

**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND**



**Assessing the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration on  
KwaNokweja, Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa**

**by**

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## ORIGINALITY DECLARATION

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In particular, I confirm that I obtained an ethical clearance certificate for my research (Certificate Number UZREC 171110-030 PGD 2021/194) and that I have complied with the conditions set out in that certificate.

I further certify that this research thesis is original and that the material has not been published elsewhere, or submitted, either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university.

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my late grandmother N.F Peyana, thank you for introducing me to God who makes dreams possible. My mother, Fezeka Lunika, and my sisters, Oyisa, Miso, and Thandwayo, I know I am capable because I am anchored by strong, unwavering woman power. *Ndiyabonga andiphezi* for your support, encouragement and prayers.

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AIDS	- Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ANC	- African National Congress
COVID-19	- Coronavirus Disease 2019
CRDP	- Comprehensive Rural Development Programme
EPWP	- Expanded Public Works Programme
FAO	- Food and Agriculture Organisation
GDP	- Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	- Growth, Employment and Redistribution
HGDM	- Harry Gwala District Municipality
HIV	- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IDP	- Integrated Development Plan
IFAD	- International Fund for Agricultural Development
IOM	- International Organisation of Migration
KZN	- Kwa-Zulu Natal
LED	- Local Economic Development
NDP	- National Development Plan
NELM	- New Economics of Labour Migration
NGOs	- Non-governmental Organisations
NSDF	- National Spatial Development Framework
PGDS	- Provincial Growth and Development Strategies
RDP	- Reconstruction and Development Programme
REC	- Regional Economic Communities
SADC	- Southern African Development Community
SDF	- Spatial Development Framework
SPLUMA	- Spatial Planning and Land Use Management
ULM	- Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality
UNESCO	- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WFP	- World Food Programme

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to assess the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja, Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. The specific objectives of the study are to (a) analyse the causes of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja, (b) assess the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration with a focus on poverty, agricultural production, and education in KwaNokweja and the implication of the COVID-19 pandemic on these, (c) explore the perception of residents in KwaNokweja towards rural-urban migration, and (d) evaluate the local municipality's responses to the consequences of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja. A mixed research methodology was adopted to address these objectives. In the qualitative part of the study, interviews were conducted with the relevant authorities including traditional authorities, municipal officers, and the ward councillor. For the quantitative dimension of the study, questionnaires were administered to community members from KwaNokweja. A thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data whereas SPSS was used to analyse quantitative data and generate descriptive statistics.

The findings of this study confirm that migration is a complex and dynamic phenomenon that is influenced by a multitude of factors. In terms of the socio-economic development impacts, it was found that migration has positive impacts in terms of remittances which enhanced the livelihoods of people in KwaNokweja. The study found that households which received remittances were able to afford to spend more on food, household needs, and education and had more assets than their non-receiving counterparts. This implies that migration plays a significant role in enhancing food security and reducing poverty in KwaNokweja. As a result, most of the participants in this study noted that they were in support of migration to urban areas because it improves their socio-economic livelihoods. Most people in KwaNokweja view migration as a route out of poverty, and a positive livelihood strategy. However, some people expressed that they discourage the migration of people from KwaNokweja to urban areas due to several factors including among others, negative experiences, the abandonment of elders and belongings, and the transfer of skills to enhance the development of urban areas at the expense of rural areas. As a result, Ubhlebezwe Local Municipality has devised several strategies aimed at promoting rural development and discouraging the migration of communities from the municipal's jurisdiction to urban areas. Based on these findings, this study recommends that the

focus should be on job creation and encouraging entrepreneurship through agriculture, skills development training and investments in small businesses. This will not only decrease dependence on remittances, but it will encourage people to generate their own income, disincentivize migration, promote job creation, attract investments, and enhance local economic development.

**Keywords: KwaNokweja, rural-urban migration, socio-economic development, remittances**

## CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

### 1.1 Introduction and background

There is a huge gap between urban areas and rural areas, in terms of wealth and development. This inequality is an influencing factor in the movement of people between geographical boundaries. The movement of people across geographical boundaries is referred to as migration (Ginsburg et al., 2016b). Big cities and towns are often characterised by well-developed settlements, availability of job opportunities, better access to health services and good education. Rural areas are characterised by poor infrastructure and housing, limited access to health care services, lack of economic opportunities and poor education (Mlambo, 2018).

Since urban areas have better wealth, quality of life and vast economic opportunities, they are attractive to people, especially the youth. These have been the main pull factors for the migration of individuals from one geographical area to another in pursuit of better living opportunities (Kanayo et al., 2019). This results in what is commonly known as rural-urban migration, where individuals from rural areas migrate to urban areas in search of employment and better living conditions (Selod and Shilpi, 2021). According to Ginsburg et al., (2016b), the inequality gap between rural and urban areas that exist in South Africa, can be linked to the socio-political economy of the colonial and the apartheid era which enhanced urban “white” areas and neglected rural “black” areas.

Such colonial and apartheid policies purposely improved and enhanced the development of urban areas, through continuously developing infrastructure and creating employment opportunities in the urban areas. This resulted in more income being generated in the urban areas while the rural areas were faced with poverty, limited educational and economic opportunities and underdevelopment (Oberhauser, 2016). The inequalities between rural and urban areas act as push factors to the depopulation of rural areas as many people migrate to urban areas to seek better benefits. Rural-urban migration consequently leads to a decline in agricultural productivity in rural areas (Woldegebriel, 2017). McGranaham (2009), states that this rural-urban migration has challenging outcomes in urban areas, such as overpopulation, development of informal settlements, increased crime rates, and

urban unemployment. These are a challenge for many developing countries that are already burdened by poverty, unemployment, and other economic issues.

This research aims to analyse the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration on KwaNokweja. KwaNokweja is a small rural area in Ixopo, a small town in the South of Kwa-Zulu Natal in the Harry Gwala District Municipality, and under the Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality. Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality is the smallest of the four local municipalities in the Harry Gwala District. The main economic sectors within the municipality include agriculture, tourism, and business (Harry Gwala Municipality IDP, 2017/18). Harry Gwala District is characterised by a rural landscape rich in agricultural soils. Within the Harry Gwala District, the Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality is amongst the municipalities dominated by traditional settlements (Harry Gwala Municipality IDP, 2017/18).

## **1.2 Problem statement**

Rural-urban migration is still a challenge in many developing countries. Several studies (Trimikliniotis et al., 2008; Oyebamiji and Asuelime; 2018, Kanayo et al., 2019) have been done in attempts to understand the causes and consequences of rural-urban migration. Some of the studies suggest that rural-urban migration plays a significant role in the distribution of the population and results in urbanisation (Trimikliniotis et al., 2008). According to Woldegebriel (2017), rural-urban migration results in the depopulation of rural areas, declining agricultural productivity and age structure imbalance as the youth migrate to urban areas. However, Ajaero and Onokala (2013) state that rural-urban migration can be perceived as a source of development for rural areas. Remittances from the migrants in the urban areas can be a source of financial support for the receiving rural households (food, clothes, education, and healthcare). This decreases the rate of poverty in rural areas. In this regard, rural-urban migration has both positive and negative impacts on rural areas.

KwaNokweja is a rural area located in the Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality, south of KwaZulu Natal. Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality is one of the four local municipalities in the Harry Gwala District Municipality (Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality IDP, 2022/23). According to the Harry Gwala Profile and Analysis District Development Model (2020), there is a high rate of unemployment in this area, leading to the migration of the residents. Nonetheless, no study has investigated rural-urban

migration and its impacts on KwaNokweja, although this phenomenon (rural-urban migration) is prevalent. This study, by investigating the socio-economic impact of rural-urban migration on KwaNokweja, therefore, occupies this research gap.

### **1.3 Aim and objectives**

#### **1.3.1 Aim**

This study aims to investigate the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban on KwaNokweja, a rural area in KwaZulu Natal, South Africa.

#### **1.3.2 Objectives**

The specific objectives of this study are to:

- a) Analyse the causes of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja.
- b) Assess the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration with a focus on poverty, agricultural production, and education in KwaNokweja and the implication of the COVID-19 pandemic on these.
- c) Explore the perception of residents in KwaNokweja towards rural-urban migration.
- d) Evaluate the local municipality's responses to the consequences of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja.

#### **1.3.3 Research questions**

- a) What are the causes of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja?
- b) What are the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration on poverty, agricultural production, and education in KwaNokweja, and what implications does the COVID-19 pandemic have on these?
- c) What are the perceptions of the residents in KwaNokweja on the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration?
- d) What are the local municipality's responses to the consequences of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja?

### **1.4 Purpose of the study**

Many developing countries are faced with economic challenges that can be linked to slow development, poverty, and unemployment. According to Parshotam and Ncube, (2017), South Africa is challenged with stagnant economic performance and unemployment due to limited economic opportunities. This is a consequence of the

colonial and apartheid period, which encouraged economic development in the urban areas and resulted in underdevelopment, poverty, and poor quality of life in rural areas (Ginsburg et al., 2016b). In response to these challenges, people, especially the youth and educated individuals, move from rural areas to urban areas in search of economic opportunities, education, and improved standards of living (Kanayo et al., 2019).

The elderly and a few other people are left in the rural areas to perform agricultural activities. This has adverse impacts on the agricultural production and economic output of rural areas. Thus, rural-urban migration is a continuing challenge for many developing countries that are in the process of establishing stable economies and alleviating poverty and unemployment. This study attempts to understand the existing push factors that influence people to move from rural areas, as well as the pull factors that attract them to urban areas. Understanding these will aid in clarifying the wealth and development imbalances between urban and rural areas. Thus, informing development planners about the extent of the problem, and possible strategies for mitigation.

### **1.5 Outline of the study**

This study is made up of six chapters. Chapter 1 is concerned with introducing and providing the background of the study, establishing the problem, and presenting the aim and objectives of the study. Chapter 2 focuses on discussing the theories that inform and provide theoretical guidance to the whole study, including neoclassical, neo-Marxist, and pluralist theories of migration. Chapter 3 responds to the research questions by reviewing existing literature related to this study. Chapter 4 describes the physical setting and the characteristics of the study area (location, topography, climate). This chapter also discusses the methodology adopted to address the objectives of the study. Chapter 5 is concerned with the analysis, presentation and interpretation of the information gathered from the two data sets of this study concerning the objectives that were set. Chapter 6 provides a summary of the main findings of the study and presents recommendations for the persisting issues which are causal factors for rural-urban migration in Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality.

## **1.6 Chapter Summary**

This chapter introduced the background of the study and presented the problem statement. It further provided the aim, and objectives to be achieved in responding to the problem, as well as the significance of undertaking this study. As outlined in the previous section, the following chapter will provide the theoretical perspectives that underpin this study.

## **CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS**

### **2.1. Introduction**

This chapter discusses the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that inform this research. It is comprised of two parts, the conceptual framework which describes the concepts that have been used in this study, and the theoretical framework.

### **2.2. Conceptual framework**

A conceptual framework refers to a combination of various concepts that inform, explain, and provide a detailed understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Imenda, 2014 cited in Shikalepo, 2020). It focuses and directs the study by identifying and defining the key concepts that emerged from the literature and theories reviewed (Shikalepo, 2020). Schram (2006), states that a conceptual framework provides rationality to the thoughts of the researcher, which provides insights and explanations as to how and why the ideas of the researcher are imperative relative to existing bodies of knowledge within the research area. It comprises the researcher's thoughts on the identification of the research topic, the problem being investigated, the research questions, the literature reviewed, the theories adopted to inform and give direction to the study, the methodology applied, procedures and instruments, the analysis of data, interpretation of findings, and the recommendations and conclusions that the researcher makes (Kivunja, 2018). In light of this, the following is a definition of concepts, which build a conceptual framework for this research.

#### **2.2.1. Migration**

According to Woldegebriel (2017), migration is a difficult phenomenon to define, this is mainly because different scholars within various disciplines perceive and define migration differently. The term migration refers to the movement of an individual or a group of people, this involves changing the place of residence, from a place of origin to other geographical destinations across an international border or within a state. It is a term used to refer to the movement of a population, regardless of the length, composition, and causes (International Organisation of Migration, 2015). In this study, migration will be used to refer to the movement of people from KwaNokweja, a rural area to various urban areas in South Africa. This form of migration is referred to as rural-urban migration, which can be classified as internal migration. Internal migration

is also known as domestic or local migration (Woldegebriel, 2017). There are four different types of internal migration identified; rural-urban migration, urban-urban migration, rural-rural migration, and urban-rural migration (Selod and Shilpi, 2021).

### **2.2.2. Migrant**

According to the definition provided by the United Nations, a migrant is an individual who has left his/her place of origin to reside in a foreign destination for more than one year irrespective of whether the causes are voluntary or involuntary, using regular or irregular means to migrate (International Organisation of Migration, 2015). This definition of a migrant excludes individuals travelling for a short period such as tourists and businesspeople. However, this term is commonly used to refer to certain kinds of shorter-term migrants such as seasonal farm workers (IOM, 2015). People who choose to migrate are usually referred to as voluntary migrants. Some migrants are economic migrants; these are the persons who leave their place of residence to other geographical areas to enhance their quality of life. This can be used to refer to people who leave their places of origin for employment purposes (Perruchoud & Redpath-Cross, 2011). Involuntary migrants are those people who are forced into migrating due to the lack of safety in their homes due to wars or natural disasters.

This study will employ this term to refer to the people of KwaNokweja who have left their place of origin to reside in other urban destinations for varied reasons and durations. These people are referred to as rural-urban migrants. According to Perruchoud and Redpath-Cross (2011), the term rural-urban migrants refers to internal migrants who relocate from rural areas to urban areas, often pushed by factors such as poverty, low agricultural productivity and incomes, population growth, environmental degradation, fragmentation and inequitable land distribution, and the lack of economic opportunities in the rural areas.

### **2.2.3. Urban**

An urban setting can be defined broadly in terms of the population density, the density of developed infrastructure and human structures such as houses, bridges and roads, the concentration of administrative bodies, varied economic activities which are mainly secondary and tertiary, and diverse livelihood strategies. The term urban can be used when referring to cities, towns, and suburbs (Dijkstra & Poelman, 2014). This term will be used to refer to well-developed areas, characterized by high population density and

with the predominant types of economic activity being manufacturing, tertiary, and quaternary industries.

#### **2.2.4. Rural**

The term rural is used, in this study, to refer to areas that lack administrative structures and government services. According to Dijkstra and Poelman (2014), rural areas are generally thinly populated. These areas are usually less developed and have poor or no formal infrastructure such as roads (Ajaero & Onokala, 2013). Rural areas are usually equated with agriculture, this is because agricultural production is the most dominant livelihood strategy, hence income-generating activities are centred on agriculture. These areas are characterized by large amounts of undeveloped land. In this study, this term will be used to refer to less developed areas, that lack proper infrastructure. It needs emphasis that this definition is context specific, because not all rural areas, particularly in developed countries lack development and infrastructure. In South Africa, these areas are usually associated with less populated, secluded, and poor areas and are mainly dependent on agriculture for income to support their livelihoods.

#### **2.2.5. Impact**

The term impact refers to the effect of an individual, thing or action on another (Oxford English Dictionary, cited in Wallman-Stokes et al., 2013). Research Excellence Framework (REF2014, cited in Penfield et al., 2013) defines impact as an effect on, an alteration or benefit to the economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment, or quality of life. This term generally refers to the direct and indirect outcomes or results brought about by an action. This term will be used to refer to the changes brought about by the movement of the people of KwaNokweja to other geographical spaces and how this has affected, among others, poverty reduction, access to better education and increase in incomes etc.

#### **2.2.6. Socio-economic Status**

Socio-economic status refers to the social class of an individual or group. This is usually measured as a combination of income, education, and occupation, which are the common measures of socio-economic status (Baker, 2014). Thus, socio-economic status is a measure of an individual's combined economic and social status. Socio-

economic examinations usually reveal inequalities in terms of access to resources, and issues that relate to privilege, power, as well as control. Good socio-economic status is usually associated with better health and quality of life (Baker 2014). For this study, this term will be adopted to refer to improvement or otherwise in socio-economic characteristics/ measures such as education, agricultural productivity and poverty. Focus on these measures is crucial in tracking the impacts and alterations resulting from rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja.

### **2.3 Theoretical framework**

A theoretical framework is defined as a structure that guides a study, by referring to formal theory. It serves as the blueprint guiding and supporting the dissertation, while also providing structure to the philosophical, epistemological, methodological, and analytical approaches of the study (Osanloo & Grant, 2016). It consists of several selected theories that brace up and enhance the thinking and understanding of the topic of study. This study utilizes three theories which are neoclassical, historical structuralism, and pluralist theories. The adoption of these theories is influenced by the aim of this study which is to understand the causal factors for rural-urban migration and the socio-economic impacts that are associated with rural-urban migration on KwaNokweja. The researcher drew on the above-mentioned theories because of their characteristics which will help to best achieve the objectives set for this study, as they can highlight and give an explanation to migration as a phenomenon for welfare enhancement and escape from poverty, especially in developing countries, such as South Africa.

#### **2.3.1. Neoclassical theories of migration**

According to De Haas (2007), neoclassical theories of migration are classified under the functionalist paradigm of social theory. Functionalist migration theories view migration as an advantage to productivity, prosperity, and potential equality in both the places of origin and migration destinations through the flows of resources such as money, goods, and knowledge between origin and destination areas. Many theories are categorized under the neoclassical theories of migration, influenced by the common premise that migration occurs in response to the individual's desires to enhance their economic benefits and improve their welfare. For this study, three neoclassical theories of migration which are Everet Lee's (1966) theory, the Value Expectancy Model and Harris & Todaro's (1970) theory, will be utilised.

### **2.3.1.1 Everett Lee's Theory (1966)**

Lee (1966), revised the work of Ravenstein and developed a new perspective on studying migration patterns (De Haas, 2007). He formulated his push-pull framework on a micro level, otherwise individual level, influenced by the supply and demand of migration. Lee believes that migration occurs within well-defined streams, from specific points of origin to destination points (Lee, 1966). According to this theory, migration patterns are influenced by various factors, which can be classified as push factors, pull factors, intervening factors, and personal factors (Lee, 1966; Kanayo et al., 2019). All the above-mentioned factors can influence the individual's decision. The push factors refer to the undesirable, and unfavourable conditions, usually in the place of origin, that influence an individual to consider moving to a new area, such as underdevelopment, social inequalities, and unemployment (Moyo et al., 2012). Factors in the origin area, according to Kanayo et al., (2019), have more influence than factors in the destination area.

The pull factors refer to what attracts people into an area, such as employment, and political representation. Intervening factors or obstacles refer to factors that exist between the point of origin and destination of an individual, such as distance, borders, policy regimes, and mountains. These determine how feasible it is for individuals to move to new destinations (Moyo et al., 2012). According to De Haas (2007), migration tends to be selective to individual characteristics and considers that people respond differently to the positive and negative factors at the origin point. The interconnection between this theory and the neoclassical realm is that migration is an individual choice.

