

# **MIGRATION DYNAMICS AND CHANGING RURAL-URBAN LINKAGES IN NIGERIA<sup>1</sup>**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This paper explores fresh issues in understanding migration dynamics and changing rural-urban linkages in south-western Nigeria. We examine the two contrasting theoretical views on the effect of rural-urban migration; that remittances from urban areas help in developing rural areas. The other side argues that the rural out-migrants rob villagers of income as agricultural productivity is adversely affected and investment in youths lost due to migration to the urban areas. The contemporary migration situation in Nigeria reflected several linkages between the rural and urban areas. The rapid urbanization process, grassroots politics, and challenges posed by support groups suggest a paradigm shift in understanding internal migration in Nigeria. Primary data through quantitative and qualitative methods were collected to explore individual migrant and migrant associations' contribution in developing their villages. The study covered 1,782 migrants from three states in South-western Nigeria. Findings revealed that migrants contribute significantly to the development of hometowns based on their status. A major issue of discussion arising from the findings is the extent to which migrants' level of empowerment influences their contribution to homestead.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Migration is a basic major component of population dynamics which is characterized by deliberate rational decision of the migrant. Whereas international migration exacts some forms of checks and limit on intending migrants, internal migration on the other hand is easily more achievable. In Nigeria as in most developing countries of the world, internal migration has become a major issue influencing government policies and program efforts. Crucial among these issues are problems of unplanned urbanization, growing urban crimes, rural poverty, neglect of agriculture and unbalanced population concentration. These suggest the effect of the dominant pattern of rural-urban migration and its effect on national life.

Generally, rural-urban migration has been explained as a function of several indicators which include income, socio-economic variables, gender factors, age, education etc (Hugo, 1998; Todaro, 1984; Greenwood, 1975; Hausen, 1997; Callaway, 1967; Rempel, 1970; Caldwell, 1969 and Adepaju, 1974; Adepaju, 1977), and more importantly is the cost-benefit calculation between the point of sending and destination (Todaro, 1987; 1989). On this basis, the differentials in income levels between the sending and destination areas serve as the basis for such movements. Two classical divergent schools of thought explained the overall effects of this proposition.

The first argued that surplus cash from urban areas in terms of remittances help in the development of social and infrastructural amenities in the rural areas. They argued that each main current of migration is associated with a compensating counter current in forms of rural development, including family support (Ravestein, 1985 and Fadayomi, 1988). In most cases, people left behind in the villages often look forward to remittances from abroad for their support (Adewuyi and Ebigbola, 1990). The other

school of thought viewed rural-urban migration from the dependency side and argued that rural-urban migration rob villagers of both human and productive resources and explained this manifestation through four channels; by their absence, visits and remittance of cash and by becoming urban beach heads for prospective village out-migrants (Makinwa, 1981). It is also presumed to weaken social bonds (Kartz 2000), and also diminishes trust, reciprocity and exchange (Ostrom et al, 1999)

These two postulates explain the rural-urban linkages in migration in most developing countries. Although, internal migration dynamics in Nigeria can be explained from these assertions, the emerging issues suggest a more holistic understanding of these complex inter-relationships between the place of origin and destination. Crucial and fresh issues of discourse in the contemporary Nigeria societies affecting these linkages include the importance of place of origin in politics and governance; family planning and HIV/AIDs; and rural developmental programmes.

In this vein, the construct of the linkages may be viewed as; the *individual migrants contribution* to support individuals left behind as well as to development of the community; the emergence of *village associations* in supporting individuals (either migrants in place of destination or community members in place of origin) and also in the development of their community. Although this has been explained as a function of altruistic or contractual motives, there is a dearth of empirical research in this discourse. This is the basis for the current research efforts.

The main objective of the research therefore is to explore new theoretical and methodological issues in explaining migration dynamics and the rural-urban linkages in Nigeria. These include the contribution of individuals as well as migrants associations in homestead development. Specifically, the research investigates the

rural-urban linkages in terms of remittances flow, political participation, rural-development, reproductive health issues, and poverty alleviation. In explaining this, a multi-disciplinary approach will be adopted through the use of systems model. The systems model helps to study phenomena by viewing them as components of an interrelated whole. In this work, the model will be most appropriate in explaining migration dynamics and also the linkages between rural and urban by considering individual as well as group (migrants association).

