Title: Return Migration Intentions among migrants in six Southern Africa countries

Authors: Ololade Baruwa, Evans Muchiri, Relebogile Mapuroma and Latifat Ibisomi

Introduction

Existing literature on migration has mainly focused on immigration to the Western countries/developed countries, and the integration of immigrants in their foster countries (1). Studies on return migration have recently been growing in number, especially for migrants residing in developed countries including (2). Countries in sub-Saharan Africa have been net producers of migrants due to the sustained political conflicts in the region, tough economic times, and reunification for family members who have relocated to host nations. In sub-Saharan Africa, countries within Southern Africa receive net in migrations for immigrants looking for political stability and better economic conditions outside of the Western countries. South Africa forms the largest recipient of immigrants within these countries, while countries in Southern Africa including Botswana, Namibia, Kingdom of Eswatini, Zambia and Lesotho receive substantial number of immigrants. However, literature on intentions to return to their countries of origin among migrants residing within Southern African countries has not been investigated in depth before. Research studies have mainly been based on immigration in the developed countries with little evidence available for countries in sub-Saharan Africa, and especially in Southern African countries. This study investigated factors associated with intentions among migrants residing in six countries of Southern African countries of Lesotho, Kingdom of Eswatini, Zambia, Malawi, Zimbabwe and South Africa.

Methods

We analyzed data collected the Need Assessment and Baseline Survey data of SRHR/HIV of the Knows No Borders project, conducted in 12 sites in Lesotho, Kingdom of Eswatini, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, and Zambia. The study used both qualitative and quantitative methods in a cross-sectional design to collect data from adolescents and young people (AYPs), migrants, and sex workers. The survey focused on a wide range of issues, including needs assessments on sexual and reproductive health, and migrations aspects of intentions to return to their country of origin.

The outcome variable was a dummy variable derived using the intention to return question. In the survey, respondents were asked "do you have any intention of moving to go and settle in the community?" Respondents answering to the affirmative of this were classified as intending to return while those not confirming, were classified as not intending to return. The independent variables used characteristics including gender, highest level of education, country, wealth index, age, work in the last 12 months, work pattern (throughout the year, seasonally and once in a while), food security, migration status, migration reason, and migration type. Multiple logistic regression analyses were conducted to identify factors that were associated with intentions to return. Analyses were conducted in two stages. In the first stage, an unadjusted logistic regression analysis was conducted while adjusted logistic analysis was conducted in the second stage. Binary logistic regression model is a technique for determining the association between a dependent variable which is dichotomous using values 0 or 1 (i.e. failure or success) and a set of explanatory variables. This is expressed as:

Log (p/1-p) = a + $\sum \beta_i X_i$ + e

Where p = the event of occurrence (outcome variable)

X = the explanatory variables

β = the size of the coefficient of explanatory variable

e = the base of natural logarithms

Data analysis were done using Stata 15 version. Results were interpreted by using odds ratio with level of significance set at p<0.05 and confidence intervals of 95%.

Results

Figure 1: percentage distribution of return migration in six Southern African countries

Percentage distribution of migrants that intend to return back to place of origin
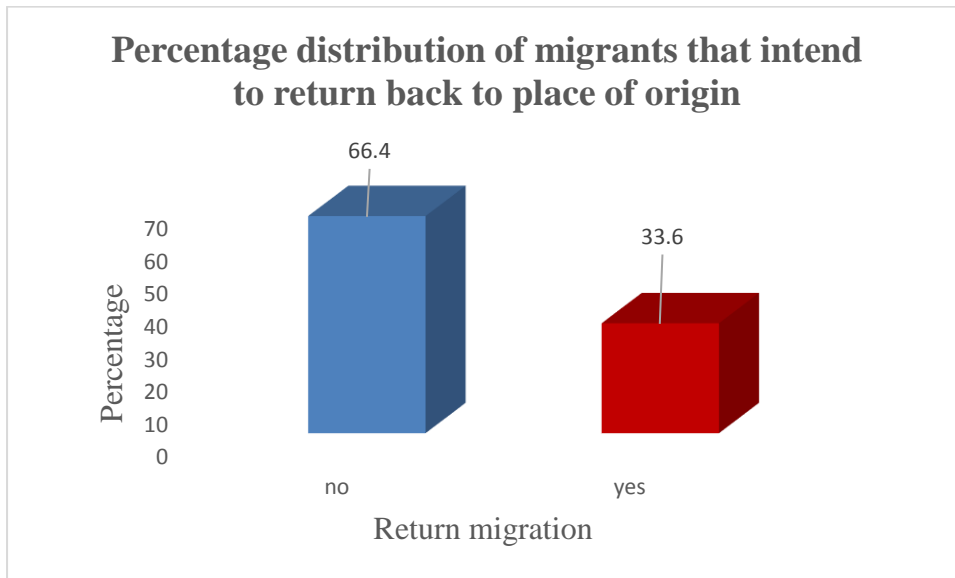
Figure 1 showed that 33.6% of internal and international migrants in all the six countries want to return back to their place of origin.

