

Su

Summary

This paper seeks to analyse the influence of migrants' families on return and the transfer of financial, human and social capital by West African migrants who have lived in Europe and North America. Based on a survey of over 600 'elite' and less skilled return migrants to Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, as well as qualitative research with migrants remaining in London and Paris, the paper argues that families play an important role in return migration, remittances, and aspects of human, social and financial capital acquisition and investment. Using Cerase's typology of return migration, the analysis seeks to discriminate between migrants whose return decisions were affected by their families – considered as 'return of conservatism', and those who made individual return decisions – considered as 'return of innovation'. The findings reveal that the relationship between the type of return (and extent of family involvement in this decision), and the extent of financial, human and social capital transfers, varies between countries and across groups of migrants. Although those whose return is influenced by their families might be considered to have made more 'conservative' return decisions, this group was found to be more likely to have transferred financial capital to their home country, and more likely to have maintained social capital gained abroad after their return. They were also as likely as 'innovative' returnees to have promoted changes in family life or in the workplace. The paper concludes by exploring several policy implications.

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	1
2. Some conceptual and methodological considerations.....	2
2.1 Defining 'family' and 'development'	2
2.2 Migration, return and socio-economic	

1. Introduction

Both migration and development have traditionally been classified as primarily economic issues, in which there is a need to focus on economic growth, investment, earnings, and levels of employment in understanding and explaining these phenomena. However, there is growing evidence and realisation that social factors, including factors relating to household and family structures play a critical role in determining patterns of migration and development, and in influencing outcomes. For example, a major development problem in Africa is the lack of capital and investment, and migrants might be seen as generating capital for investment through remittances (Table 1).

Table 1: Net remittances to Economic Community of West African (ECOWAS) countries, 1994-1999

Year	Remittance to the zone	Remittances from the zone	Net remittances (US\$ million)
1994	1168	579	589
1995	1463	640	823
1996	1597	701	896
1997	2500	661	1839
1998	2097	659	1438
1999	1759	248	1511

Source: IMF Balance of Payments Statistic Yearbook

Nonetheless, although the remittances by migrants to their countries of origin are important, many blame both migrants and their families for not using these resources for investment but rather for consumption (Massey *et al* 1998 Hermele 1997, Thomas-Hope 1985). In the African context in particular, research indicates that remittances are primarily used for consumption and social events (Adepoju 1991 1998, Adler 1985, Cobbe 1982), rather than investment in more 'productive' activities, thus lessening their impact on macro-economic indicators of development. Such behaviour is certainly related to the overall economic investment in the region. According to Snrech (1998: 41), meeting basic needs continues to be a major preoccupation in West African economies and 'investments in housing have been a major component of private investment'.

Return migration, particularly when it is voluntary, seems to have had little historical impact on change and development. Fisher *et al.* (1997) argue that the impact of return migrants on development and change is disappointing because

the crucial type of return in promoting such change – return of innovation – is uncommon. Böhning has argued that 'instead of a boom to development and an injection of dynamism, the returnee means a return of failure, conservatism and retirement' (cited in Hermele 1997: 137). In Cesare's (1974) typology, the 'return of conservatism', along with the 'return of failure', are arguably the most influenced by family and kin.

At the same time, at a micro level, many studies have pointed out that migration needs to be placed in its social context (Adepoju 1998a, 1998b, Afolayan 1998, Faist 1999, Findley

factors and the transfer and investment of capital to promote development in the country of origin. The same variable is also used to explore whether there are any differences between the two groups in terms of their impact on social and workplace transformation.