According to De Haas (2008), there are certain limitations to using this theory as a tool to explain migration decision-making processes. For instance, despite this theory's ability to categorize reasons for migration, it makes overly simplistic assumptions about people's behaviour and responses to stimuli. The theory postulates that people can make cost/benefit calculations based on general information about markets. It does not consider the complex reality of human mobility, and that people might lack the ability to act upon migration decisions. It fails to sufficiently account for varied migratory behaviours of individuals to the same push and pull factors presented to them (Castles et al., 2014). This theory also fails to consider how the varied realities and conditions of the places of origin and destination interact with other factors to influence migration decisions (De Haas, 2007). Factors presented to people vary,

influenced by their experiences and perceptions and the interaction of these factors plays a significant role in shaping migration decisions made by individuals as well as migration flows. This theory has also been criticized for being unrealistic in viewing migration as a cost-benefit calculation by individuals, without considering the structural arrangements that act as barriers, such as inequalities. Notwithstanding these criticisms, the researcher drew on this theory because of its ability to analyze migration based on factors that push migrants from their places of origin, and what attracts them to other destinations. This will be useful in understanding what pushes people to migrate from KwaNokweja.

#### **2.3.1.2 Value-expectancy model**

The Value-expectancy model posits that prospective migrants are individuals that make rational, conscious decisions to migrate based on more than economic considerations, but also social and psychological factors (Fawcett & DeJong, 1981 cited in Vella, 2019). This theory encourages a specification of the values of individuals that have the potential to be met through migrating (or staying) and the linkage, in terms of expectancy, between migration behaviour and achieving the set goals in other locations versus the location of origin (Gordon, et al., 1983). Individuals have the potential to migrate influenced by multiple values of migration outcomes and expectations. Values refer to specific goals that potential migrants have set and expect to accomplish through migration, such as wealth. According to Hagen-Zanker (2008), values can be non-economic, such as self-fulfilment and security. These values are however dependent on the individual's personal and household characteristics and social norms. This approach was adopted for its ability to capture the considerations that prospective migrants make, and what they expect to achieve through migration. This will give insights into their migratory behaviour and migration patterns.

#### **2.3.1.3 Harris & Todaro's (1970) theory**

Harris (1970) and Todaro (1969), developed Harris & Todaro's (1970) theory, which remains the most representative of functionalist migration theories (De Haas, 2021). The Harris & Todaro migration theory attempts to explain the phenomenon of rural-urban migration in developing countries, by stating that migration is a response to wage differentials (Espindola et al., 2006) between the rural and urban areas and that urban unemployment is an equilibrating factor for rural-urban migration (Fields, 1975). The Harris & Todaro (1970) theory assumes migration is an economic phenomenon,

implying that migration occurs for economic reasons and explains migration by geographical differences in income and production between two different sectors, the rural agricultural sector, and the urban manufacturing sector (Harris & Todaro, 1970). It assumes that these production and wage differentials influence individuals to migrate from low-wage, labour-surplus areas, and rural sectors to the urban high-wage sector with scarce labour (Fields, 1975).

In this regard, migration is seen as a positive optimization strategy, in which people are influenced to migrate by the desire to access enhanced and stable sources of income and living opportunities. These individuals partake in migration because they believe that higher earnings will compensate for the cost and the risk of migrating. This perspective on migration supposes that people make rational decisions to migrate to other places to enhance their economic gains and benefits (Moyo et al., 2012). Evidence of this is usually demonstrated in developing countries with rapid rural-urban migration (Abreu, 2012), due to the lack of economic opportunities and poverty in rural areas. KwaNokweja demonstrates similar characteristics, such as underdevelopment and limited economic opportunities. This has resulted in the people of the area adopting migration options to more developed urban areas in attempts to improve their welfare.

According to Harris and Todaro (1970), there is a politically determined minimum urban wage that is greater than the rural earnings. Zenou (2005), states that in the perspective of this migration theory, migration will continue to occur if the urban expected incomes exceed rural earnings. Fields (1972), posits that individuals consider various labour market opportunities that are available to them before migration. These opportunities influence them to make decisions based on opportunities that best maximize their expected gains and benefits (Espindola et al., 2006), which usually involves them migrating to urban areas.

Migrating to the urban areas does not necessarily guarantee employment, improved welfare, and higher income, hence the existence of risks associated with migration. The expected gains anticipated by individuals who engage in migration as an optimization strategy are measured by the differences in actual wages in the rural areas and expected urban wages. This is modelled by the minimum urban income multiplied by the probability to find a job in the urban area (Zenou, 2005). The

probability of getting a job in urban areas is influenced by the rate of urban unemployment. This theory postulates that there exists a periodic random job selection that occurs in urban areas, whenever the number of job seekers is greater than the number of jobs available (Harris & Todaro, 1970). Implying that migrants and permanent urban residents have equal and fair chances of getting employment, hence migrants believe they could get employment when they are living in the urban areas than in the rural areas, despite the high urban unemployment rates (Chen, 1994).

According to Chen (1994), the Harris & Todaro theory resembles the thinking of the Keynesian revolution, which hypothesizes that there can occur an equilibrium with the existence of high urban unemployment. Urban unemployment in this case is viewed as an equilibrating factor in rural-urban migration, and migration occurs in disequilibrium (Harris & Todaro, 1970). According to Fields (1972), rural-urban migration acts as an equilibrating force equating rural and urban expected gains, hence it is regarded as a disequilibrium phenomenon. Zenou (2005), states that the creation of urban employment may increase the already high rates of urban unemployment, this is a result of the induced negative effect of rural migration, which may outweigh the positive effect of job creation. However, Harris and Todaro (1970) postulate that equilibrium is only achievable with unemployment and predict that rural-urban migration will result in labour being scarce at the places of origin and less scarce at the urban destination end. This will result in capital being generated to the places of origin. In neoclassical thinking, this will result in economic equalization between the origin and destination regions. The establishment of equilibrium will thus eliminate the incentives for migrating (Gupta, 1987).

This is hardly possible, especially for developing countries that are challenged with market imperfections, inequalities, and other structural constraints on development and migration (De Haas, 2007). This theory has been criticised for having simplified assumptions, which makes it unrealistic (Chen, 1994), and for not being able to address the challenge of constraining forces such as government restrictions on migration. Harris and Todaro in their migration theory fail to account for the political and social barriers that influence migration behaviour. Gupta (1987), states that the Harris & Todaro theory is abstract and is unable to consider the influence of various rural and urban institutions such as trade unions on rural-urban migration. This theory

fails to sufficiently provide answers to how structural inequalities enhance social and spatial inequalities.

De Haas (2014), further states that government structures and other structural arrangements such as family, community and culture constrain migrants from making free, independent choices to migrate to destinations of their choice. This theory has been criticized for being unrealistic in assuming that there is potential for economic equilibrium between rural and urban areas or rich and poor countries. The Harris & Todaro theory is often criticized for being too restrictive (Espindola et al., 2006) and does not consider the socially differentiated nature of migration processes. This is because this theory emphasizes income as the only pull factor influencing individuals to migrate to cities (Chen, 1994). This theory has also faced criticism for oversimplifying migration processes by making assumptions that rural-urban migration would inevitably result in higher unemployment given the finite employment supply.

For this study, specifically with relation to the objective to assess the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration on kwaNokweja, the researcher drew on this approach to understand the case of rural-urban migration in kwaNokweja. The adoption of this approach is primarily influenced by the assumption that individuals tend to migrate in an effort of enhancing and improving their well-being and economic gains. Adopting the Harris & Todaro theory will shed economic as well as geographic perspectives on the rural-urban migration problem that is being studied, and highlight the economic, wealth and development gap that persists between the rural and urban sectors in developing countries. Espindola et al., (2006), state that this theory is typically focused on studying migration in the context of unemployment in developing countries. This aspect of the Harris & Todaro theory is suitable for the study's objective to analyze the impacts that can be associated with rural-urban migration.

### **2.3. Neo-Marxist/Historical-structural theories of migration**

Marxist theories are concerned with analyzing global capitalism, which is perceived as the primary causal factor of global inequality (Linklater, 2005). These theorists attribute the persistence of poverty in poorer countries to capitalist exploitation. The historical-structural school of thought views migration as being at least, to some extent, forced or involuntary due to larger structural factors. This approach introduces the perspective of migration as a way of mobilizing cheap labour for capital. According to

De Haas (2010), historical structuralists have not yet developed a theory, however, the Dependency theory (Frank, 1969) and Emmanuel Wallerstein's world systems theory classified countries according to their degree of dependence (Kunwar, 2013; De Haas, 2014), have influenced the historical-structural perspective to migration studies. Kunwar (2013), states that in line with the Marxist political economy-dependency theory, this approach to migration studies posits that underdevelopment, which can be viewed as a push for migration, was a legacy of European colonialism. This system encouraged the exploitation of the resources of poor countries to improve the rich countries.

Dependency theory was viewed as an explanation for the persistence of poverty in poorer countries. According to Ferraro (2008), this theory came about in the late 1950s, introduced by Paul Prebisch, the Director of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America. The development of this theory was influenced by the condition of economic growth in the advanced industrialized countries that did not result in the growth of the poorer countries but instead led to economic challenges in the poorer countries. This idea opposes neoclassical thinking which assumes that economic growth would be beneficial to everyone, even when benefits are not necessarily evenly shared (Ferraro, 2008). The theory attempts to explain the current and persisting state of underdevelopment challenging various countries, by examining the existing interaction patterns among these countries and by noting that the inequality that exists between these countries is an intrinsic part of these interactions. Dependency theorists attribute the motive force driving dependency relationship to capitalism. The capitalist system introduced and enforced inflexible division of labour internationally. This labour division is responsible for the underdevelopment of many countries of the world. The dependency theory postulates that the poorer countries are not underdeveloped simply because they failed or "lagged behind the scientific transformation of the Enlightenment values of the European states". Rather, these countries are challenged with poverty and underdevelopment because they were integrated into the European economic system as mere producers and suppliers of raw materials as well as sources of cheap labour (Ferraro, 2008). These poorer countries, also known as the Third World countries, were not allowed to market their resources in a way that made them competent with the dominant states.

According to Chirot and Hall (1982, cited in Martinez-Vela, 2001), the world systems theory is an adaptation of the dependency theory as it also suggests that the wealthy countries benefit from the poorer countries by exploiting these countries for cheap labour and raw materials. Wallerstein drew on the dependency theory in formulating his theory and adopted the neo-Marxist perspective of development processes (Kilembe, 2010). Wallerstein's world system theory posits that the way a country is integrated into the capitalist world system determines how economic development takes place in that country. He further classifies countries into a three-level hierarchy, that consists of the core, semi-periphery, and periphery (Wallerstein 2004, cited in Kilembe, 2010). The core countries are the capitalist countries that dominate and exploit the peripheral countries for cheap labour and raw materials. Semi-peripheral countries have characteristics that resemble both core and peripheral countries. Peripheral countries are Third-world countries, which are dependent on the core countries for capital, and the export of raw materials. This reinforces the inequality gap between the core and peripheral countries, and the dependence of the periphery countries on the core countries.

The historical structuralism school of thought also acknowledges that people have unequal access to resources and these inequalities are often enhanced by capitalist expansion. The colonial and capitalist expansion disadvantaged underdeveloped countries, leading to accelerated rural change, poverty, rapid urbanization, displacement of workers, and the growth of informal economics (Kunwar, 2013). The fundamental premise of the historical-structural theories of migration is that migration occurs when broad structural processes influence individuals to move. It presents global political and economic inequalities in migration studies and postulates that economic and political power are unevenly distributed among developed and underdeveloped countries (De Haas, 2008).

The division between the developed and underdeveloped, otherwise core-periphery and semi-periphery enhanced the dependency of the poor countries on richer economies. Theorists within this realm emphasize the significance of social, economic, cultural, and political structures in influencing the behaviours of individuals. These structures can act as barriers and direct individuals to act in certain ways (De Haas, 2014). This approach to migration links the factors that influence migration to structural change in world markets. It postulates that migration is a function of globalization, the

increased interdependence of economies and the development of improved forms of production (Massey et al. 1993, cited in Kurekova, 2011). These theories view migration as a macro-level phenomenon in which individual agency is subordinated to structural demands (De Haas, 2007). According to Zolberg (1992, cited in Rudolph, 2002) migration is shaped by domestic and international structural forces. This approach to migration patterns posits that capitalist systems have led to the displacement of the rural poor in developing countries, forcing them to migrate to more developed urban centres to meet the demand for cheap exploitable labour.

According to De Haas (2010), theorists within this school of thought view migration as an escape from the misery that is caused by global capitalist expansion. They interpret migration as a manifestation of capitalist penetration and the unequal terms of trade that exist between developed and underdeveloped countries (De Haas, 2007). This perspective on migration is appropriate as South Africa is challenged with inequalities that can be traced back to colonial influence. This approach will enable the analysis of the inequalities that exist between people in terms of resources and between rural and urban areas.

According to De Haas (2014), an individual's decision to migrate is taken within structural constraints presented by the capitalist system and must consider factors such as immigration restrictions and regulations, opportunities for employment and housing, and transport costs. The historical-structural school of thought opposes the assumption of the neoclassical migration theory that individuals make independent, free decisions to migrate but rather that migration is to a certain extent forced or involuntary due to broad structural factors. It studies migration patterns regarding large structural forces that influence the migratory behaviours and decisions of the poor (De Haas, 2007).

These theories have been criticized for their inability to consider the role of migrants' agency and for supposing that individuals automatically respond to global structural demands, irrespective of their aptitudes and aspirations (De Haas, 2008). They are perceived as being too deterministic and rigid in their view that individuals are victims that adapt to macro-forces (De Haas, 2010). The adoption of this approach to migration is influenced by the colonial and apartheid history of South Africa. These governmental and political structures are responsible for the division and inequalities

that are present between the rural and urban areas in South Africa. Apartheid planning resulted in urban areas being rich and developed, while the rural areas were impoverished. This motivated the flow of labour from the rural areas to the more developed urban areas, characterized by surplus capital. Evidence of apartheid planning remains today, as the rural areas are still characterized by poverty. These theories will assist this research to capture the realities of the KwaNokweja community, regarding the historical structures that impact their well-being.

#### **2.4. Pluralist theories of migration**

The pluralistic theories of migration are theories that exist between the two extreme views on migration and development which are the functionalist (neoclassical, optimistic), and structuralist (pessimistic) views (De Haas, 2010). These theories adopt hybrid approaches that take both agency and structure into account when studying migration (De Haas, 2010). Harmonized agency and structure-oriented approaches are essential due to their ability to influence migration behaviour. This enables a more flexible approach to dealing with the heterogeneity of migration impacts. These theories allow for a variety of outcomes that better explain migration causes and impacts, and influences on individuals.

##### **2.4.1 New Economics of Labor Migration**

The New Economics of Labor Migration was pioneered by Stark (1978, 1991), who introduced the thought of considering the behaviour of migrants in a wider societal context (De Haas, 2008 cited in Kunwar, 2013). According to De Haas (2007) and Abreu (2012), this approach to migration emerged in the 1980s as an improvement and sophisticated embodiment of the neoclassical migration theory. New Economics of Labor Migration was developed to redress the flaws of the historical-structural approach and neoclassical theoretical framework. These flaws refer to the unsatisfactory character of the neoclassical theories of migration which tend to be rigid and unable to accommodate the complex and varied realities of migration and the lack of regard for human agency in the historical-structural approaches to migration. This theory sought to establish a middle ground between the historical structural perspective and the neoclassical approach to migration (Abreu, 2012).

This approach to migration states that migration occurs in response to poverty and other constraints (De Haas, 2021). The fundamental premise of the NELM is that

households make the decisions for individuals to migrate to other destinations to maximize their economic gains and benefits, so they can provide income insurance and financial support for their families left in the areas of origin. Having one member migrate to a certain destination can be viewed as a co-insurance strategy aimed at diversifying income through risk spreading (De Haas, 2007).

According to Hagen-Zanker (2008 cited in Abreu, 2012), NELM is the only migration theory so far which links the migration decision to the impacts of migration. Abreu (2012) notes that the NELM opposes the idea of viewing optimization and rationality as the only influencing principles for migration. The NELM encourages the integration of other factors other than income maximization when studying migration (De Haas, 2007). This approach to migration posits that migrants tend to behave in similar ways and are usually influenced to respond by similar factors.

Using an approach that also considers the impacts of migration, will assist in understanding the interconnection that exists between the factors that influence individuals to migrate and the outcomes of migration. Abreu (2012) posits that the theoretical insights of the NELM can be summarized under five main headings. (i) emphasizing deprivation as a determinant for migration, (ii) the assumption that households and families are decision-makers, rather than individuals, (iii) the emphasis on migration as a strategy to diversify risks and overcome market incompleteness, (iv) introducing information theoretical considerations in migration theory, (v) understanding migration as a process of innovation adoption diffusion (Abreu, 2012). These summarize the postulation that migrants engage in migration influenced by the desire to enhance and improve their welfare. All these aspects of the NELM relate to the study as they highlight various factors that influence individuals to partake in migration. The advantage of using the NELM as a theoretical perspective to this study is that it does not only consider income and production as the major influencers for migration, but it is also concerned with the societal dimensions that influence migration decisions. De Haas (2010, cited in Abreu, 2012) states that the NELM enables a variety of outcomes than the use of a single approach to understanding migration, and can adhere to reality better than the Harris & Todaro theory. Concerning this study, the use of this theory will support the weaknesses of the Harris & Todaro neoclassical migration theory. This will enhance the outcomes of

the study and establish a variety of explanations that contribute to understanding the case of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja.

#### **2.4.2 Household Livelihood Strategy or Sustainable Livelihood Perspective**

The livelihood perspective on migration was developed by geographers, anthropologists and sociologists who conducted research in developing countries, and noted that their findings did not fit into the neoclassical theories, or Marxist theories (Scoones, 2009). This led to the postulation that opposes the idea of the historical structural approaches that view migrants as victims of capitalism but encourages the thought of viewing them as people who desire to improve their livelihoods despite the presents of constraining factors (De Haas, 2010; Kunwar, 2013). Adopting this approach to migration studies, meant a drastic shift from other approaches that tend to be rigid, to more empirical approaches. However, this approach to migration supports the historical-structural approaches to migration to the extent that they posit that people do not make independent decisions to organize their livelihoods, but they are influenced by broader social contexts, such as households, communities, and ethnic groups (De Haas, 2008).

Household livelihood strategy recognizes that households engage in migration as a strategy to diversify, secure, enhance and improve their livelihoods. Migration is not only a short-term survival strategy for rural populations who are challenged by the constraints of capitalism but migration is employed as a strategy to improve livelihoods and secure income (Thieme, 2008). This approach is concerned with the diversity and complexity of the ways that people support their living (Thieme, 2008). The livelihood perspective considers various factors, such as capabilities, assets, economic activities, social institutions, and various other factors that influence one's life (Carney, 1998 cited in Kunwar, 2013). This approach introduces the significance of considering the deliberate decisions that individuals make to establish secure and improved livelihoods, influenced by their access to opportunities and resources (De Haas, 2007). This is particularly appropriate for the study as it seeks to gain insights into the livelihoods of the KwaNokweja community and the various factors that motivate them to migrate.

