

Internal migration in Northern Ghana: understanding the integrative challenges of migrants in Tamale Metropolis

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Abstract

Purpose: Successful integration of migrants in any society has a very vital impact on the wellbeing of migrants. The study therefore uses descriptive statistics to analyse the integrative challenges of internal migrants in the Tamale metropolis of Northern Ghana.

Research methodology: The study adopted the mixed-method approach and non-probability sampling techniques to select 120 internal migrants for the study.

Results: The results revealed that economic factors (46.7%) accounted for most reasons cited for migrating. Language barriers (24.2%) and higher cost of living (19.2%) were the most encountered challenges and a proportion of 10.8 per cent reported not having encountered any difficulty.

Limitations: The study explored all forms of internal migration in the Metropolis. However, it failed to explore the occurrence of international migration given the growing influx of international migrants in the study area.

Contribution: The outcome of the study will advance knowledge on the challenges faced by migrants within the Metropolis and measures could be taken to resolve some undesired experiences. Additionally, the study will make a valuable contribution to the limited migration literature in the North.

Keywords: *Internal migration, Migrant integration, Challenges*

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1. Introduction

Human mobility is an occurrence that traces back to the earliest era of human history (IOM, 2020). From time immemorial, people have always moved from various places to different destinations. According to Anitha & Pearson (2013), humans have always migrated to flee from wars, to find new economic opportunities, and to travel to new places. Growing bodies of literature on migration, including (Jarawura and Smith, 2015; Abdulai, 2016), revealed that migration continuously affects migrants' livelihoods, their families, and the communities involved in the process. This is further supported by data from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), indicating a total amount of USD 689 billion remittances globally which reiterates the massive contribution of migration to the global economy.

However, taking cognisance of the huge positive societal transformations of migration, the phenomenon sometimes results in some adverse impacts on both origins and destinations (Issahaku, 2016). Given the contemporary dynamics of migration, in September 2015, the United Nations adopted the 2030 agenda for sustainable development which incorporated migration-related issues in the policy framework (Holliday et al, 2019). In recent times, many people than ever before live in places other than their place of birth. According to the IOM (2020), the number of international

migrants across the world reached 272 million in 2019 compared to 173 million and 220 million in 2000 and 2010 respectively. Furthermore, despite the massive movement of people from Africa to other continents, migration in Africa is basically characterised by outflows to other countries within the continent ([Duplantier et al, 2017](#)). According to [IOM \(2020\)](#), over 21 million African migrants are living within the continent and 19 million others outside the continent. [Adepoju \(2006\)](#) noted that these movements within the sub-region are largely influenced by a wide range of factors including economic, environmental, socio-cultural and political factors.

Therefore, migration is a complex and multifaceted concept that is primarily defined within the context of space: as international and internal migration ([King, 2013](#)). Nonetheless, internal migration is the most dominant form of migration in Ghana ([Duplantier et al, 2017](#)). According to [Ghana Statistical Service \(GSS\) \(2014a\)](#), it is estimated that about 98.7 per cent of migrants in the country are internal migrants. In affirmation, a plethora of studies conducted reported that almost all ethnic groups in Ghana upon moving into the country moved from one part of Ghana to their present settlements ([Abdul-Korah, 2008](#); [Van der Geest, 2010](#)). These studies tend to provide factual evidence of the dominance of internal migration in the country. Nonetheless, the pattern of internal migration in Ghana has principally been movement from rural centres to urban localities and movement from the northern part of the country to southern Ghana for various reasons ([Awumbila et al, 2008](#)). In as much as many people migrate from the North to the south to seek greener pastures, a good number of people also migrate to the major urban localities in the North ([Imoru and King, 2018](#)). These movements could be attributed to several reasons as the [National Migration Policy \(2016\)](#) cited the availability of essential social amenities and other socio-economic factors as the major influencing factors of such movements. Studies such as [Abdulai \(2016\)](#); [Imoru and King \(2018\)](#); [Fuseini et al, \(2017\)](#) attributed migration to the North to the fast pace of development of some major towns in the North and hence these towns continuously attract migrants from other parts of the North and the country at large. It is therefore worthy to appreciate the fact that some migrants might face challenges and in some cases extreme experiences in the process of integrating successfully into these societies.

