

Oguaa Journal Of Social Sciences (JOSS), Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Cape Coast, 4 (4):44-63, 2009.

**Seasonal migration of students abroad: A case study of the University of Cape Coast.**

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**Abstract**

*Before the 1990s, seasonal emigration of students from tertiary institutions in Ghana during holidays was an uncommon phenomenon. But in recent times, students in Ghanaian universities migrate abroad during holidays. Using students of the University of Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana as a case study, the objectives of the paper are to assess how the decision to migrate is determined, examine the reasons for migrating and outline the implications of migrating abroad on academic performance of the students. Data for the study were collected using both survey questionnaire and in-depth interview from 336 students who had ever travelled abroad, through the snowball technique. The study indicates that most of the students migrated due to economic reasons and were influenced by their parents/guardians to migrate. Results from a binary logistic regression showed that male students were more likely to migrate abroad than their female counterparts. The effects on some of the students who migrated abroad were poor academic performance, deferment of programme and payment of penalty for late registration of courses. Seasonal migration of students is an initiation process for future brain drain. Policies aimed at addressing brain drain in Ghana should therefore*

*incorporate seasonal migration of students as part of a holistic approach to addressing brain drain in the country.*

**Keywords: Students, Seasonal migration, Gender and University of Cape Coast**

## **Introduction**

Ghana has experienced two phases of international migration. The first phase was marked by the post independence era in the early 1960s when the country experienced a net immigration. This was due to the favourable economic conditions in the country during the early period of independence coupled with the liberal immigration policies in the country which attracted immigrants from other West African countries, particularly from Nigeria, Togo, Burkina Faso (then Upper Volta), Mali, Benin (formerly Dahomey) and Cote d'Ivoire. (Anarfi et al., 2004). These foreigners took advantage of job opportunities that were available in the mines, constructional work and agriculture, especially cocoa farming during the early days of independence when there was dire need for human resources of all kinds. For example, the 1960 Population Census report indicates that, foreigners mostly from neighbouring West Africa countries constituted about 12 percent of the total population of Ghana.

The second phase of international migration begun from 1969 when the then government of Ghana introduced the Aliens Compliance Order of 1969 that compelled foreigners without valid resident permits to leave the country within two weeks or regularize their stay. This marked the beginning of emigration from Ghana. This was followed by subsequent political instability and deterioration of economic conditions in

the country between the late 1970s and early 1980s, especially in 1983 when the country experienced the worst form of drought and bushfires which culminated in widespread famine across the country. This deplorable situation witnessed the emigration of Ghanaians, both skilled and unskilled, first to neighbouring countries, notably Nigeria and Ivory Coast and subsequently to Europe or the United States (Twum-Baah, 2004). Since then emigration of Ghanaians abroad has continued unabated.

Since independence successive governments have been sponsoring students abroad for further studies in order to obtain the needed human resources for the various sectors of the economy. But within the last one and half decades, some students in tertiary institutions in Ghana migrate abroad on their own, particularly during holidays. This is contrary to the past, where some students spent holidays locally with their parents or other relation while others took up vacation jobs locally in order to earn some money for their education.

Historically, migration of students abroad, known as The Grand Tour, started in England from 1500 to about 1820. The young aristocrats (sons of English aristocracy) together with their tutors often embarked on educational tours to the major cultural cities of Italy that lasted four months or more. The main motive of such tours was academic but it also offered the students the opportunity to satisfy their curiosity abroad (Fridgen, 1996). Today, students from developing countries such as Asia, Africa and Latin America migrate to the United Kingdom (UK), United States of America (USA) or Canada during vacations for various reasons which include the search for vacation employment and visits to close relations or friends (IOM, 2003). Globally, movements

across the globe have been made possible through advancement in transport and communication technology.

It is important to understand the phenomenon of seasonal migration of students abroad as it may have implications for their studies and consequently the human resource need of the country, particularly in the tertiary institutions where there is urgent need for young lecturers to replace the aging faculty staff. The objectives of the paper are to assess the decision-making process, examine the reasons for migrating, highlight experiences abroad and outline the implications of migrating abroad on the academic performance of students. The paper hypothesizes that the main motive of students who migrate abroad during holidays is economic.