The system model view the two areas as development systems and migration dynamics as the outcome of the rural urban linkages. The components of the rural-urban linkages are not only in forms of physical facilities but also of organizations and institution. The rural-urban linkages indicate a symbiotic relationship, in which activities in one area influence the other area. The rural-urban linkages expressed in the form of flows of ideas, diffusion of innovations, influence on forms of government and organization and remittances in terms of goods, social capital and cash are carried out by migrants (either as individuals or groups), in the development of the rural centers.

## **CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The conceptual framework recognized the interrelationship between rural-urban linkages and migration dynamics as systems and processes respectively. The concepts of “systems” and “processes” are different in the model and it is necessary to distinguish between the two. A clear definition of the concepts was provided by Lakshmanam (1982), in which case a system is a set of parts coordinated to accomplish a set of goals. The system is the structure that facilitates the process, in this case, rural-urban linkages. The processes are the outcomes of the systems. In this

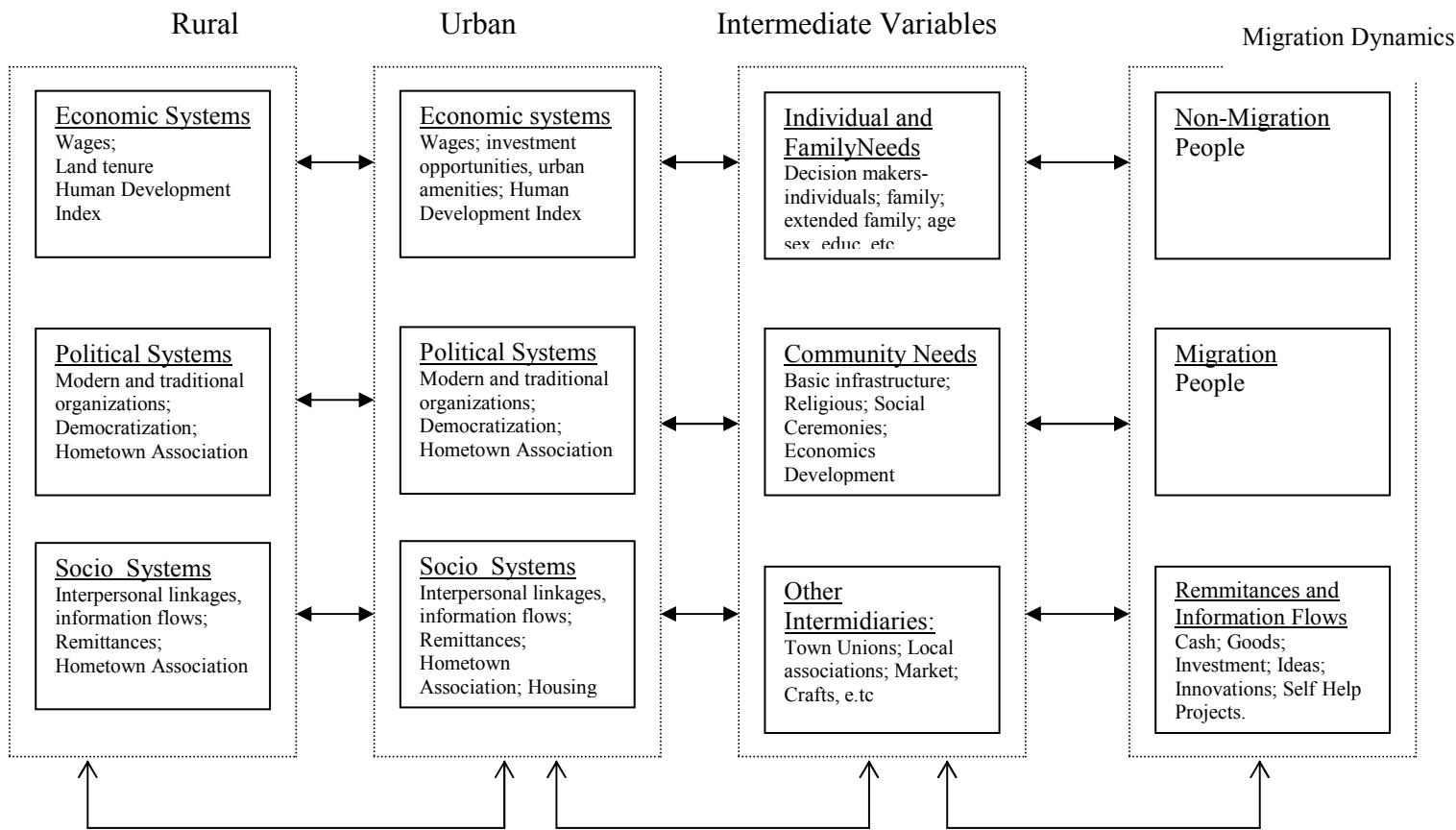
study, rural-urban linkages serve as the structure or the environment that give rise to the processes. The systems are dynamic and can be modified to fit desired process.