This aspect of migration is what has come to be known as migrant integration. This involves the process of migrants adapting to their new environment and becoming a part of it ([Garces-Mascareñas & Penninx, 2016](#)). According to [Kusi-Appiah, \(2018\)](#), migrants upon migrating to their destinations, the foremost challenge that migrants encounter is adapting to the environment of the destination as they are accosted with some challenges and difficulties which to some extent limit their adaptations to their destinations. These challenges may extend from restrictions in movements, and freedom to partake in trade activities and, to delineating social cohesion as migrants might not be allowed to interact in some situations hence impeding their successful integration into the destination societies ([Oucho & Williams 2019](#)). The study further indicated that the values, belief systems and the physical environment of these destinations might be somewhat different from that of the sending communities of migrants and hence they consequently go through some limitations before being integrated successfully into these communities. These limitations range from difficulties in adapting to languages, to the religious and cultural beliefs of the host communities which implies that the livelihoods of migrants might as well be threatened as their activities would be restricted by these challenges. Furthermore, [Penninx et al. \(2008\)](#) indicated that successful integration is not only hindered by the inability of migrants to adapt but sometimes because of the posture of the indigenes of the host communities towards migrants, which adds up to their integration experiences. It is therefore worthy to understand that migrants who can integrate swiftly are likely to live in harmony with the people within the host societies and contribute effectively to the development of these communities.

Numerous scholars and researchers have conducted studies on the nexus between migration and integration. For instance, [Penninx et al. \(2008\)](#) sought to examine the state of migration and integration in Europe, [Oucho & Williams \(2019\)](#) studied the challenges and solutions to migrant integration, diversity and social cohesion in Africa. Moreover, [Kusi-Appiah \(2018\)](#) explored the integration experiences of migrants in Madina while [Yajalin \(2015\)](#) also studied the community consequences and individual migrant experiences in Agbogboloshie. Even though, there is a wide range of literature on migration in Ghana, there exist very few studies on migration in the northern part of the country. It

is therefore based on this assertion the study was carried out to explore migration and integration challenges of migrants in Tamale Metropolis.

The study therefore sought to achieve the following objectives:

- To describe the socio-demographic characteristics of internal migrants in Tamale Metropolis
- To explore factors motivating migrants to settle in the Metropolis
- To examine challenges faced by migrants in the process of integrating into the Metropolis

2. Literature review

2.1. The concept of migration

Historically, migration is one of the prominent forces that has shaped the world. Migration worldwide has been regarded as a live improvement strategy adopted by people to enhance their livelihoods. In the past, colonial invasion, wars, and slavery were the main causes of migration ([McKeown, 2004](#)). However, in current times, migration processes are mostly done voluntarily and attributed to economic or social purposes. In addition to economic and social factors, [Jarawura \(2013\)](#) revealed also noted people chose migration as a coping strategy in response to climatic changes in their communities.

According to [GSS \(2014a\)](#), migration is defined as the movement of people in space often involving a change in of residence of the people involved in the movement. Migration occurs at different scales; international and internal migration ([Appianing, 2013](#)). However, emphasis is placed on internal migration as it serves as the bedrock of the study. In this regard, internal migration is defined as the movement of people within the country where such people should have stayed at the destination for a period of at least six months ([GSS, 2014a](#)). From this perspective, a migrant is referred to as any Ghanaian who staying in a place in Ghana outside their place of birth for at least six months.

2.2. Patterns and trends of migration in Ghana: Northern Ghana

Migration in Ghana is an old age activity in the lives of many residents in Ghana. Practically, almost every ethnicity in the country moved from some part of the world to their current settlements ([Anarfi et al. 2003](#)). During the colonial era, many researchers attributed the movement of people to the British colonial system that favoured the southern parts of the country to the northern parts ([Songsore & Denkabe, 1995](#)). The continued movement of labour from the North to the southern parts led to the evolution of the north-south migration which recently has become a very critical aspect of migration in Ghana. The northern part of the country is characterised by unfavourable weather and environmental conditions which affect their livelihoods and hence inhabitants resort to moving to the southern part of the country in search of other alternative sources of livelihoods ([Abdul-Korah, 2008](#)). Other factors observed to be influential include economic conflicts and inadequate social amenities in this part of the country ([Abutima, 2019](#)).

The above affirms the assertion of the dominance of internal migration in the country. [GSS \(2014a\)](#) estimates there were about 8 million internal migrants representing 34.1 per cent of the total population of the country in 2010. Spatially, Greater Accra Region attracts the highest number of migrants from other parts of the country, with the report further estimating about 1.6 million migrants in the region, followed by the Ashanti Region with about 853,751 migrants. Consequently, the northern regions have the least number of internal migrants since they are mostly the sending societies of migrants to the southern parts. Internal Migration, just like other forms of migration has positive effects on the migrants and the receiving societies. These positive effects come in various forms, of which [Ackah & Medvedev \(2010\)](#) cited its potential ability to improve welfare and living conditions primarily through remittances and investments made by migrants as few of them. In terms of age and sex, it is revealed by [GSS \(2014a\)](#) that young adults are more likely to migrate, with 28.5 being the median age of rural migrants. The population and housing report further indicated that males tend to be mobile than their female counterparts in migrating internally. Nonetheless, [Awumbila \(2015\)](#) indicated that massive numbers of females continuously migrate to the urban cities of southern Ghana in search of economic gains. According to [Tanle & Awusabo-Asare \(2007\)](#), many of the young

