

***SUSTAINABLE RETURN OF INDEPENDENT
CHILD MIGRANTS TO THEIR HOME
COMMUNITIES IN NORTHERN GHANA***

By

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Presentation Outline

- Introduction
- Research Questions/Objectives &
Methodology
- Key Findings
- Conclusions

Introduction

- A substantial proportion of independent child migrants are desirous to acquire some resources not only to start a new life but also to support their families back at home (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2005);
- Independent north-south children migration follows the historical pattern of migration in Ghana;
- Current wave of child migration is a foundation of modernisation framework (Gurung, 2000), poverty (Anarfi and Kwankye, 2005) & perception of economic benefits (Prabhakara, 1984);
- Independent child migration could produce two outcomes: permanent residence at destination or temporary or permanent return & re-integration;
- Some migrants may return upon attainment of their objectives and others return when they fail to achieve their objectives or when they cannot cope with the social environment & way of life of the destination area (Oberai, 1989).

Research Questions & Objectives

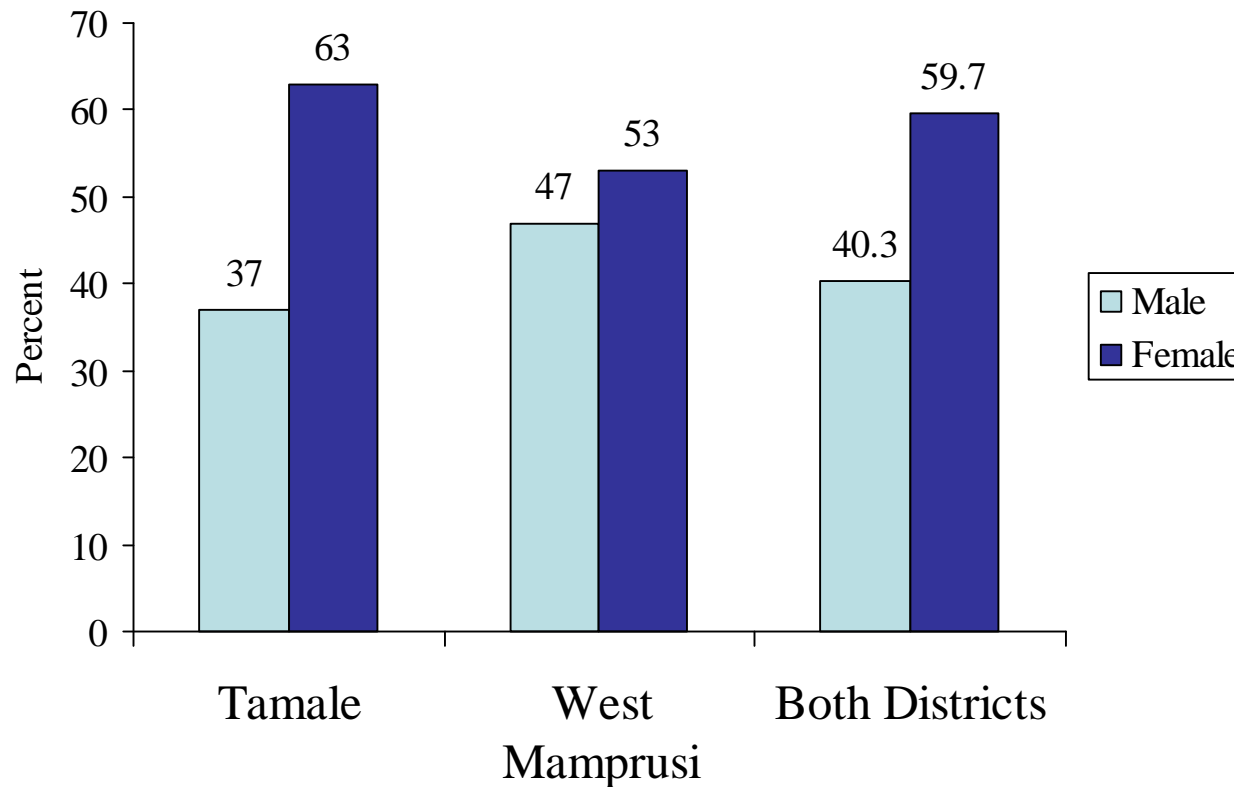
- To find out who returns;
- Analyse the factors that affect return migration to the north;
- Examine the sustainability of the decision to return and re-integrate into the home economy;
- Understand the economic and social benefits or costs of return migration.

