important factor in the livelihood decisions of “Kayayei” women and girls. Some of the “Kayayei” were able to recount how successful migrants’ (“Kayayei”) impacted their family members back

home through remittances and gifts which played a part in influencing rural young girls to also migrate. Though other reasons also came up such as (running away to avoid forced and early marriages) in the course of the discussion, poverty and peer as well as family pressure were the most dominant reasons for which they (female migrants') were in the "Kayayei" business.

Living Condition/ Challenges of "Kayayei"

The living conditions of "Kayayei" in Ghana have often drawn public sympathy. Media reports have centred on their exposure not only to bad weather and insanitary conditions but harassment from some unscrupulous persons who may also be living on the streets (TUC, 2012). However in the case of Tamale, many of these conditions did not apply to the "Kayayei". The findings showed that migrant "Kayayei" had houses to lay their heads except for the conditions in such houses. When asked about the nature of houses they lived in, one of the "Kayayei" replied: *"Abbah", master you know already, you just want to tease us*". The discussion revealed that the "Kayayei" (head porters) lived in slums, a finding which conforms to King and Amponsah's (2012) observation that slums are the centres of migrants'. This was what one of the participants had to say about their housing conditions:

"A boha ya ami ni wum" (you have asked and you will hear). We live like animals here in Tamale. No proper place to sleep or even rest. It is pathetic but then we just have to endure and see how the end will be. We are eight in a room and you can imagine. There is nothing like privacy. The door to the room does not even have a lock.

The discussion further revealed that the rate of room occupancy was five persons or more per room which is higher than the national room occupancy average rate of 3 persons per room in the country. Also there were concerns about security and safety as the migrants' lamented about how sometimes people tried to take advantage of them at night and sometimes accusing them of rather being thieves. The finding implies that "Kayayei" live in poor room conditions and as a result can result in the erection of Kiosk as can be found in some parts of Kumasi and Accra if the need for privacy becomes indispensable which would alter the current appearance of the city to have an unattractive look.

In addition, the "Kayayei" in the course of the discussions did mention insults and extortion as one of their challenges as it appeared each and every one of them had experienced it in one way or the other. From the discussion, it was revealed that the old educated women would always yell at them ("Kayayei") and speaking English which they sometimes find difficult to understand. One of the participants passed a comment during the discussion and below is the comment that was passed:

The literate women are difficult, nonetheless they are better than those that will insult and cheat you in addition. If they don't give you in excess of the amount charged, they would not give you less than the amount charged, unlike the traders who are always in the market with us.

Beyond the comment passed about the maltreatment they (“Kayayei”) go through, below is a narration of one of the participants on how she was insulted and cheated:

My brother, it happened that I was from the transport yard heading towards the Aboabo market when this woman called me to carry the food she was going to sell at her place in the market, so I quickly rushed to her to do as she requested. This woman told me her place was not far from where we were, so I should leave my head pan behind and carry hers. So she gave my pan to a certain woman in a store nearby, not knowing her place was a significant distance from where we set off. I did not complain. Upon arrival, she told me to arrange her bowls and unfortunately on my part, some of the bowls slipped off my hands and fell on the bare floor, come and see, the woman insulted me very well and said she was not going to pay me and I had nothing to say, but for the intervention of some of her customers, she later gave me 50 pesewas when I should have being given not less than Gh cedis 1.

This means that the “Kayayei” were often always under the control of clients including the determination of amount paid for the service rendered, which in the most part was always a small amount. This however can be a motivating reason for some of the “Kayayei” to run away with clients’ items if their earnings do not help them or if they feel cheated.

However, in the midst of these challenges, data findings revealed that there were improvements in the socio-economic status of “Kayayei” after migration, and as well impacted positively on their relatives back home. For example, after migration, the “Kayayei” earned at least Gh6 cedis daily as income that allowed them to care for themselves, save and to send remittances to support families and other relatives back home compared to the little or no income they were grappling with when they were in their rural places. They were also able to access potable water and other basic social amenities that were characterised with urban Tamale. The findings implied that there was hope for the “Kayayei” to meet some of their main objectives of coming to the city especially to earn a living. As a result not even their living conditions and the maltreatment they go through would or could send them back to their rural origins and that explains why this phenomenon keeps increasing in the region.