female internal migrants mostly migrate from the rural parts of the country, which earlier on has been established as net out-migration areas to urban destinations such as Accra, Kumasi, and Takoradi. This trend of the migration of young females to the southern parts of the country is known as 'Kaya yei', where they serve as head porters ([Awumbila, 2015](#)). Furthermore, the findings of [Imoru & King \(2018\)](#) revealed some of these females rather remain in the North, specifically Tamale Metropolis, where they still serve as head porters as a source of earning income. Despite the benefits these females derive from this occupation, [Anarfi & Kwankye \(2005\)](#) revealed that these young females are sometimes victims of sexual, physical, and financial exploitations from people within their surroundings.

From the above, inter-regional migration has since being part of the livelihood systems of people in the country through these years. Significantly, many other migrants move from rural areas mostly described as less developed areas to advanced urban areas. The [Ghana Statistical Service \(2014a\)](#) defines a rural area as a locality with a population of lesser than 5,000 people which an urban referred to as a locality with 5,000 or more persons. [Awumbila et al. \(2008\)](#) indicated this form of migration is influenced by a range of factors, including the perceived availability of job opportunities, the existence of social amenities in the urban areas and harsh environmental and climatic factors, inadequate job opportunities in rural areas.

According to [Appianing \(2013\)](#), rural-urban migration is the most dominant type of internal migration in Ghana. Despite its recurring nature, [Deshingkar & Grimm \(2005\)](#) noticed that rural-urban migration in recent issues has grown to become a menace in our society. The mass movement of energetic labor from the rural areas, congestion, poor housing conditions, and increased unemployment and crime rates at the urban centres confirms the fact that rural-urban migration has evolved to become a social canker ([Twumasi-Ankrah, 1995](#)). Even though the picture painted above points to the negative consequences of rural-urban migration on both rural and urban centres, there are situations where this form of human mobility contributes to the development of the communities involved.

Notably, the literature reviewed establishes the Northern part of the country as the sending societies of internal migrants in Ghana. Despite the prevalence of north-south migration in the country, there is numerous evidence of the movement of migrants from other parts of the country to the northern part of Ghana ([GSS, 2014b](#)). According to reports from the 2010 Population and Housing Census, despite the deficit in net migration in this part of the country, there is a relatively higher rate of in-migration specifically in the Northern region, than the other regions of the North ([GSS, 2014b](#)). This could be attributed to the rising pace of urbanisation in the North and also the availability of large parcels of arable lands for farming in most parts of the North.

2.3. Migrants integration, experiences and challenges

Migrant integration is only a matter of concern to migrants who wish to stay for longer periods in their destinations ([Garces-Mascarenas & Penninx, 2016](#)). Successful integration is vital for all those involved in migration; people at the sending areas, migrants themselves, and the people at the receiving areas, not just in terms of the benefits associated with migration, but also successful integration promotes the well-being of migrants related to their security and social harmony at their destinations ([IOM, 2012](#)).

Although migrant integration is understood differently in different contexts and countries, the IOM defines migrant integration as the mutual adaptation between migrants and the host society which implies a sense of commitment and respect for values that bind migrants and their host communities. Migrant integration goes further to include equal access to social services and access to other necessities of life by migrants without restrictions. The relationship between migrants and their host communities forms an essential part of the migration process and affects the degree of acceptance and social inclusion of migrants into these communities. According to [Laurentsyeveva & Venturin \(2017\)](#), migrants upon arrival at the host communities, challenges relating to Language, accessing economic resources, restricted social life are among the several obstacles migrants will have to adapt to. Once

migrants are able to adapt swiftly to the environment of the host communities, they tend to develop a sense of membership in their communities.

In the case of rural-urban migration, [Twumasi-Ankrah \(1995\)](#), in his study, revealed that not all rural migrants who migrate to the cities become urbanised. This points out the fact that rural migrants also face some integration challenges in the host cities. This affirms the findings of [Oucho & Williams \(2019\)](#) that there are restrictions to the successful integration of migrants in host communities as not all migrants are allowed to enjoy similar privileges as that of the natives. These restrictions may be controllable in some situations and beyond the control of migrants in other contexts. They manifest in several ways, including ethnic or religious discriminations, language barriers, and difficulties in accessing social services such as housing and healthcare ([Pennix et al, 2008](#)). Additionally, most internal migrants are mostly engaged in energetic and informal jobs where they earn result to meagre wages. These wages are not usually enough to meet their basic needs in their destinations which in itself become a challenge to their survival and stay at their respective places. Besides, some migrants are forced to live in squatter or informal settlements due to their inability to get better forms of residence upon arrival at the host communities. These squatters settlement exposes migrants to poor water supply, poor sanitation services and medical services which has higher possibilities of having adverse effects on their health ([Mberu et al, 2013](#)).