### **Contextual issues**

Globally, there is evidence that international migration has been on the ascendancy. According to the Population Division of the United Nations, the population of international migrants (defined as people who live in a country other than their country of birth) rose from 75 million in 1965 through 105 million in 1985, 175 million in the year 2000 to an estimated figure of 192 million in 2005. This has been attributed to improvement in transport and communication, which have promoted international migration particularly between developed and developing countries. The increasing numbers of international migrants across the globe has stimulated international, regional and national discourses, particularly in the last decade between both developed and developing countries. For instance, the conference on Global Commission for International Migration held in October, 2005 at Geneva, October 2005) was followed by

the United Nations High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in New York in September, 2006 and the Global Forum on Migration and Development in Brussels in July 2007. At the continental level, the adoption of the African Union's Strategic Framework for a Policy on Migration and the African Union's Common Position on Migration and Development in 2006 are significant landmarks on migration and development.

Furthermore, migration and development analyst (Martin, 1992; De Haas, 2008; Hugo, 2008) have noted that development stimulates migration. It is argued that at the initial stage of development, internal migration is the predominant type of migration in a country since a certain threshold of wealth is necessary to enable people to meet the costs and risks associated with international migration. With increasing socio-economic development, an increasing proportion of the population is able to migrate abroad (De Haas, 2008). It is on record that Ghana has achieved some modest socio-economic development within the last decade. As an agrarian economy, the economy has in the past been characterized by high rates of inflation, continuous depreciation of the cedi, dwindling foreign reserves, an excessive public debt burden and fluctuating growth (National Development Planning Commission, 2005). But in recent times considerable progress has been made: the economy is characterized by relative stability, with all the targeted macroeconomic indicators registering positive trends (National Development Planning Commission, 2005). For instance, the real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased from 3.7 per cent in 2000 to 5.8 per cent in 2005 while inflation declined from a peak of 41.5 per cent in March 2001 to 15 per cent in September 2005. Although the cedi depreciated cumulatively by 0.4 per cent against the US dollar between January and

September, 2005, it appreciated by 8.2 per cent and 11.6 per cent against the Pound Sterling and the Euro respectively (Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, 2006). The improvement in the economy could be one of the factors that has made it possible for some people including students to afford the cost involved in international migration

Unlike the 1980s where most students did not have access to internet facilities and therefore did not have information about various destinations, today with the increasing internet facilities worldwide which is equally felt in Ghana, students at tertiary institutions have access to information about various destinations abroad through the internet. Besides, there are proliferations of various travel agents in the country some of which have agents on University campuses who advertise and facilitate students' holiday travels. However, at the Ghana immigration office the data available on emigrations have not been disaggregated into various characteristics of emigrants and therefore it was not possible to obtain data on emigration of students. The other sources of obtaining data on students who travel abroad during holidays are the travel agents but the few that were contacted for data were reluctant to give out data. Consequently, data on students who applied to the University for introductory letters to obtain visas was used to show the number of potential travelers from the University in each academic year (Table 1). It must be noted that since the introductory letters are not visas, the number of students who obtained introductory letters from the University cannot be a proxy indicator of students from the University who travel abroad. Table 1 shows that 39 per cent of the total students' population applied for introductory letters in the 2002/2003 and 2003/2004 academic years but the number increased to 46 per cent in the 2004/2005 academic year

and reduced drastically to 15 per cent in the 2006/2007 academic year. The data for the 2005/2006 academic year could not be found. This implies that in every academic year some students of the University of Cape Coast show interest to travel abroad during holidays.

**Table 1: Number of students who applied for introductory letters at the University of Cape Coast to obtain visas between the 2002/2003 and 2006/2007 academic years.**

<b>Academic year</b>	<b>Total population of students</b>	<b>Total number of applicants</b>	<b>Percentage of total number of students</b>
2002/2003	11,637	4504	38.7
2003/2004	12,452	4818	38.7
2004/2005	15,030	6863	45.7
2005/2006	17,090	NA	-
2006/2007	17,072	2527	14.8

**Source: Office of the Registrar and Data Processing Unit, University of Cape Coast.**

### **Conceptual and theoretical perspectives**

Migration may be defined as a temporary or permanent change in the usual place of residence across space in a given time period. It has time, space and other dimensions which are often used to classify migrants. Seasonal migration, which is the focus of this paper refers to all migrations that last less than a year. It can take various forms such as seasonal migration of agricultural labourers or seasonal migration of fishermen or nomads with respect to the agricultural calendar. It can be internal in which case the movement is from one part of a country to another or from one country to another in the case of international migration. In both cases the most important benchmark is the time frame which must be less than a year. Since holiday periods in tertiary institutions in Ghana, often last for a couple of weeks, migration of students abroad during holidays can be put in the context of seasonal migration owing to the short time period involved.