2. Some conceptual and methodological considerations

2.1 Defining 'family' and 'development'

In examining the mediating role of family factors in the relationship between international migration and socio-economic development, it is important first to clarify these concepts. At the centre of this paper is the container concept of

who fail to secure an income abroad) and 'return of conservatism' (those who always planned to return, as their family ties are at home) amongst returnees. These two groups are unlikely to be agents of change on their return. In contrast, it is only those who represent a 'return of innovation' – those who stay to earn money and advancement abroad, but hit a 'glass ceiling' and so seek to move beyond this obstacle by returning

3. The impact of family on international migration

The main objective of this section is a descriptive analysis of the role of family in international migration and the development of transnationalism. Do family factors influence migration and the development of the transnationalism?

3.1 Family and emigration

If we examine this question first from the perspective of why people migrated abroad, family factors do not appear very important. In none of our samples was joining other family members a major reason for the first migration, with most people saying they moved either to study or to work (Table 2 – see appendix). Nor did family reasons feature as a major factor in influencing onward movement to a second country. However, when asked who had made the decision to move, a much larger proportion reported that they took the decision to move with their family. Family members were more likely to have influenced the initial decision to move amongst the elite group, perhaps because of the greater emphasis amongst this group on studying abroad, and the role played by family members in funding their studies.

However, even if respondents did not report the reason for migration being to follow family members, there is some evidence that international migration history in the family may increase access to migration in practice. Around a quarter of each group of returnees in each country reported that their father had already lived abroad, with this rising to over half of the elite migrants interviewed in Ghana (Table 3).

Table 3: International migration experience within families

		Elite
CIV	GHA	B

not willing or would be reluctant to be dependent on housing provided by family members back home. Instead, there is a great emphasis amongst returnees on building or buying one's own property. Having a house in the country of origin was repeatedly mentioned in interviews in London and Paris as one of the main conditions for returning. This apparent desire for housing and financial independence may actually be related to the reciprocity of exchange.

Migration also affects family life, inducing a number of points of stress for both the migrant and his or her family. The extent to which migrants remained committed to their families is examined in Table 6. Although, or perhaps because only about one in ten parents migrated with their children, meaning that the overwhelming majority were separated from children during migration, strong ties were maintained amongst those interviewed with their families back home. This is manifested through regular contact with family members in the majority of cases, as well as the sending

FIM stayed longer abroad and so returned at an older age, whereas in Côte d'Ivoire the reverse was true, with family-influenced migrants returning at an earlier age.

Table 8: Proportion of migrants influenced by their families by sex, country of origin and skill level

	Côte d'Ivoire		Ghana		Total	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
Elite	42.2	54.5	48.8	86.2	65.0	80.4
Less skilled	58.3	81.0	67.9	72.1	46.1	70.6
Total	47.7	71.6	57.2	77.8	56.2	74.3

Source: Field data, 2000-01

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the migration decisions of female respondents were found to be more influenced by family than male respondents. Overall, over 70 per cent of interviewed women were influenced by their families, against 56 per cent of men (Table 8). Those interviewees classified as 'less-skilled' were also overall more likely to have been influenced by their families than the elite group, with the exception of women in Ghana.

4.1 Impact of family factors on the acquisition of capital by migrants

By dividing the sample into 'family-influenced' and 'non-family influenced' it was possible to compare the two sub-samples in order to see whe

4iadja2 160.2365.2 0 0 10.02 243.710.0.02 0 210.02 160.2365 404.

order to then return to set up a business, one respondent in London explained:

'Most of them after one two years will lose their money and fail in business. The business environment back home is not easy and there are many problems there, the legal and social system. Some of them want to improve their living standard quickly so they don't reinvest their profit in business. For some it is bad luck and misfortune. All in all many of them just fail. So you will see some of these guys trying to come back to England again. Very few of the returnee are successful because they have connection or they are just lucky.'

Another respondent in London who had started a housing project with his sister in Ghana for his old age explained the different forms of remittances:

'Yes.

Can policy towards the sustainable return of migrants work through families and friends?

Since migrants look to family and friends for information about return, yet they also report problems in their relations with families on return, should more attention be paid by policy makers to these families, rather than the migrants themselves? This specifically leads to a second question:

Can policies to promote investment and savings by migrants work through families?