Methodology

- Study is part of a broader one targeting a total sample of 600 (300 return migrants & 300 non-migrants);
- Study focuses on return migrants of 15+ years selected randomly from Tamale Municipal Area and West Mamprusi District;
- Qualitative information also collected through in-depth interviews among District Assembly members, opinion leaders, religious & traditional leaders and FGDs among return migrants and non-migrant respondents in the two districts that were studied;
- Simple statistical measures including percentages in addition to logistic regression analysis were used in presenting the results.

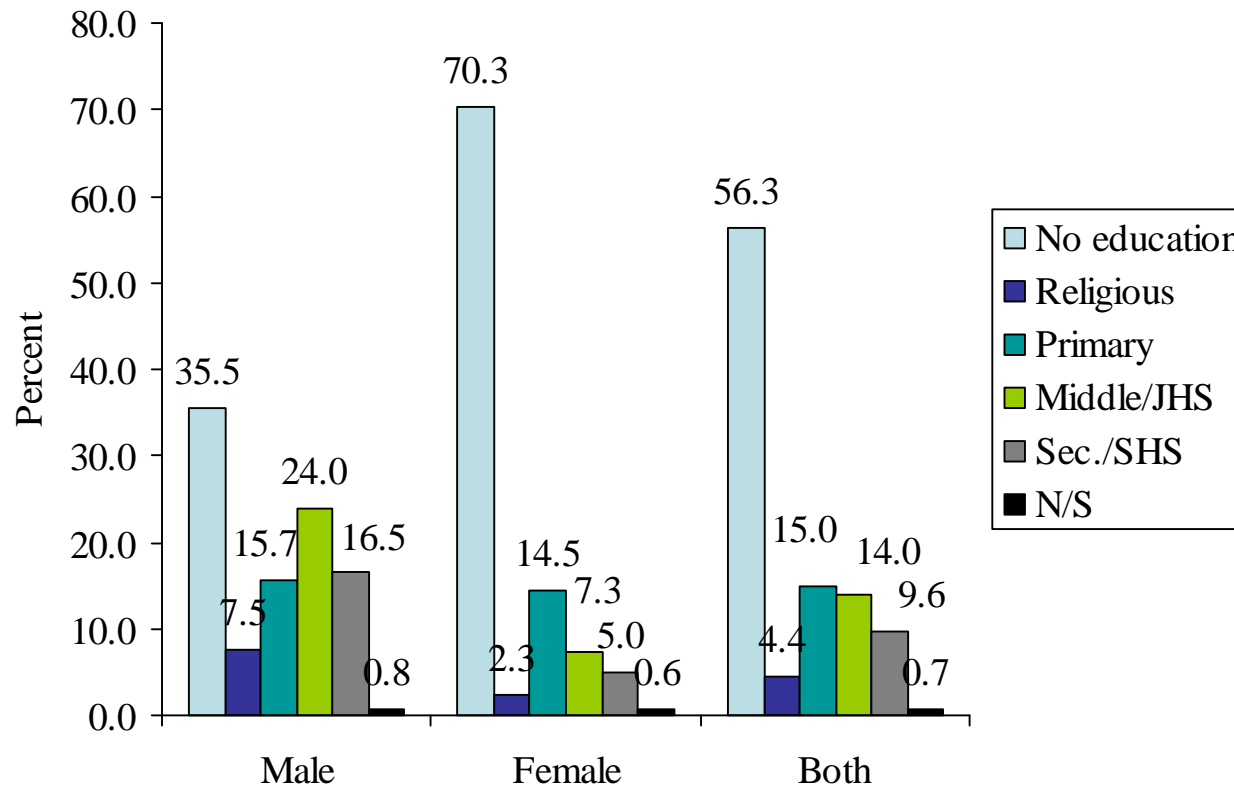
Key Findings

% Distribution of return migrants by sex



- **Females migrate more than males for some of them think their needs are more than the males;**
- **A fifth of them were first borns & a higher % of male than female return migrants were first borns.**

Educational Attainment of Return Migrants



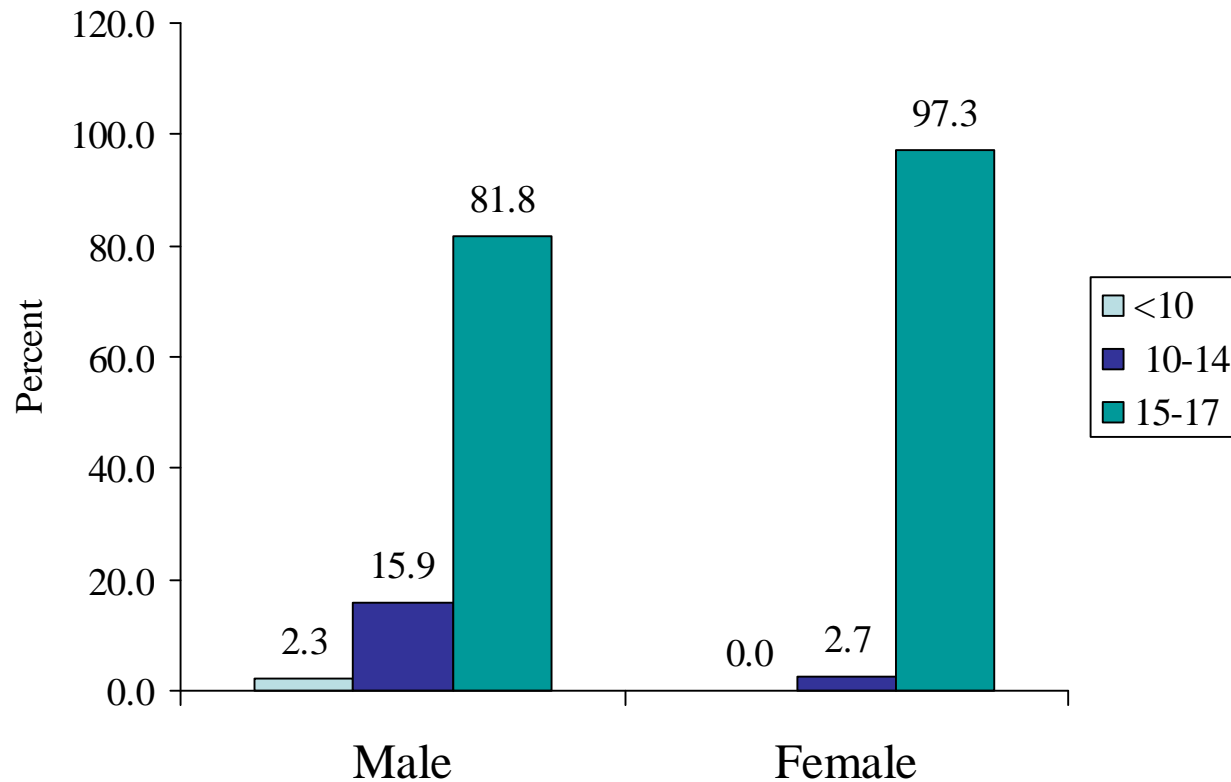
- They were made up of two main ethnic groups: Dagomba and Mamprusi;
- 36% of the males and 48% of the females were married;
- Married females were more likely to return home than their male or other counterparts.

