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Full Length Research Paper

Survival strategies and livelihood diversification of Ileje Migrants in Mbozi District, Southern Tanzania

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This paper attempts to examine survival strategies and livelihood diversification of migrants in Mbozi district, southern Tanzania. A total of 551 heads of households were involved in this study. The study used both quantitative and qualitative techniques in collecting and analysing data where household questionnaire, in-depth interviews, field observations, focus group discussions and documentary review were used as data gathering techniques. Descriptive statistics and content analysis have been used as data analysis methods. The study results indicate that, Ileje migrants adopted a number of survival strategies such as intensification of non-traditional cash crops such as maize, rice, millet and bananas, out-migration, establishment of petty businesses in major trading centres and involvement in casual labour. The study concludes that the adopted survival strategies were seen to be useful in improving the livelihoods of migrants in the place of destination. However, none of the strategy deemed to be sustainable; rather migrants used them interchangeably. It is recommended to provide support, particularly existence of reliable markets for agricultural products, provision of loans with low interest rates and provision of training on business skills in order to help them strengthen their small business and agriculture that seems to act as their major survival strategy.

Key words: Survival strategy, livelihood diversification, migrants, Ileje, Mbozi, Tanzania.

INTRODUCTION

Rural households have usually been able to make a living from diverse survival strategies (Steel and Lindert, 2017; Ørtenblad, 2015). Generally, the extent and nature of diversification of a household's income sources vary. In this regard, Senadza (2012) and Ellis and Allison (2004) contend that better-off households tend to diversify in form of non-farm business activities such as trade, transport, shop-keeping and brick-making whereas, the poor tend to diversify in form of casual wage work, especially on other farms. Moreover, out-migration is used as a survival strategy to environmental stress caused by population pressure which increases economic difficulties among the community members. This acts as a driving force of some community members in search of other opportunities for survival. Out-migration has to be seen as an involuntary choice since people are being forced by both internal and external factors for survival. Out-migration, therefore, is best understood as one of the strategies adopted by individuals, households or communities to enhance their livelihoods. Todaro (1976)

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made it explicit that both poor and relatively well off economic classes do migrate, mainly from rural areas to urban centres. Faced with hardships in the rural areas, the poor peasants tend to move towards a definite destination which is likely to offer them better conditions. These projected better conditions in the area of destination constitute the 'pull' factors. On the other hand, the well-off people are motivated to move to their new places of destination (the towns) because of the brighter prospects available there.

Migration, therefore, is driven generally by perceived differences in the utility of living or working in two geographical locations. The pattern of survival of individuals or households is reflected in the assets and activities undertaken to earn a livelihood. In fact, resilience of a given social unit tends to depend on the success of these activities. Generally, migration is a mechanism individuals or group of people decide to make adjustments to development gaps created by the dynamic and inviting industrial sector in urban and peri-urban areas.

Studies by Kassie et al. (2017), Atamanova and Van den Berg (2012), Beyene, (2008) and Niboye, (2003) observed that, lack of land for farming increases the demand for livelihoods diversification outside agriculture. In fact, people are prompted to consider available options in the face of population pressure whereby non-farm activities take precedence over farming as the basis of rural household livelihoods. These activities may be in the form of wage labouring for better-off farmers or employers in the non-farm sectors, self-employment and petty business. Literature show that livelihood diversifications are more determined by various factors including the education level of the heads of households (Minot et al., 2006), gender (Abrego, 2009), (Horrel et al., 2008), household size (Minot et al., 2006), and location (Owusu et al., 2011). As it has been stated earlier that people migrates in search of improved livelihoods away from their areas of domicile.

Tanzania like other developing counties tends to experience both out-migration and immigration of people within and outside the country. The rate of out-migration/immigration varies from one region with another depending on various factors. There are some regions/ districts where the speed of out-migrations/immigration is greater than others. Ileje district is well known in Tanzania for out-migration where its people have been moving from their mother land to other places within and outside the region (Mbonile, 2002).

Out-migration of people from Ileje is more triggered by increased pressure on land resource due to high population growth. This has resulted to increased cultivation of the marginal lands causing land degradation and loss of soil fertility of which has affected the farm output. As a response to increased poverty levels due to low agricultural returns, people have decided to move from one place to another searching for better life, Mbozi district being their major destination. Since reasons of migration are diversified, single classification cannot fully explain why people migrate. Age, sex, education and family size are used to explain why groups of people migrate (Agergaard et al., 2010; Minot et al., 2006).