Daily Income of “Kayayei”

Generally respondents earned on average, incomes between GH6 and GH10 a day, while a few on a very lucky occasion earned between GH10-12 a day. The results suggest that occasionally, “Kayayei” could earn more than the minimum wage in the country, which was

pegged at GH7 cedis as of January 1, 2015. However, there was a general concern shared by the migrants' "Kayayei" that old women mostly from the peri-urban Tamale were now joining the trade making the market now competitive. This imply that "Kayayei" is gradually shifting away from being an inferior or disgraceful trade for young female migrants' to an accepted or normal trade for poor and illiterate females in the region.

Contribution of "Kayayei" to Urban Development

As a distinct urban poor group, people usually underestimate or even do think that their presence has no any contribution to the development of themselves not to talk of them contributing or playing a role in the development of destination areas. So in an attempt to identify their contribution, first a question was asked about their contribution to revenue generation in the metropolis and the general response was that they do not contribute to revenue generation because they do not pay tax with a reason that their earnings were not much and coupled with the fact that they were not stable and so, it would be difficult to tax them. Nonetheless, it was revealed that the "Kayayei" in the course of their activities, provided services and labour to people, therefore making life easier for urban residents (both rich and poor) per the services they provided. From peoples' homes to the market, the "Kayayei" were always available to supply services that ordinarily, people or urban residents would not agree to do. Example, carrying of water on large head pans from chop bar to chop bar for sale, washing of peoples clothing which sometimes included under wears, carrying loads in and around market centres, serving as nannies etc. Thus, the services provided by the "Kayayei" were in no doubt important to shoppers and market traders as well as families in their homes because of the domestic services they sometimes provided.

Also, by making a living from their incomes, their consumption on daily human needs in the town also contributed in growing or developing the area through the expansion of peoples businesses. For instance, the "Kayayei" generally did not cook and therefore had to buy food from the streets always. Virtually every personal effort at satisfying their own selves was being paid for, thus from house rent to the meals they eat. To this extent, "Kayayei" by their mere presence in the Metropolis invested some of their earnings in the area of destination which undoubtedly contributes to development.

THE CASE OF SACK TRADERS

The Sack Trade involves selling of grains and other food stuffs in sacks, pans and bowls as well as sealing and loading of sacks. However, the sale of the food stuffs is the main trade whiles the sealers and loaders are employees to facilitate the trade. Some of the food stuffs that are

usually sold in the market include, maize, millet, groundnut, beans, rice etc., but the maize appeared to be the most available and dominant among the traders in the market, because it constitutes the most staple food in the northern part of the country. Notably, because these food stuffs are for the most part contained in sacks, collectively the traders in the food stuffs are commonly referred to as “Kpalan-kohiriba” which literally means Sack Traders. The study found that trading in sacks was one of the trades that paid more among the traders in the market because; these food stuffs they traded in are consumed by a substantial margin of households in all parts of the country, day in day out. The sack trade was operated by male and female migrants’ and non-migrants’ as well, with the migrants’ mostly being the suppliers of the food stuffs. The operations of these Sack Traders appeared to be organised, as each and every person in the trade had a special duty or role to play. For instance, it had those who did the selling, divided into two groups’ males and females, those that stitched or sealed the sacks on one side and those that carried or loaded the sacks (Truck pushers). However those who did the stitching were sometimes those who carried or loaded the sacks as well, except the females who also stitched. Below is a cross section of some of the women Sack Traders in the market and one of those who stitched in the course of his work.



Plate 3 Section of female Sack Traders busy at work



Plate 4 A sack sealer sealing some sacks

Source: (Author, 2016)

Causes of Rural Urban Migration

Unlike the “Kayaye” people, where members of the focus group generally agreed that poverty and peer pressure were the main reasons why they left their places of origin, the Sack Traders

mainly came to Tamale to trade and also through social networks like marriage to join their husbands. Notably, it was the women who mainly migrated through the social means, while some came to trade and return again to their rural areas without necessarily staying permanently in Tamale. Here is an account of one of the women participants on how she came to Tamale:

When I was a young girl, there was this man who used to come and buy sacks of grains during market days in our village to send to Tamale whose place in the market was just besides my grandfather's place. This man used to 'worship' my grandfather a lot to the liking and satisfaction of my grandfather. Nature as it is bound to happen, I was sent to call my grandfather in the market one day when my grandfather's friend saw me and became interested in me, so he told my grandfather and that was all. Little did both of us, myself and now my husband; know that my grandfather was already nursing that in his mind. He (now my husband) was asked to follow what tradition demanded and also bring the necessary marriage items. That was all. This gentle man just had a wife like that. So I followed him to Tamale and since then I have been here.