Migration Experience

Reasons for migrating:

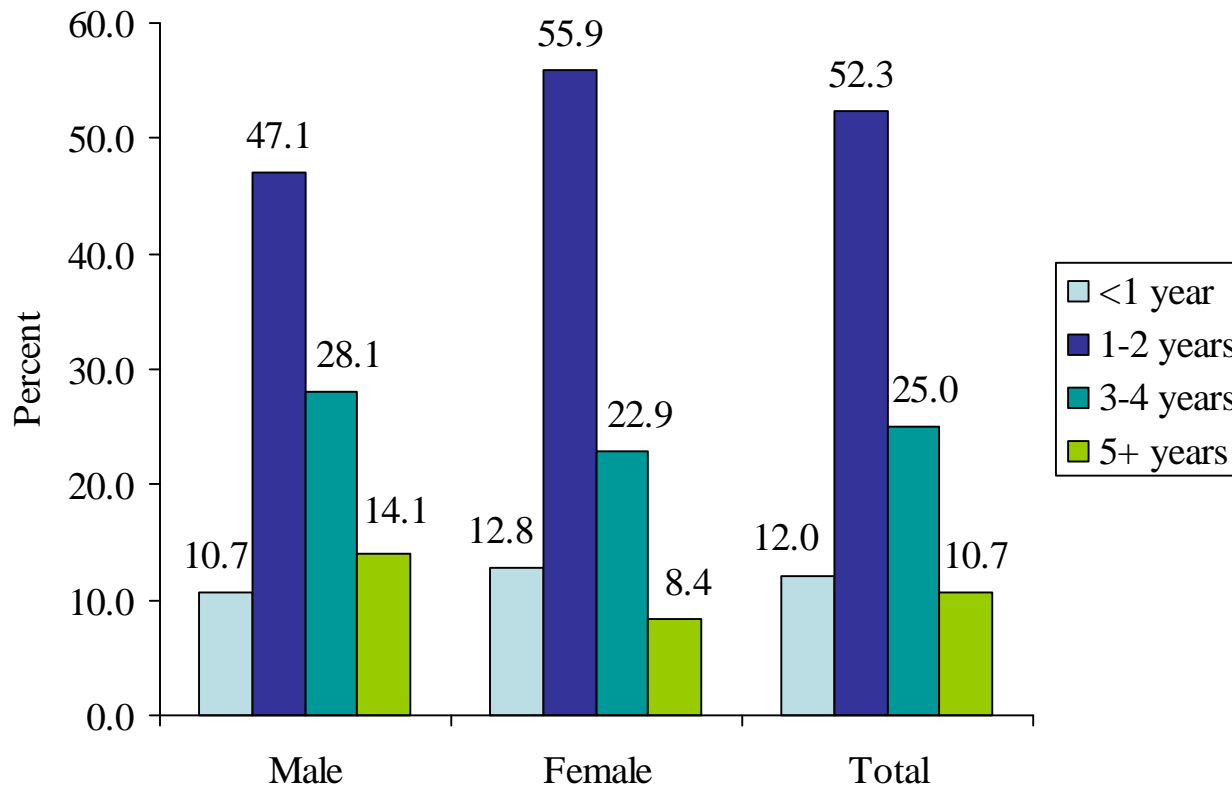
- Desire to go and find work to do (>3/4 of them);
- A general perception of job opportunities down south;
- Poverty and economic hardships at the origin;
- Out of curiosity, peer pressure and sheer idleness at the origin.