In order to earn living, migrants are involved in various activities. In rural areas, where land for cultivation is available, agricultural intensification seems to be the main survival strategy. This is done either by intensifying resource use through the application of greater quantities of labour or capital for a given land area as emphasized by Brønd and Fold (2016), Niboye (2003) and Boserup (1965). Heads of households pursuing this strategy depend on the available agro-ecological potential and the implications for labour and capital. Technological innovations coupled with increases in labour inputs in agriculture helps to increase the productivity of land.

Livelihood diversification is generally determined by heads of household's income sources that varies among households (Clemens and Ogden, 2013; Demissie and Legesse, 2013; Bezu and Barrett, 2010; Ellis and Allison, 2004). Bezu and Barrett (2010) and Ellis and Allison (2004) argue that better-off households tend to diversify in non-farm business activities such as trade, transport, shop-keeping and brick-making, and the poor tend to diversify in the form of casual wage labour, especially on other farms.

Moreover, diversification seeks to broaden the range of non-farm activities or diversify non-farm activities by taking up new jobs. It occurs by choice for accumulation or reinvestment purposes, or out of necessity either to cope with temporary adversity or as a more permanent adaptation to the failure of other livelihood options. The former motivation might be associated with a wide range of income-earning portfolio to offset all future types of shocks or stress, whereas the latter would more likely be a narrower, rehearsed response to a particular type of common stress.

Various scholars particularly Urassa (2009), Mbonile (2002) and Niboye (2003) have examined the survival strategies of migrants and the effects of migration in Tanzania. Though this is well known, little is reported on how Ileje migrants survive in Mbozi district which culminates to the need for this particular study. The focus of this paper is to investigate the survival strategies of migrants from Ileje district in Mbozi district. The paper highlights various activities performed by migrants as a way of improving their livelihoods, usefulness of their survival strategies and challenges encountered by migrants in performing the chosen survival strategies.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study area

This particular study was conducted in Mbozi district (Figure1). The study area extends between latitudes 32° and 34° South and between longitudes 34° and 35° East (URT, 2010). Mbozi district