A number of theories have been put forward by previous researchers to guide studies on migration, in this paper the theories employed are the new economics of labour migration, the migration network theory and the dependency theory. Stark (1991) postulated the new economics of labour migration which emphasizes the role of the migrant's household in the process leading to migration. The main tenet of the theory is that migration decisions are not made by individual actors but within larger units of interrelated people, typically families. It is argued that households that are subjected to risk, capital market imperfections or relative deprivation, enter into implicit contractual arrangements with its members in which they fund the costs of migration and/or education and migrants subsequently provide remittances in return. On return, the migrants also expect from household, benefits such as inheritance which provides the incentive for migrants to honour their side of the obligation (Waddington and Sabates-Wheeler, 2003).

According to Stark and Taylor (1989), families act collectively not only to maximize expected income but also to minimize risks to income, acquire social status and overcome a variety of market failures, like capital and credit markets. Seasonal migration of students abroad can be situated in the context of the new economics of labour migration. A household could sponsor its student in a tertiary institution to migrate abroad during holidays to work and earn some income. The income obtained through migration could be used for the payment of fees and/or support household income. However, the new economics of migration is not without criticisms. One of its major limitations is that it concerns itself only with the causes of migration at the sending side without considering mechanisms at the destination which may encourage or discourage



migrants to adjust to their new environment (Arango, 2000). Moreover, differences in the characteristics of migrants and their ability to send remittances home have been ignored.

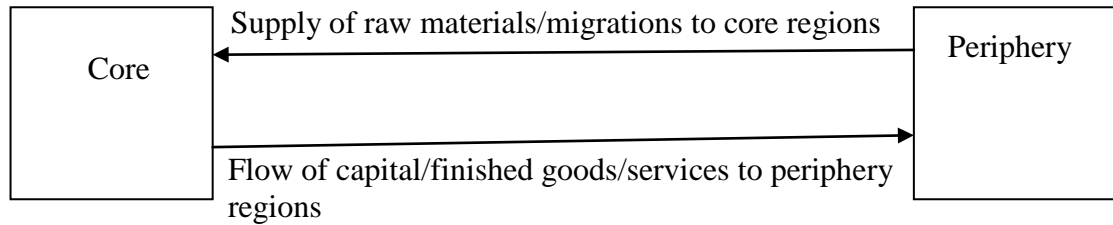
In the 1990s, the old sociological notion of 'networks' began to be considered in formulating a new approach to explain migration. Massey (1993) defines a migration network as a composite of interpersonal relations in which migrants interact with their family, friends or compatriots who stayed behind in their country of origin. The links cover the exchange of information, financial assistance, and assistance in finding jobs, accommodation or other forms of assistance.

According to the theory, these interactions make migration easier by reducing the costs and inherent risks. In the context of migration network theory, students who had ever migrated abroad are likely to share their experiences with their colleagues who intend to migrate abroad. This could lead to a form of migration network among students which could facilitate future migrations. One of the criticisms against the network theory is that it is considered only as a facilitator, structural changes that may affect the working of the network such as changes in immigration laws or political or economic changes, which could affect the network, have been ignored. In addition, although migration network may be seen as a dynamic social entity, it cannot go on forever, it may get to its saturation point and begin to stagnate (Arango, 2000).

The dependency theory originated from the work of the Latin America and Caribbean scholars in the 1970s in opposition to optimistic claims of modernization theory which saw the less developed countries being able to catch up with the West. Drawing upon various Marxist ideas, the proponents argued that colonial domination had produced relationships between the developed and the developing world that were

inherently unequal. The basic principle is that the developed world with high level of socio-economic development is identified as the core region while developing countries invariably with low socio-economic development constitute the periphery. With an underlying dependency relation between the two areas, the core offers finished goods, capital and services which include formal education while the periphery in turn supplies raw materials and induce migrations to core regions due to low socio-economic development (Fik, 2000) (Fig. 1). Analyzing the relationship between the core and periphery, Potter et al. (2004) noted that the conditions of developing countries are not the outcome of inertia, misfortune, chance, climatic conditions or whatever, but rather a reflection of the manner of their incorporation into the global capitalist system. Seasonal migration of students from the University of Cape Coast can be situated within the core-periphery model since core countries, particularly the UK and USA are major destinations of migrants from Ghana (Twum-Baah, 2004), a periphery country. In particular, migration of students to the UK is an indication of continuous dependence on former colonial masters.