This approach is suitable for application in developing countries, which are usually challenged by inequalities, and unevenly distributed opportunities. This is an important

aspect of this study that acknowledges that people are faced with different realities. The characteristics of this approach demonstrate the ability to capture these realities that people face, the constraints they are challenged with and how they decide to make a living. The NELM and the Household Livelihood Strategy demonstrate a more realistic analysis of the conditions faced by people in developing countries. The adoption of these approaches is influenced by their ability to capture the realities of how households live and design their livelihoods (De Haas, 2010).

## **2.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter has identified and defined the key concepts that inform this study. These concepts are migration, migrants, impact, rural, urban, and socio-economic status. The chapter provided a broader explanation of the concepts identified, to emphasize understanding and the perspective of the study. The theoretical frameworks which relate and give guidance to the study were also discussed. Guided by the objectives of the study, the researcher justified the adoption of these theoretical frameworks. These include the neoclassical theories, neo-Marxist/ historical-structural theories and the pluralist theories of migration. The next chapter is concerned with reviewing existing literature relating to the study.

## CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 3.1. Introduction

According to Arshed and Danson (2014), reviewing literature around a topic area provides background and justification for the study. It also highlights gaps and inconsistencies that exist in the literature. The objective of this chapter is to analyse the existing literature on the migration phenomenon and unpack the causes that influence migration and the impacts resulting from it. It also provides varied perceptions that people and communities have towards migration and the responses that have been put in place to address challenges and opportunities associated with migration.

#### 3.1.1. Overview of the migration phenomenon

Akokpari (2000 cited in Mlambo and Mpanza, 2019) defines migration as a phenomenon that involves the movement of people from one geographical area to another, either within or beyond their country of residence. This definition accounts for both internal and international migration. Migration is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that has shaped the history of mankind (Borderon et al., 2019). For many decades, individuals and households have engaged in migration for diverse reasons such as seeking improved living conditions and escaping adverse conditions in their places of origin (Castelli, 2018). As a result, in 2015 more than 244 million international migrants lived in a foreign country, representing an increase of 40% since the year 2000 (Castelli, 2018). Of the 244 million international migrants, 150 million were identified as migrant workers. In 2017 the UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs estimated a total of 258 million international migrants, demonstrating a significant increase in the figures of international migrants estimated in 2015. Of these, a rough 112 million (43%) migrants lived in the Global South. Within the Global South, 80 million migrants were estimated to be living in Asia, 25 million in Africa and the rest in Latin America and the Caribbean (Chikanda et al., 2020).

A rough calculation of one-third of all international migrants is youth aged 15-34 and 74% are of working age (20-64 years) (McAuliffe et al., 2019). Castelli (2018) further notes that most international migrants of working age live in Europe, Asia, and North America. In 2019, Europe and Asia were reported to host an estimated 82 million and 84 million international migrants respectively, followed by North America (59 million)

(McAuliffe et al., 2019). According to Chikanda et al. (2020), South-South migration is not sufficiently researched, however evidence of this migration trend is demonstrated by the increasing rates of urbanisation taking place in the Global South. They further note that more than 120 million migrants in this region engage in intra-South migration to destinations within the Global South. However, the migration trends in this region are multifaceted and are demonstrated by various migration types.

In the Global South, many countries are the migrant source and slightly fewer are destination countries. Chikanda et al. (2020), note that in 2015, approximately 161 countries were origin countries for South-South migrants, while a total of 158 migrant countries were migrant destinations. Approximately 14% of the global migrant population is in Africa. Crush et al., (2005) explain the complexity of migration patterns in Africa by noting that many African countries are the source destination as well as transit countries. In 2019, the IOM reported that roughly 21 million (53.2%) of African-born migrants still resided in Africa, and primarily engaged in intracontinental population mobility, between land borders than to other continents (Flahaux and De Haas, 2016). In 2019, Eastern Africa hosted a rough 30% of the entire migrant population residing in Africa, followed by Western Africa (28%), Southern Africa (17%), Middle Africa (14%) and Northern Africa (11%) (Achieng et al., 2020). The European Commission (2018 cited in Rodrigues and Bjarnesen, 2020), shows that in East Africa, migrants tend to favour Kenya, Ethiopia, and Uganda. In Northern Africa, the major migrant destinations are Libya and Egypt. Cote d'Ivoire and Nigeria are major migrant destinations in Western Africa. In Central Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Cameroon, and Angola receive the most foreign-born migrants. South Africa is the major migrant destination in Southern Africa. According to UNCTD (2018, cited in Popoola et al., 2021), 3.1 million African migrants were in South Africa, Cote d'Ivoire (1.2 million), Uganda (900 000), Libya (629 000), Kenya (577 000), Ethiopia (426 000), Chad (242 000), Gabon (213 000), Cameroon (206 000), and Tanzania (168 000).

The Southern African region is part of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region (Nshimbi et al, 2017). The SADC region is currently made up of 16 countries (Angola, Botswana, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Eswatini, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. This region can be generally divided into two categories, migrant-sending countries such as Mozambique,

Malawi, Lesotho and Zimbabwe and migrant-receiving states such as Botswana and Namibia. South Africa falls into both categories (Black et al., 2006). The Southern African Development Community (SADC) region has a long and complex history of migration that dates to the mid-nineteenth century (Crush et al., 2005). Populations in this region engaged in migration long before colonial conquest. For instance, in the 19th century, the mining sectors in Namibia and Zambia attracted large numbers of migrants from various countries in the region (Crush et al., 2005). This century also witnessed large numbers of labour migrants from countries such as Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia recruited to the mines in Zimbabwe (Crush et al., 2006 cited in Nshimbi & Moyo, 2017).

The South African history of population movement dates to as early as the 1880s. Studies on migration in this region such as (Nshimbi and Lorenzo, 2016 cited in Moyo, 2019) find that in the late 1880s, people from Mozambique engaged in seasonal migration for labour in the South African farms. The discovery of diamond in Kimberly (1860) and gold in Witwatersrand (1880) were the major catalysts of migration in South Africa and led to an influx of migration of labour migrants, predominantly from Botswana, Eswatini Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Tanzania, and Zimbabwe to the South African mines (Crush et al., 2005). The demand for labour in this period also encouraged South Africans, especially men to engage in circular migration from the rural to the urban areas within the country, because their permanent residence was prohibited in the urban areas (Moyo et al., 2020). This was because the apartheid government passed several laws aimed at discouraging the presence of black people in the urban areas as they were believed to be encroaching on urban land that was rightfully set for whites. In the 1960s and 1970s, the diamond and copper mines in Botswana and Zambia attracted many labour migrants from other countries in the region, including South Africa (Nshimbi et al, 2017). Currently, South Africa remains the largest migrant-receiving country in Africa, and hosts migrants from various countries within the continent and beyond {Mixed Migration Centre (MMC), 2019}.

### **3.1.3. Overview of migration in South Africa**

According to Crush (2000, cited in Nshimbi and Moyo, 2017), the South African history of migration is the most researched in the Southern African region. However, Rogan et al., (2008), note that scholars have afforded less attention to internal migration in South Africa. The South African history of population mobility is deeply rooted in the

historical processes that influenced movement and settlement, especially that of black populations, such as apartheid (Rogan et al., 2008). Historically, the mobility of black people within South Africa was strictly controlled by the colonial and apartheid government. Pass laws applying to Black Africans were introduced in 1760 and were enforced through various laws, with the sole aim of controlling and monitoring population movements. According to Klaaren (2017), in 1809 Britain introduced a pass law to native black people who wanted to access areas reserved for whites. In the mid-1800s, immigrants from other African countries were forced to carry passes while within South Africa (Klaaren, 2017). The 1913 Immigration Act is among the various pass laws passed by the apartheid government and was aimed at restricting the internal migration of blacks and Indians while giving the privilege of free mobility to whites. Many more racist and selective immigration trends followed, primarily aimed at regulating the mobility of non-whites within the country (Moyo et al., 2021).

The policies that were introduced and implemented after 1948 were concerned with achieving spatial and social segregation through the mobilization of government resources and the displacement of black South Africans (Bakker et al., 2020). Bakker et al., (2016), further note that this was achieved through the implementation of the Group Areas Act (1950), the Population Registration Act (1950), and the Pass Laws Act (1952). The Group Areas Act (1950) assigned a native reserve to each black population group and enabled the government to remove people that were not living in the area assigned to their population group. The Population Registration Act (1950) was devised to assign a population group to every citizen and provided the political and social rights that applied to each population group. Through these policies, the apartheid government was able to control the movement of the black population by depriving them of their choice of location, restricting their rights to own land and choosing where they wanted to live. These policies also forced many black South Africans out of their original area to live in homelands that were specifically designed for all racial groups in South Africa. The South African government forcefully moved approximately 3.5 million people between 1960 and 1983 (Bakker et al., 2020).

In response to the persisting presence of black people in the urban areas, and areas designated for the minority Whites, the apartheid government further depended on the Pass Laws Act (1952). This was to restrict the movement of black people, control black urbanisation and ensure that black Africans always carried an internal passport with

them where ever they went, while also monitoring their movement within the country (Klaaren, 2017). Failure to present this passport when requested resulted in an arrest. Although the mobility of the black population was highly restricted, whites from across the country and beyond had the right to move in and out of the country. These laws significantly impacted the distribution of the population in space and the process of urbanisation. Klaaren (2017), further notes that the Abolition of Influx Control of 1986 (Act 68 of 1986) led to changes that afforded black citizens and non-citizens permanent residence in urban areas.

The abolishment of apartheid and the dawn of democracy in 1994 resulted in an increase in both international and internal migration, including rural-urban migration. That is, following the removal of mobility restrictions, many people from the rural areas flowed to nearby urban areas seeking better livelihood opportunities (Bakker et al., 2020). About 56% of the South African population currently lives in urban areas (Kok and Collinson, 2006 cited in Duffy et al., 2018). This implies that South Africa is one of the most urbanized countries in Africa. Njwambe et al., (2019) note that high rates of rural-urban migration continue to be a major challenge in South Africa. South Africa's urban population is reported to be growing at alarming rates and the United Nations projects that by 2030, a staggering 71.3% of the population will be residing in urban areas (Mlambo, 2018). Increasingly, people are moving to urban areas mainly driven by the perceived better living and working conditions that are present in the urban areas.

Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg experience an increase in the inflow of people from across South Africa (Angelopulo, 2017). Cross (2009, cited in Mlambo, 2018), notes that the South African trend of rural-urban migration is characterized by four main corridors, mainly from Limpopo, Free State, northern KwaZulu-Natal, and Mpumalanga, heading into the Gauteng province and those from southern KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape heading into the Western Cape. Poorer provinces such as the Eastern Cape and Limpopo, are major source areas for rural-urban migrants, while better economically developed provinces are prime targets for rural-urban migrants seeking better livelihood opportunities. This pattern of internal migration is explained by Rogan et al., (2008), who note that districts with higher employment rates attract larger numbers of internal migrants, especially from rural communities. The South African trends of internal skills migration have been largely market-driven and include

population movements between Western Cape, Gauteng, and KwaZulu-Natal. It is within this context that this study attempts to assess the socio-economic impacts of this trend of migration in rural areas, specifically KwaNokweja.

### **3.1.4 Causes of rural-urban migration**

Rural-urban migration is motivated by a multitude of factors. Mercandalli et al., (2019) allude that the trend of rural migration in sub-Saharan Africa is informed by a multi-dimensional combination of factors. This section focuses on discussing the pull and push factors associated with rural-urban migration.

#### **3.1.4.1 Search for economic opportunities**

Rural-urban migration is the primary factor causing urban growth. Rural-urban migration has been associated with industrialization, urbanization, and economic development (Baloyi et al., 2021). Zhang and Gao (2014) found that the industrialization of China led to the urban-ward migration of rural dwellers for economic purposes. Urban areas are generally characterized by better income and employment opportunities compared to rural areas. Unlike most rural areas which are primarily dependent on agricultural activities for income and are generally characterized by low wages and poverty (Baloyi et al., 2021), urban areas have a diverse range of employment opportunities and generally have higher minimum wages (Mlambo, 2018). Therefore, working in urban areas generally increases the likelihood of earning more income than working in rural areas. Hence, the migration of rural residents to urban areas can also be understood as the reflection of the desire of rural residents to enhance their economic situation. In this case, the higher income levels in the urban areas act as an attractive factor for rural populations. This implies that wage disparities, in the labour market, between the urban and the rural areas motivate rural-urban migration (Harris and Todaro, 1970 cited in Farrell, 2018; FAO IFAD IOM WFP, 2018).

This confirms that both capital market imperfections and the lack of income diversification opportunities in rural areas encourage rural dwellers to take advantage of the economic opportunities concentrated in urban areas. Melo and Ames (2016, cited in Mlambo, 2018), also subscribe to this statement by noting that rural-urban migration is often influenced by the prevalence of better wages and working conditions in urban areas. Migrants relocate from labour-abundant societies with low wages, rural

areas to labour-scarce urban areas with higher wages. Rural youth tend to be vulnerable to unemployment and poor rural incomes, these spur migration to the urban areas. This conforms to the Harris-Todaro model which notes that rural-urban migration is often a response to economic factors and wage differentials between rural and urban areas. This perspective on migration studies views migrants as people who make rational migratory decisions influenced by calculations of the costs and benefits associated with migration.

Gauteng is the largest source and destination of internal migration in South Africa (Rogan et al., 2008), including rural-urban migration. Kok and Collinson (2006) in their study found that people from northern KwaZulu-Natal migrate to Gauteng motivated by wage differentials between the rural northern KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. This also applies to other rural provinces such as Limpopo and the Eastern Cape, where the majority of people migrate to better-developed provinces for economic purposes (Kok & Collinson, 2006). Thus, Baloyi et al., (2021) conclude that in South Africa, a clear interconnectedness exists between rural-urban migration, rural poverty, and prevailing economic conditions.

#### **3.1.4.2 Structural inequalities**

Rural areas generally suffer more than urban areas, especially in developing countries. In South Africa, there is a wide gap of inequality between the rich and the poor, and between rural and urban areas (Todes & Turok, 2018). Ajaero and Onokala (2013) assert that rural-urban migration occurs in response to rural-urban inequality in terms of wealth and better livelihood opportunities. Mlambo (2018) argues that in South Africa, rural-urban migration is a consequence of economic disequilibrium. This implies that inequality and economic disparity within South Africa, such as poverty, and economic challenges lead to rural-urban migration. The South African rural-urban migration trend is better clarified by looking into the historical and political aspects in the urban and rural areas. For instance, Njwambe et al., (2019) and Ginsburg et al., (2021) relate the South African trends of circular rural-urban migration to the colonial and apartheid era.

The colonial discriminatory system was largely in favour of the development of urban areas (Okhankhuele & Opafunso, 2013). Todes and Turok (2018) posit that this system ensured that some parts of the country were deliberately excluded from

development. This developmental bias in terms of development has been viewed as a consequence of the concentration of wealth resources, services and economic activities in the urban areas and the abandonment of rural areas (Ajaero & Onokala, 2013). The colonial and apartheid systems restricted the mobility of black South Africans and denied them permanent access to the more economically developed urban areas. Colonial laws such as the 1937 Native (Urban) Act were aimed at controlling the movement of blacks within South Africa and denying them access to areas that were occupied by the minority Whites, such as the urban areas and other areas that were characterised by economic opportunities (private farms) (Baloyi et al., 2021). The residential segregation policies of the apartheid government formed racially separated locations with unequal access to resources and amenities (Todes & Turok, 2018). Furthermore, these systems centred better living opportunities such as employment, public amenities, educational facilities, and infrastructure in the urban areas, while little focus was given to rural areas, consequently making these areas poor and underdeveloped. Black African areas were used as reserves for cheap labour. Consequently, labour migrants, especially males oscillated between urban and rural areas for economic purposes (Ginsburg et al., 2021).

South African rural areas are less significant in terms of basic amenities such as educational facilities, clean water, and sanitation. They are currently characterised by poor health and educational facilities, and limited access to job opportunities (Baloyi et al., 2021). On the contrary, urban centres are perceived to offer a diverse range of socio-economic opportunities and improved quality of life. Rural-urban migration is evidence that opportunities and public amenities are largely concentrated in urban areas, thus, is a response to inadequate socio-economic facilities in rural areas, such as educational opportunities, health care and transportation systems among others (Okhankhuele & Opafunso, 2013). Rural residents often migrate to urban centres driven by the desire to access better livelihood opportunities and take advantage of urban benefits.

#### **3.1.4.3 Education as a driver of rural-urban migration**

Gregson (2020), notes that education is both a cause and a consequence of migration. According to Ginsburg et al., (2016a), education is one of the major determinants of internal migration, including rural-urban migration. In rural areas, school attendance is usually higher in the early grades and eventually declines due to the absence of close

by schools that offer higher education (Zago, 2016). Furthermore, the lack of transport and proper infrastructure also acts against educational attainment in many rural areas. These can be understood as the causal factors for the low literacy rates and high rates of school dropouts in rural areas. Consequently, a low proportion of the rural population is educated, and rural youth tend to have less secondary education (Mutandwa et al., 2011).

The quality of education in most rural areas is inferior compared to that offered in urban areas (Njwambe et al., 2019). The persistent scarcity of good quality schools in rural areas acts as a strong incentive to migrate to urban areas seeking better educational opportunities. Hence, educational attainment is considered one of the key influencers of rural-urban migration (Adamtey et al., 2015). However, Browne (2017), postulates that education is neither a driver nor a pull factor of migration. According to this perspective, education is understood to act as a secondary driver, except for young people who are more likely to cite education as the primary driver of their migration because they desire to access better schools and universities in urban areas. In support of this, Mutandwa et al., (2011), further note that vast literature concerned with rural-urban migration in developing countries found that education influences the migration decisions of rural youths. Okhankhuele and Opafunso (2013), in their study also noted that student migration is an existing phenomenon especially when the youth migrate to access universities and other educational facilities that are usually absent in rural areas.

People who engage in rural-urban migration usually associate it with the prospect of getting decent, white-collar jobs (Browne, 2017) and accessing better economic gains as a result of being educated. This highlights the close relationship between education and economic prospects. This further explains why children's education is often viewed as a family investment for the future. Higher levels of education generally increase the rural individuals' likelihood to engage in migration to urban areas. In Kenyan rural areas, educated females demonstrate a higher likelihood to migrate than educated males. Similarly in a study by Deng and Law (2020), women with secondary and tertiary level education were more likely to engage in rural-urban migration.

Browne (2017), argues that higher education is more likely to influence migration in low-economic contexts, including rural areas, due to factors such as greater

aspirations for higher financial resources, and limited job opportunities in the communities of origin. This is particularly true for countries with highly selective and formal labour markets which require higher levels of education and skills. In this instance, rural migrants are positively selected based on their levels of education, and those with higher levels of education are more likely to migrate to urban areas (Browne, 2017). In some instances, however, higher levels of education disincentivize migration because of the availability of formal employment in rural areas. It is for this purpose that some people (doctors, nurses, and teachers) remain in rural areas occupying formal jobs that offer similar economic benefits to those in urban areas.