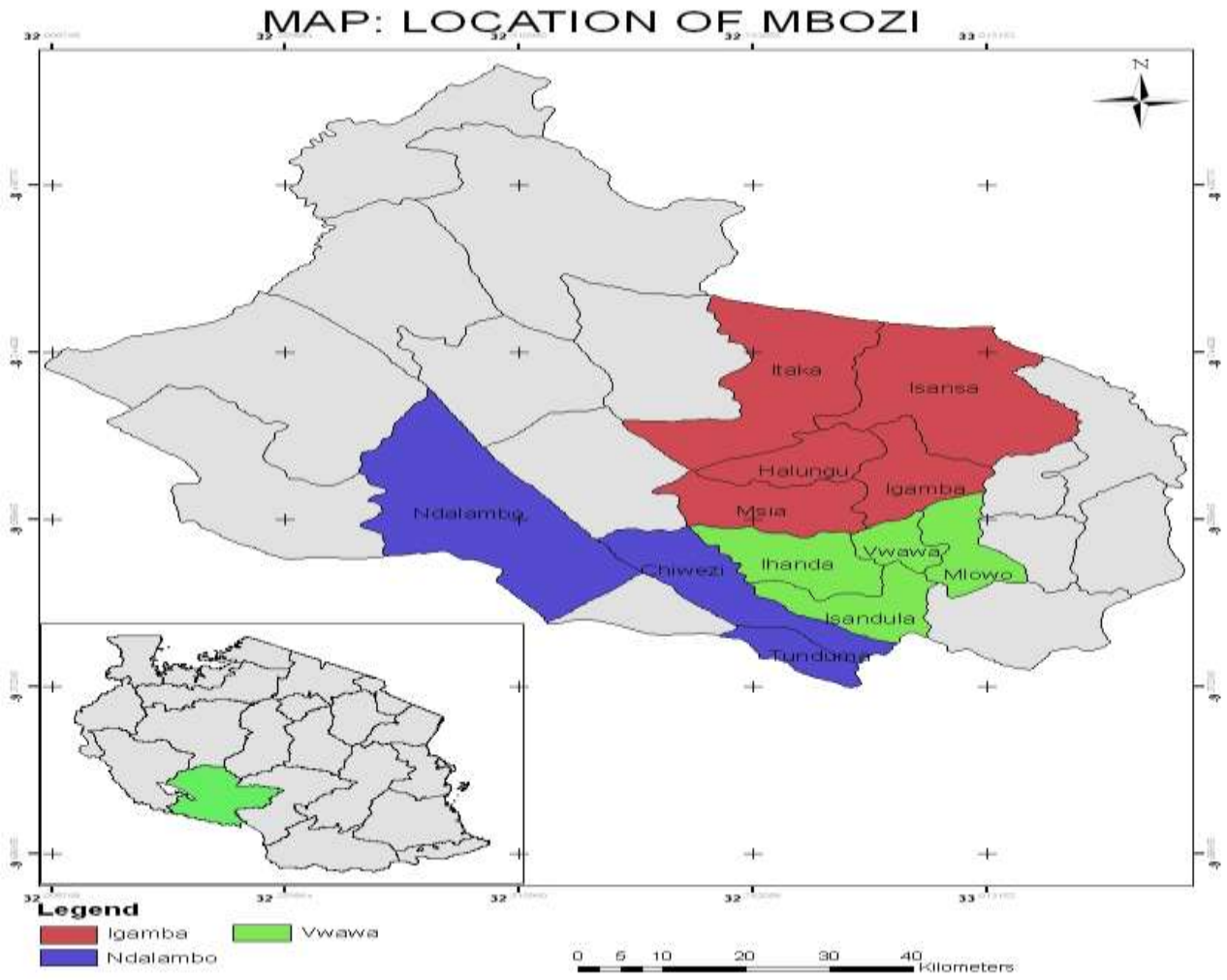


Figure 1. Location of Mbozi district showing the study areas.

has been chosen because most Ileje people migrate to Mbozi than to other districts. Generally, Mbozi receives migrants from Ileje, Kyela and Rungwe districts, who move to the area primarily to establish new settlements. Two divisions namely Igamba and Vwawa were purposively selected for the study. The household survey was conducted among 551 heads of households. The current study employed a mixed method approach where both qualitative and quantitative techniques were used in data collection and analysis.

Sampling techniques

Both purposive and snowball sampling techniques have been used. Mbozi district and the surveyed divisions, wards and villages were purposefully selected because of their proximity distance to Ileje district. The target population of migrants was captured through snowball sampling technique because the exact number of migrants was not known. The researcher made initial contacts with village leaders who identified a small group of people (known individual migrants) and used them to establish more contacts with other potential heads of households. Use of snowball sampling technique may have affected the representativeness of the sample. Apart from snowball sampling technique, purposive sampling was also employed in the selection of key informants deemed to possess crucial information for the study (Figure 1).

Sample size, data collection and analysis methods

This study employed 551 questionnaires to household heads to collect quantitative data. Questionnaire survey was conducted in 2011/2012 in the study area where questions were directed to the heads of households who, in most cases were the main decision-makers at the household level. Both closed and open ended questions were used. Closed ended questions had many options that allowed the respondents to choose only one for some questions and more than one option for multiple response questions. Few open ended questions were also included to allow respondents to express their levels of understanding on the topic studied. Closed questions ensured uniformity on answers and simplified data entry while open ended questions aimed at acquiring more information based on respondent's experiences on migration and survival strategies. Qualitative information was collected through the use of in-depth interviews, field observations and focus group discussions in 2011/2012. In-depth interviews were

conducted with nine selected key informants who deemed to posses crucial information for this particular study. Moreover, focus group discussions were used to validate the information gathered through other methods. A total of five groups with a composition of six members (adult women, adult men and elderly people) were included in the discussions. Field observations were used to capture specific information particularly, activities done as survival strategies for migrants in the area of destination. Documentary reviews from government reports and scholarly works were also used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data that relates to the study topic. The collected data were analysed through both descriptive and content analysis methods. Quantitative data from the questionnaires were analysed through descriptive statistics. Frequencies were determined to observe the occurrence of the responses from interviewed heads of households. Qualitative data from focus group discussions, in-depth interviews and field observation have been analysed by content analysis.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-economic and demographic characteristics of the respondents