Furthermore, this is what one of the male migrants' had to say about how he also came to Tamale.

As for me, my mother used to trade in the sacks but she is now aged. As of then, she used to travel almost every market day to Tamale to trade, but she can no longer be travelling around like she used to do. So I have stepped in her shoes to continue the trade, but as for me I stay both in Tamale and Lingbing (a village in northern region) because I have two wives, one in Tamale and the other in Lingbing.

However among the employees of the Sack Traders especially with regards to the loading boys, it was observed that most of them were also migrants' from the upper east region and nearby villages around Tamale. So the study had an informal conversation with a few of them and it was identified that the causes of migration were not that different from those of the "Kayayei" people. Many of them, three out of four lamented about the absence of job prospects in the rural settlements of the region resulting in poverty in the rural areas. In the course of the dialogue, it was revealed by the loading boys that as young growing men in the village, people especially parents looked up to them to provide, and failure to do so would mean one was a failure. In effect, the loading boys revealed that the lack of employment came along with a lot of pressure and consequences. For instance one of them said: *no family would like to give their daughter out to you to marry because they think you are useless and for that matter cannot take care of their daughter.*

Living Conditions/ Challenges of Sack Traders

Unlike the sympathetic living conditions of the “Kayayei”, the Sack Traders were able to live a good life. Though the business had its ups and downs, generally, the groups’ participants were content with their wellbeing. Further discussion showed that these groups of migrants’ lived like the average Ghanaian even including the loading boys who were mostly clad in dirty clothing. For instance, the discussions revealed that the living conditions of the Sack Traders were okay to the extent that some of them had their own houses and motor vehicles even though most of them agreed they lacked some basic facilities like toilet and pipe borne water in their homes. Nonetheless they could access them (basic facilities like toilet and pipe borne water) within the neighbourhoods, therefore did not have a problem regarding the lack of some basic facilities in their homes. Below is what one of the participant male traders had to say about his living conditions:

“Alhamduli lah” (thanks be to God). God has blessed me with a house and two of my children are in the teacher training college. Even though, no one is ever satisfied with what he or she has, if one is able to get something to eat, drink and to wear daily without stealing other people’s belongings, I think he or she should be grateful to God.

Although generally the Sack Traders were okay with their living conditions, the women Sack Traders were not happy about their locations of operation in the market. This is what one of the women said in this regard:

Uncle, look at our place of work - when it rains customers find it difficult to access us and we ourselves find it difficult to trade. The ground is often flooded and as a result makes it difficult for us to display our food stuff and the stalls in the market are expensive for us to acquire.

Another woman participant added:

Can you not see some of our colleague traders along the street? It is even dangerous. A vehicle can just run into one of us one day. That is not all, because of what we trade in; animals will not let us rest. We are always with the animals here in the market as if they also come to trade. They are always destroying and eating our maize.

Then again, the loading boys because of the nature of their work, in the course of the dialogue complained bitterly about the constant and persistent bodily pains which sometimes made them unable to sleep at night. Further, the dialogue revealed that these workers (loading boys) usually resorted to self-medication and constant abuse of drugs which could have implications on their health.

Daily Income of Sack Traders

Largely, respondents deemed that they were making sufficient earnings. The discussions showed that this business was highly lucrative especially in the dry season when food stuffs become scarce in the urban areas. So because, it was revealed that during the period of dry season when many farmers and non-farmers might have consumed all their produce or probably sold them, food within the period (dry season) in effect would then become scarce and only available in some few areas or people who traded in the food stuff, hence allowing them (traders) the space to determine prices of food stuff at higher rates to increase their profit margin. In this sectorial sack trade, the loading boys earned the least sum of money, taking home about Gh7-15 cedis daily. The Sack Traders, who sold the food stuffs were regarded as superior relative to the loading boys, and testified that they could earn about Gh50 and 200 cedis on a lucky day especially on market days. According to one of the male the Sack Traders, some of the Sack Traders could take home about Gh300 cedis on a lucky business market day. For instance one of the male respondents noted:

“On the first market day of last month (February), I made close to gh500 cedis. On that faithful day, many customers trooped in and out to buy some grains. My daughter is a student nurse who was due to pay her school fees just about that same week, so I was thinking of where to get some money and add to the little I had to defray the debt within that week and fortunately, market was good so I paid the fees with ease”.