2.4. Theoretical underpinnings

Theoretical review of literature plays a vital role in every research by providing theoretical justification to the main concepts considering the objectives of the study. There exist several migration- related theories and models. However, two theories were explored in this research including Lee's push-pull theory of migration and Social network theory.

Lee's push-pull theory explains migration as a consequence of factors present at both origins and destinations that either push migrants out of their origins or attracts them to the host communities. Based on this contention, [Lee \(1966\)](#) postulated that migration is a decision made on these factors that have a higher influence on migration. The theory is premised on the idea that in every locality, there exist factors that either attract or repel people. Likewise, The Metropolis as one of the biggest and urbanised cities in Ghana provides a wide range of opportunities that act as pull factors of migration to the city. The availability of a larger market for goods and services, the concentration of public and private offices and the growing population are some of the underlying conditions in the study area that portrays the push-pull relationship of the theory. However, the theory is criticised on the grounds that it is too simplified and should rather be regarded as an analytical framework rather than a theory ([Yajalin, 2015](#)).

The choice of the Social Network theory is based on the idea that migrants' integration is facilitated by the kind of social bond and relationship already established with people at the destinations. Hence, such migrants are spoon-fed with some information that has a higher probability of enabling them to integrate successfully and quicker. Social network migration theory is simply the relationships that exist between migrants, former migrants and non-migrants at the origin and destinations through established social bonds ([Massey et al, 1993](#)). Based on the underlying principles of the theory, friends and relatives can help influence the decision to migrate by providing information on the available job opportunities to potential migrants also lessen some of the challenges usually faced by migrants. Despite the comprehensive and appealing nature of this theory, [Klaver \(1997\)](#) pointed out that the theory failed to indicate other external and internal factors that affect migration but rather gave credit to migrant networks as an important facilitating or constraining factor of migration.

3. Research methodology

The study employed the mixed-method approach using the descriptive survey research design. According to [Creswell \(2005\)](#), the approach allows for collecting and analysing both quantitative and qualitative data either at some aspect of the research or throughout the research process to gain an in-depth understanding of the problem at hand. The target population of the study was permanent internal migrants aged 15 and above and had migrated to the study area and stayed for a period of six months to five years prior to the study. Persons within this age group are highly placed to provide rich

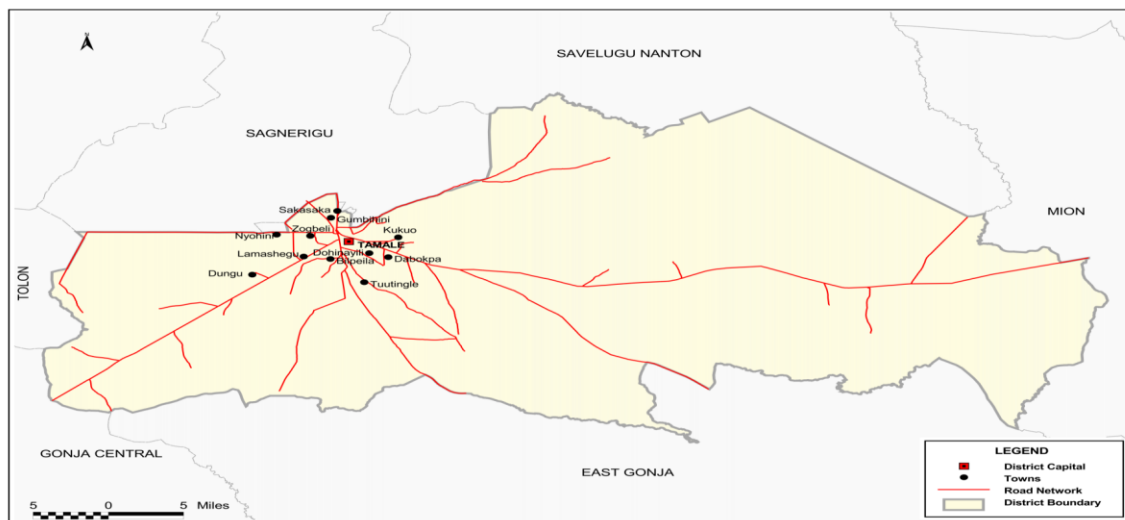
and mature information which explains why the specific age group was chosen. In addition, the six months to five-year period was chosen as the Ghana Statistical Service identifies a person as an internal migrant when the individual stays at a place other than his/her place of birth for a period of six months and above ([GSS, 2014a](#)). Moreover, the five year period was chosen based on the recognition that time was essential in the integration process of migrants. It was thoughtful that within this period, the study would be able to capture the integrative challenges and experiences as some migrants would have been either experiencing these challenges or being in the process of being integrated.