It was important to study the age structure and education levels of the population because several social relations within the community depend on age and education. An examination of age structure of the heads of households by district (Table 1) indicates that, majority of heads of households were aged 26 to 35 (49%) and the last category constituted 2.4% of the heads of households were aged above 61 years. Age is an important variable in the study of mortality, fertility and migration of population in various places. Not only that but also various demographic studies have shown that migration is age and sex selective. When the heads of households were examined by sex (Table 2), it shows that as in all traditional societies the dominance of males as heads of households is quite vivid in Mbozi district Out of 551 heads of households, 93% were male-headed households and only 7% were female headed-households of which has an implication on survival strategies. 7% of female respondents comprised divorced, widows, separated, left behind and singles (Tables 1 and 2). Education influences the future shape and direction of migrants in the area of destination. Results in Table 3 shows that 57% of Ileje migrants in Mbozi district had completed primary school education, 17% had primary education while 14% had never attended any formal education. These results indicate that more than half of the respondents were unable to get formal employment due to low levels of education of which have big implication on survival strategies and livelihood diversification (Table 3).

Table 1. Age of the Ileje migrants in Mbozi district.

Age	Percentage (N=551)
21-25	2.5
26-30	25.4
31-35	23.6
36-40	16.3
41-45	12.7
46-50	8.2
51-56	5.4
57-60	3.4
61+	2.4
Total	100

Table 2. Heads of households in Mbozi district.

Heads	Percentage (%) (N=551)
Male headed	93
Female headed	7
Total	100

Table 3. Education level of the Ileje migrants in Mbozi district.

Education	Percentage (%) (N=551)
Primary	57
Secondary	17
Non formal	14
Others	12
Total	100

Survival strategies of Ileje migrants in Mbozi district

This study intended to identify the survival strategies of Ileje migrants in Mbozi district. The study results (Figure 2) identified crop farming, out-migration, petty trade, livestock keeping, casual labour and others (sales of local brew, carpentry, masonry, brick making, grain milling and house renting) being among the survival strategies of Ileje migrants in Mbozi district. The study results show that, farming was the dominant survival strategy where 90% of the surveyed population was involved in crop production.

Volcanic soils in the area support a variety of crops such as bananas, maize, beans, sweet and irish potatoes and finger millet. Moreover, coffee production was noted to be the major cash crop. Most of the coffee farmers are small-scale producers and depend on rain-fed cultivation. The study noted that, all the surveyed Ileje migrants' households in Itaka, Msiya, Halungu, and Igamba wards were involved in coffee cultivation of which implies that Ileje migrants have found coffee growing in Mbozi more rewarding than at home. The majority of heads of households of Ileje migrants in Mbozi confirmed that

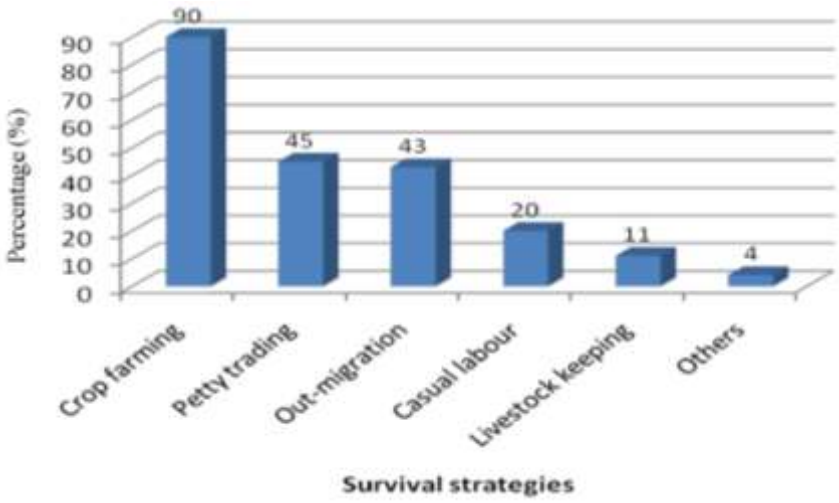


Figure 2. Survival strategies among heads of households in Mbozi district.
NB: Analysis based on multiple responses hence percentage exceeds 100%.

coffee cultivation in Mbozi was more rewarding than coffee cultivation in Ileje, hence this has motivated them to invest more on coffee production for improved livelihood. The current results are in line with that of Urassa (2009) who observed that many rural households in Tanzania depend on agriculture as their major source of livelihoods, selling of surplus food to raise cash meeting household needs.