Ginsburg et al. (2016), found that the labour market in many countries located in sub-Saharan Africa comprises both the formal and informal sectors, and thus attracts both skilled and unskilled labour. Rural migrants tend to favour the informal sector because it requires a lower level of skills and education. This explains the negative correlation between education attainment and migration, especially in countries with less selective labour markets such as South Africa. The South African labour market offers vast informal employment opportunities in the mining and domestic sectors. Therefore, South African rural populations (skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled) relocate to urban areas to seek improved living conditions (Baloyi et al., 2021).

#### **3.1.4.4. Environmental factors**

IOM (2020) opines that natural disasters and environmental change have always been among the major factors influencing population mobility. This confirms that environmental migration is an existing phenomenon and is often perceived as involuntary migration. Environmental and climate change are often associated with human displacement, vulnerability and forced migration. According to IDMC (2019 cited in Acheing et al., 2020), in sub-Saharan Africa natural disasters led to the displacement and forced migration of roughly 2.6 million people in 2018. Previous studies concerned with the environment-migration nexus such as Koubi et al., (2016) and Freeman (2017), have provided evidence that environmental changes play a significant role in influencing the migration of people, especially those from rural areas. Crush et al., (2005) also linked environmental factors with accelerated urbanisation rates.

Most studies concerned with the environmental-migration nexus tend to focus on rural populations who are more vulnerable to climate change and environmental issues. This population group includes those involved in agriculture such as small-scale farmers, livestock herders and subsistence farming households. Recent studies have focused on the impact of climate change and the rise in instability and conflicts in Africa on rural-urban migration (Selod & Shilpi, 2021). Rural households in sub-Saharan Africa are largely dependent on agriculture for subsistence, therefore, environmental events such as droughts and floods can lead to aggravated poverty and food insecurity (Mercandalli et al., 2019). Alterations in temperature and rainfall due to climate change affect agricultural production and reduce agricultural incomes and rural wages. McLeman and Hunter (2010, cited in Lyu et al., 2019), further link the trends of rural-urban migration in Sub-Saharan Africa to climate variability.

It can, therefore, be concluded that rural residents are more vulnerable to environmental challenges because of the more direct impacts on agriculture. Furthermore, the seasonal nature of the environment and other climatic factors impact the processes of agriculture such as production, income, and employment. Detrimental impacts on agricultural production such as reduced production and low agricultural wages, therefore, pose challenges to the livelihoods of rural populations. The vulnerability of these rural residents to environmental events is further worsened by the persisting high rates of poverty in the rural areas in sub-Saharan Africa (FAO IFAD IOM WFP, 2018). In the face of such adversities, rural residents migrate to urban areas, often seeking better livelihoods and improved standards of living. Rural-urban migration is also used as a significant insurance strategy against risks such as environmental shocks, and a means to diversify household income. Koubi et al., (2016), state that individuals tend to migrate to environmentally attractive destinations. The availability of environmental resources (rainfall, moderate temperatures, better yields) in a destination makes it more attractive (Freeman, 2017; Henry et al., 2003 cited in Borderon et al., 2019).

It has been noted that favourable environmental conditions also influence the movement of people (Borderon et al., 2019). However, focus on the influence of favourable environmental conditions on migration patterns is usually neglected as the majority of the migration-environment nexus literature is concerned with the influence of detrimental environmental conditions on migration patterns. Mercandalli et al.,

(2019), accentuate that the relationship between rural migration and environmental factors is complex. It is, therefore, noteworthy that environmental drivers to migration impact differently the livelihoods and well-being of population subgroups. These factors either encourage or hinder migration. Hence the diverse responses of population subgroups to various environmental events. Generally, people who are directly dependent on natural resources for livelihoods, such as rural dwellers, are the most sensitive to the environmental drivers of migration and are therefore more likely to adopt migration as an adaptive strategy (Koubi et al., 2016b). A study by Land and Hummel (2013 cited in Koubi et al., 2016b) demonstrates that people who are dependent on other economic activities for livelihood are less vulnerable to environmental drivers influencing migration because they have more resources to support their livelihoods.

Migrant decisions are further influenced by their experiences, behaviours, and perceptions. The diverse individual perceptions of different environmental events (sudden and gradual) influence migration decisions in varied ways (Koubi et al., 2016a). These perceptions of environmental events are informed by the individual's ability to cope with environmental change. This emphasizes that though environmental factors influence migration, they are not significant factors in causing population movement. Hence the significance of broad recognition of the economic, political, and social factors that may intersect with environmental factors and influence migration decisions (Freeman, 2017). Selod and Shilpi (2021) subscribe to this postulation by noting that the extent to which migration drivers influence an individual's decision is dependent on diverse factors. For instance, individual decisions are also influenced by income, gender, skills, and age groups (Achieng et al., 2020).

#### **3.1.4.5. Gender disparities**

According to Crush et al., (2005), the migration patterns in Southern Africa are profoundly gendered primarily due to the colonial system which discouraged the migration of females and prioritized male migration. This explains the male-dominated internal and cross-border migration patterns in the Southern African region (Crush et al., 2005). Achieng et al., (2020), note that from the late nineteenth century to the 1950s gender-biased policies were in existence that were committed to keeping women in rural areas. Policies restricting urban residency and land ownership largely discouraged the migration of females. The migration of females was further

suppressed by marital and domestic duties. As a result, the engagement of females in migration was often perceived as mere accompanying of a spouse and a consequence of male migration (Kanayo et al., 2019), or driven by family duties such as caring for a family relative.

However, despite the restrictions to mobility, women have migrated independently to and within South Africa since the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, predominantly to the Witwatersrand for economic purposes in the gold mining-driven economy. Most of these women originated from rural areas in South Africa, and peripheral states such as Swaziland. After the abolishment of apartheid, the migration trends in South Africa continued to be male-dominated, mainly because the search for labour was largely male-oriented (Popoola et al., 2021). The post-apartheid era has, however, seen a significant increase in the migration of females (Njwambe et al., 2019), and recent migration patterns have been increasingly feminized as a result of the increasing participation of women in the labour force (Camlin et al., 2014).

Motivations for this migration pattern are wide-ranging including marriage and family reunion, political instability, economic purposes, and gender inequalities (Popoola et al., 2021). According to FAO IFAD IOM WFP (2018), females also engage in rural-urban migration to escape gender-biased discrimination/practices such as female genital mutilation, early marriage, and gender-based violence. The disadvantaged position of women in traditional rural areas, such as constraints in accessing land, resources and opportunities encourage women to seek better opportunities in the urban areas. The absence of men in rural areas also causes the migration of working-age women from rural to urban areas. Camlin et al., (2014) cited a study by Collison et al., (2009) which found that the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century witnessed increased participation of women in migration as a livelihood strategy, especially those from poor households. Single, educated, and childless women are more likely to engage in migration. The migration of women is usually short-term and short-distance, mostly to destinations such as other rural areas, towns and peri-urban areas that are closer to their place of origin and where they keep ties (Camlin et al., 2014). Males tend to engage in long-distance migration and outnumber women in both inter-provincial and international migration. However, women and men demonstrate similar levels of engagement in localized internal migration, including rural-urban migration. This

highlights that gender influences the destination of migrants, and the duration of their migration journey.

#### **3.1.4.6. Political factors**

Several political issues spur population mobility, such as political instability, violent conflicts, and war. Such political conditions (wars, conflicts, government oppression), are major factors causing rural-urban migration in developing countries. Violent conflicts and political instability act as drivers of rural-urban migration, especially in contexts where urban areas promise safer environments than rural areas. Afu (2019) posits that insurgent groups are not a foreign phenomenon in some parts of Africa. According to Adekola (2016), rural-urban migration is the most dominant trend of internal migration in Nigeria, and further links recent trends of internal migration to the insurgence of Boko Haram. In Nigeria, the violent activities of Boko Haram led to the influx of rural migrants from Southern Borno and North Adamawa states to urban areas such as the city of Yola (Donsanda, 2016). Initially, this insurgent Islamist group which is believed to have a political and religious undertone aimed its attacks at security. These attacks eventually escalated and targeted citizens, mostly in their homes or public spaces such as shopping malls, and places of worship among others. The violent activities of Boko Haram included shootings, abductions, suicide bombings and burning of property (Ekwueme & Obayi, 2012 cited in Afu, 2019).

North Cameroon also suffered from the violent activities of Boko Haram. Boko Haram targeted rural villages in Cameroon after the President of Cameroon declared war on Boko Haram at the security summit in France, in 2014 (Afu, 2019). Many people from rural areas were forced to flee from their homes and seek refuge in safer and more peaceful destinations. Migration in response to conflict and violence is broadly considered forced migration. The violent activities of Boko Haram led to the displacement of many people in Africa, including Nigeria (Adekola, 2016), and Cameroon (Afu, 2019). In Cameroon, almost 200 000 people were displaced, including youth. Human displacement increases people's exposure to poverty, danger, and vulnerabilities. According to Donsanda (2016), rural areas were most affected by the insurgency of Boko Haram due to the lack of security forces in the rural areas. The lack of social protection such as police stations in rural areas encourages migration to safer urban spaces that have access to better social services (FAO IFAD IOM WFP,

2018). However, migration responses to violence tend to vary depending on the level of violence, especially because migration can be expensive when violence is intense.

#### **3.1.4.7. Social networks**

Non-economic causes of migration include factors such as household demographic characteristics, social norms, levels of satisfaction and social networks (Kok et al., 2003 cited in Rogan et al., 2008). The decision to migrate is largely influenced by the extent of their connectedness to communities at the origin and destination areas (Blumenstock et al., 2019, Blumenstock & Tan, 2016). The study by Blumenstock et al., (2019) demonstrates that individuals are more likely to migrate to destinations with larger networks. A study by Popoola et al., (2021), reaffirms that existing migrant networks influence the decisions of prospective migrants as people tend to migrate to destinations where they can rely on people they know. The existence of a social migrant network at the destination influences migration and functions to encourage, discourage, facilitate, and channel the migration of new migrants (Glederblom & Adams, 2006 cited in Rogan et al., 2008). These social networks are even more important for poor migrants.

Oluwafunmiso (2011), found that in Nigeria, rural-urban migrants chose destinations influenced by the existence of social networks. In rural areas, social networks, and kinship, especially for urban destinations, provide information and reduce risks associated with migration by providing support to new migrants (Comola & Mendola, 2015 cited in Blumenstock et al., 2018; FAO IFAD IOM WFP, 2018). Migrant networks also serve to reduce the costs associated with migration by making information and other resources accessible to potential migrants (Nshimbi et al., 2021). Social networks generally facilitate the integration of new migrants in the host destination. As a result, De Haan and Raqub (2010), note that migrants in a particular destination usually originate from specific origin areas.

Another distinct mechanism provided by social networks coincides with the new economics of migration theory. This theory considers the household as an important influence on migration. It assumes that decisions to migrate are usually taken by a household rather than by an individual. Households decide to send abroad one member of the family to diversify income and minimize risks. Banda (2018), states that the individual chosen by a household to migrate eventually enables the migration of

other family members. This maximizes the strength of social networks and allows for further migration of individuals in the origin community, and the flow of resources into the origin community which essentially impacts positively the origin community. First-generation rural-urban migrants tend to keep strong ties with rural communities. These ties gradually weaken with the following generation of migrants and eventually detach (Crush et al., 2005).

### **3.2. The socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration on rural areas**

In South Africa, rural-urban migration poses great challenges for both rural and urban areas (Mlambo, 2018). This study, therefore, analyses the impacts of rural-urban migration on migrant-sending rural areas. Thus, this section focuses on the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration on migrant-sending rural areas in terms of education, poverty, and agricultural production and the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on these.

#### **3.2.1. The Impacts of rural-urban migration on poverty**

The impacts of rural-urban migration usually manifest in two ways. First, rural migrants in the urban areas send remittances to their families in rural areas to support their livelihoods. Migration, including rural-urban migration, allows migrants to make economic gains and access other resources, such as money, that they can remit back to their families in their place of origin (Kanayo et al., 2019). Most rural households depend solely on agriculture for survival. Income from small-scale farming is generally low, thus making rural households dependent on migrant remittances to be able to support their livelihoods (Ajaero & Onokala, 2013). The term remittances broadly refer to the financial or in-kind transfers sent by migrants to families or community of origin (Moyo & Nicolau, 2016). Rural low-income households are the main beneficiaries of remittances, especially in developing countries. Approximately a quarter of African rural incomes are sourced from migrant remittances (De Haan & Yaqub, 2010). Remittances insure against unexpected costs, provide financial stability to families, and enable investment in the education of children, businesses, property and other assets, as well as support access to health care (Nshimbi & Moyo, 2017).

A recent study by Ebadi et al., (2020 cited in Onyango et al., (2021) found evidence that remittances from urban-based migrants are positively correlated with food security in rural areas. A study by Popoola and Akande (2016, cited in Popoola et al., 2021)

found that rural-urban migration impacts food production, household income and remittance. Urban-based rural migrants send remittances in the form of money or food to their families left behind, and these remittances provide for the needs of rural households. Remittances allow rural households to spend more on food and non-food expenses. This has significant positive impacts on food security, and access to health care and education (Nshimbi & Moyo, 2017). In-kind remittances (food, cars), play a significant role in enhancing the standards of living of the receiving households. Hence the view that migrant remittances provide significant support to rural households and communities and contribute to poverty alleviation (Rocchi & Del Sette, 2016, Ginsburg et al., 2021).

A survey on the use of remittances in Southern Africa revealed that 82% of remittances-receiving households spend remittances on food, and 24% invest in agricultural activity (Crush & Caeser, 2009 cited in Onyango et al., 2021). This highlights the significant role of remittances in poverty reduction and food insecurity (Onyango et al., 2021). Ratha (2013), reaffirms that remittance-receiving households demonstrate higher incomes and are generally less likely to suffer extreme poverty, compared to those households without remittances. A study by Woolard and Klasen (2004) which was reviewed by (Wurku and Marangu, 2015) found that between 1993 and 1998, migrant remittances resulted in 10% of household poverty transitions in KwaZulu Natal. However, the major downfall of remittances is that they are not always sustainable, especially for migrants in the informal sector.

Rural-urban migrants also participate in many developmental projects in their rural communities, such as the construction of roads, and the award of educational scholarships to students in rural areas (Ajaero & Onokala, 2013). Furthermore, they note that remittances and these projects serve as indicators of the level of socio-economic development that can be associated with rural-urban migration. Rural-urban migration produces di-directional results on the livelihoods of migrants and rural communities (Oucho et al., 2014). Evidence from vast literature suggests that rural-urban migration can either alleviate or aggravate poverty, depending on the level of development of the place under consideration. Hence the findings on this nexus are not uniform, some findings suggest that in other areas rural-urban migration led to poverty alleviation. Yet, in some instances, it widens the income inequalities in rural areas (Lipton, 1980 cited in Mukhtar, 2018). The selectivity of migration may lead to

the enhancement of income disparities between rural households, thus increasing relative poverty in these communities (Lacroix, 2011). This highlights the complexity of the relationship between migration and poverty, also proving that more research is required to understand this nexus. This study is therefore committed to occupying the gap that exists in literature and providing answers to how rural-urban migration impacts poverty in the rural areas from which migrants originate.

### **3.2.2. Impacts of rural-urban migration on agricultural production**

The relationship between migration and agriculture is increasingly becoming an area of concern among researchers (Mukhtar et al., 2018). According to Negari and Mishra (2019), about 20% of the GDP in Sub-Saharan Africa is sourced from the agricultural sector, implying that this sector plays a crucial role in the economy. Many rural households are dependent on agriculture as the main livelihood strategy, hence growing rural out-migration rates remain a concern in most developing countries, including South Africa. Collinson et al., (2006 cited in Mbatha and Mofokeng, 2021) note that the decentralisation of industries was aimed at developing the rural economies by creating economic opportunities and reducing rural out-migration, which was resulting in the abandonment of the agricultural sector. Rural-urban migration has had significant implications on the transformation of the agricultural sector (Tacoli, 2002 cited in Negari & Mishra, 2019). McDowell and De Haan (1997, cited in Negari and Mishra (2019), note that the impacts of migration on agriculture depend on various factors such as the pattern of migration involved, the time spent on non-agricultural activities, assets, and farm-enhancing inputs, as well as opportunities that enable female participation in the agricultural sector. The impacts of rural-urban migration on the agricultural sector may manifest in various ways, which can be direct or indirect (De Brauw, 2017). However, it can be concluded that rural-urban migration poses negative impacts on agricultural production (De Brauw, 2017).

In developing countries, high rates of rural out-migration have negative implications on the productivity and development of rural agriculture (Mbatha & Mofokeng, 2021). This is because rural out-migration discourages surplus labour and creates a decline in rural agricultural produce and income. The rural agricultural sector loses most of its skilled and innovative labour force to the industrial sector through rural-urban migration, thereby, creating a decline in agricultural production and its contribution to household income, food security and poverty reduction (Kooiman et al., 2018). These

conform with the results from a study by Lyu et al., (2019) which demonstrated that in China, the agricultural sector lost labour to the non-agricultural sector, which further led to a decline in agricultural income and production. Moreover, Ma et al. (2019), found that rapid urbanization accounted for the annual loss of approximately 200 hectares of rural cultivated land in China.

Migration, including rural-urban migration, is primarily dominated by male, able-bodied youth. Negari and Mishra (2019), note that the migration of males from rural areas has had various consequences on agricultural production. The absence of young men in rural areas often leads to low agricultural returns, food insecurity and poverty. This trend of migration has also resulted in the feminisation of rural agriculture, as males often migrate to seek jobs in the urban areas leaving women and children behind. Rural male out-migration generally increases the workload of women in the agricultural sector (FAO IFAD IOM WFP, 2018). Thus, migration leads to the feminization of decision-making because women assume the role of deciding which crops to grow, and sell or investment-related decisions, which therefore influences the input and output in the agricultural sector (De Brauw, 2017).

Young people tend to neglect the agricultural sector because they do not perceive agricultural employment opportunities as decent work (Mbatha, 2019 cited in Mbatha and Mofokeng, 2021). This results in an empty nest when only the elderly, children and vulnerable people are left to maintain rural agriculture (Lyu et al., 2019). The rural population and labour force decline, thus limiting rural development and agricultural improvements (Ma et al., 2019) Furthermore, the inability of remittances to substitute for the lost labour prompts the migration of other rural residents, including females and children. However, it is important to note that migrant remittances can contribute to rural agricultural productivity when people use them to purchase agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilisers. A study by Rwelamira and Kristen (2003, cited in Mbatha and Mofokeng, 2021) revealed that through remittances, rural households can expand their small-scale agriculture and advance to commercial agriculture.

Remittance-receiving households invest in agriculture to a far less extent compared to food, education, and medical care. However, these households generally have better agricultural equipment compared to households without remittances such as tractors, and feed choppers among others. De Haan and Raqub (2010), reviewed a study by

Lakshmanasamy (1990), which provided evidence that in some instances rural-urban migration impacts positively agricultural production, especially through innovation and technology. Technology and innovation lead to the modernization of the rural agricultural sector and results in increased production. However, the extent to which rural-urban migration impacts agricultural production depends on various factors including educational levels, assets, social structures, and the seasonality of migration among others.