Since most of the projects and investments made by migrants whilst they were abroad involved relatives, and yet the number of business failures is also substantial, an immediate question arises as to whether it might be helpful to train families and relatives of migrants on investment opportunities and business management, rather than focusing such training solely on potential returnees. Family members at place of origin serve as a point of reference for many migrants, especially those who fall into Cerase's 'return of conservatism'. A more innovative approach to investment and development might therefore target this group.

With regards to the flow of information from country of origin it might be useful to think of improving such flows through families.

This question links to good governance in the sense that government and state media may work hard to attract migrants' interest but many of these migrants would listen more to their relatives (as they understand the local situation) to assess the quality of the information. As Snrech rightly recommends to West African authorities,

'above all, information must not simply serve a few macro-economic policy-makers, ... it must give every citizen the possibility to grasp not only the changes that are occurring but also the issues of the future, thus rendering possible the adoption of a realistic strategy' (Snrech 1998: 87 Emphasis added)

As the comparison between the two countries and between less skilled and elite returnees have shown, such policies should be context sensitive and focus on poor and unskilled migrants for whom family factors seem to be more important.

In the arena of policy on information, evidence that return migrants get their information from families suggests that government and development stakeholders should concentrate on

providing quality information through media that are used by local populations.

References

Adepoju A. (1998a) Emigration Dynamics in Sub-Saharan Africa. In R. Appleyard (ed.) *Emigration Dynamics in Developing Countries. Volume 1: Sub-Saharan Africa*. Aldershot. Ashgate. Pp17-33.

Adepoju A. (1998b). Linking Population Policies to International Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa. In R. Appleyard (ed.) *Emigration Dynamics in Developing Countries. Volume 1: Sub-Saharan Africa*. Aldershot. Ashgate. Pp301-336

Adepoju A. (ed) (1997) *Family, Population and Development in Africa*. London and New Jersey. Zed books

Adler S. (1985) Emigration and Development in Algeria: doubts and dilemmas. In R. Rogers (ed) *Guest Come to Stay: The effects of European Labor Migration on Sending and Receiving*. Boulder. Westview Press. Pp 263-84

Afolayan A.A. (1998) Emigration Dynamics in Nigeria: Landlessness, Poverty, Ethnicity and Differential Responses. In R. Appleyard (ed.) *Emigration Dynamics in Developing Countries. Volume 1: Sub-Saharan Africa*. Aldershot. Ashgate. Pp35-67

Ammassari, S. and R. Black (2001) *Harnessing the Potential of Migration and Return to Promote Development: Applying concepts to West Africa*, IOM Migration Research Series, 5, International Organization for Migration, Geneva

Baerends E. A. 1994. Changing Kinship, Family and Gender Relationship in Sub-Saharan Africa. Leiden. VDse013 Tw 10.02 0 0 10.02oui 1994. Chs6dr10.02ik02

Chant S. and S. A Radcliffe (1992) Migration and development: the importance of gender in S. Chant (ed.) *Gender and Migration in Developing countries*. London and New York, Belhaven Press. Pp 1-29

Cobbe J. (1982) Emigration and Development in

Vimard P. and N'Cho S.,(1991) "Une approche des cycles familiaux en Côte d'Ivoire", in "*Femme, Famille et population*", actes de la conférence de l'UEPA (Ouagadougou, 24- 30 avril 1991), UEPA, Dakar, Vol. 1., pp 143-59.

Table 10: Acquisition of social capital

Côte d'Ivoire		Ghana	Total
FIM	Non-FI		

Table 12: Remittances from the less skilled returnees.

	Côte d'Ivoire		Ghana		Total	
	FIM	Non-FIM	FIM	Non-FIM	FIM	Non-FIM
<u>Average amount par transfer</u>						
Male	189	238	432	207	334	
Female	217	178	315	291	273	Non-FIM
Total	199	226	396	224		