The process is, therefore, the dependent outcome or goal of the system.

Figure 1 presents the system model as the conceptual framework of the study.

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework for Migration Dynamics and Changing**

**Rural-Urban Linkages in Nigeria**



**A Systems Models of Rural-Urban Linkages and Migration**

The systems model considers exogenous and endogenous/intervening variables as independent variables on which people's decision to migrate are based, the dependent variable. At a latter time, the outcome of the migration process may impact on the structure, the rural urban linkages, bringing about a change that may either reinforce or deter migration out or into the areas. The model includes among its independent variables demographic and economic settings, socio-cultural context and political system and environmental conditions that operate in both sending and receiving areas. These are influenced directly or indirectly by intervening variables, of traditional and non-traditional organizations, world economic/ political order, community/family system, society/community needs, and by other intermediaries, such as, hometown associations or town unions.

The link with the source region is strengthened, as majority of the migrants maintain steady contacts with their home towns/rural areas. For instance, the present democratization process has led to the rise of urban-based ethnic union of migrants, seeking self determination for their homeland. In most cases, they spearhead the demand for and funding of the lobby for creation of new political units. A migrant that has kept close contact with the hometown stands a better chance of getting support for political contests. Successful migrants also made significant contribution to the development of their community and contributes in influencing issues. The links are therefore purposeful.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Migration itself is a dynamic process and also very sensitive to social and economic issues at both micro as well as macro levels. Research on the subject matter in Nigeria has not been able to adequately capture the emerging challenges imposed

on it by the current surrounding environment. For instance, the prospect of the new democratic orientations on migration; reproductive health challenges including, problems of HIV/AIDs; changing patterns of traditional family support systems; effects of celebration of towns' day and influence of organized migrants associations in rural development.

The current research effort is to provide fresh and new approach in theoretical and methodological explanations of the current challenges in migration dynamics and conceptualizing rural-urban linkages in Nigeria. This study by identifying the problem in the areas of theoretical and methodological development should provide fruitful paradigm shift as well as methodological approaches to enhance the adequate understanding of the subject matter in Nigeria society of the twenty-first century.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study was carried out in South-western Nigeria which consists of six states out of the 36 states in Nigeria. Three out of the six states were selected-Ogun, Oyo and Ondo States. Two urban and two rural local government areas (lgas) were chosen in each of the state. *Choice-urban lgas- where state secretariat was situated as well as the lgas with the highest population,-rural lgas- the two lgas with the least population in the states.*

Using a multi-stage systematic research design, 600 respondents were selected in each of the three states which translate into 1,800 respondents in all. Three types of research instruments were utilized-questionnaires, focus group discussions and in-depth interviews. Questionnaire was administered to migrants, 24 fgds were conducted among selected group of male and female migrants. In-depth interview were conducted among four community leaders in the rural areas selected.