Moreover, petty business was reported to be practiced by 45% (Figure 2) of the respondents. The term business in this study was used to mean all non-farm economic activities which involve buying and selling of non-selfproduced products or processed farm products. Petty businesses identified include whole and retail shops, small kiosks, selling consumer items, brewing local liquor, buying and selling crops and livestock, making and selling burnt bricks and selling of forest product such as timber, firewood, and charcoal. Most of the business activities relied on the sale of surplus food crops such as maize to earn cash income for meeting household needs. This is supported by Agergaard et al. (2010) and Smith et al. *(*2001) who argues that, where there is good access to markets the ability of rural household to diversify into non-farm income earning opportunities is enhanced.

The study further noted that, formal business at Mlowo, Vwawa and Tunduma trading centres tended to be largely controlled by males due to the patriarchal system prevalent in that area. As a result, the majority of the women were engaged in small businesses such as selling cooked food as food vendors and selling local brews. Age-wise, it was clear that business in the areas under study was dominated by younger age group (15 to 35) years. In Mbozi, many youths start business from the age of 15 soon after completing primary education. Moreover, the study results further revealed that households heads with low education levels participated in crop cultivation more than those with more education who participated in trade and non-farm activities. In addition, households with less educated heads adopted fewer survival strategies than those with more educated heads.

Not only that but also out-migration was noted to be among the survival strategy in the study area. For this particular study, migration was categorized into two main groups namely seasonal and permanent. The study results indicate that, 43 percent of the heads of households (Figure 2) were reported to migrate either temporarily or permanently. The need for money was a primary cause of seasonal migration coupled by lack of property and economic difficulties among the youth. This was also reported by one respondent during in-depth interview;

Seasonal migration has been an option taken by young people from all poor groups to move out of the district in search of wage labour in urban areas. Most of youth males move to Morogoro region working as migrant labourers in sugar estates, while girls moves to Mbeya municipal and other urban areas to work as house girls or waitress…… Male respondent with primary education aged 48 years at Itaka ward).

Similarly, Smith et al. (2001) have reported that younger men were more proactive in newer survival strategies than older men. For this particular study, the older migrants remained mostly in the more traditional non-manufacturing activities than the relatively higher diversification witnessed in households with young heads. These results are supported by Hein (2011) who emphasize on the role of age in out-migration because

young people are flexible in skills and are in better position with few family responsibilities to take risks and face uncertainties. Usually, older rural people were having income from cash crops. In fact, older men had migrated in the past and brought back money to invest at home, hence difficulty to migrate. Moreover, older men with families, social and political status were more likely to be influenced by the position of influence and authority in the rural social system. This implies that they get psychic satisfaction from return migration not out-migration. Apart from out-migration, casual labour was also reported by 20% (Figure 2) to be among their survival strategies. This was more dominated by youth who were temporally employed in farming activities. Casual labour was also observed by Mbonile (2002) who argue that poverty in periphery districts such as Ileje made the people adjust their means of livelihood from subsistence farming to casual labour in small-scale plantations. This was also reported during the FGD as one respondent had this to share;

*Casual labour is one among the survival strategy taken by youth in our area. Normally youth works in farming activities…. For example, in Mbarali and Kyela, the youth are employed in commercial rice farms, in Rungwe they work in tea and coffee farms while in Mbeya Rural they work in Irish potato farms, in Chunya they work in tobacco farms and mining centers while in Mbozi district they work in maize and coffee farms. (*Female respondent with secondary education aged 45 years at Mlowo ward).

Furthermore, livestock keeping was also reported to be practiced by the surveyed population. The study results indicate that 11 percent of the surveyed migrants were involved in livestock keeping (Figure 2). This group mostly constituted middle aged and older people who adopted livestock production to be among their survival strategies than younger migrants. Apart from cow, goat, pig and sheep domestication, poultry keeping was also noted to be practiced in a small-scale. Mbozi is well-known for its black feathered chicken, which grow fast and produce meat and eggs as well.

As such, the growth of supportive grains, sunflower and poultry feeds industries in the area help enhance business in general and boost poultry projects. The influence of household head's age on survival strategies has also been reported by scholars such as Iiyama *et al.* (2008), Babulo et al. (2008) and Smith et al. (2001). On average, Iiyama et al. (2008) reported that in Kenya households with young heads (35 years) diversified into regular off-farm income generating activities where as those with older heads (61 years) diversify into livestock keeping. The last category of survival strategy is termed as others constituting 4% of the respondents. This group comprised activities like hand crafting, masonry, fishing; brick-making, house renting, owning grain milling machines and local brew production (Figure 2).