Age at First Migration



- 56.7%** went to GAR, **32.4%** were in Ashanti, **9.0%** went to B/A and **1.4%** and **0.7%** respectively stayed in Western and Eastern regions);
- Females – GAR (68%), Ashanti (29%) & BA (3%);**
- Males – GAR (40%), Ashanti (38%) & BA (18%).**

Duration of Stay at Destination Area



52% of females compared to 45% of males went home prior to their return. Again, a higher proportion of the females (79%) than the males (65%) saved some money for the purpose of returning home. However, for a majority of them, the average amount of money they reported to have saved was quite small: 82% of the males and 67% of the females reported savings of less than GH¢100.00 (\$103.09).

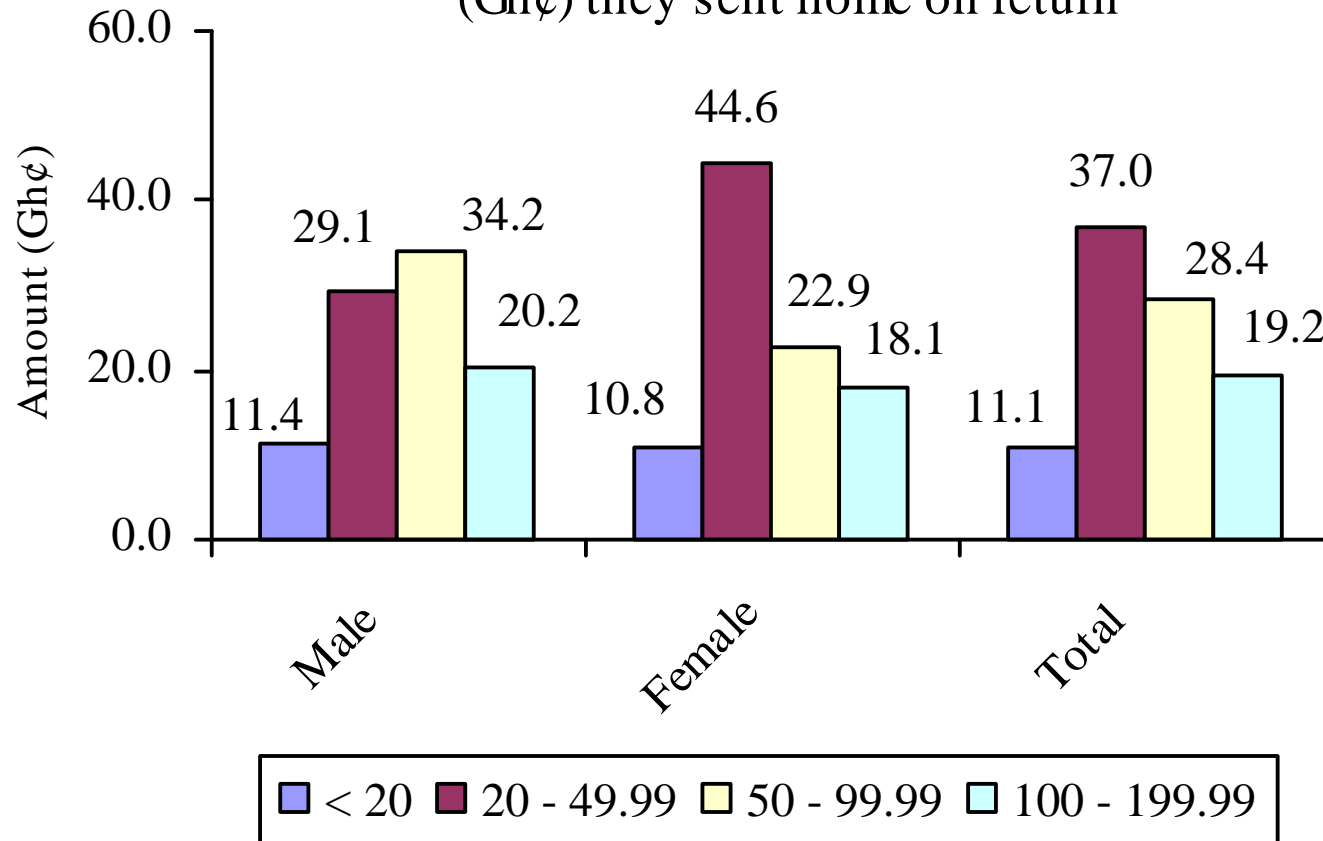
Returning Home

- For most of them (63% of the males and 65% of the females), no one assisted them to return home;