### **3.2.3. Impacts of rural-urban migration on education**

Several years after the achievement of democracy, education remains poor in South African rural areas in terms of quality and learner performance (Du Plessis, 2019). South Africa has high rates of primary and early secondary schooling enrollment, with the poor provinces enrolling large numbers of children in school (Hartnack, 2017). However, these poor provinces generally have under-sourced schools, large class sizes and poor educational resources. Furthermore, rural areas are believed to be challenged by the lack of professionals and qualified teachers. This can be linked to brain drain and teachers refusing to remain in the rural areas due to professional, social, and cultural issues or isolation. Educators are generally demotivated to remain in or relocate to rural areas, and they often do so because of opportunities such as promotional posts in rural schools (Du Plessis, 2019). Iderawumi and Abiodun (2018), also link the shortage of qualified teachers in rural areas to rural-urban migration and note that this trend of migration has detrimental impacts on education development in rural areas.

Central to this section is whether rural-urban migration contributes to the improvement and human development in the migrants' areas of origin. Schapiro (2009) suggests that migration poses both positive and negative possible outcomes concerning the education of non-migrant children in the source regions. Positive impacts are achieved when migration enables more expenditure on child education, thus resulting in improved educational attainment. Yang (2004, cited in Ratha and Shaw, 2007), argues that the impact of remittances on the education of the people in migrant-sending areas is manifested by three combinations. Firstly, improved household income, thus enabling households to better afford to finance education. Secondly, remittances may enhance incentives to educate children, especially when there is a higher probability of the child migrating to join the parent(s). Furthermore, Ferrone and Giannelli (2015),

claim that the migration of children increases their chances of accessing education. This result is not surprising since educational attainment drives rural-urban migration (Babi et al., 2017), and families may partake in migration to achieve better educational opportunities for their children. According to Bakewell and Bangiglio (2013, cited in Browne, 2017), the education of children is often perceived as a future family investment, as education is often considered a route out of poverty.

There is, therefore, a broad understanding and agreement that migration has significant positive implications on education (Adamtey et al., 2015). Migrant remittances contribute significantly to the education of migrant's children and lower the likelihood of children dropping out of school. Furthermore, Ratha and Shaw (2007), cite several studies that have provided evidence for the positive correlation between remittances and school attendance, such as Elabawdy and Roushdy (2010). Additionally, remittance-receiving households generally spend more on education than households without remittances. De Brauw (2017) reviewed a study by Yang (2008) which suggests that there is a positive correlation between education and higher wages, which affirms that migrant remittances enable more investments in the education of children.

The negative impacts are manifested when migration discourages educational attainment (Schapiro, 2009). Family conflicts arising from the absence of some household members, especially parents may alter the household structure and lead to more household responsibilities for children, and therefore result in less commitment to education (Ferrone & Giannelli, 2015). The increase in the number of migrants within the household is also believed to contribute negatively to the educational attainment of children (Townsend et al., 2002), due to increased household responsibilities and more demand for child labour to substitute the roles of migrants in households. For instance, Boucher et al., (2005 cited in Ratha and Shaw, 2007) found that parent migration to offer unskilled labour is likely to lead to more child responsibilities, child labour and a decline in school attendance or school performance.

### **3.2.4. The implications of COVID-19 on the socio-economic impacts of migration**

The devastating socioeconomic and political impacts of Covid-19 have been felt by many, if not all communities across the globe (Maple et al., 2021). Responses to the virus such as lockdowns have impacted greatly the economies of countries and amplified unemployment rates. Responses adopted by countries, such as mobility bans were largely felt by individuals working in the informal sector with limited or lacking job security. Migrants have been noted as the population group most vulnerable and exposed to the negative impacts of the pandemic. According to Benton et al., (2021), the pandemic worsened the socio-economic pressure on people who depend on mobility for survival (migrants).

Maple et al., (2021) found that extreme lockdowns, border closures and restrictions on movement due to Covid-19 have highlighted how essential mobility is for people. These responses to Covid-19 led to migrants being trapped in destinations with no means to return home, further exacerbating their vulnerability to challenges such as poverty, especially since Covid-19 resulted in job loss and unemployment. According to the NBS (2020c), in China, migrant workers' wages declined by approximately 6.7% in the first and second quarters of 2020 (Fan & Zhang, 2021). This had detrimental impacts on remittances, as a result, many remittance-receiving households in rural areas were exposed to poverty. Consequently, many rural remittance-receiving households became food insecure and fell into poverty during the lockdown. According to Rozelle et al. (2020), rural households had to reduce spending on food (meat, fruits, and vegetables), and switch to cheap and less nutritious foods. Restrictions on mobility also brought about challenges with the transportation of agricultural products to the markets. The inability of rural farmers to generate income from agricultural products due to lockdowns and other restrictions aimed at curbing the spread of Covid-19 increased their vulnerability to rural poverty (Huang, 2020).

South Africa confirmed the first Covid-19 case on the 5<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, and a month later the figures had risen to a staggering 1585 infected people (Mahaye, 2020). This led to the implementation of various strategies aimed at flattening the curve. These measures included mobility restrictions and school closures among others. According to UNESCO (2020, cited in Mahaye (2020), a total of 192 countries in the world implemented total school closures to curb the spread of the virus, which led to

increased dropouts. The announcement of the country-wide lockdown on the 26<sup>th</sup> of March 2020, led to approximately 14 million temporary drops out, and demotivated school attendance, especially in rural areas. Shepherd and Mohohlwane (2021), evidence that due to poverty and the stress induced by the virus on parents, 10% of adults reported that at least one child in their households did not enrol on a school in 2021. In May 2021, an estimated 650 000 to 750 000 children between the ages of 7-17 were not attending school (Shepherd & Mohohlwane, 2021). The virus further disrupted curriculum implementation (Mahaye, 2020), leading to poor performance and poor educational returns.

The inequality gap between urban and rural areas in terms of development and resources was also heightened. According to Du Plessis (2014, cited in Mahaye, 2020), many South African schools are in underdeveloped and less privileged rural areas. Urban schools were better equipped to cope with the virus, while rural schools lacked resources such as computers and the privilege of quality education. Private schools and better-privileged students had access to tablets and computers and were better able to cope with online learning. According to Statistics South Africa (2018), only 10,6% of South African households had internet access in their homes. This highlights the difficulty of online learning to cater for everyone. Furthermore, the closure of multiple facets of society, including schools, led to the cancellation of nutritional programmes in schools. This exposed rural learners to hunger and amplified their vulnerability to poverty, and food insecurity and significantly impacted school attendance and performance. Considering this review, this study assesses how the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted rural-urban migrants concerning poverty, agricultural production, and education in KwaNokweja.

### **3.3. Perceptions of rural-urban migration**

There are diverging perceptions regarding rural-urban migration. Migration is broadly understood as a prominent part of development (Cockx, 2018). In the past rural-urban migration has been understood as a factor that facilitates economic growth, industrialization, and urbanisation (Donsanda, 2016), which can be viewed as a sign of favourable development. This statement is further supported by Motlhale et al., (2019), who note that migration plays a significant role in the economic and social life of the world. This trend of migration has the potential to facilitate the socio-economic development of countries and can achieve sustainable development in the long run

(Tumwesigye et al., 2021). For this reason, some municipal authorities in South Africa understand migration as having positive impacts on the growth of cities and have devised strategies to attract qualified migrants to the metropolitan areas (Lawrence & Rogerson, 2019).

Rural residents also tend to associate rural-urban migration with economic benefits and better livelihoods. In these areas, rural-urban migration is often perceived as a key element of income diversification, especially when rural households migrate to urban areas to diversify income sources and reduce dependence on low agricultural incomes. Farmers and rural households also perceive rural-urban migration as risk insurance against the uncertainties associated with agriculture. These individuals, therefore, adopt rural-urban migration as an income diversification strategy against risks such as food insecurity and income uncertainty associated with fluctuations in agricultural production due to climate change (FAO IFAD IOM WFP, 2018). Afu (2019) found that rural youth associate migration to urban areas with access to better livelihood opportunities and skills other than those related to agriculture.

Additionally, in many rural communities, youth migration signifies success and generally leads to higher social positions after returning home (Ungruhe, 2010, cited in Afu, 2019). This is mainly because urban-based migrants generally receive better economic returns and send better remittances than their peers in rural areas. In this view, rural-urban migration allows individuals to take advantage of the concentration of economic conditions in the urban areas and improve their livelihoods. Thus, rural communities view rural-urban migration as a route out of poverty and a livelihood strategy for poor households in developing countries, especially in Africa (Cockx, 2018; Donsanda, 2016) because it enables them to transform their socio-economic livelihoods and cope with the adversities in the poor rural areas (Mutandwa et al., 2011). Others support rural-urban migration because they believe that it creates employment opportunities for the people who remain in the rural areas, thus reducing competition for resources (water and land) in the rural areas (FAO, 2016 cited in FAO IFAD IOM WFP, 2018).

In cases of political instability, wars, conflicts and environmental challenges, rural residents move to urban areas to seek refuge. In such instances, rural-urban migration is perceived as a coping strategy. In some countries, women and girls engage in rural-

urban migration to escape gender-specific discrimination in rural areas such as forced marriages and genital mutilation (FAO IFAD IOM WFP, 2018). Some people view rural-urban migration as a route to independent life (Atnafu et al., 2014). Individuals travel for various reasons, including to redesign their insight and acquire knowledge (Banda, 2018), and for adventure. These individuals perceive migration as an opportunity to experience different geographical spaces and gain insights into the world.

Some people, however, demonstrate a contradicting understanding towards rural-urban migration. For instance, most governments, especially those in developing countries frown upon this trend of migration because of its effects on both rural and urban areas. Rural-urban migration poses productivity challenges in both rural and urban areas (Arndt et al., 2018). Mlambo (2018), notes that though rural-urban migration has significant positive implications for urban development, the opposite is true for rural development. This trend of migration is believed to be the major factor acting against rural development. Dufhues et al., (2020), attest to this by noting that rural-urban migration may worsen the challenges of underdevelopment in rural areas. Ma et al., (2019) and Omodan et al., (2019) concur by noting that the migration of rural residents to urban areas hinders the development of rural areas. Rural areas are losing professional and skilled labour, as well as financial resources due to rural-urban migration (Dufhues et al., 2021). Rural-urban migration also accounts for the persisting rural poverty, poor quality infrastructure and child labour (Omodan et al., 2019). These detrimental impacts associated with rural-urban migration influence negative perceptions towards this trend of migration.

Sooryamoorthy and Mkhoba (2016), posit that migration strains the social and economic relationships among men, women, and families. They link the labour migration of black Africans from the rural areas to mines in the urban areas to the diminishing father roles and paternal absenteeism. During the apartheid era, men were recruited for labour in the mines, leaving behind their children and families in rural areas. The absence of men resulted in disrupted family life, increased female responsibilities and child labour. The migration of men is blamable for marital breakdowns (Sooryammorthy and Mkhoba, 2016), illegitimate children, extra-marital affairs, and the spreading of diseases such as HIV/AIDS. Migrants often find themselves in compromising situations such as sex work, and engagement with

multiple partners which makes them vulnerable to diseases such as HIV (Dahal et al., 2013 cited in Motlhale et al., 2019).

According to Camlin et al., (2015), in Southern Africa, HIV/AIDS spreads rapidly between urban areas and is transmitted from these areas to rural areas through migration. However, female migrants generally demonstrate higher chances of acquisition and transmission compared to male migrants and non-migrants. This can be explained by the vulnerable position of girls and women in prostitution and discrimination (Camlin et al., 2015). According to Camlin et al., (2015), HIV contributes to household instability and may result in the migration of other household members for various reasons. Crush et al., (2005) subscribe to this by noting that HIV/AIDs create new incentives for migration. HIV-related death may cascade caregiving roles and additional responsibilities to other family members, especially women, grandparents, and children. Some individuals thus discourage rural-urban migration due to its linkages with increased HIV risks, and other diseases such as tuberculosis.

It can thus be concluded that there are varied perceptions regarding rural-urban migration. Individual perceptions are shaped by lived experiences, circumstances and social environments in which people find themselves. It is in this context that this study attempts to understand the perceptions of the residents of KwaNokweja towards this trend of population movement.

### **3.4. Local responses to rural-urban migration**

Dufhues et al., (2021), posit that despite the advantages associated with free population movement, governments face challenges with implementing policies to regulate population mobility. The central aim of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) in Africa, including the SADC region, is to enable free movement and to afford other benefits of mobility to people within the continent to rectify the challenges associated with the colonial system such as borders and promote economic integration. However, rapid rural-urban migration and urbanization continue to be a major challenge, especially for developing countries, including African countries. Rural-urban migration is often accused of challenging both urban and rural areas. In response to these challenges, governments attempt to regulate rural-urban migration through the adoption of an intricate set of policies aimed at demotivating the urban ward flow of people from rural areas and encouraging them to remain in the rural areas

by limiting access to affordable housing in the urban areas and promoting development in the rural areas (Dufhues et al., 2021).

Some governments tend to approve laws and regulations that restrict population movement, such as the registration legislation in China (Osmonova, 2016 cited in Dufhues et al., 2021). According to Li (2010), the Chinese government implemented various policies aimed at discouraging rural-urban migration. The Hukou household registration system was implemented in the 1950s and classified the entire population of China as either rural or urban residents. This policy was specifically aimed at monitoring population movement and regulating rural-urban migration. However, after being confronted with various socio-economic challenges such as unemployment, poverty, and inequalities in terms of development, the Chinese government enacted policies in favour of rural development (Li, 2010). Atnafu et al., (2014), notes that in Ethiopia, rural-urban migration is regulated by a government land tenure policy that prohibits landowners from selling, exchanging, or mortgaging their land. This policy thus hinders rural residents from selling land and migrating to urban areas.

Other governments, such as those in developing countries, including Africa and Asia, encourage rural residents to remain in rural areas and attempt to attract urban residents to rural areas through policy interventions and regulations. These include rural development policies concerned with creating employment and generating income, improving, and developing rural infrastructure (Dufhues et al., 2021). The overall assumption is that rural development and improved livelihoods of rural residents will discourage the incentive for migrating to urban areas. Governments, particularly those in developing countries, including South Africa (Haskins et al., 2017), also attempt to retain skilled professionals (such as healthcare professionals) in rural areas, to facilitate rural development and attract investments. For instance, in rural Kazakhstan, public scholarship programmes were launched to retain qualified personnel in rural areas. These scholarships ensure that beneficiaries pursue professional careers that are in demand and commit participants to serve in rural areas for a minimum of 5 years (GovReKaz, 2018 cited in Dufhues et al., 2021).

At a national level, the African National Congress (ANC) government introduced policies aimed at tackling the development challenges and inequalities which were inherited from the apartheid government. One of these is the Reconstruction and

Development Programme (RDP) in 1994, which was aimed at rectifying the imbalances challenging South Africa and facilitating economic development (Bailey, 2017). The central focus of this programme was on addressing the major socio-economic challenges facing South Africa such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, and service provision backlogs, among others. The RDP impacted significantly improved access to basic services for the poor, such as clean water and housing. According to Maluleke et al. (2019), South Africa has achieved outstanding results in providing basic services to people since 1994, as a result, 85.4% of the population have access to electricity and 89.9% have access to piped water. Furthermore, 3.6 million RDP houses have been built since 1994, and many people benefitted from these, especially the poor and disadvantaged people in their former homelands.

However, the RDP programme received several critiques and was accused of having minimal results. Some of these critiques included housing defects, poor workmanship, misallocation of low-income housing, and poor locations of the housing, among others (Maluleke et al., 2019). The RDP housing programme has also been accused of reinforcing the spatial patterns of colonial and apartheid rule. This is because in most cases RDP houses were built on cheap land that was set aside by the apartheid government to build black townships (NSDF, 2019). These houses were built in the peripheries of urban areas, away from social and economic facilities such as schools, shopping malls and clinics. As a result, in 2015 about 3411 of almost 3 million RDP houses that were built since the implementation of the programme in 1994 were sold by beneficiaries to private owners. Moreover, the housing backlog has increased from 1.9 million in 1994 to 2.3 million due to the lack of proper allocation of houses, corruption, urbanisation and population growth (Maluleke et al., 2019).

Local municipalities were also faced with several backlogs in extending basic services to people, especially those in rural areas. The challenges faced by municipalities were further worsened by the dual authority in these areas. According to Nxumalo and Whittal (2013), the Municipal Demarcation Act (No. 27 of 1998), mandated the Municipal Demarcation Board to select locations for local government boundaries. This was aimed at dissolving the geographies of the apartheid legacy and redressing inequalities in public services. As a result, rural areas and traditional communal lands were split by municipal boundaries. This led to disputes between municipalities and

traditional authorities who assumed the responsibilities over land development and service delivery in these areas.

The complex duality in governance in these rural areas has affected rural areas in terms of service provision, conflicts over land, and land management (Nxumalo and Whittal, 2013), further hindering service delivery and worsening the backlogs challenging the rural areas. As a result, rural residents moved to urban areas to escape conflict and take advantage of the better conditions in the urban areas. Bailey (2017), thus, argues that this programme spurred migration to the urban areas as people from the rural areas moved to these areas to benefit from the programme. Migration to the cities aggravated service provision challenges and overcrowding in the urban areas, further swelling the waiting list for RDP houses (Bailey, 2017). Based on the reviewed literature, one can thus argue that while the RDP programme has had significant impacts on the major backlogs challenging South Africa, it has failed to sufficiently tackle the challenges faced by the poor, and further aggravated social problems such as rural-urban migration.

The Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy was published two years after the introduction of RDP (Naidoo & Maré, 2015). This strategy largely supported the goals set in the RDP but focused more on rebuilding and restructuring the economy of South Africa. GEAR was introduced as a means to reduce poverty and inequality through economic growth (Streak, 2004). Michie and Padayachee (1998, cited in Streak, 2004) argued that though the GEAR document mentioned very little about reducing inequalities, it was anticipated that employment creation and economic growth would result in reduced poverty and inequality. However, the growth that resulted from the strategy was not accompanied by job creation, and therefore failed to sufficiently contribute to the reduction of poverty and inequality.

Challenged with persisting inequalities, poverty, unemployment and rapid urbanisation, the South African government continued to develop and implement strategies and programmes aimed at tackling these challenges such as the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) which was introduced in 2009 to address poverty and food insecurity. The National Development Plan (NDP) was tabled in 2012 to promote economic growth and job creation (Naidoo & Maré, 2015). The NDP recognized the need to change the land planning system of South

Africa and set out to ensure sustainable land development. The NDP also recognized the role of the agricultural sector as a driver of poverty reduction, especially in rural areas and predicted that the agricultural industry has the potential to address unemployment through a successful land reform programme and growth of irrigated and land land-based reform (Mbanda & Ncube, 2021). It, therefore, mandates that rural economies receive support from agriculture, and where possible mining, agro-processing, fisheries, and tourism.