**Fig. 1 A Core-periphery model**



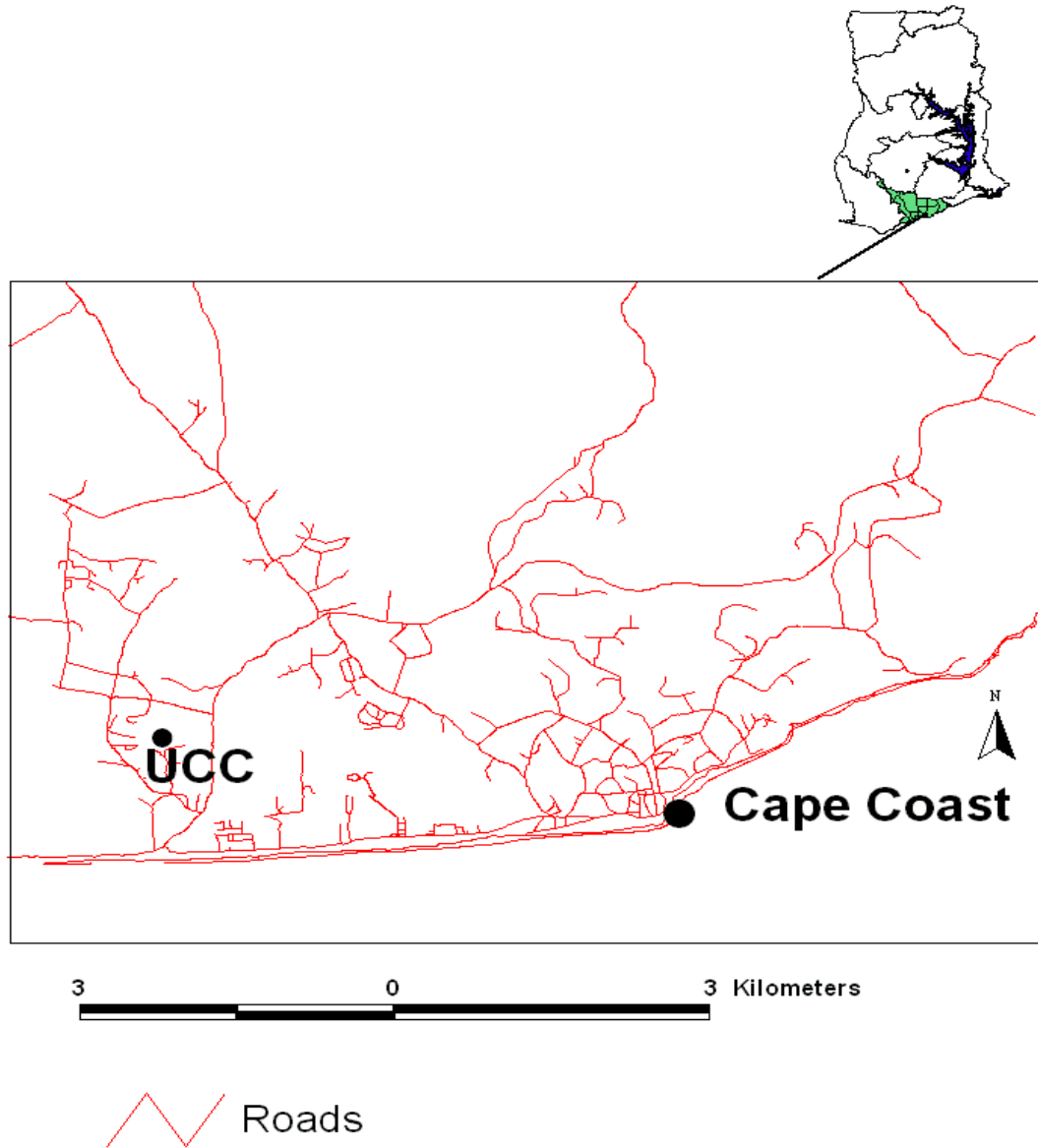
**Source:** Author's construct

### **The study area**

Situated in West Africa, Ghana is bordered by Cote d'Ivoire in the west, by Burkina Faso in the north, by Togo in the east and to the south by the Atlantic Ocean (Fig. 2). According to the 2000 Population and Housing Census report, Ghana has a population of about 19 million people, an annual growth rate of 2.7 per cent and an average density of 79.3 persons per sq. km (Ghana Statistical Service, 2002). It has a total land surface area of 230,000 sq. km and experiences mostly tropical conditions. It has ten administrative regions which have been zoned into Districts, Municipals and Metropolis. The Cape Coast Municipality which is the administrative capital of the Central Region was the first national capital and seat of government in the Gold Coast era until 1877 when it lost that status to Accra, the present national capital of Ghana. The Cape Coast Municipality has a total population of 118,106, an intercensal (1984-2000) growth rate of 2.1 per cent and an average density of 162.2 persons per sq. km. The Cape Coast Municipality hosts a number of educational institutions such as the University of Cape Coast, the Cape Coast Polytechnic, the OLA Teacher Training College and several Second Cycle Institutions. The University of Cape Coast was established in October,

1962 as a University College under the tutelage of the University of Ghana until October, 1971 when it became a full-fledged and independent University, with the authority to confer its own degrees, diplomas and certificates. It has nine Faculties/Schools namely, Arts, Education, Social Sciences, Physical Sciences, Agriculture, Medical Sciences, Business, Biological Sciences and Graduate Studies. From an initial student enrolment of 155 in 1963, the University now has a total student population of over 37,000, comprising 17, 000 regular students and 20,000 distant learners. The regular students were the target population of this study (Publications Unit, 2007).