**Table 1: List of local government areas selected in each state**

<b>State</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Rural</b>
Oyo	1. Ibadan North 2. Ibadan South-west	1. Ido 2. Ogo Oluwa
Ondo	1. Akure 2. Ondo	1. Idanre 2. Akoko North-East
Ogun	1. Abeokuta North 2. Ijebu Ode	1. Abeokuta South 2. Ijebu East

### **Findings**

- Among men, major reasons for movement are for business, education, job transfer and job search. Whereas among women, marital reasons, job search and education were the most prevalent reasons for movement. Very few proportion of both males and females (less than 2%) reported family and political problems as the reason for such movement. Exerpts from FGD highlighted main reasons for movement as; availability of infrastructure in receiving places, family ties, and higher economic advantages.

*“My place is a typical rural town. Most of the facilities and infrastructures here are not there. There are job opportunities here, and as a business man one enjoys better patronage here.”*

Also, a discussant from Akure expressed that:

*“In my place patronage is very low compare to Akure. Also electricity supply there was epileptic, while we enjoy relatively, stable electricity supply in Akure.”*

Some of the discussants also expressed believe that it is important to migrate in order to be successful in life. Excerpts from adult males in Ijebu, Ogun state are as follows:

*We have different people with different beliefs. Some people believe that if they don't move from one place to another they can't make it.*

*Another realm is that if you stay in a place where people know your background they can easily harm you so you go to a place where they don't really know you. That is the reason I decided to move from my own state.*

- About 15% were second/third generation migrants, almost half of the respondents expressed their intention to live in current place permanently, 10% each had parents and siblings co-residence in their current place. About 20% had their spouse(s) and 25% had their children in hometown. 18% of respondents had landed property in hometown compared with 12% with landed property in current place of residence.
- Across the sampled respondents, about 40% had hometown associations in their destination town, 65% among these belong to such associations. About 50% reported that their association supports members' welfare, while 60% reported associations' commitment on developmental projects in hometown. Almost 50% reported associations' financial support to hometowns development, about 40% reported lobby/sensitization, and 2% reported support through relief materials in time of need. About 40% of respondents claimed that they celebrates hometowns day with the participations of hometown associations in diasporas. On assessment of hometown association contribution to development, the national umbrella association visible contribution was attested to by 65% of the respondents, while those by other

micro association was attested to by 45% of the respondents and by respondents association in place of residence by 40%. About 28% reported the relevance of such associations in education (scholarships, provision of books and amenities etc), 17% reported social amenities and 13% reported building of town halls.

- Migrants participation in political activities showed that 30% of males vs 15% of females among migrants participate and belong actively to a political party. Among this group, 60% of males vs 15% of females attend political party meetings in hometown. Only 16% of males among this group ever contested political elections in hometown. Overall, 13% of respondents reported that their village associations influence political activities in hometown, while about 20% reported that the associations influence traditional activities at hometown.
- Contraceptive dynamics among the migrants revealed a higher use of family planning methods among the migrants in their current place. About 60% of respondents considered the need for improved promotion of family planning services and campaign in hometown. About 3% knew of persons in hometown who had been infected with HIV/AIDS. More than 90% believed that people (kins and relatives) in their hometown are at no risk of HIV/AIDs. About 70% reported very high levels of stigmatization of HIV/AIDs infected people.

## **RURAL-URBAN LINKAGES**

These linkages were viewed through the use of logistic regression model to examine the correlates of migrants to rural-urban linkages in terms of-infrastructure ownership and development in both areas, participation in homestead associations, intention to return home, and political participation. Results

from the logistic regression model showed that age of respondents less than 46 years is a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) predictor variable for land ownership in hometown. Higher ages (46 years and above) is not statistically significant in predicting land ownership in hometown. Compared with the reference category (age 66 years and above), respondents in lower ages were less likely to own landed property in hometown than the reference category. Also, the model establishes a direct relationship between the age of migrants and likelihood of owning landed property in hometown. This assertion seems highly plausible especially in traditional societies where land possession is highly valued especially among the elderly. Those without such heritage may be viewed with cultural disdain as poor. Table 5.1 presents the details.