Following the NDP, the government introduced the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act (No. 16 of 2013) (SPLUMA) to facilitate land use, settlement planning and land-use management. Provincial governments and municipalities are usually responsible for implementing government programmes. The Municipal Systems Act No. 34 of 2000 mandates that all municipalities in South Africa develop their own Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) and subsequent Spatial Development Frameworks (SDFs) (ULM IDP, 2021/22). According to Section 20 of SPLUMA, the SDF is part of an IDP. An IDP is a five-year plan reviewed annually that municipalities devise to facilitate development at the local level. The SDF is a tool which facilitates growth and focuses on addressing the imbalances of the apartheid regime. This framework also ensures sustainable land development that is not harmful to environmentally sensitive areas such as productive agricultural land and protected areas. These government tools are set out to facilitate development at the provincial and local levels.

According to the IDP (2021/22) of Ubuhlebezwe municipality, agriculture is one of the major economic drivers and is among the major contributors to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of the municipality. Unemployment and poverty are among the key challenges facing the Ubuhlebezwe municipality, with most of the population living below the poverty line. Female-headed households are dominant within the municipality, including KwaNokweja because of male migration to urban areas. The municipal IDP (2021/22; 2022/23), provides that the municipality prioritizes gender equality in its development principles. Women empowerment is encouraged through economic opportunities for women in businesses such as street vendors, and hawkers, among others. This is anticipated to rectify the gender inequalities of the past and extend economic opportunities to women to tackle poverty and food insecurity.

The municipality has also made attempts to address high illiteracy rates through educational donations in the form of science kits and dictionaries to high schools.

Ubuhlebezwe municipality also has nutrition programmes aiming to tackle food insecurity, particularly among orphans and vulnerable children (ULM IDP, 2021/22). Some of the challenges faced by the municipality include the inability to retain skilled professionals and offer higher wages. These are often identified as drivers of rural-urban migration. In alignment with the 7 Goals of the KZN Provincial Growth and Development Strategies (PGDS), particularly job creation and human resource development, the municipality extends workplace skills programmes and staff bursaries (ULM IDP 2021/22). Unemployment and poverty are further addressed through EPWP. Housing backlogs in Ubuhlebezwe are demonstrated by substandard dwelling units, especially in the traditional authority and informal settlements. The municipality has several rural housing development projects aimed at addressing the housing service provision backlog within the municipality. Spatial development, however, remains a challenge due to private land ownership since the municipal jurisdiction is surrounded by white farms.

These are expected to promote economic development and align with the vision of the municipality to ensure good quality of life for all the people within the municipality. Furthermore, the strategies implemented by the municipality align with several governmental (national and provincial) strategies aimed at tackling the challenges faced by South Africa. The overall goal of these implementations is sustainable and equitable development in urban and rural areas. Rural development is specifically anticipated to disincentivize rural-urban migration, thus addressing challenges such as brain drain and poverty in rural areas. NGOs have played a significant role in promoting rural development, and have encouraged the government to increase budget allocations to the agricultural sector to assist farmers. The IDP (2021/22; 2022/23) of Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality reveals that NGOs such as the Lima Rural Development Foundation have played a significant role in supporting small farmers. The Lima Rural Development Foundation's Abalimi Phambili Farmer Support Programme was introduced in 2015. Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality adopted this programme in 2016, aiming at supporting small farmers from disadvantaged backgrounds and strengthening market linkages (farmers, service providers and markets).

Though not directly aimed at addressing rural-urban migration, the above-discussed strategies implemented by all spheres of government to address the various challenges facing South Africa and promote rural development may be linked to changes in the prevalence of this trend of population mobility. This study, therefore, attempts to discover the extent to which these development interventions have succeeded in influencing migratory behaviours in rural areas, as well as the frequency of rural-urban migration.

### **3.5. Chapter Summary**

The South African history of population mobility is shaped by the historical events that largely controlled the mobility of black Africans (Rogan et al., 2008). The post-apartheid era witnessed an influx of both international and internal migration as the previously oppressed took advantage of the freedom of mobility to improve their livelihoods. In many African countries, including South Africa, economic factors are usually cited as the primary drivers of migration. This chapter has, however, unpacked various other factors influencing the multifaced phenomenon. It has also explored the meanings and aspirations that individuals associate with rural-urban migration. Several years after the abolishment of apartheid, South Africa still suffers from the challenges of inequality and this is complicated by several backlogs on education, housing, and service delivery, among others (Mbanda & Ncube, 2021). The rates of poverty and unemployment remain high, especially in rural areas. As a result, the government continues to implement development strategies aimed at addressing the remnant challenges of the apartheid regime. Rural development is among the major priorities of national, provincial, and local governments, as it is anticipated to reduce poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity in previously marginalized areas.

## **CHAPTER 4: CONTEXTUAL SETTING AND METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY**

### **4.1. Introduction**

This chapter is divided into two sections, the first section discusses the contextual setting of the study area, KwaNokweja. Factors such as the location, topography, geology, climate, and socio-economic characteristics of the study area are discussed to describe the setting of the study area. The second section focuses on the methodology adopted in this study. This includes the research paradigm, research design, data collection methods, data analysis methods, and the relevant ethical considerations of the study.

### **4.2. Description of the study area**

The focus of this study is a rural area called KwaNokweja situated in Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality (ULM) (Figure 4.1). ULM is one of the five local municipalities under the Harry Gwala District Municipality. Among the four municipalities, Ubuhlebezwe has the highest unemployment rate of 25%. Unemployment is noted as the major contributor to poverty in the area. As a result, the municipality is challenged with youth and skilled professionals' out-migration due to the lack of economic opportunities, with movement mainly towards Ixopo. Ixopo is the main administrative and services centre in ULM and is identified as the primary node. According to Ubuhlebezwe IDP (2022/21), KwaNokweja is identified as a tertiary node.

The spatial coordinates of KwaNokweja are 30°09'12"S and 30°03'54" E. This area was chosen for its rural nature and its proximity to the main corridor (R56). KwaNokweja is located 7,5 km from the R56, which is the primary corridor of ULM R56. This corridor links to the N2, thus facilitating mobility, economic activities within the municipality, and economic development in KwaZulu Natal and the Eastern Cape. This route connects Ixopo to towns such as Kokstad, Matatiele, Pietermaritzburg, and Port Shepstone. The location of KwaNokweja, therefore, makes these urban centres better accessible to residents from KwaNokweja, than those from the other tertiary rural nodes in ULM. These characteristics were also considered when selecting this study area to assess the extent to which they contribute to migratory decisions in KwaNokweja.

## Study Area: KwaNokweja, KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

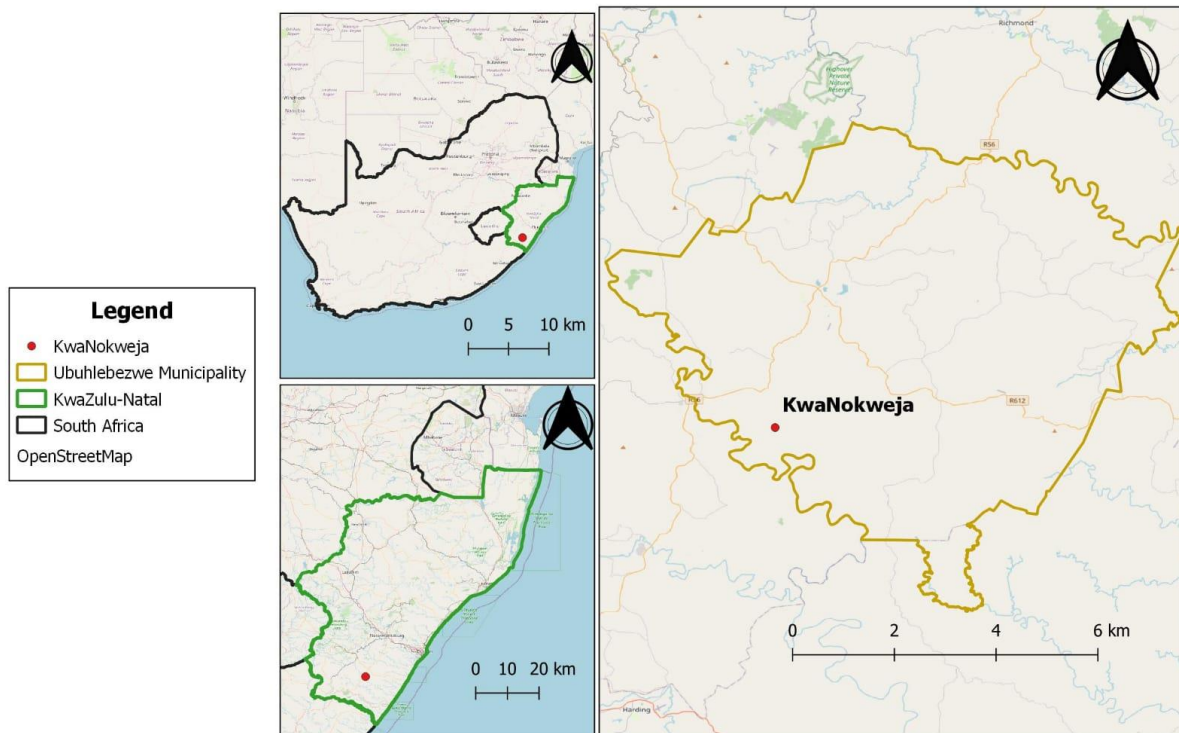


Figure 4.1: Study Area (Source: Author, June 2021)

### 4.2.1 Climate

ULM experiences a humid subtropical climate. The estimated mean annual rainfall received in the ULM range between 600mm to 850 mm, with generally more rainfall recorded in summer. The southern and eastern regions of the municipal area receive the highest annual rainfall, while the western region receives the lowest. This area is prone to frost in winter. The low temperature associated with this season has negative implications on agricultural development, such as a limited range of crops that can be grown and poor levels of production, shortened length of the growing season. There are also mists in spring and early summer (IDP 2021/22). Berg winds and sudden cold fronts in the area result in unpredictable weather conditions particularly in spring and summer, including floods (IDP 2022/23).

### 4.2.2 Topography

The area under ULM is characterised by a hilly topography with steep mountains and gently sloping river valleys. The eastern region of the municipality is made up of numerous river valleys. The steep slopes result in vulnerability to erosion and degradation, thus reducing agricultural production. The mountainous, and rugged

nature of the area limits accessibility and results in dispersed settlements. This also limits infrastructural development due to the high cost-of-service delivery in terms of construction and maintenance. The positive impacts associated with the topography of the area include serving as water catchment areas, creating natural corridors, and aesthetic qualities (IDP 2021/22; 2022/23).

#### **4.2.3 Geology**

ULM is made up of complex geological formations, with most of the soils categorised as fertile and good for agriculture. Tillite and Dolerite are underlying the central region of the municipality, Ecca Group Arenite and Shale underly the western portion, while the eastern portion is underlain by Natal Group Arenite and Gnesis. The soils around Ixopo have lower agricultural potential because of aluminium toxicity and Phosphorus fixation (IDP, 2022/23).

#### **4.2.4 Vegetation**

ULM has thirteen vegetation types. The Midlands Mist belt grassland is the most dominant type of vegetation, especially in the southwestern and northwestern portions of the municipality. Another vegetation type found in the northwestern region is the KwaZulu Natal Highland Thornveld. The Eastern Valley Bushveld and KwaZulu Natal Hinterland Thornveld vegetation types are found in the northern region of the municipality. The eastern region is mostly covered by Southern KwaZulu Natal Moist Grassland. Dry Coast Hinterland Grassland and Moist Coast Hinterland Grassland vegetation types are found in the south, southwestern, and eastern parts of the municipal area. The KwaZulu Natal Sandstone Sourveld covers the southwestern, southeastern, and eastern parts of ULM (IDP 2021/22; 2022/23). This is the main agricultural area catering for timber and sugarcane plantations. Other vegetation types found include the Eastern Mist belt Forests, Scarp Forests and Eastern Temperate Wetlands.

#### **4.2.5 Agricultural potential**

Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality is one of the main agricultural regions within the KZN province. This area is characterised by natural vegetation, agricultural plantations, and land belonging to the traditional authority. According to the municipal IDP (2022/23), 77% of the land is suitable for agriculture, as a result, agriculture is among the major economic drivers in ULM. However, many people within the area mainly engage in

small-scale farming for household consumption. The main crops produced in the area include beans, maize, potatoes, *amadumbe*, pumpkins, butternuts, carrots, and spinach among others.

#### **4.2.6 Socio-economic conditions**

Ubuhlebezwe Municipality is predominantly rural, with Ixopo as the main administrative and services centre. Most of the population in ULM resides in rural areas. According to Statistics South Africa Census (2011), KwaNokweja covers an area of 6.90 km<sup>2</sup> and has a total of 576 households. The female population is the most dominant, summing up to a total of 54%, while males contribute 46% to the total population of KwaNokweja (Stats SA, 2011). Male absenteeism in Ubuhlebezwe is linked to rural-urban migration. However, the IDP (2021/22) highlighted that males dominate in the labour sector despite being outnumbered by the overall female population. This can be linked to the disadvantaged position of women in many rural areas and the labour market. As a result, men in the area migrate to urban areas where economic activity is mainly concentrated, on employment.

The population of KwaNokweja is made up of children aged 0-14 years (38,26%). The working age group (15-64) constitutes 56.32%, while those ages 65 and above make up 5.43% of the overall population of KwaNokweja. According to the IDP (2022/23), the dependence ratio of people between ages below 15 and above 64 is 89.39%. This implies that most of the people in Ubuhlebezwe Municipality are unemployed and dependent on social grants, pensions, remittances and employed population. According to the IDP (2022/23), a great proportion of the people residing in rural areas are living under the poverty line because of unemployment and over-reliance on agriculture as the primary source of livelihood. The municipality is also challenged with low levels of education, with most of the population only having Grade 12. Low literacy rates in ULM result in low skills base and worsen rates of unemployment since most of the population have no qualifications.

#### **4.3 Research Methodology**

According to Al-Ababneh (2020), research methodology refers to the process or a plan of action that guides the selection and application of research methods and provides the rationale for the selection of these.

### **4.3.1 Research paradigm**

A research paradigm is defined as a set of beliefs that guide actions in research (Creswell, 2014). It represents varied views about the reality of the world. According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006, cited in Mukherji and Albon, 2018), it plays a significant role in influencing the way knowledge is studied and interpreted. A research paradigm sets the intent, motivation and what is expected of the research. Wahyuni (2012) describes a research paradigm as a set of essential assumptions about how the world is viewed, which act as a framework to guide the behaviour of a researcher. It is a worldview used to guide an investigation (Krauss, 2005).

Research paradigms address the philosophical dimensions of social sciences (Wahyuni, 2012). There are three philosophical dimensions of a research paradigm which are ontology, epistemology, and methodology. Ontology is concerned with how reality is perceived. Epistemology is concerned with the nature of knowledge and ways of learning about reality. This view is concerned with what constitutes acceptable knowledge and ways to make sure that this knowledge is adequate and legitimate. According to Al-Ababneh (2020), the theoretical perspectives of a study are informed by epistemology. These perspectives are responsible for determining the methodology to be followed by the study. Methodology is concerned with choosing the research methods employed by a study and provides a rationale for the selection of these research methods. Krauss (2005), states that epistemology is closely related to ontology and methodology, as ontology refers to the philosophy of reality.

This implies that a research paradigm has a significant role in influencing the research methodology. According to Creswell (2014), paradigms influence researchers to embrace a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods approach when conducting research. This study adopts pragmatism as a research paradigm. Pragmatism is not committed to a single system of philosophy or reality (Creswell, 2014). It employs different methodologies to sufficiently respond to what is being investigated. Pragmatism rejects the belief that facts about social reality can be discovered by employing a single scientific method. According to Creswell (2014), pragmatism is problem-centred and attempts to sufficiently understand the problem by using a variety of approaches, hence it is pluralistic. Pragmatists have the freedom to choose different methods, techniques, and procedures to respond to the research. The theoretical

paradigm about the nature of reality plays a significant role in understanding the design and methodology used to carry out the study (Krauss, 2005). Informed by pragmatism, this study adopted the mixed methodology research design.

#### **4.3.2 Research design**

Creswell (2014), defines research designs as procedures used when collecting, analysing, interpreting, and reporting data in research. These are used to provide guidance and direction for procedures in research (Creswell, 2014). Research designs have a significant role because they guide the methods and procedures undertaken when conducting research. This study utilised the mixed methods research design which is a research approach that employs both qualitative and quantitative data, integrating both forms of data and using various designs that may include different philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks (Creswell, 2014). A mixed methods design is more accurate than a single research approach, as the strengths of one approach compensate for the weaknesses of the other to sufficiently achieve the objectives of the research (Della Porta, 2014). This approach posits that the integration of both qualitative and quantitative research approaches provides a better understanding of a research problem. It rejects the idea of employing a single approach because it advances that all methods have a certain degree of bias and weakness. The mixed methods approach encourages the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research as this is likely to eliminate the bias and weakness of both research data.

There are three common methods within the mixed methods approach, namely: convergent parallel mixed methods, explanatory sequential mixed methods, and exploratory mixed methods. The convergent parallel mixed method is most suitable for this research as it involves collecting and merging qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously to provide a comprehensive understanding and analysis of the research problem (Schoonenboom & Johnson, 2017). For this study, the researcher conducted interviews and distributed questionnaires to the participants. The research data collected was analysed separately. Lastly, the results gathered from these two data sets were compared and interpreted to establish similarities in the findings and

formulate coherent meanings and conclusions. This was to establish whether the results convey one meaning or contradict each other.

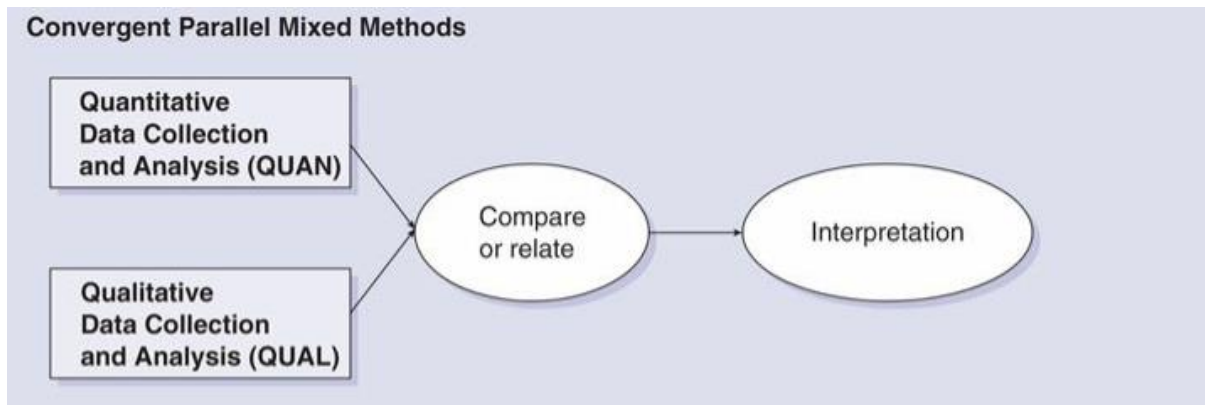


Figure 4.2: Convergent parallel mixed method (Source: Creswell, 2014).