Since the exact number of the target population was unknown, it was impossible to determine the sample size for the study. In this regard, a reconnaissance survey was carried out in the study area using both purposive and snowballing sampling techniques to identify a sampling frame of 220 internal migrants who had met the inclusion criteria of the study. One major limitation of using these sampling techniques in the determination of a sample size for a study was the fact that bias cannot be ruled out. A sample size of 120 migrants was arbitrarily chosen based on the resources available for the study. These respondents were randomly chosen from the sampling frame using the lottery method. Moreover, a total of eight interviewees were purposively chosen to enable the study to probe deeply into the challenges and experiences of migrants in the process of adapting to the new environment. These participants were chosen from the sample size for the study who had expressed a profound interest in the study. The study solely depended on both primary and secondary data sources. Primary data were derived from the respondents through face-to-face interviews and questionnaires administered by the researcher, while secondary data were sourced from periodic reports from the IOM, the GSS, publications, articles from internet sources and other related works relevant to the study. In an effort to obtain the primary data, questionnaires and interview guides were the data collection tools in the study. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained during the collection of the data. The quantitative data obtained were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 and qualitative data were edited and transcribed based on common themes. In an attempt to ensure the confidentiality and privacy of respondents, all ethics-related issues were duly adhered to.

Study area

The study was undertaken in the Tamale Metropolitan Assembly (TaMA) of the Northern Region of Ghana. The Metropolis covers a landmass of approximately 922 km² and lies between latitude 9° 16' and 9° 34' North and longitudes 0° 36' and 0° 57' west ([TaMA, 2014](#)). In terms of its relative location, Tamale Metropolis is bordered to the North-West by Sagnarigu Municipal, Mion District to the East, Tolon District to the West, East Gonja to the South and Central Gonja to the South West. According to the 2010 Population and Housing Census, The Metropolis has a total population of 223,252, comprising 40,227 males and 41,121 females with the majority of its inhabitants living in urban localities and more than 30 per cent employed in service and trading activities ([TaMA, 2014](#)). This is reflective of the highly urbanised nature of the Metropolis which suggests why many of the inhabitants are employed in that sector. According to [Fuseini et al. \(2017\)](#), as a result of the massive social and economic transformation in the Metropolis, migrants from other parts of the country and even internationally continue to migrate to the area to take advantage of the economic opportunities in the Metropolis. In addition, the agglomeration of offices, hospitality facilities and other services in Tamale which doubles as the Metropolitan and regional capital presents a wide range of prospects for development. Generally, based on the 2010 Population and Housing Census there were a total number of 35,394 migrants in the Metropolis with majority of them migrating from places within the Northern Region. As a result of the continuous movement of migrants into the Metropolis coupled with the Metropolis's ability to attract migrants, the Metropolis was chosen for the study.

Figure 1. A Map showing the study area: Tamale Metropolis.



Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2014b)

4. Results and discussions

4.1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

As part of the study objectives, the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents were enquired as presented in the table below. From Table 1, the study revealed that majority of the respondents had migrated from the northern territory of the country. This represents about 65.8 per cent of the migrant population followed by migrants from the Middle Belt territory with 21.7 per cent and lastly the Coastal territory with 12.5 per cent. This is found to be consistent with the findings of [Fuseini et al. \(2017\)](#) who indicated that the Metropolis is among the biggest and urbanised cities in the North and the country at large and hence serve as a centre of attraction that continuously attracts migrants from other parts of the North and other places in the country due to huge economic opportunities that exist in the city. Findings of the 2010 Population and Housing Census also point out that, majority of migrants in Metropolis migrated from other parts of the Northern Region which is found to be in tandem with the output of this study. The territories were defined based on the sixteen administrative regions of the country where: the northern territory comprised of the five regions of the North including the Northern, North-East, Savannah, Upper East and Upper West Regions. The Middle Belt territory included the Bono, Bono East, Eastern, Oti and Ashanti Regions while the Coastal territory covers the Greater Accra, Western, Central and Volta Regions.