**Fig 2: Map of Ghana showing the Cape Coast Metropolis**



**Source: GIS and Cartographical Unit, Dept. of Geography and Tourism, University of Cape Coast.**

## **Data and methods**

Data for the study were collected through survey questionnaire and in-depth interview from students in the University of Cape Coast who had ever travelled abroad. The questionnaire comprised of two main sections; the first part which covers the demographic characteristics of respondents includes age, sex, marital status, programme being pursued at the university, level, religious affiliation and ethnicity while the second section consisted of specific issues on migration such as how the decision to travel abroad was made, main reason for travelling abroad, funding of trip, country of destination and duration of stay. The field assistants were final year Population and Social Science students reading a semester course in Migration and Development. A day's training was organized to discuss the instruments with the field assistants after which the instruments were pre-tested before embarking on the data collection. The snowball technique was employed on the assumption that a student who had ever travelled abroad is more likely to know other colleague(s) who had also migrated before. In all, 336 students who had ever travelled abroad were identified and interviewed.

## **Results**

### **Socio-demographic background of respondents**

This section provides information on the socio-demographic characteristics of the students and covers age, sex, marital status, programme being pursued, level, religious affiliation and ethnicity (Table 2). The rationale is to identify the socio-demographic profile of students involved in seasonal migration abroad. The data indicate that the respondents were mostly male students (60 per cent), who were young (85 per cent were 29 years or below) and were never married (84 per cent). This supports the literature on

international migration that most migrants from sub-Saharan Africa are young males (Adepoju, 2004; European Union, 2006). The respondents were mostly Social Sciences and Education students (58 per cent) and most of them (83 per cent) were levels 300 and 400 students which is consistent with the fact that in the University of Cape Coast only levels 200, 300 and 400 students can apply for introductory letter for the acquisition of visas for travelling abroad. The majority of the respondents were Christians (90 per cent) and 56 per cent were Akans. That most of the students who ever travelled abroad were Christians and Akans support the data from the 2000 Population and Housing Census report of Ghana which indicate that the majority of Ghanaians are Christians (69 per cent) and belonged to the Akan ethnic group (49 per cent) ( Ghana Statistical Service, 2002 ).

**Table 2: Socio-demographic background of respondents**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
>20	2	0.6
20-24	123	36.6
25-29	162	48.2
30-34	40	11.9
35-39	6	1.8
40+	3	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	203	60.4
Female	133	39.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Programme</b>		
Science	60	17.9
Social Sciences	100	29.8
Education	95	28.3
Arts	74	22.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Level</b>		
100	13	3.9
200	45	13.4
300	107	31.8
400	171	50.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Marital status</b>		
Never married	282	83.9
Married	47	14.0
Separated/divorced	6	1.8
Widowed	1	0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Religion affiliation</b>		
Muslim	28	8.3
Christianity	303	90.2
Traditional	5	1.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Ethnicity</b>		
Akan	189	56.3
Ewe	44	13.1
Ga/Adangme	29	8.6
Mole-Dagbani	59	17.6
Guan	13	3.9
Others	2	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Data from fieldwork**



### **Influence on decision to migrate abroad.**

One of the objectives of this paper is to assess how the decision to migrate was arrived at. The decision to migrate may be influenced by household, friends or initiated by the individual migrant (Tanle and Awusabo-Asare, 2007). Table 3 indicates that about 60 per cent of the students were mostly influenced by their parents/guardians and/or friends while about one-third decided to migrate on their own. Parents/guardians influence was on the preparedness to fund the trip while friends provided information on travelling abroad. Females were mostly (5 out of 10 ) influenced by their parents/guardians to migrate abroad than their male counterparts ( about 3 out of 10) while nearly four out of every ten males compared to only two out of every ten females decided on their own to migrate abroad. The fact that more males than females migrated on their own is due to the fact that males are generally more adventurous than females. In general, parents/guardians and/or friends influence students to migrate abroad seasonally.