## 4.4 Research methods

### 4.4.1 Population and Sampling

The population is a term used to refer to the totality of all entities involved in a research problem, such as people, events, and objects that relate to the problem being studied. Sampling refers to the process of drawing a small number of participants from the total population intended for the study (Creswell, 2014). Establishing a sample helps the researcher to obtain rich data that would be difficult to acquire when studying the whole population. In line with the convergent research paradigm, the following parts explain the sampling and data collection and analysis procedures for both qualitative and quantitative research approaches.

#### 4.4.1.1. Qualitative sampling

Choosing people to be included in the research is important. This process is referred to as sampling. Qualitative research follows the non-probability sampling theory in the determination of sample size (Palinkas et al., 2015). In line with the non-probability sampling theory, this study adopted the purposive sampling technique. According to Creswell and Clark (2011, cited in Palinkas et al., 2015), purposive sampling involves the selection of people who know and have experienced the central phenomenon that is being studied. Setia (2016, cited in Mukherji and Albon, 2018) states that purposive sampling is mostly used in qualitative studies, where participants can be selected based on the information, they can provide on specific subjects which contribute to the study. Purposive sampling is also referred to as selective, subjective, or judgemental sampling.

This study sampled a total of 4 participants (Table 4.1) from the population of KwaNokweja. This sample comprised one municipal official, one ward councillor and two traditional authorities. These participants were sampled to provide information about their experiences and observations regarding rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja. This was influenced by the objectives of the study which are aimed at assessing the impacts of rural-urban migration in the community, as well as the perceptions of the local people on rural-urban migration.

#### 4.4.1.2. Sample Size

According to Mukherji and Albon (2018), the sample is relatively small in qualitative studies, this is because the results of qualitative studies are often designed to apply to small groups. The total sample of this study is made up of 4 participants from KwaNokweja. The sample was selected based on their knowledge and experiences with rural-urban migration, especially concerning the causes and impacts of migration, which are crucial for this study.

Table 4.1: Qualitative research sample

<b>Participants</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Reason for selection</b>
Local ward councillor	1	Knowledge about the reasons and impacts of rural-urban migration on KwaNokweja.
Local municipal officer	1	Information on the impacts of rural-urban migration on KwaNokweja.
Traditional authority	2	Experiences and knowledge about the impacts of rural-urban migration on agricultural production and livelihoods.
Total	4	

(Source: Author, June 2021)

#### 4.4.1.3. Qualitative instrumentation and data collection

An interview is a data collection tool used when information is needed from participants (Mukherji & Albon, 2018). Mukherji and Albon (2018), state that the extent of the interview relationship is influenced by the research paradigm chosen. This study adopted semi-structured qualitative interviews with open-ended questions to collect information from participants. Open-ended questions are flexible and allow the

participants to share their knowledge and experiences better. In this type of interview, the researcher used specified topics to guide the interview and gather the information that is relevant to the study. Interview sessions were guided by a set of questions prepared by the researcher before the interview session. Qualitative documentation such as public documents from the municipality was also used for more information about the challenges with rural-urban migration, and the causal factors in ULM.

#### **4.4.1.4. Data Analysis**

This study adopted the thematic analysis method, and according to Nowell et al., (2017), this is the relevant qualitative data analysis approach. Nowell et al., (2017), argue that thematic analysis can be used in different epistemologies and research inquiries. Thematic analysis is used to analyse qualitative data, and identify, organise, and describe the common issues and themes that represent and summarize the views of all the participants (Buetow, 2010). Themes refer to groups of codes that recur and are similar or connected in a patterned way (Buetow, 2010). Recurrence can occur across or within persons, groups, events, or processes. This method of analysing data involves a thorough reading of the qualitative data. This is useful when trying to identify the common themes within the data, highlighting differences and generating unanticipated findings (Nowell et al., 2017). Thematic analysis involves six stages which are getting familiar with the data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining, and naming themes, and producing the report/manuscript (Kiger & Varpio, 2020)

In this study, stage one involved getting familiar with the data through replaying recordings and transcribing interviews, organising, and arranging data according to the sources of information. In the second stage, the researcher reviewed all the transcripts and took notes of the responses and comments that were relevant and contributed to the study. This made it easier to recognize the various viewpoints of participants and their experiences with rural-urban migration. It also assisted in identifying connections and comparable findings between the datasets of this study and existing literature. The initial codes were developed from the common responses of participants.

The third step of this process of analysis is concerned with the generation of themes. These themes represent the major findings of the overall study and range from 5-7 for

a research study (Creswell, 2014). The codes were combined and compared to determine how they relate to one another. The researcher then derived themes from these codes. These themes represented the major findings that respond to the objectives of the study. In stage four, the researcher reviewed the themes by re-reading and thoroughly checking if the coded data was assembled under the correct themes. This assisted in checking coherence and identifying whether or not each theme had adequate substantiation and reflect the whole dataset. Stage five involved defining and naming themes. In this stage, the researcher used the revised themes to interpret and formulate a narrative explanation of the themes identified in line with the objectives of the study. This assisted in highlighting the insights provided by this study, and how the information gathered was able to provide answers to the research questions. In stage six, the researcher reported and presented the findings using direct quotations from the participants. This was done to either support argument made by the study or present the views of the participants.

#### **4.4.1.5. Qualitative validity and reliability**

A methodological triangulation technique was used to facilitate the validation of the qualitative data that was collected. This involved comparing the data from the interviews with other sources of data including existing literature, municipal publications, researcher's observations, and data from the questionnaires. Similarities and differences between the data were analysed and clarified and compared to the findings of other authors to ensure that the findings are real and relatable to other areas with similar challenges. Creswell (2014) recommends that the bias of the researcher should be clarified when conducting research. The researcher ensured that the study was conducted fairly and free from bias. This helped in producing honest findings. The study considered all perspectives and information gathered, including contrasting themes which enhanced the reality and reflexivity of the study. Discussing contrary information enhanced the credibility of the findings, and helped in identifying emerging information (Creswell, 2014).

#### **4.4.2.1. Quantitative sampling**

Quantitative sampling follows probability sampling theory as explained in the following parts.

#### 4.4.2.2 Sample size

The sample size in quantitative research is calculated using numerical methods. According to Bartlett, Kotrlík and Higgins (2001), inappropriate or extreme sample sizes can affect the quality and accuracy of the study. This study utilised Cochran's (1977) formula to calculate the sample.

$$n_0 = \frac{z^2(p)(q)}{e^2}$$

Where  $z$  = the standard error associated with the chosen level of confidence.

This study used a 90% confidence level.

$p$  = the standard deviation/ estimate of variance.

The researcher used 0.5 as the value of variability.

Where  $q = 1 - p$

$e$  = the acceptable margin of error

The acceptable level of error for this study is 5%.

Therefore:

$$n_0 = \frac{(1,65)^2(0,5)(0,5)}{(0,05)^2}$$

$$= 272.25$$

$$= 272$$

Cochran's (1977) correction formula was used to calculate the final sample size.

$$n_1 = \frac{n_0}{1 + \left(\frac{n_0 - 1}{N}\right)}$$

Where  $N$  = the total population of the study area.

According to the Stats SA (2011), KwaNokweja has a total of 576 households.

Therefore:

$$n_1 = \frac{272}{1 + \left(\frac{272 - 1}{576}\right)}$$

= 184.97

=185 (participants)

#### **4.4.2.3. Quantitative instrumentation, sampling technique and data collection**

This study used structured questionnaires with a combination of open-ended and close-ended questions. These questionnaires comprised pre-coded questions to provide quantitative data. The questionnaires were designed to gather perceptions of the local community members on rural-urban migration. Permission was received to collect data from Grade 12 learners in Nokweja High School, in order to provide insights to the perspectives of the younger population of KwaNokweja towards rural-urban migration. The actual selection of respondents followed the simple random sampling technique. This involves randomly selecting people in the sample frame, this implies that each person has an equal chance of being selected for inclusion in the study (Creswell, 2014). Simple random sampling was appropriate for this study as it facilitated the unbiased collection of varied perceptions from different individuals in the sample frame. This enabled the data collected to be generalised to a much larger population. The researcher undertook a face-to-face administration of the questionnaires to the selected individuals in the study area and adhered to all Covid-19 protocols including the maintenance of social distancing, and the use of face masks and sanitizers.

#### **4.4.2.4. Data Analysis**

The data obtained from the questionnaires were entered into a computer using Statistical Software for Social Sciences (SPSS). SPSS is a versatile statistical package that enables various types of analyses and data transformation devised to help researchers summarize and interpret raw data (Arkkelin, 2014). Statistical procedures help to summarize data and manage information and illustrate the relationship between variables. Variables such as gender, age, and level of education were recorded in the software, followed by value labels that represent the characteristics and responses of the participants. This helped in reducing the large volume of raw data into homogeneous groups to obtain meaningful data. To present the results from the questionnaires the researcher processed the data using descriptive analysis in the form of tables and graphs. These tables and graphs are a

visual presentation of the number of participants and their responses to the questions. The information provided by these graphs was interpreted, examined, and compared with qualitative data to formulate meanings.

#### **4.4.2.5. Quantitative Validity and Reliability**

To ensure the validity of the findings and conclusions of this study, the researcher ensured that the primary data is sourced from the randomly selected participants in the study area. As recommended by Creswell (2014), the researcher triangulated the findings of the qualitative and the quantitative data and established commonalities between the data. This assisted in identifying emerging information from the data. The findings of this study were also compared and related to other existing studies with a similar research problem to determine whether other researchers and authors found similar challenges, impacts and answers to the research problem. This informed the researcher about the ability of the study to be generalized and applicable to similar research problems. The use of SPSS helped in ensuring that the data produced is correct and free from human errors, thus enhancing the validity of the study.

#### **4.5 Ethical considerations**

Ethics is a term used to refer to the values and morals that apply to certain cultures and groups (Weinberg & Schneider, 2007). According to Goodman and Carey (2004), ethical issues usually refer to problems of confidentiality, the scope of practice and competence, and functioning in the best interest of the participant. The ethical principles differ from one group to another, in social research it is important to consider the participants.

- a) Voluntary participation: no one was forced to participate in the conduction of this research. Participants engaged freely and willingly and had the freedom to withdraw at any point and time.
- b) Informed consent: Informed consent involving any individual participants is important (Hacker, 2013). Participants must be allowed to accept or reject the proposed research (Goodman & Carey, 2004). The participants of this study were fully informed and made aware of the purpose of the research.
- c) Do no harm: It is important to identify the risks that participants can potentially be exposed to (Hacker, 2013). According to Weinberg and Schneider (2007), participants should be protected; all dangers and risks

should be minimised. The participants were not subjected to any form of harm (physical or psychological) during and after their involvement in the research.

- d) **Anonymity:** In research, the identities of all participants should be held in strict confidence (Mukherji & Albon, 2018). The privacy and anonymity of participants should always be protected in social research (Della Porta, 2014). The privacy and dignity of participants in this research were respected, protected, and assured.

#### **4.6. Limitations of the study**

In the quantitative part of the study, the researcher only managed to administer the questionnaires to 172 instead of 185 participants. This means that the actual sample size was not reached. However, it must be stated that the response rate was 94% and it is assumed that the sample was sufficient to meet the objectives of the research. Another potential limitation was that there were more female respondents than males which suggests that the results were skewed toward female perspectives. Although this may be true, it should be noted that the study area has more women than men as explained in-depth in the preceding section and chapter 5. In addition, more men have migrated to urban areas. Thus, the fact that there were more women respondents is a finding which is in line with existing studies on migration that more men tend to migrate and leave women behind. This issue is critiqued in detail in the analysis part of this thesis. During data collection, some of the participants were less willing to engage with the researcher for a longer period for fear of contracting the Covid-19 virus, which may have potentially led to limited responses. It should be noted that although the research was done after the Covid-19 rules and regulations were lifted in South Africa in April 2022, some people in the study area were less free to interact. However, the researcher put on a mask and maintained a safe distance, and this was enough to put at ease the participants such that they fully responded to the questions.

#### **4.7 Chapter Summary**

This chapter discussed the physical qualities of the study area. Discussing these was mandatory for the study as it explained the reasons for, and the extent to which the pre-existing conditions in the municipality influence migratory behaviours and patterns

in the region. The other section of this chapter discussed the methodology adopted, and the ethical considerations of this study.

## **CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter discusses and interprets the findings of this study. To do so, it starts by describing the demographic characteristics of the respondents that participated in the study. This is then followed by the factors causing rural-urban migration, the impacts, and the perceptions of the people in KwaNokweja towards rural-urban migration, as well as the municipal responses to the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja.

### **5.2 Demographic characteristics**

The demographic characteristics of the participants discussed in this section relate to their age, gender, marital status, level of education, and the participants' employment status.

#### **5.2.1 Age**

The age distribution of the population of KwaNokweja is dominated by young people aged below 20, and the elderly aged 51 and above, which represent 30% and 27% of all participants respectively (Table 5.1). The dominance of young people aged below 20 was influenced by that the researcher also collected data from Grade 12 learners at Nokweja High School to understand their perspectives towards rural-urban migration. These population subgroups were followed by the population aged between 21-30, representing 20% of all participants. This population subgroup comprised individuals who had completed secondary education but were forced to remain in KwaNokweja due to the lack of higher education institutions and funds to further their studies, and unemployed individuals who lost their jobs and/or had to return to rural areas from urban areas as a result of COVID-19. However, 29 of these participants (85%) expressed that they had plans to migrate to urban areas, given the opportunity, within the next 5 years. A conclusion that can be drawn from these findings is that the population groups between ages 31-40 and 41-50 were the least represented in this study because some had migrated for employment and other livelihood opportunities, and some were at work during the time of data collection. This, therefore, provides evidence that the migration of young and able-bodied populations to urban areas leads to children, particularly those who still attending school and elders being left behind in rural areas. This is further reinforced by the elderly participants who noted that they

had no intentions to migrate to urban areas due to age and child-care-giving roles as a result of the migration of the parents of children for several reasons. These findings correspond with the postulation by Lyu et al., (2019), that the migration of the youth leads to an empty nest where only the elders, children, and vulnerable population including women and disabled people are left behind in the rural areas.

Table 5.1: Age characteristics of the research participants

Age group	Frequency	Per cent
Below 20	52	30
21-30	34	20
31-40	13	7
41-50	27	16
51 and above	46	27
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Author, September 2022)

### 5.2.2 Gender

In this study, there were more female participants than males (Table 5.2). These findings are supported by Ubuhlebezwe IDP (2022/23), which confirms that the female population is most dominant within the municipality. The dominance of women and female-headed households in KwaNokweja can be linked to the migration of men to nearby towns and cities (IDP 2021/22), for various socio-economic reasons including searching for better economic and livelihood opportunities. These findings can also be linked to persisting traditional gender roles where women assume household duties while men are providers and are thus expected to work to support their families. Patriarchy, especially in rural areas enforces gender roles in households, and women are, therefore, expected to assume domestic household duties while men migrate to urban areas for employment. Male absenteeism and the dominance of females in rural areas, including KwaNokweja can further be viewed because of the apartheid legacy which encouraged male labourers to the mines in the urban areas while discouraging the migration of females.

This resulted in gendered migration patterns in South Africa, with migration often characterised by young men who move to urban areas to work as migrant labourers in urban areas and farms. As a result, it was a custom to send working-age men to urban areas for employment opportunities (Black et al., 2006). This is further reinforced by Crush et al., (2005), who note that migration patterns in South Africa are

deeply rooted in colonial and apartheid systems which influenced the population distribution within the country. Notwithstanding, migration patterns are changing because women are also migrating from rural to urban areas for a variety of reasons ranging from economic to socio-cultural as well as political (see e.g FAO IFAD IOM WFP, 2018; Njwambe et al., 2019; Popoola et al., 2021). Some women are even migrating internationally (see e.g. Camlin et al., 2014). All this is progressively changing the gendered nature of migration.

Table 5.2 Gender characteristics of participants

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Per cent</b>
Male	71	41.3
Female	101	58.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Author, September 2022)

### 5.2.3 Marital status

In this study 170 of 172 participants revealed their marital status, and 2 participants did not wish to specify. As presented below (Table 5.3), 133 of these participants were single (61 males, 72 females) representing 79% of all respondents. The results of this study suggest that only 18% of the respondents were married, totalling 30 of 170 participants (3 males, 27 females). As noted in the preceding section, the gender proportion differs markedly between the female and male participants of this study, with significantly more females than males. Only 4 participants were divorced (2 males, 2 females), totalling 2%, and the remaining 3 males chose “other”, adding to 2% of the total 170 participants.

Table 5.3: Marital status of participants

Gender	Single	Married	Divorced	Other	Total
Male	61	3	2	3	69
Female	72	27	2	0	101
<b>Total</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>170</b>

(Source: Author, September 2022)

#### 5.2.4 Education levels of the participants

Results show that 3.5% of the participants in this study do not have formal education, followed by 7.6% with primary-level education (Table 5.4). Of all the participants, 139 (80.8%) responded that they had a secondary school level of education, whilst only 14 participants had tertiary level education. In KwaNokweja there is one secondary school, Nokweja High School, where most of the participants obtained their secondary-level education. However, the absence of higher education institutions has resulted in the majority of the population only having primary and secondary level education and no post-matric qualification. According to the IDP (2021/22), Ubhlebezwe Municipality is challenged with low levels of education with the majority of the population only having secondary-level education and no post-matric qualification. This has direct implications for the high rates of youth unemployment within the municipality. The absence of higher education institutions is considered a driver for migration, especially when people migrate to urban areas to access higher education institutions and a better-quality education. This understanding can be linked to the trend of rural-urban migration occurring within the municipality.

Table 5.4: Level of education of participants

Level of education	Frequency	Per cent
Primary	13	7.6
Secondary	139	80.8
Tertiary	14	8.1
Other	6	3.5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>100</b>

(Source: Author, September 2022)

#### 5.2.5 Employment status of participants

A total of 126 participants responded that they were unemployed, representing 73% of the sampled population (Figure 5.1). The frequency of unemployed people can be attributed to the high unemployment rates (32.9% in 2022) challenging South Africa, and the low levels of literacy in the Ubhlebezwe Municipality. According to Ubhlebezwe IDP (2021/22), among the major challenges faced by the municipality is the low literacy rates, and the inability of the population to occupy vacancies that require post-matric qualifications. As a result, most skilled professionals originate from

other places outside Ubuhlebezwe Municipality (IDP 2021/22, 2022/23), such as teachers, medical professionals, law enforcement officers, and municipal officials, among others. Most of the people from within the municipality are employed in the informal sector which does not require formal qualifications. These findings reinforce the statement by Baloyi et al., (2021), that rural municipalities are faced with challenges in retaining skills and filling vacancies due to limited skilled professionals in the rural areas.

Only 17% of the participants were employed, mainly as educators in the primary and secondary schools in and around KwaNokweja, and medical professionals and assistants in Nokweja Clinic. Some respondents were employed by the municipality as Expanded Public Works Programme (EPWP) workers on the road construction project. The low percentage of employed individuals in KwaNokweja can also be linked to the unwillingness of professionals to work in rural areas due to poor living conditions and lack of proper infrastructure. To further attest to this, Ubuhlebezwe IDP (2021/22) reported that the municipality is challenged with the large exodus of skilled professionals seeking better wages and better standards of living in the urban areas. This understanding resonates with the premise of the neoclassical perspective of migration studies (see Chapter 2, Section 3,1) that rural-urban migration is, in some cases stimulated by the wage differentials between rural and urban areas. According to the Harris and Todaro Model of migration (see Chapter 2, Section 3.1), rural-urban migration occurs due to wage differentials between these geographical spaces, and the expectation of better wages in the urban areas due to the perceived higher minimum wage in these areas (De Haas, 2007).