Across gender with male as the reference category, gender shows to be a significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) variable in ownership of land in hometown. Male migrants, more than their female counterparts are twice more likely to own landed property in hometown. Marital status variable is only significant for the unmarried (never married category,  $p < 0.05$ ). Migrants who are out-of marriage (divorced, widowed and separated) are more likely than the reference category (married) to own landed property in hometown. Those never married are less likely than the married category to own a land in hometown. Educational level and religion affiliation of migrants are not significant predictor of ownership of land in hometown. Employment is a significant predictor of migrants' ownership of land in hometown. Those who are employed are more likely to own landed property in hometown than those not employed.

We also considered the predictors of migrants possessing landed property in their current place of residence. All age categories of migrant are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ). The pattern displayed shows a direct relationship between age

and ownership of landed property in current place of residence. Gender and those not in union, and religion are not important significant predictors of land ownership in current place of residence. On participation in hometown association, the underline assumption here is that individual characteristics influenced participation in hometown association activities.

The main statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) predictor variables of migrants in participation in hometown association activities are gender and marital status. Males more than females are more likely to belong to migrants association. Also, married migrants are also more likely to those not married to belong to migrants association. Gender, education and religion are the statistically significant predictor variables of intention to return back to hometown among migrants. The significant predictor variables for participation in political activities include sex, higher ages, currently married and higher education.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

The study revealed a strong relationship between migrants' empowerment and rural-urban linkages. Migrants with higher income as well as high educational status are more likely to support homestead. Those with lower status are less likely to contribute to the homestead. This point is evident in this study. This is a major factor in the linkages considered. Those who are empowered have very high tendencies to influence rural development. They are more likely to participate in village associations, politics, own property in hometown as well as promote contraceptive use.

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## Appendices

**Table 2 Percentage Distribution of Respondents' by Migrants' Status**

	Male (n=975)	Female (n=807 )
<b>Length of years of migration to current place</b>		
1-5 years	41.3	38.2
6-10 years	20.7	19.1
11-20 years	16.6	17.7
21-48 years	21.3	25.0
<b>Age of respondents at the time of migration to current place</b>		
Since birth	15.9	18.1
1-12 years	7.5	7.2
13-18 years	7.1	9.8
19-24 years	22.7	26.5
25-60 years	46.5	38.4
61 years +	0.4	0.0
<b>Intention to reside permanently in current place of residence</b>		
Yes	46.4	53.0
No	53.6	47.0
<b>Distance by road (in hours) between current place of residence and hometown</b>		
2 hours or less	51.0	58.2
3 – 5 hours	27.4	23.7
6-9 hours	12.6	13.0
10 hours and above	9.0	5.1
<b>Household members co-residing with respondent<sup>2</sup></b>		
None	38.5	27.4
Spouse	32.7	35.7
Children	30.8	40.8
Siblings	15.6	11.0
Parents	8.9	10.2
Others	3.2	3.0
<b>Family members in Place of Origin</b>		
Grand-parents	15.2	13.3
Parents	47.5	47.0
Spouse	20.9	20.7
At least a Child	23.7	24.5
Others <sup>3</sup>	17.9	15.6

<sup>2</sup> Individual cases were in percentage (multiple responses)

<sup>3</sup> Uncles, Nephews, Aunties, Cousins and other relatives.