**Table 3: Influence on decision to migrate abroad.**

Influenced by	Sex		Total (%)
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
Parents/guardians	27.1	51.9	36.9
Friends	26.1	14.3	21.4
Nobody	38.4	22.6	32.1
Siblings	5.9	10.5	7.7
Cousins	2.5	0.8	1.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>336</b>

**Source: Data from fieldwork**

### **Reasons for migrating abroad and funding of trip.**

The reason to migrate abroad is always the driving force for most potential migrants. Table 4 indicates that both males and females students migrated abroad due mostly to economic reasons (38 per cent) followed by visits (31 per cent) to friends

and/or close relations. In general, students travelled abroad due to economic reasons, this is an indication of the continuous economic dependence of periphery countries on core countries. This finding is consistent with other findings which suggest that emigration from developing to developed countries is mainly for economic reasons (Anarfi et al. 1999; European Union, 2006). Many male students (4 out of 10) than females (about one-quarter) migrated abroad for economic reasons whereas nearly half of females (45 per cent) compared with a quarter of males (26 per cent) said they visited friends and/or close relations abroad. The differences between males and females regarding the main reason for migration could be that naturally males are expected to fend for themselves; which explains that explain why more males than females migrated for economic reasons. Females are naturally known to be dependants which explain why more females than males migrated for the purpose of visit. The fact that the main motive of migrating abroad is economic may be due to the fact that students pay various fees on campus and since there are limited opportunities for adequately compensated vacation work locally, some students migrate abroad to work during the holidays so that they would be able to pay their fees and other expenses on campus.

One prerequisite of migration is the ability to pay for the cost of travelling. Those who can fund their trips are more likely to migrate than those who cannot afford the cost involved. More than two-thirds of the students (69 per cent) indicated that their trips were funded by their parents/guardians, with more females (75 per cent) than males (65 per cent) being funded by parents/guardians. Salaries and loans constituted other sources of funding for males (21.3 per cent) than females (17.4 per cent). It can be deduced that since female participation rate (6.2 per cent) in the formal sector (both public and private)

is less than that of males (22.8 per cent), it explains why more females than males depended on funding from parents/guardians (Amu, 2005). That parents/guardians mostly funded the cost of trip abroad is consistent with the new economics of labour migration theory which indicates that households provide financial support to enable one of its members to migrate abroad with the expectation that the migrant would in turn remit household members.

**Table 4: Reasons for migrating abroad and funding of trip**

Reason	Sex		Total (%)
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
Adventure	30.0	28.6	29.5
Economic	43.4	24.8	38.4
Visit	26.1	45.1	31.3
Medical attention	0.5	1.5	0.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>336</b>
<b>Source of funding</b>			
Parents/guardian	64.5	75.2	68.8
Salary	16.3	8.3	13.1
Student loan	2.0	5.3	3.3
Bank loan	3.0	3.8	3.3
Other	14.3	7.5	11.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>336</b>

**Source: Data from fieldwork**

#### **Country of destination and duration of stay**

Table 5 shows that the most preferred destination of the students was the UK (66 per cent) followed by the USA (19 per cent). Almost the same number of males and females travelled to the USA but a fairly higher number of males (68 per cent) than females (64 per cent) travelled to the UK. That most students travelled to the UK is expected because the British were Ghana's former colonial masters and therefore there are long-standing political and historical ties between Ghana and the UK. It is also an

example of the dependence of periphery countries on core countries as indicated in the dependency theory. Besides, the UK is an English speaking country and therefore students will feel more comfortable with the English language. In addition, data on emigration from Ghana indicates that the UK is the most preferred destination of most emigrants from Ghana (Anarfi et al., 2004). The presence of Ghanaians in the UK can facilitate migration network between students and Ghanaians resident in the UK.

Some students did not stay long at the various destinations as they have to come back to continue with their programmes. Table 5 indicates that about nine out of every ten students mentioned that they stayed at their destination for between one and three months while 12 per cent said they stayed for a period of four months or more. A higher percentage of males (15 per cent) compared with females (8 per cent) stayed four months or more. This might be due to the fact that more males than females migrated for economic reasons as indicated above. Since the University's holidays on the average are always less than two months, it is likely that students who stayed longer (4 months or more) might have deferred their programmes as confirmed by a 33 year old female student:

I had a 14 months visa to travel to the U.S., so I deferred my course for one academic year. I am now in the final year but I don't regret at all because my trip abroad was worth it.