Comparing the Sack Traders' incomes currently with what they could have gotten in their rural origins, there is no doubt that migration has enhanced their earnings. This is because in the rural areas, majority of them are poor and farmers too, who either cannot afford to buy or simply do not need to buy food because they (rural people) also produces some of the food, so no serious sales or trade can be effective there in rural areas. From observation, these groups' of traders occupied a significant portion of the market probably because of the significant services they provided for the people of Tamale, so the study wanted to know whether the Sack Traders had any relation with the city authority or not. It was revealed, however that the only relation between them (Sack Traders) and the city authority was when the city authorities go to collect levies from them.

Contribution of Sack Traders to the Urban Development

Though, they are largely not accounted for by labour market surveys like many other informal sector workers, the study identified that the Sack Traders paid an amount of 1 Ghana cedis every week as of the time of the group discussion to the assembly and therefore by extension contributed to the economy by way of tax payment (referred to as tickets) by the Traders'. This

finding can be related to (CUTS, 2016; King 2006 cited in Baah-Ennumh & Adom-Asamoah, 2012) that levies paid in the informal commercial sector contribute to the internally generated funds of District Assemblies.

Also, it was found that the Sack Traders bring in food from the rural areas to sell to the urban residents in Tamale and as such ensured food security in the town. This finding was similar to (CUTS, 2016; Baah-Ennumh & Adom-Asamoah, 2012) who found that the activities of the market women have led to reliable supply of food and food security for the urban economy. For example, it was revealed in the study that majority of residence in Tamale bought their food stuffs from these grain sellers in the market especially in the dry season, when food was scarce to buy from peoples farms, because these grain sellers were able to keep stock of their produce awaiting normally the dry season when the cost of foodstuffs were expected to increase. This finding conforms with that of (Baah-Ennumh & Adom-Asamoah, 2012) that traders, especially maize sellers, are able to preserve foodstuffs in times of glut for future use during the lean season.

Lastly it was established that the Sack Traders in the course of their trade served as an employment source, confirming the finds by (CUTS, 2016; Baah-Ennumh & Adom-Asamoah, 2012) that traders generate jobs for people. It is a notable fact that the rural areas are for the most part the origin areas of production of the food stuffs found in most of the urban markets. What this means is that traders did employ residents to support in bagging whatever food stuff they were, and also transporting them from the farm gates to the market centres, as such drivers get employed. Also, 'Motor King' Riders and 'Truck Pushers' in the metropolis all gained employment due to the activities of the traders in the markets. The study revealed that the 'Motor King' Riders and the Track Pushers were the people that distributed the bags of grains for both traders and those who go to buy some food stuff from the market. This explains why a motor king station is situated right at the market besides the Sack Traders and again the only reason why trucks pushers as well trucks were still in existence in Tamale.

THE CASE OF TRICYCLE RIDERS

This is a relatively new emergence in the transport sector of the country especially in the northern regions of Ghana. However, the operations of this particular transport activity are common in other parts of the globe particularly in the Asian countries especially in India and Bangladesh. The People of Tamale refer to it as "Shakar", (a name of popular Indian actor) because it was mostly in Indian films they saw this particular type of transport facility. Also some refer to it as yellow-yellow because of the general yellow colour of the majority of these tricycles or "Na-ee na-ee" (an imitation to speak like an Indian). Originally, the tricycle is supposed to

carry three passengers including the rider totaling four. However, through observation, two more additional seats were added to it, increasing the carrying capacity of the tricycles to five (5) passengers instead of the original three (3) passengers which could have some road safety implication on the roads of the metropolis. For instance, though the researcher is not an expert, the additional weight on the tricycles on a bad day can cause a problem on the road. Also from observation the comfortability of the Rider can be undermined and compromised which can also result in other road safety issues.