**Table 3 Participation in Hometowns' Day Celebration**

	Male	female
<b>Do your Association celebrates hometown's day</b>		
Yes	44.0 (429)	33.5 (270)
No	56.0 (546)	66.5 (537)
<b>In what ways do your association contribute to the success of the celebration</b>		
Financial support	23.8 (102)	23.7 (64)
Moral/advisory	35.2 (151)	27.4 (74)
Materials	30.1 (129)	34.4 (93)
Others	11.0 (47)	14.4 (39)
<b>Do other associations celebrate hometowns' day</b>		
Yes	90.5 (210)	84.9 (107)
No	9.5 (22)	15.1 (19)
<b>In what ways do other association contribute to the success of the celebration</b>		
Financial support	89.5 (188)	90.7 (97)
Moral/advisory	5.7 (12)	5.6 (6)
Materials	1.9 (4)	1.9 (2)
Others	2.9 (6)	1.9 (2)
<b>Do your association's national body celebrate hometowns' day</b>		
Yes	94.5 (225)	90.8 (128)
No	5.5 (13)	9.2 (13)
<b>In what ways do your national association contribute to the success of the celebration</b>		
Financial support	90.2 (203)	87.5 (112)
Moral/advisory	6.2 (14)	5.5 (7)
Materials	0.4 (1)	1.6 (2)
Others	3.1 (7)	5.5 (7)

**Table 4 Percentage Distribution of Respondents by Assessment of Reproductive Health Indicators**

	Male		Female	
<b>Level of awareness of the need for family planning and contraception in Hometown</b>				
Very High	17.7	(173)	16.6	(134)
High	50.6	(493)	47.8	(386)
Low	13.4	(131)	12.1	(98)
Very Low	4.5	(44)	3.8	(31)
Don't Know	13.7	(134)	19.6	(158)
<b>Level of family planning and contraception utilization in Hometown</b>				
Very High	17.0	(166)	16.0	(129)
High	43.5	(424)	43.9	(354)
Low	15.5	(151)	11.9	(96)
Very Low	7.0	(68)	6.1	(49)
Don't Know	17.0	(166)	22.2	(179)
<b>Level of awareness/campaign HIV/AIDs in Hometown</b>				
Very High	11.6	(113)	9.3	(75)
High	16.2	(158)	15.5	(125)
Low	21.0	(205)	19.2	(155)
Very Low	5.7	(56)	6.2	(50)
Don't Know	45.4	(443)	49.8	(402)
<b>Level of awareness of prevention of HIV/AIDs in Hometown</b>				
Very High	12.8	(125)	13.0	(105)
High	36.5	(356)	39.3	(317)
Low	15.0	(146)	11.4	(92)
Very Low	10.2	(99)	7.6	(61)
Don't Know	25.5	(249)	28.8	(232)
<b>Know of people in your community who have contacted HIV/AIDs?</b>				
Yes	2.7	(26)	3.2	(26)
No	97.3	(949)	96.8	(781)
<b>Where was the person infected with HIV/AIDs taken to?</b>				
Hometown	34.6	(9)	34.6	(9)
Outside hometown/don't know	65.4	(17)	65.4	(17)
<b>What is the community response to the plight of those infected</b>				
Responsive	3.9	(1)	11.5	(3)
Apathy	26.9	(7)	11.5	(3)
Stigmatized	69.2	(18)	76.9	(20)
<b>Has any member of your association experienced any of the following?</b>				
STIs/HIV/AIDs	3.8	(17)	0.9	(3)
Other communicable diseases	4.0	(18)	2.8	(9)
Permanent disability	4.2	(19)	2.5	(8)
Accident/serious diseases	19.2	(74)	11.3	(32)

**Table 5 Percentage Distribution of Migrants by Participation in Political Activities**

	Male		Female	
<b>Do you currently belong to any political party</b>				
Yes	28.8	(281)	14.9	(120)
No	71.2	(694)	85.1	(687)
<b>Do you attend political meetings in your hometown</b>				
Yes	60.9	(171)	45.8	(55)
No	39.1	(110)	54.2	(65)
<b>Have you ever contested for any elective positions in your hometown</b>				
Yes	15.7	(44)	----	
No	84.3	(237)	100.0	(120)
<b>Do your association participate in political activities at hometown</b>				
Yes	13.1	(128)	6.3	(51)
No	86.9	(847)	93.7	(756)
<b>How can you assess the level of participation of your association in hometown politics</b>				
Very high	27.2	(123)	26.7	(85)
High	37.6	(170)	34.5	(110)
Low	15.3	(69)	21.9	(70)
Very low	19.9	(90)	16.9	(54)
<b>Does your association influence traditional activities?</b>				
Yes	27.2	(123)	22.3	(71)
No	72.8	(329)	77.7	(248)
<b>Are you willingly to go back to re-settle in your hometown in future</b>				
Yes	60.0	(585)	49.7	(401)
No	40.0	(390)	50.3	(406)