The results also indicated that majority of the respondents migrated from urban centres representing 54.2 per cent of the respondents and the remaining 45.8 per cent represent migrants from rural centres. By observation, though most of the migrants were really from settlements that were far developed and exhibited urban characteristics, a chunk of the migrants was mostly from localities that might have reached urban status based on the population threshold but exhibit rural characteristics. As such, these localities are described as urban in nature but in a nutshell, are more unless rural centres. Based on this assertion, the definition of rural and urban settlements by the Ghana Statistical Service which is mainly based on population threshold has therefore been criticised as some settlements may meet the population threshold, and still exhibit the features of rural settlements. The study further revealed that more than half of the respondents were males representing about 51.7 per cent and the remaining being females. This finding is found to be consistent with the output of many migration studies in the country who reported that, despite the massive proportion of females internal migrants in the country, more males tend to migrate internally as they are mostly perceived in the traditional societies as the breadwinners of their respective families and hence in the quest to fulfill these responsibilities may choose to migrate to cities or localities which offer better economic opportunities ([Awumbila et al. 2008](#)). The study further showed that about 55.9 per cent of respondents were mostly youthful that is within the ages of 15-34 with respondents within 55 and above ages having the least per centage of

five. The present evidence where majority of the respondents were young adults confirms the GSS reports on migration in Ghana where most internal migrants in Ghana were relatively youthful. The results also revealed showed that about 32.5 per cent of the migrants had no formal education followed by those who attained primary education with 23.3 per cent. In terms of marital status, majority of the respondents were married (54.2%) and the least of them representing 8.3 per cent of them being either widowed /separated or in Consensual Union. More than one-third (30.8%) of the migrants were into trading followed by respondents who were into artisan and other related work with 27.5 per cent. About 9.2 per cent were unemployed and the least of them working as head porters (Kaya yei). The finding is consistent with that of [Awumbila et al. \(2008\)](#) who indicated that most internal migrants in the country are mostly uneducated and mostly involved in informal commercial activities such as trading.

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents in Tamale Metropolis

Variables and categories	Frequency	Per centage
Region		
Northern Territory	79	65.8
Middle Belt Territory	26	21.7
Coastal Territory	15	12.5
Total	120	100.0
Type of settlement		
Rural	55	45.8
Urban	65	54.2
Total	120	100.0
Sex		
Male	62	51.7
Female	58	48.3
Total	120	100.0
Age		
15-24	26	21.7
25-34	41	34.2
35-44	30	25.0
45-54	17	14.2
55+	6	5.0
Total	120	100.0
Education		
No Formal Education	39	32.5
Primary	28	23.3
Middle/JHS	16	13.3
SHS/Tech/Vocational	19	15.8
Tertiary	18	15.0
Total	120	100.0
Marital status		
Single	31	25.8
Married	65	54.2
Divorced	14	11.7
widowed /Separated/	10	8.3
Consensual Union		
Total	120	100.0
Religion		
Christianity	48	40.0
Islam	65	54.2
Traditional Religion	7	5.8
Total	120	100.0
Occupation		

Artisan and Service related	33	27.5
Farming	6	5.0
Student	14	11.7
Trading	37	30.8
Unemployed	11	9.2
Public/Civil servant	10	8.3
Kaya yei	9	7.5
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

4.2. Factors motivating migrants to settle in the Metropolis

Migration in whatever form is influenced by a wide range of factors. As such, the pull factors of the migrants were explored. Table 2 below illustrates that most internal migrants migrated to the study area due to the availability of higher economic opportunities (46.7%) in the Metropolis. Tamale Metropolis is considered to be the most populated and one of the fastest growing cities in West Africa ([Fuseini et al., 2017](#)) and hence offers a wide range of services and markets for businesses and increased job opportunities. In this regard, many people migrate to the Metropolis to take advantage of these opportunities. Moreover, the majority of respondents who migrated to the study area due to the availability of higher economic opportunities were males (48.4%) and the proportion of female respondents citing this factor being 44.8 per cent. According to [GSS \(2014a\)](#), it is reported that most internal migrants in the country mostly migrate to localities perceived to possess higher economies of scale and job opportunities with most of such migrants being rural migrants. During the in-depth interviews, a 33 male from Karaga indicated: *"most of the youths in my village are mostly not working during the dry season and even the farming we do does not return many proceeds, I decided to come to Tamale to be a Yellow-yellow driver (a tricycle mostly used for commercial means of transport in the area) because I heard it's a lucrative business here. Through this, I now cater for my family well and my sibling and parents"*. The findings further reiterate the findings of many studies that migrants mostly migrate to localities where there exist several economic opportunities which they can take advantage of.

