

Children and Migration in Ghana: Unveiling the Realities of Vulnerability and Social Exclusion

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Abstract : In contemporary times, the incessant movement of northern children especially girls to southern Ghana at the detriment of their education is worrisome. Due to the misplaced mindset of the migrants concerning southern Ghana, majority of them move without an idea of where to stay and what to do exposing them to harsh conditions of living. Majority find menial work in cocoa farms, illegal mining and head portorage business. This study was conducted in the Kumasi Metropolis to ascertain the major causes of child migration from the northern part of Ghana to the south and their living conditions. Both qualitative and quantitative tools of data collection and analysis were employed. The purposive sampling technique was used to select 90 migrants below 18 years. Specifically, interviews, focus group discussions and questionnaires were used to elicit responses from the units of analysis. The study revealed that the major cause of child migration from northern Ghana to the south is poverty. It was evident that respondents were vulnerable to the new environment in which they lived. They are exposed to harsh environmental conditions; sexual, verbal and physical assault; and harassment from arm robbers. The paper recommends that policy decisions should be able to create an enabling environment for the labour force in the north to ameliorate the compelling effects poverty has on child migration. Efforts should also be made to create a proper psychological climate in the minds of the children regarding their destination areas through sensitization and education.

Keywords : child migration, vulnerability, social exclusion, child labour, Ghana

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