*Note that the number varied across the variables considered*

**Table 4. Percentage Distribution by Participation in Activities of Hometown Association**

	Male	Females
<b>Does your hometown have association in place of residence</b>		
Yes	46.4 (452)	39.5 (319)
No	53.6 (523)	60.5 (488)
<b>Are you a member of the Association</b>		
Yes	66.4 (300)	64.6 (206)
No	34.4 (152)	35.4 (113)
<b>How best can you describe your level of participation in the association</b>		
Financial commitment	74.0 (222)	71.8 (148)
Moral/Advisory	3.0 (9)	3.9 (8)
Executive Member	10.3 (31)	10.7 (22)
Only attend meetings	12.7 (38)	13.6 (28)
<b>Does your association have any obligation towards in-coming Migrants</b>		
Yes	79.0 (237)	72.8 (150)
No	21.0 (63)	27.2 (56)
<b>Does your association have any obligation towards members welfare including<sup>4</sup></b>		
Marriage	61.7 (279)	57.7 (184)
Funeral	57.5 (260)	54.9 (175)
Other Social functions	60.8 (275)	57.1 (182)
<b>How often do you hold meetings</b>		
Monthly	68.1 (308)	61.8 (197)
At least once every three months	31.6 (143)	36.7 (117)
At least once every six months	0.2 (1)	1.6 (5)
<b>Does your Association contributes to developmental programmes in your hometown</b>		
Yes	65.5 (296)	60.5 (193)
No	34.5 (156)	39.5 (126)
<b>Forms of Contribution to Hometown Development from your association</b>		
Financial	60.4 (273)	55.5 (177)
Moral/Advisory	38.3 (173)	43.6 (139)
Materials (e.g relief materials, educational, etc)	1.1 (5)	0.6 (2)
Others	0.2 (1)	0.3 (1)
<b>Are there other chapters of your hometown association in other towns</b>		
Yes	24.6 (240)	18.3 (148)
No	75.4 (735)	81.7 (659)
<b>How many of such other chapters outlets in other towns do you know</b>		
Less than 5	72.2 (143)	86.1 (99)
Between 6 and 10	23.2 (46)	12.2 (14)
Between 11 and over	4.6 (9)	1.7 (2)
<b>Does other chapters of your Association contributes to developmental programmes in your hometown</b>		
Yes	23.8 (232)	15.6 (126)
No	76.2 (743)	84.4 (681)
<b>Forms of Contribution to Hometown Development from other chapters</b>		
Financial	89.7 (208)	88.9 (112)
Moral/Advisory	6.5 (15)	7.9 (10)
Materials (e.g relief materials, educational, etc)	2.2 (5)	1.6 (2)
Others	4 (1.7)	1.6 (2)
<b>Does your association have a national umbrella coordinating the chapters</b>		
Yes	24.4 (238)	17.5 (141)
No	75.6 (737)	82.5 (666)
<b>Where is the secretariat of the national umbrella of your association situated</b>		
Within hometown	85.3 (203)	73.1 (103)
Outside hometown	14.7 (35)	26.9 (38)
<b>Does the national umbrella contributes to developmental programmes in your hometown</b>		
Yes	83.2 (198)	71.6 (101)
No	16.8 (40)	28.4 (40)
<b>Forms of Contribution to Hometown Development</b>		
Financial	91.4 (181)	94.1 (95)
Moral/Advisory	5.1 (10)	3.0 (3)
Materials (e.g relief materials, educational, etc)	1.5 (3)	1.0 (1)
Others	2.0 (4)	2.0 (2)

Note: Numbers of cases varied and percentages were based on the number that responded to the questions.

<sup>4</sup> Multiple responses were computed.