- Majority of either males (59%) or females (74%) returned home less than five years ago, a higher proportion of the males (40%) than the females (26%) having returned home since 10 years or more ;
- Migrants who returned with a lot of valuables attracted more attention from family and community members on their arrival, the females usually attracting a higher level of attention than the males: *“As for we men, there is no return scene since most male return migrants arrive secretly to avoid any scene”* (Male return migrant, TMA, 15-30 years);

“Those who acquired many assets like to arrive at the community in broad day light for parents and onlookers to admire and appreciate the return migrant’s efforts in obtaining valuable goods”
(Headmaster, Gbimsi Junior High School).

Cash Resources Sent Home

Percent of return migrants by sex and cash amount (Gh¢) they sent home on return

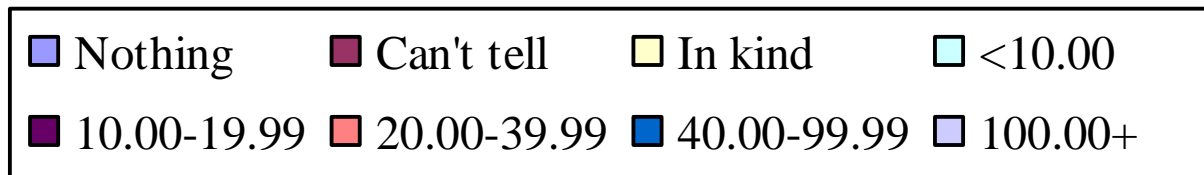
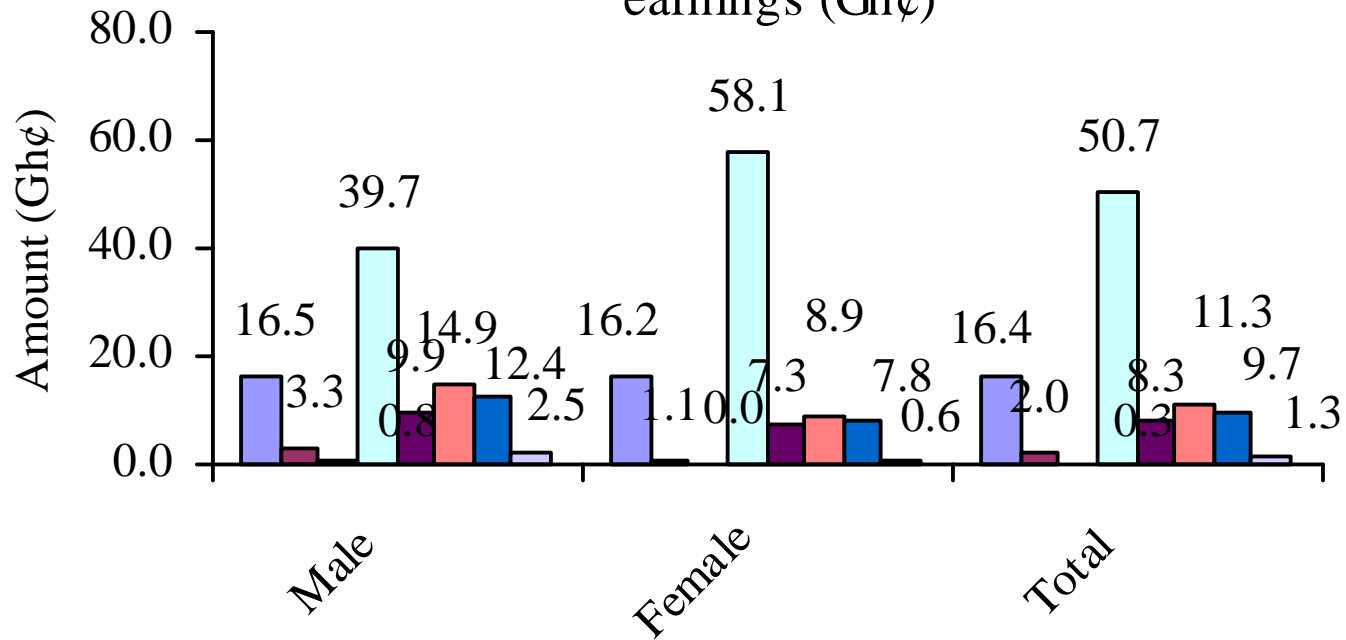