This occupation was solely for males who were mostly the youth of school going age, with majority of them between the ages of 16-35. The tricycle taxi business involved transporting people from one destination to another. One would have thought that the emergence of this tricycle taxi would make transportation of goods of buyers and sellers in the markets and other shopping centres easy and faster because of its portable nature which would have given it an advantage of accessing the market and push the “Kayayei” out of business, but this new transport mode does not have the provision or space for carrying goods but rather its concentration was on transporting people. In essence the Tricycle Riders were in serious competition with the Taxi Drivers in the Metropolis with all indications showing that they (Tricycle Riders) had taken over the market of transporting people from the Taxi Drivers. This was because Tricycle Riders charged relatively cheaper fares which even resulted in a demonstration in the early months of this year (2016) by Taxi Drivers in Tamale, demanding city authorities to come to their aid, and in addition accusing the Tricycle Riders of not paying any tax among other reasons. Also the study found that the Tricycle Riders had outwitted other commercial transport services like the 207 buses, as a result has made the tricycles much more popular because they were able to access areas where the 207 buses and taxis initially did not access frequently or daily except to charter, because of bad roads and sometimes, the fear of not getting passengers back to town. The problem of not having access to transport facility in some areas were peculiar to peri-urban and nearby rural communities who had access to commercial transport only on market days. But the coming of the Tricycle Riders had broken those barriers of transportation because the study noticed that the tricycles were virtually in every corner of the Metropolis and its surrounding districts and villages.

Despite the strong emergence of the Tricycle Riders in the transportation sector of the economy and the courage at which Riders of these tricycles had on the roads and also the reliefs they had brought to many residents, both within Tamale and its surrounding communities it is worth nothing that the use of tricycles for carrying passengers is unlawful and violates the road traffic regulation, LI 21/80, regulation 128, which prohibits the use of motorcycle or tricycle for commercial purposes. The regulation states that a motorcycle or tricycle shall not be

registered to carry a fare paying passenger. Such tricycles and motorcycles are not legally recognised to carry passengers for commercial purposes except for courier and delivery services which Riders in the Metropolis had ignored.

The study revealed that majority of these tricycles were owned by political party activists who acquired them through the Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC), a government funded social intervention programme (which is expected to have known better, the provision made in the regulation 128 of the road traffic regulation) to be used as taxis to help reduce the transportation difficulties in the region and also to reduce poverty. Below is one of the stations of the tricycles and also a picture showing one of the improvised seat to the left of the Rider.



Plate 5 one of the “Shakar” stations on the street at Aboabo



Plate 6 A “Shakar” showing one of the improvised seats

Source: (Author, 2016)

Causes of Rural Urban Migration

Majority of the Tricycle Riders (7 out of 10) were of school going age but were found rather in these tricycles transporting people from one place to another. So in the course of the discussion when the question was asked, *why are you not in a school but rather in the station?* The responses were varying, but were all related to poverty. However, further discussion showed that the level of poverty could not have entirely necessitated the migration for majority of them. Many of them (Riders) dropped out of school because of lack of interest in school while a few

(3 out of 10) were still in school and riding as well, but from all indication were also likely to stop the schooling since their commitment to attendance was not frequent because of the incomes they had started earning, if proper care is not taken. In the case of one of the respondents, this is what he had to say about how come he was in Tamale:

After writing B.E.C.E and awaiting my results in 2015, the guy who used to ride this motor was cheating my uncle because he used not to return the amount my uncle and he had agreed on almost all the time, so my uncle asked that I should come and do the riding so that by the time my results would be out I would have saved some amount to pay my fees and cater for some other needs since my parents were not financially sound. But when our results were out I did not get placement so I have decided to continue because am getting 'small- small' and life is moving on well.

When he was further asked whether he had the intension of going back to school one day, his response was negative, citing the reason that because he has been out of school for a long time, he could not cope again. Another respondent added:

Masser tin in zu-uri pun kpim kpim ooh, din zugu ti nin ni ku gbaa tuma maa, kpa n kpa ka buu lo. Shikuru guna ti nin kadin ni (master, we are dunderheads' already oh, so as we have found ourselves in the job we will continue to be in it forever. Schooling is not a priority for us)

Here were J.H.S graduates who could not even construct a sentence of their own in English. These gentlemen like many of their colleagues were satisfied with their current condition and therefore willing to stay in the trade. In addition, one of the oldest in the group discussion (35 years), gave his account on how he was now in Tamale working:

"As for me I used to farm in my village until I had admission to do DBS in T. poly, but in my second year I could not afford the fees so I dropped out and had the "yellow yellow" to ride, through the efforts of my land lady. Ever since, I have been in Tamale doing this. That is for the past two years now".