**Table 5: Country of destination and duration of stay.**

Country destination	Sex		Total (%)
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
United Kingdom	67.5	63.9	66.1
United States of America	18.7	18.0	18.5
Germany	1.5	3.0	2.1
Ireland	3.0	1.5	2.4
Italy	1.0	1.5	1.2
Canada	1.0	3.8	2.1
Holland	2.5	1.5	2.1
Others	4.9	6.8	5.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>336</b>
<b>Duration ( in months)</b>			
1-3	85.2	92.5	88.0
4-6	3.9	6.0	4.8
7-10	3.9	-	2.4
11+	6.9	1.5	4.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>336</b>

**Source: Data from fieldwork.**

### **Determinants of migration abroad**

The logistic regression technique was employed to identify factors that influence students to migration abroad during holidays. It was preferred to other multivariate techniques because of its robustness and sensitivity to outliers (Nwakeze, 2007). In addition, it has the advantage of estimating odd ratios for each variable to determine how much each is likely to explain the dependent variable (migration abroad).

Table 6 presents the results from the logistic regression analysis. The reference category is represented by one in each of the independent variables. From the results, there is a higher likelihood of male students (1.208) migrating abroad than female students. Similarly, students who were single or were previously married were more likely to migrate abroad compared with those who were married. There is a significant relationship between payment of school fees and the desire to migrate abroad during

holidays. It was evident that students whose school fees were paid by their parents/guardians were more likely (1.159) to travel abroad during holidays compared with those who pay their own fees. Sex, marital status and payment of school fees showed direct (positive) relationship with the odd ratio while age indicated an inverse relationship. In general, sex, marital status and payment of school fees indicate a higher likelihood of migrating abroad during holidays.

**Table 6: Results of logistic regression on the determinants of migration abroad.**

Variable and its description	Results			
	B	Standard error	Sig.	Odd ratio
Migration status: Non migrant =0, Migrant =1				
<b>Independent variables</b>				
Age: 15-19 (RC) =1, 20-30 =2, 31-39 =3, 40+ =4	-.008	.013	.522	.992
Sex: Female (RC) =1. Male =2	.186	.164	.255	1.208
Marital status: Married(RC)=1, Single=2, Ever married=3	.205	.228	.367	1.228
Payment of school fees:Self (RC) =1, Parents/guardian =2	.147	.073	.044*	1.159
Contant	.190	.230	.409	.827

\*P < .05

### **Benefits obtained and experiences abroad**

Benefits from emigration abroad could be so varied that it can only be properly captured using an open-ended question. In the study, respondents were asked to indicate the main benefit that they obtained from their trip abroad. More than half (55 per cent) of the respondents benefited economically from their trip while others (39 per cent) indicated that they had broadened their personal experiences as a result of migrating abroad (Table 7). Whilst more females benefited (about 5 out of 10) than males (nearly 4 out of 10) in terms of broadening their experiences, males benefited more economically

(59 per cent) than females (48 per cent) which further buttress the point that males migrated mostly for economic reasons.

On their experiences abroad, varied responses were mentioned by the students but the main ones were working under very stressful conditions (34 per cent), racial discrimination (34 per cent) and the feeling of personal insecurity (13 per cent). More females (41 per cent) than males (29 per cent) reported racial discrimination while fewer males (5 per cent) than females (11 per cent) reported poor accommodation. That more females than males complained of racial discrimination and poor accommodation could be that females are generally more sensitive than males. Some information on benefits and experiences abroad teased out from the qualitative data are as follows:

I was able to purchase things like a laptop, computer printer, digital camera and DVD player which I would'nt have been able to buy in Ghana ( A 31 year old male student ).

I learnt how to manage time, since over there, the whites are time conscious in everything they do ( A 27 year old female student).

I witnessed a scene in broad day light in Bronx, New York, where two teenagers shot and killed an old man on the street. I felt insecure, and there and then, I felt like coming back to Ghana immediately (A 29 year old male student).

These verbatim quotations from some of the students indicate that students do not only benefit materially from their trips abroad but also they are exposed to diverse experiences which could inform their lives both at school and after school. For instance, students who hitherto were not sensitive about time have learnt to be time conscious which could impact positively on their academic work.