The mentioned activities were carried out in relation to gender where men were noted to be involved in carpentry, brick-making and construction. On other hand, females were engaged in producing and selling local brew, food staff or fetching forest products. The findings shows that livelihood diversification was mostly determined by socio-economic characteristics and demographic factors where age, sex and education, were important factors in influencing the diversification of survival strategies of migrants. Generally, the young heads of households were found to adopt more survival strategies than relatively older heads of households, educated than non-educated as well as males against females.

Opportunities and challenges of the survival strategies to migrants in Mbozi district

Out-migration serves as a survival strategy of the people searching for better life in the new place than that of their home place. The study results indicate that migrants from Ileje reported to have improved their livelihood better than previous. During in-depth interviews and FGD respondents acknowledged the role of their decisions to move from Ileje to Mbozi district due to high improvement in their income levels as shown in the following narrations.

*Working as casual labourers has resulted to better economic prospects for us and our families as well. We earn money which helps us to survive but we sent remittances to our families in our home place. Today we do not live with our wives and children because we left them at Ileje. However our livelihood has improved a lot a compared to our stay in our home village……(*Male respondent with primary education aged 35 years at Isansa ward).

Another responded also had this to share;

*……Farming is very productive here at Mbozi as compared to the one practiced at Ileje……..When I was at Mswima (Undali), I was harvesting between 500-600 Kg of coffee in a year. Currently, I am able to get 5000-7000 Kg per year which was not possible for my 30 year stay in Ileje. I have managed to build a big house and my life has improved a lot….(*Male respondent with primary education aged 63 years at Ihanda ward).

Moreover, raising cattle for milk and pig domestication in Vwawa, Igamba and Ndalambo divisions were reported to boost revenue for migrants. Large-scale pig ties were observed at Ichenjezya and Ihanda.

The pigs are transported to Mbeya City, Dar es Salaam and Zambia. The FGDs with pig-keeping households revealed that the project is lucrative as there was a ready market within and outside Mbozi district as reported here under;

Table 4. Challenges encountered by migrants in Mbozi district.

Challenge	Percentage (%) (N=551)
Low price of crops	57.7
Pests and diseases	22.5
Lack of markets	7.3
Loss of soil fertility	5.1
Poor transport network	4.4
Land shortage	3.1
Total	100

*Pig domestication is very profitable here at Vwawa. Businessmen come from Dar es Salaam to look for pigs in Mbozi district. Their arrival has drastically raised the prices of pigs from Tshs. 50,000 to more than Tshs.200, 000 depending on the size of the pig. Through this business I have managed to build two houses and be able to open a grocery at Vwawa town….(*Male respondent with primary education aged 47 years at Vwawa ward).

The current study results concur with that of Mbonile (2002) who reported on improved livelihood to migrants and their families. Moreover, Ellis and Allison (2004) observed that diversification of livelihood to migrants serves as a shock absorber for households against environmental and economic eventualities of which is evidenced to Ileje migrants. Even though migrants have acknowledged on improvement of their livelihood as compared to the previous life before migrating, on other hand they have encountered various challenges which act as obstacles towards their success. Results in Table 4 indicates that 57.7% of the surveyed population reported to produce more crops but end up frustrated due to low price of the agricultural products (Table 4). Not only that but also existence of pests and diseases in both food and cash crops has also affected the agricultural returns as reported by 22.5% of the respondents. Smallholder farmers reported to spent more capital buying pesticides and insecticides of which reduces the profit earned. Other problems reported include lack of reliable market for agricultural products, loss of soil fertility, poor transport and communication network which hinder easily transportation of agricultural products from the production area to the market place and land shortage caused by high demand due to increased immigration. The factors aforementioned have affected the effectiveness of the survival strategies.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

This paper has examined the survival strategies of Ileje migrants in Mbozi districts. A number of survival strategies were identified including crop production, out- migration, petty business, livestock keeping and casual labour. Migrants have been noted to intensify farming and establishment of petty businesses in major trading centres of Vwawa, Mlowo and Tunduma townships as their major survival strategies. The findings presented in this paper established that age, sex and education were important factors in influencing the diversification of survival strategies of migrants from Ileje to Mbozi district. The study concludes that, although all the survival strategies examined seems to have improved migrants livelihoods better than in their place of origin, however none of strategy is complete in its own forcing migrants to opt for more than one survival strategy. It is recommended to provide support particularly provision of small loans and train them on business skills in order to help them strengthen their small business and agriculture that seems to act as their major survival strategy.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

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