The respondent also did further indicate that when talking about the people who started riding the tricycles in Tamale, he could not be left out. However he admitted that he had no plans of going back to school again when he was asked about the future of his education after dropping out of school, because he (the oldest in the group discussion) responded that he had a wife whom he had a child with and would rather use all the resources he had to educate the child.

Living Conditions/ Challenges of Tricycle Riders

Generally, the Tricycle Riders were made of young men as of the time the FGD was carried out, with majority (6 out of 10) staying with their relatives in family houses. From interactions with

these Riders, housing seemed not to have being a worry for them at all. A good number of the migrants' were Dagombas (8 out of 10) unlike that of the "Kayayei" who were mostly from the west and east Mamprusi Districts and Upper East Region. That notwithstanding, the lack of a well and official demarcation of a station for these Riders posed some challenges for them in the course of their work as was disclosed by the members of the group in the discussion. For instance they cited that shop owners along the street constantly sacked them from parking in the spaces in front of their stalls and accused them of not allowing customers access to their shops. Also it was revealed that the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly had also been on their necks occasionally, and the latest been an operation to arrest them for using the tricycles for commercial purposes in December 2015, by the police and other stakeholders the group discussion revealed, citing that their operations falls foul of the road traffic regulation. However, participants were quick to add that if it is illegal, why did the government give them (tricycle) out to some other people for use in the first place, one of the respondents quizzed, *is it not to work?* To add, members revealed that they paid road tolls of 50 pesewas to the GPRTU every day and sometimes even to the police and therefore did not expect to be harassed by city authorities. By observation, it was also revealed that the 'by heart' way of parking, (that is parking without any order) sometimes made it difficult to identify who really was supposed to load passengers first before the other in all the two stations which sometimes resulted in unnecessary exchange of unpleasant words. They however hinted that they were not ready to be relocated to any distance either than a place even closer to the market, because that was where they could access passengers. One of the participants had this to say about why they would resist any decision to relocate them far from the market:

Bo zuo ka taci drava nim maa daa to ayirimo la? Bi bilahi nyeri passinja nim' laa, ka sheli zugu bi staisa maa n waga mini daa maa, din zugu niriba bi laa cheni nti kperi bi loori, amma ti nin ni dji sheli go maa, vuhigu yi ku di daa kayi na, ti nin zaya la, koo gari kpe kati move o (why did the Taxi Drivers go on demonstration the other time? They don't get passengers much any longer, not because of anything, their station is far from the market, so people do not usually go to enter their cars. But for us, where we have found ourselves, any one at all after shopping in the market and out, we are those to see, he or she enters and we move that person).

In the midst of the challenges of the Tricycle Riders, the study revealed that they were ready to endure.

Daily Income of Tricycle Riders

Largely (10 out of 10), respondents said that they were making satisfactory earnings. About their daily income, the study found that this trade is extremely profitable, with many earning

much more than any rural business or trade could provide them. For instance, below is an account by one of the respondents on the profiteering nature of the business:

With commitment on the part of the Rider and the right motivation from the owner of the tricycle, the owner within a year should be able to get back the amount of money he or she used in buying the tricycle and whatever income that follows, master you know is profit.

Data gathered showed that their daily earnings were between Gh 50-70 cedis. However, the daily earnings can best be described as 'artificial' because, as observed in the course of the study, almost all if not all the tricycles that were in the stations had two improvised seats in the front of the tricycles, hence earning them additional income. Participants of the FGD were of the view that the introductions of the two seats were helpful since they earned additional income and therefore did not have any problem with the improvised seats. Below is how one of the participants of the FGD narrated how come two more seats were added to his tricycle:

One day, after I had closed from work and gone to give my daily returns to my boss, I met him seated at his base with a friend of his. So when I greeted and gave him the proceeds of about gh40 cedis, my boss conspired with his friend saying that I have brought the money on time and that they had admitted his uncle at the hospital and he needed to go visit him, but lamented the money could be small because when he goes to the hospital they will immediately demand for money to pay bills and cater for some other cost. His friend then told him that whiles his colleague owners of tricycles were adding more seats to get some more money; he has decided to be a principled man. However I begged to take my leave then and whatever decision they took after I left, I cannot tell. A week later, my boss told me to send the tricycle to a welding shop to have some additional seats, as a result I worked half day on the day of the welding and since then my earnings have increased to about gh60-70 cedis daily”.