In addition, the study again revealed that about 18.3 per cent cited the reason for joining their relatives and friends in the study area. About 18.3 per cent of the female respondents cited this reason as the main factor influencing their decision to migrate as against 12.9 per cent of the male migrants. This therefore insinuates that more females migrated with the reason of joining their families and friends than males which could be attributed to the fact that most females turn out to have their spouses in the Metropolis and had to move to stay with their husbands. According to [Boakye-Yiadom & Mckay \(2006\)](#), a significant factor influencing female migration in the country was females joining their husbands in destinations to help them in their endeavours which could partly be blamed for more females citing this reason as the main factor influencing their migration. From Table 2, the study also revealed that quite a proportion of the respondents cited easy access to essential social amenities (10.8%) as the pull factors that attracted them to the study area. Since the Metropolis is the most developed urban city in the North, there exists a wide range of critical social services and that could explain why migrants might choose the Metropolis as their desired destination. In addition, the study indicated that about 9.2 per cent of the respondents migrated to the study area to pursue higher education and about 8.3 per cent were on job transfers to Metropolis. Similarly, more males were likely to migrate due to easier access to essential social amenities in the Metropolis as 11.3 per cent of male migrants migrated to the study area due to this factor as against 10.3 per cent of the female migrants. Furthermore, the results revealed that about 6.7 per cent of the respondents attributed their decision to migrate to socio-cultural factors such as to escape from socio-cultural related issues such as forced marriages and other cultural factors at their origin. Conversely, there were as many females (10.3%) as males (3.2%) who migrated from their places of origin to the Metropolis due to this factor. This is however not surprising as [Tanle & Awusabo-Asare \(2007\)](#) revealed that there exist some socio-cultural practices in the Ghanaian traditional set-up that works to the advantage of people with women being the most vulnerable to such practices and hence females are forced to migrate to other destinations where they feel secured and in an attempt to escape from such practices. This was further

supported by respondent 46: a 21 year old female who stated that "My father gave me to some man who is a farmer to marry him. He has so many wives and I didn't want to marry him. This led to fights (issues) between my parents and me. My sister who is a kaya yoo in Tamale told me to join her here and that is why I left karaga" This is evident in the findings of [Imoru & King \(2018\)](#) that some young Kaya yei females in the Metropolis cited escape from forced marriages as some of the reasons for migrating to the study area despite a larger number of attributing their movement to the availability of higher economic opportunities in the Metropolis.

Table 2. Factors motivating migrants to settle in the Metropolis

Factors	Sex of Respondents				Total	% (Overall)
	No. of Male	% of Male	No of Female	% of Female		
Availability of higher economic opportunities	30	48.4	26	44.8	56	46.7
Easy access to essential social amenities	7	11.3	6	10.3	13	10.8
To join relatives and friends	8	12.9	14	24.1	22	18.3
To pursue higher Education	8	12.9	3	5.2	11	9.2
Job transfer	7	11.3	3	5.2	10	8.3
Socio-cultural factors	2	3.2	6	10.3	8	6.7
Total	62	100	58	100	120	100

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

4.3. Integrative challenges faced by internal migrants in Tamale

The foremost challenge of most migrants upon getting to their destinations is to successfully integrate into the socio-economic and physical settings of their respective communities. In this regard, the study examined the various challenges internal migrants in the Metropolis in the process of integrating into this destination. The study revealed that while only 10.8 per cent of the respondents encountered no difficulties at all, many migrants representing 89.2 per cent were confronted with integrative challenges and experiences. From table 3, it is shown that about 24.2 per cent cited language barriers as the main integrative challenge faced in the study area. Ideally, the Metropolis is a dominant Mole-Dagbani spoken area; as such most migrants from the southern parts of the country relatively find it difficult in adapting to the language spoken in the study area as compared to their northern counterparts. This in tandem with the findings of [Oucho & Williams \(2019\)](#) who indicated that when there exist vast cultural differences between the host community and that of the origin, migrants encounter difficulties in adapting to the language of the host community which serves as a barrier to the migrants of being assimilated into their destinations. A 43 year old female during the In-depth interview session stated that "Me, for instance, I came here to join my husband who passed on last year with our kids. We are all fantis from 'Akyease' and since we came, the language here is difficult to learn and because of that we hardly have conversations with the indigenes. We are just seen as strangers and even when we have ceremonies in our house the people here do not come apart from our church members whom most are from south (referring to the southern part of the country).

Furthermore, Table 3 also again shows that while 19.2 per cent cited higher cost of living as their main integrative challenges, 16.7 per cent of migrants indicated difficulty in gaining employment as their integrative challenges. This was followed by respondents who complained about accommodation related issues (9.2%) and trade restrictions (8.3%) respectively. This is further supported by numerous studies [Kwankye et al. \(2007\)](#); [Kusi-Appiah \(2018\)](#) who indicated that upon migrating to respective destinations, most migrants encounter challenges of getting decent accommodation especially when the migrant has no form of social network in that particular destination. Hence most of them are mostly found in informal settlements and other unstructured housing facilities in the cities which further worsen their living conditions. Concerning trade restriction challenges, a 28 year old male from Kumawu during the In-depth interview noted with disappointment that, *"my brother when I came to this place, my friend had a place for me to sell shoes and other goods I usually buy from Kumasi but I was denied the place because another person who is from here also wanted it and hence he was favored. But now I have this place however doing business at the old place would have been better than here since it was in town.* It is reported by [Oucho & Williams \(2019\)](#) that in a situation where migrants and people of the host community are in contention for opportunities, the indigenes are mostly favored which could explain why the respondent was denied access to operate his business in that space.