Multivariate analysis

Table 2 presents the unadjusted and adjusted estimated for the association between return migration and selected characteristics in six Southern Africa Countries. Both the unadjusted and the adjusted analysis shows that country is associated with migration return. For instance, the unadjusted logistic regression in model one shows that the odds of migration return is 0.54 times lower among all migrants in Mozambique compared to all migrants in Lesotho. After adjusting for the effect of other variables in the analysis, the result shows that the odds of return migration is 0.51 times lower among all migrants from Mozambique compared to all migrants from Lesotho.

Table 2 also shows that there is a difference in the likelihood of return migration in the age groups. Result shows that the odds of return migration are 0.77 and 0.68 times lower among migrants that are 25 years and above compared to migrants that are less than 25 years in both the unadjusted and adjusted logistic regression analysis respectively. Education also shows a significant association with return migration. Results shows that the odds of return migration are 1.67 and 1.40 times among migrants with tertiary education compared to migrants with primary education in both the unadjusted and the adjusted logistic regression analysis.

Wealth index, work in the last 12 months and work pattern were only found to be associated with return migration in the unadjusted logistic regression analysis. Also, the odds of return migration is 0.68 times lesser among migrants who have not worked in the last 12 months compared to migrants who have worked in the last 12 months. Result shows that the odds of return migration is 1.71 times higher among migrants in the middle wealth income compared to migrants in the low wealth income. Result also

shows that the odds of return migration is 1.39 times higher among migrants who work seasonally compared to migrants working throughout the year.

Our results show that having food security increases the likelihood of return migration. Results show that the odds of return migration is 1.44 and 1.36 times higher among migrants that are food secured compared to migrants that have food insecurity in both the unadjusted and adjusted logistic regression analysis respectively. Lastly, the odds of return migration is 3.72 and 3.67 times higher among migrants that are mobile or seasonal workers compared to migrants that are permanent residence in both the unadjusted and the adjusted logistic regression analysis respectively.

Table 2: Odds ratio (and 95% confidence intervals) of logistic regression analysis of migration intention and associated factors in the six Southern African countries

	Model 1 (unadjusted)		Model 2 (adjusted)	
	Odds Ratio	(95% CI)	Odds Ratio	(95% CI)
Variable				
Country				
Lesotho	1		1	
Malawi	1.11	0.71-1.73	0.58	0.34-1.01
Mozambique	0.54	0.32-0.89*	0.51	0.27-0.94*
South Africa	1.38	0.88-2.16	0.94	0.53-1.65
Kingdom of Eswatini	1.91	1.18-3.10*	1.14	0.63-2.08
Zambia	1.85	1.18-2.88*	1.75	1.05-2.92*
Gender				
Male	1		1	
Female	0.89	0.73-1.09	0.77	0.59-1.01
Age				
15-24	1		1	
>24	0.77	0.63-0.94*	0.68	0.50-0.90*
Highest level of education				
Primary	1		1	
Secondary	1.08	0.86-1.36	1.26	0.91-1.75
Tertiary	1.67	1.25-2.21*	2.23	1.40-3.53*
Wealth index				
Poor	1		1	
Middle	1.71	1.27-2.31*	1.21	0.87-1.67
Rich	1.34	0.99-1.81	0.78	0.51-1.19
Work in the last 12 months				
Yes	1		1	
No	0.68	0.56-0.82*	0.83	0.63-1.09
Work pattern				
Throughout the year	1		1	
Seasonally	1.39	1.02-1.89*	1.51	0.92-1.89
Once in a while	0.84	0.55-1.28	0.89	0.85-1.67
Food security				
No	1			
Yes	1.44	1.11-1.86*	1.36	1.36-2.83*
Migration status				
Internal	*1*		*1*	
International	*0.73*	0.48-1.11	*0.69*	0.37-1.39

Migration reason				
Economic	1		1	
Family	0.84	0.52-1.35	0.89	0.62-1.42
Other	0.99	0.57-1.74	1.06	0.67-1.64
Migration type				
Permanent residence	1		1	
Mobile/seasonal worker	3.72	2.27-6.13*	3.67	2.17-5.85*
Other	0.79	0.35-1.82	0.74	0.48-1.66
Prob> F		0.000		

Discussion

The implication of the results is-a-vis existing literature and policies will be discussed.

Funding

References

1.   de Haas H, Fokkema T, Fihri MF. Return Migration as Failure or Success?: The Determinants of Return Migration Intentions Among Moroccan Migrants in Europe. J Int Migr Integr. 2015;16(2):415-29.
2.   Flahaux M. Return Migration to Senegal and the Democratic Republic of Congo: Intention and Realization. CairnInfo International Edition. 2014.