**Table 7: Benefits obtained and experiences abroad.**

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Sex</b>		<b>Total (%)</b>
	<b>Male (%)</b>	<b>Female (%)</b>	
Earned some money	52.7	33.8	46.1
Clothing	5.9	14.3	9.2
Broadened Horizon	36.0	45.2	38.7
Gained working experience	5.4	6.8	6.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>336</b>
<b>Experiences</b>			
Poor accommodation	4.9	10.5	7.1
Work-related stress	35.5	31.6	33.9
Personal insecurity	17.7	6.8	13.4
Racial discrimination	28.6	41.4	33.6
Other	13.3	9.8	11.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>336</b>

**Source: Data from fieldwork**

#### **Effects of trip on academic work.**

Two questions were posed on the effects of the trip on academic work. One was to find out whether or not the trip affected academic work and the other was if it did, what were the specific effects. The specific effects of the 122 students who reported that the trip abroad affected their academic work were poor academic performance (43 per cent), deferment of programme (24 per cent) and payment of penalty for late registration of courses (23 per cent) (Table 8). Besides these effects, some of the students indicated in the in-depth interview that they never had time to rest before the semester begun as reported by a 28 year old male student:

When I returned, I did not get time to rest and recover from the tedious work abroad before the academic work begun. As a result of the tiredness, I performed poorly in last semester's examination.



**Table 8: Effects of trip on academic work.**

Effects	Sex		Total (%)
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
Deferred programme	25.0	20.0	23.8
Paid penalty	16.3	43.3	23.0
Performed poorly	46.7	33.3	43.4
Other	12.0	3.3	9.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>122</b>

**Source: Data from fieldwork**

### **Intention to travel again in future.**

For various reasons, some students may decide to migrate again while others may not. The students were asked whether or not they intended to migrate abroad again during holidays and if yes, the reasons for intending to migrate again. Table 9 shows that out of the 306 students who indicated that they intended to migrate again in future, about half (48 per cent) said it was due to economic reasons while a little over a quarter said they wanted to further their education abroad. For both reasons, the percentage of males was greater than females indicating that males are more likely than females to migrate again in future. Although some of the students went through some negative experiences on their first trip, almost all of them are willing to migrate again in future.

**Table 9: Reasons for intending to travel again in future.**

Reason	Sex		Total (%)
	Male (%)	Female (%)	
Economic	51.3	42.4	47.9
Exposure	11.1	18.6	14.0
Education	28.0	23.7	26.4
Visit	4.8	12.7	7.8
Marriage	4.8	2.5	3.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>306</b>

**Source: Data from fieldwork**

## **Discussion and conclusion**

The study set out to examine seasonal migration of students abroad during holidays using students of the University of Cape Coast as a case study. Seasonal migration abroad for holidays is now popular among students in tertiary institutions. The results from the study revealed that between the 2002/2003 and 2006/2007 academic year, on the average, 4000 students applied for introductory letters from the University of Cape Coast to travel abroad during holidays. The students were mostly levels 300 and 400 students. More than half of the students were males and most of them migrated to the United Kingdom or the United States. This is expected because the British were Ghana's former colonial masters and therefore there are long-standing political and historical ties between Ghana and the UK. Besides, both the UK and the U.S. are English speaking countries and therefore the students felt more comfortable with the English language as a medium of communication.

Those who migrated were mostly young (29 years or below) and never married. The cost of travel was mostly funded by parents/guardians indicating that students who migrated abroad come from households of moderate to higher income since the cost of migrating abroad is between GH¢841 and GH¢1402 (between US\$900 and US\$1500 for either UK or USA). Also, social network among students on campus, particularly the provision of information on traveling abroad was one of the ways some students were influenced by their colleagues who had travelled before. The other form of influence could be the demonstrative effects often associated with return migrants which compel some potential migrants to migrate ( Tanle and Awusabo-Asare, 2007).

The main motive of migrating was economic which buttresses the dependency syndrome of periphery countries on core countries. However, some females students migrated abroad due to social reasons such as visiting relations or spouse ( Anarfi et al, 1999; Twum-Baah, 2004). More than half of the students reported that they benefited economically, especially the males while some females said they broadened their experiences through various experiences that they went through. Since the students benefited from their trips abroad, most of them indicated the intention to migrate again during the next holidays. Seasonal migration of students abroad could initiate students into a permanent migration in future after graduation. It is on record that Ghana has already lost some key human resources such as health workers and University lecturers as a result of brain drain (European Union, 2006).

The study revealed some negative experiences abroad such as racial discrimination, persistent feelings of insecurity and working under very stressful conditions. In the context of the micro-economic theory of migration, these negative experiences are the costs at the destination to students who migrated abroad. The costs at the origin are poor academic performance among some students, payment of penalty for late registration of courses while others deferred their programmes because they overstayed.

The study established that some students from the University of Cape Coast migrate abroad during holidays mostly for economic reasons. Although almost all of them benefited from the trip abroad, some of them did so at the expense of their academic work. The long term implication is that some of the students are likely to become part of the brain drain currently experienced in the country. In a more holistic approach to

addressing brain drain in Ghana, seasonal migration of students from tertiary institutions in Ghana needs to be incorporated into the existing policy framework.

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