In as much as the Riders were making enough money from their business, it was revealed from the discussion that they the Riders of the tricycles did not care about the possible dangers involved as a result of the introduction of the two seats besides the Rider. In fact, their minds were all clouded with how much money they will make at the expense of their own lives and the lives of other people.

Contribution of the Tricycle Riders to Urban Development

With regards to the roles played by the tricycle business in the urban economy, it was identified that the tricycles upon its introduction in the transport industry in Tamale had aided in the reduction of poverty in Tamale among male migrants' and the youth in general. Usually, unlike young female migrants' who upon arrival in the city normally found themselves in petty trading and at worse carrying loads for clients and performing other domestic responsibilities commonly

referred to as “Kayayei” which are characteristic of the roles of females in this part of the country, same could not be said for their male counterparts in the city since the gender roles ascribed to males in the northern part of the country are quite scarce and often demanding, therefore cannot easily be or within a day engaged in by the males as a source of livelihood, example mason, mechanic etc. This partly accounted for most male unemployment, especially the young uneducated ones in the city, which in effect increased their poverty situation and that of the entire Metropolis in the past. However, the use of the tricycles as commercial transports have employed majority of them (migrants’) and other male indigenes which implies that unemployment was reduced, and urban residents especially the male youth were able to earn themselves some income to be able to satisfy their needs.

Also, it was identified that transportation within the town and its environs has now been made easy, accessible and cheap for everyone, through the hard work of the Tricycle Riders, which promoted and facilitated trade. This conclusion agrees with Owen, 1964 cited in Narteh (2011) in his assertion that transport plays a major role in the expansion of traditional markets to propel the necessary growth in any economy. For instance the study revealed that unlike first, traders and even customers from neighbouring villages could not come to Tamale town to either buy or sell. They usually would have to wait for the market day before they could have any hope of coming to town, but the operation of the tricycles as taxis now have come to put a stop to that and as a result people now come and trade in Tamale more often and therefore partly account for the increasing trade in the town.

Lastly, Tricycle Riders paid an amount of 50 Ghana pesewas every day as of the time of the group discussion to the assembly; therefore contributed to the internally generated funds of Metropolitan Assembly to aid in the development of the local economy.

CONCLUSION

It is established that rural urban migration played a part in the development of the Metropolis through the services/labour migrants’ rendered to all manner of persons who required their service; they also contributed to employment creation opportunities and poverty reduction, trade expansion, as well as revenue generation. In effect rural urban migration can be considered to be one of the strategies for development and a key route to be out of poverty. Hence, it can be inferred that in Tamale, the process of rural-to-urban migration is not entirely harmful, as it has positive impacts on urban development. However, based on this study and its findings, further studies should be carried out to determine: what accounts for the new twist of older dagomba women increasingly joining the ‘Kayayei’ trade, the effect of division of labour on the Sack Trade and the road safety implications of the improvised seats of the tricycles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The urban informal economy in Ghana makes available the majority of jobs and income to scores of people, add- in poor rural to urban migrants'. Yet, urban authorities barely consider the informal sector needs, particularly on the matters of infrastructure, space and services. As a result workers of the informal sector more often than not operate in spaces and areas they are not supposed to. To solve this, city authorities should allocate spaces in the markets to deserving people after their completion and not based on partisan politics and parochial interest at affordable rates. Also city authorities should properly zone the Metropolis especially the CBD and ensure that the residents follow suit in terms of physical development and trade as well. In addition, there should be an amendment of the Road Traffic regulation 128 which makes it illegal for tricycles to be used as commercial transports since it is widely accepted as mean of transportation for people and also contributes to development.

Finally the study adds to the calls for the full and effective execution of prevailing policies on urban development, notably the Urban and Migration Policies of Ghana in order to tackle the concerns of rural-urban migration.

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