THE PREDICAMENT OF RURAL URBAN MIGRATION IN GHANA: 
THE CASE OF THE VISIBLE, BUT VOICELESS KAYAYEI GIRLS

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ABSTRACT

This exploratory qualitative study examines the factors behind the prevalence of girls migrating from the three northern regions of Ghana to the southern cities, to indulge in unpaid labour involving the carrying loads. Through focus group discussions, the study examines the push and pull factors of these migrants, the work and living conditions of the participants in their new destination, implications of the load-carrying job, and the overall well being of the Kayayei. Our goal is to understand the lived experiences of the Kayayei and explore types of policies/services needed to make positive changes in the lives of these girls/women. Findings from this study confirm that lack of economic opportunities coupled with socio-cultural factors contribute to the migration of these young women. It is recommended among others that Ghana’s girl head-load carriers be provided with vocational, educational and employable skills that empower women and girls.

Keywords: Kayayei, Child Labour, Poverty, Urban Migration, Ghana.
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