Household Characteristics

- 49% of return migrants were the biological children of the household head, a clear indication of their non-independence even after return;
- Females of age 25 years and above were mostly spouses/partners of the household heads;
- About 19% were also daughters/sisters-in-law;
- 93% of the males were in households headed by a male with 7% residing in others headed by females;
- Household sizes were large, ranging from one to 70 persons: 34% were in households with less than 10 members while 66% lived in others with 10 or more persons.

Re-Integration

Percent of return migrants by sex and monthly earnings (Gh¢)



Results of Logistic Regression Analysis

	<u>Model I: Benefited from Migrating</u>			<u>Model II: Will not Migrate Again</u>		
<u>Independent Variables</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>S.E</u>	<u>Odds Ratio</u>	<u>B</u>	<u>S.E</u>	<u>Odds Ratio</u>
<u>Age</u>						
15-19#						
20-24	-.165	.389	.848	-.389	.419	.865
25+	-.499	.454	.607	-.276	.503	.759
<u>Sex</u>						
Male#						
Female	-.331	.326	.718	.336	.372	1.399
<u>Level of Education</u>						
No education#						
Primary	-.198	.386	1.304	-.193	.435	.824
Middle/JHS/higher	.266	.366	.495	-.547	.397	.578
<u>Destination Area</u>						
Rural#						
Urban	-.704	.436	.495	-.463	.477	.630
<u>Marital Status</u>						
Never married#						
Married/living together	.093	.312	1.098	.392	.342	1.430
Divorced/separated	1.616	1.169	5.031	.203	.910	1.225
<u>Duration of Stay (years)</u>						
< 1#						
1-2	.377	.431	1.457	1.237	.451	3.455**
3-4	.205	.478	1.227	1.345	.522	3.840**
5+	.151	.594	1.163	.093	.633	1.399
<u>Savings towards Return</u>						
No#						
Yes	1.130	.290	3.095**	-.772	.383	.462*
<u>Constant</u>	.719	.602	2.052	1.063	.654	2.896
R Square:		.125			.115	
Chi-square:		27.304			20.817	
-2 Log likelihood		330.823			276.859	
* p < .001 ** p < .05 # reference category						

Conclusions

- While the desire to find jobs in southern cities and communities to raise some money to go back to assist their family members appears very dear to the child migrant, it does not appear that such a desire is always realised;
- It appears that sustainable return is dependent on one's ability to save substantial amounts of money for the purpose of return; these are persons most likely to report of having benefited from migration and perhaps ought to stay behind and yet are those more likely to migrate again;
- Sustainable return may be attained often when the migrants are unable to fulfil their dreams of going home with enough wealth and yet, it is not clear what contributions they would be able to make considering that the resources with which to do so may be lacking;
- It is difficult to conclude that there is sustainable return as many of the return migrants can hardly boast of jobs that could guarantee sustainable incomes;
- A longitudinal study could examine the migration trajectories and how they translate into sustainable return and transformation of home communities of child migrants who eventually return.