Further analysis again revealed that about 8.3% of the migrants reported the climatic nature in the study as an integrative challenge. The study area is in the Northern part of the country where they mostly experience severe high temperatures and harsh climatic conditions during the dry season due to the North East trade wind that blows from the Sahara desert all through to Northern Ghana. As such, some migrants who might be strange to such conditions complained of the high temperature and the dusty nature of the environment during the period which usually leads to various ailments such as cough and catarrh. The study again revealed that about 1.7 per cent of the migrants cited hostility of community members while the same percentage also indicated religious and cultural barriers as the main challenge of integrating into the society. According to a respondent in the course of the in-depth interviews, the 47 year old male stated that *"my son you see in my area here, almost everybody is a Muslim but since I don't worship with them because I am a Dagban Doo (referring to an African Traditional worshipper), most of the people here act differently towards me and as you can see since I came here I have managed to have few friends"*. Literally, the respondent is not fully assimilated into the society due to his beliefs which in a way has affected his successful integration into the society. According to [IOM \(2012\)](#), the successful integration of migrants into the society largely depends on the level of cohesion between the host society and that of the migrant and when these principles are compromised, migrants are then faced with difficulties to get integrated successfully into their respective societies.

Table 3. Challenges faced by migrants in the process of integrating into the Metropolis

Challenges	Frequency	Per cent
Accommodation related issues	11	9.2
Religious and Cultural barriers	2	1.7
Language barriers	29	24.2
Trade restrictions	10	8.3
Higher cost of living	23	19.2
Hostility of community members	2	1.7
Difficulty gaining employment	20	16.7
No difficulties	13	10.8
Unfavourable climatic conditions	10	8.3
Total	120	100.0

Source: Field Survey, 2021.

5. Conclusion

The study used descriptive analysis in the form of tables to examine the integrative challenges of internal migrants in the Tamale Metropolitan area in the Northern Region of Ghana. The study revealed most of the migrants were youthful, which is found to be common among most internal migrants in Ghana. The youthful nature of the migrants suggests an increase in the human resource available in the study which has a higher propensity of promoting socio-economic development of the place. It also revealed that there were more male migrants than females which could be partly blamed on the patriarchal system of the Ghanaian traditional society and hence most males strive harder to earn income to take of the families and thus adopt migration as one of such measures. The major determinant of migrating to the Metropolis was the availability of economic opportunities where there were indications from migrants on the availability of larger markets for goods and services and also job opportunities. Though some other factors such as socio-cultural factors, educational factors and job transfers accounted for some movements, economic factors are mostly found to be the major determinant of migration in most cases as found in most migration studies. Furthermore, the findings reveal that almost all migrants encountered challenges one way or the other that has therefore limited their successful integration into their respective societies. Language barriers were the most challenge encountered by migrants in the Metropolis, with some other migrants pointing out the difficulty in gaining employment and trade restrictions as limitations to successful integration. Language barriers and trade restrictions were significant of the challenges as it was revealed during the interview sessions that these challenges adversely affected the livelihoods of migrants which may further worsen their living conditions in the destinations. Nonetheless, quite a number of migrants reported not to have faced any difficulty as they swiftly adapted to the environment. Further probing revealed that such migrants were aided by their social networks present in the study area which made it easier for them to integrate successfully. Significantly, the outcome of the study has advanced knowledge on the challenges faced by migrants within the Metropolis and the major socio-economic activities of internal migrants. This study, therefore, has enhanced the comprehension of the phenomenon of internal migration in Northern Ghana and should therefore be regarded in the formulation of effective strategic policies in the management of migration and migrant integration in Ghana.

Policy recommendations

Firstly, the formation of Hometown associations should be encouraged by migrants in the Metropolis. This will help provide a variety of assistance to migrants and ease up the challenges faced by migrants in settling down in the Metropolis. Also, the association would serve to represent the interest of migrants in the negotiation of issues between migrants and indigenes. Secondly, the Government and other relevant stakeholders involved in migration should implement policies and other interventions that will promote the successful integration of migrants given the socio-economic transformations associated with migration. These interventions should be geared towards providing job opportunities, entrepreneurship and enhancing their capacity to reduce their economic woes in the Metropolis and also improve upon the living conditions of migrants in the destination.

Limitations and study forward

The study explored the phenomenon of both rural-urban and urban-urban migration in the Metropolis, as well as their respective motivating factors and integrative challenges. However, the study failed to explore the occurrence of international migration given the growing influx of Nigerian and Nigerien migrants in the study area. Subsequent studies should focus on investigating the pattern of international migrants as well as their integrative challenges in the Metropolis.

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