Self-employed participants made up only 5% of the participants (8 males) and were primarily employed in the taxi, and construction industries (Figure 5.1). None of the female respondents was self-employed, due to the limited access to economic opportunities and land resources for women in the area. This confirms comparable studies like that by Mulema and Damtew (2016, cited in Mussa, 2020) in Ethiopia in which the involvement of women in heavy agricultural duties with lots of physical work is culturally discouraged, and is traditionally understood as tasks suited for men. Cultural biases such as these, reinforce the disadvantaged positions of women in society in terms of access to resources such as land and hinder their access to empowerment and advancement opportunities (Mussa, 2020). Thus, posing adverse

impacts on their ability and potential to escape poverty and support their livelihoods. Hence the higher rates of vulnerability among female-headed households to poverty, and food insecurity, especially in rural areas. The least percentage of participants responded that they were retired (4%), due to age and ill health. This portion primarily comprised elder women who were either staying alone or with their grandchildren.

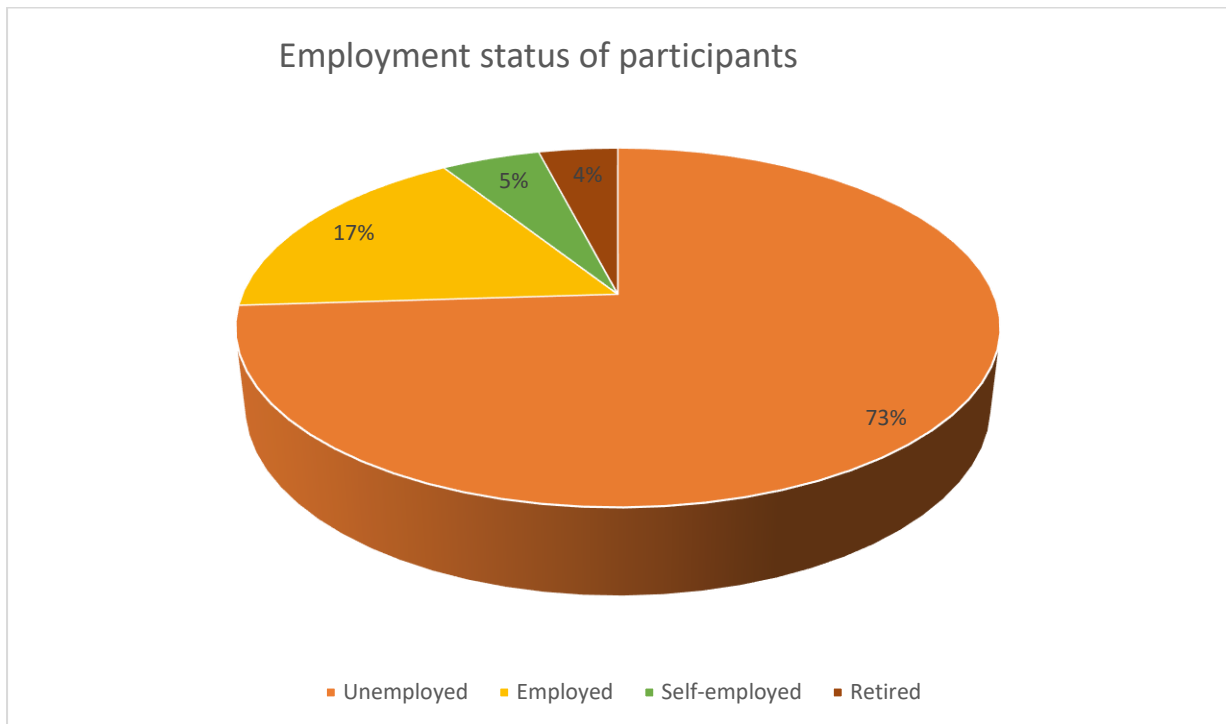


Figure 5.1. Employment status of participants (Source: Author, September 2022)

### 5.3 Causes of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja

A total of 141 participants had household members residing in urban areas. These participants responded that their household members migrated to urban areas for various reasons including employment, education, family, and improved livelihood opportunities, among others. The most frequent cause of migration was employment and was cited by 108 of all 141 (77%) participants with migrant family members. The findings of this study are supported by the FAO IFAD IOM WFP (2018), which concluded that the rural-urban migration trend is largely influenced by economic factors, especially in developing countries. It is not uncommon for people from poverty-rife rural areas to migrate to urban areas in anticipation and hope of securing employment and overcoming household financial constraints. Superior employment prospects in the urban areas attract large numbers of people from rural areas seeking economic advancements, especially young people who are generally more vulnerable

to unemployment. According to Mbatha and Roodt (2014 cited in Nyoni and Kollamparambi, 2022), migration to urban areas, is therefore assumed to increase the chances of getting employment, and result in higher economic gains.

A study by Ginsburg et al., (2022), noted that metropolitan areas in South Africa constantly experience an influx of individuals seeking employment and better economic prospects. A similar trend of population mobility is demonstrated by migrants from KwaNokweja who relocate to towns and cities in pursuit of better economic prospects and livelihood opportunities. This migration to urban areas is, however, not a new phenomenon in South Africa. According to the historical-structural school of thought, rural-urban migration is a persisting consequence of the past governance policies in South Africa which stimulated urban bias within the country. The colonial and apartheid government system created a wealth disequilibrium between urban and rural areas (Bakker et al., 2016).

As a result, urban areas were afforded better developmental advantages compared to rural areas and, therefore, became a haven of opportunities, and economic hubs due to the abundance of economic activities such as mining. This led to the development of urban areas at the expense of rural areas. This prejudice against the less developed rural areas triggered their dependence on the more developed urban areas. This explains why since the 19<sup>th</sup> century the urban areas and mining towns such as Johannesburg have attracted both internal and international migrants, particularly males, from countries in Sub-Saharan Africa including Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Swaziland, among others, who were recruited as migrant labourers (Chamunorwa & Mlambo, 2014).

The underdevelopment and poor economic performance of rural areas are therefore viewed as an enduring consequence of these governance systems which promoted prejudice against rural areas in terms of opportunities, including investment and infrastructure. Urban areas, therefore, are magnet destinations attracting people who are seeking improved economic gains, improved standards of living, and access to better livelihood opportunities. In the historical-structural view, rural-urban migration reflects the opportunities absent in rural areas, but available in urban areas such as employment. According to the dependency theory (see Chapter 2, Section 2.2), the inequality gap in terms of wealth and opportunities between these two geographical

areas compels poor rural communities to depend on urban areas for economic and livelihood opportunities. As a result, labour, and skills are transferred to urban areas which then experience economic growth and better development while poverty persists in the rural areas (Wallerstein, 1974). Urban areas, therefore, continue to be characterised by better wages, better living conditions, and vast economic opportunities, while the opposite stands true for rural counterparts challenged with limited economic opportunities, poverty, and low wages (Mlambo, 2018; Baloyi et al., 2021).

The migration of individuals from KwaNokweja for better economic prospects in the urban areas can also be viewed through the neoclassical perspective of migration (see Chapter 2, Section 3.1). This perspective of migration posits that migrants are individuals who are drawn to different destinations because of the availability of desirable livelihood opportunities such as employment, higher salaries, and improved living conditions in these destination areas. According to this school of thought, migrants are, therefore, people who make decisions to move from their places of origin to other destinations to improve their livelihoods via migration to better-developed destinations with vast livelihood opportunities, typically urban areas. However, it is imperative to note an important caveat that the proportion of economic migrants in KwaNokweja comprised individuals who migrated with promised employment, people seeking employment, and people anticipating higher-paying employment in urban areas. This aspect is evidence that people make migration decisions based on a set of goals and needs that they anticipate achieving through migration. These goals are, in this case, more achievable in urban areas. Therefore, the findings from this study align with the Value Expectancy theory of migration (Gordon, et al., 1983), which argues that migration is driven by a set of goals, aspirations, and expectations that individuals hope will be realized through migrating to other destinations. The values that individuals attach to their migratory behaviours are influenced by personal, and household characteristics. This aspect of the Value Expectancy model is evidenced by the participants in this study who noted that household members migrated to urban areas to provide for their families.

This study gathered that the need for better educational facilities also results in rural-urban migration. This was further confirmed by one of the traditional leaders of KwaNokweja, who noted that one of the major causes of rural-urban migration in the

area is the lack of higher education facilities (Interview with the Traditional leader, KwaNokweja, July 2022). A total of 35 of 141 (25%), of the respondents, noted that family members had migrated to urban areas for educational purposes. A case in point is that firstly, some students from KwaNokweja were attending school in towns such as Ixopo, while household members remained in the rural areas. Therefore, one respondent stated, “many children from here in KwaNokweja are sent to attend school in urban areas because parents believe that schools in the rural areas offer poor quality education. As a result, the school enrolment in rural areas is affected.” (Interview with the Chief, KwaNokweja, July 2022). These findings are like Njwambe et al., (2019), who established that the education offered in rural areas is often believed to be of a lower standard and inferior quality than in urban areas. As a result, some rural households favour the education offered in urban areas and send their children to attend school in nearby towns, rather than in the schools available in their rural areas.

Secondly, this study uncovered that 80.8% of the participants in this study had secondary-level education, whilst only 8.1% had tertiary-level education (Table 5.4). This was attributed to the lack of tertiary institutions nearby. In this study, some individuals were reported to have migrated to urban areas to access higher education facilities. Zago (2016) noted that, in rural areas, school attendance is usually higher in the early grades and eventually declines due to the lack of institutions that offer higher education. Education, therefore, incentivises migration for people seeking access to better education and educational facilities available in urban areas, especially youth. This resonates with Lee’s push and pulls model which identifies the absence of higher educational facilities as a push factor that compels individuals who seek educational attainment to move from rural areas (Lee, 1966). Conversely, the availability of these educational facilities in urban areas, therefore, attracts many people.

A total of 21 of 141 participants responded that their household members migrated for other reasons besides the ones provided on the questionnaire. When asked to specify, some participants revealed that the household members migrated due to poor infrastructure in the rural areas such as untarred roads, and lack of basic services, and some were imprisoned in urban areas. According to the ward councillor from KwaNokweja, the major factors perpetuating the movement of people from KwaNokweja to urban areas include the lack of proper infrastructures such as roads,

housing, and proper sanitation, among others (Interview with Ward Councillor, KwaNokweja, June 2022).

KwaNokweja is among the rural areas that have not received RDP houses and toilets. The service provision challenges facing the municipality are demonstrated by the backlogs in housing and proper sanitation, among others. Only 12% of households in the municipality have access to flush toilets connected to the sewage system, and these are predominantly in towns. Ubhlebezwe Municipality IDP (2021/22) noted that the piped water backlog in the municipality had 70834 people listed in 2016, and about 54% of the households are without clean or piped water. Only 12.4% of households had access to piped water, either within their dwellings, inside their household yards, or in community boreholes. Despite the availability of boreholes and taps in the community, the participants in this study responded that they sometimes go for 2 weeks – 2 months without water coming out of the taps. The water challenge faced by KwaNokweja is further worsened by the distance they had to walk to collect water with buckets from these communal taps (Figure 5.2).



Figure 5.2: Community members of KwaNokweja collecting water from the community water well. (Source: Author, July 2022).

These poor conditions in KwaNokweja present reasons for people who are not satisfied with their places of origin to migrate to destinations that will offer them the services they desire. These findings are amplified by Lee's (1966) Push and Pull theory of migration which identifies the lack of facilities, poor service delivery, and unemployment as push factors that encourage people to seek better conditions in other destinations, such as urban areas. According to this theory, migration occurs in

response to a set of negative and positive factors in an area that either compels people to migrate to other areas or encourages them to remain in their destination of origin (Mlambo, 2018). Lee's Push and Pull theory of migration further posits that the factors in the place of origin have more influence on migration decisions than the factors in the destination area. This suggests that people migrate mainly in response to their dissatisfaction with negative factors in their places of origin than to the positive factors they anticipate experiencing and /or achieving in the destination areas.

Family incentives were the least cited cause of migration in KwaNokweja and were cited by only 9 participants. These included family reasons such as marriage, family reunification, and family caregiving responsibilities. The infrequency of family-induced migration to urban areas is further reinforced by the dominance of females in KwaNokweja, whose migration is typically understood to be influenced by family, and kinship pressure such as the need to accompany a spouse. In the case of family-induced migration, many female participants in this study noted that they had migrated from their places of origin to KwaNokweja for marriage and caregiving responsibilities, and only their husbands migrated to urban areas. As discussed in the preceding parts, Figure 5.3 below summarises the causes of rural-urban migration in the study area.

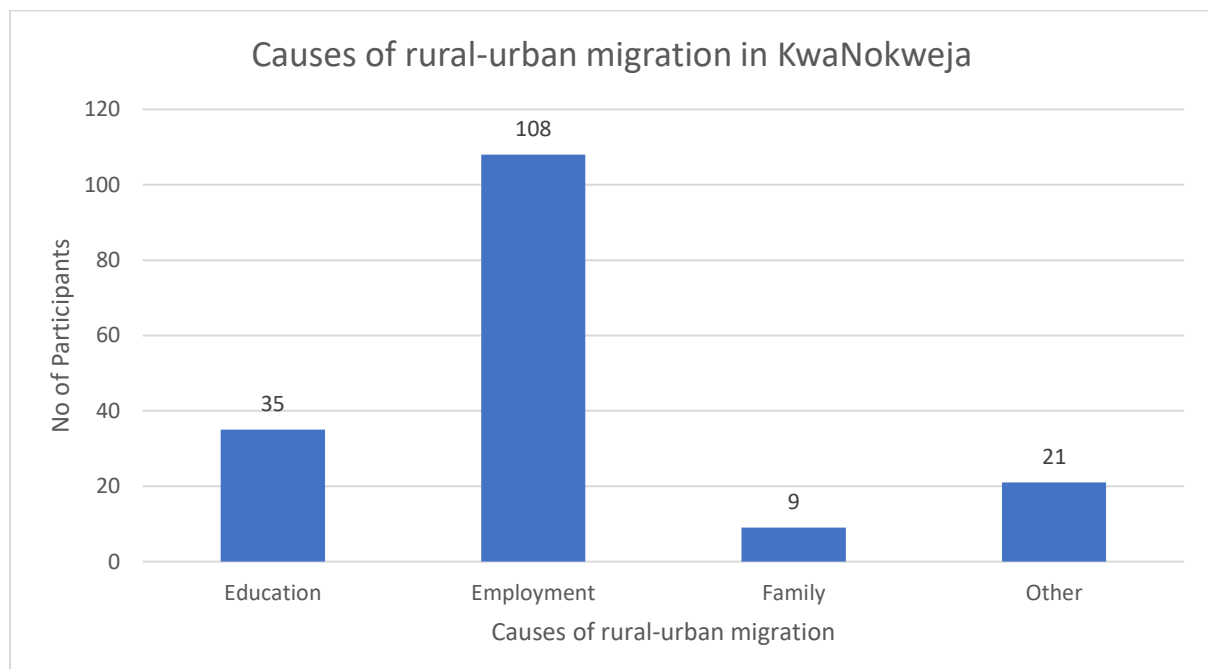


Figure 5.3: Causes of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja (Source: Author, September 2022)

The causes of rural-urban migration as described in this section only provide a general overview of why people migrate. This reinforces the broader argument that drivers of migration do not exist in isolation from each other, migration is a result of a combination of several drivers. However, according to Castelli (2018), the incidence of one driver over another is uncertain. Nevertheless, these causes of rural-urban migration do not necessarily mean that everyone migrates to urban areas despite the various negative factors that exist in KwaNokweja.

Findings emanating from this study show that the decision to migrate is a complex decision that involves the family/ household. All this shows that the lack of economic opportunities for example only provided a general setting within which people migrated. But the decision to undertake the movement involved families, and males and younger people were more likely to be sent to urban areas because of their advantage in securing jobs and role in providing for their families in the rural areas. In most cases, female participants responded that their husbands, parents, and children had migrated to urban areas for employment and education, while they looked after young children and the homesteads in KwaNokweja.

For instance, participant 98 stated, “my husband migrated to Durban for employment, but I remained in here in KwaNokweja to raise children because I did not complete school and it would be hard for me to find employment in urban areas.” (Interview with Participant 98, KwaNokweja, July 2022). This was corroborated by other research participants who noted that only certain family members had migrated to urban areas while they remained in KwaNokweja because they either had household responsibilities, were less educated/ qualified or were too old and therefore had fewer chances of finding employment in urban areas. For example, one respondent stressed that “my eldest son and daughter migrated to urban areas to find work while I decided to stay in the rural areas with my grandchildren because I am too old to go to urban areas.” (Interview with Participant 86, KwaNokweja). Similarly, another participant noted that “my brother went to Joburg to look for a job. I cannot go to urban areas because I am currently the eldest and only breadwinner at home, and my family would suffer if I left.” (Interview with Participant 78, KwaNokweja, July 2022). This, therefore, reinforces the view that families usually send individuals who stand a better chance of securing employment in urban areas to increase the gains from migration, maximize benefits and reduce the risks associated with migration. This resonates with Black et

al., (2006), who stated that it is not uncommon to send young men to look for jobs in urban areas. However, the democratic era in South Africa has created opportunities for women to participate in the economic sector, hence the increasing participation of females in migration for economic opportunities. Therefore, families adopt migration as a risk-sharing strategy and send individuals whose migration has the greatest potential benefit for the family/household in terms of economic returns.

According to Browne (2017), education is often associated with the likelihood of white-collar jobs, hence the education of children is often regarded as an investment that will benefit families in the long run. Therefore, families encourage their children to migrate to urban areas to attain higher education in hope that it will result in good-paying jobs and improved livelihoods for the household. Similar findings emanated from this study. For example, one participant noted that “our children are unemployed because the municipality says that they do not qualify.” (Interview with Participant 92, KwaNokweja, July 2022). Therefore, some participants responded that their children migrated to urban areas for education which would make them employable, and in the long run result in improved livelihoods for the family/household. A youth representative from Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality responded that “I believe that rural-urban migration is good when young people migrate to acquire skills and knowledge that will benefit those who remained in the rural areas, including their families and communities, and also develop rural areas.” (Interview with ULM Youth Representative, Ixopo, July 2022). The findings of this study, therefore, established that there are diverse migration decisions that are influenced by various factors which act on communal, family, and individual levels (Castelli, 2018).

This study’s findings are in line with the NELM theory, which states that migration is a collective decision made by households rather than individuals to minimize the risks associated with migration such as urban unemployment, and expensive urban lifestyle, and maximise economic benefits (De Haas, 2010). This is demonstrated by participants and families who remain in rural areas, while other household members especially young and able-bodied members, migrate to the urban areas. Some of the migrants in urban areas maintain ties with households by remitting back home. This affirms that these individuals migrated to improve the financial well-being and livelihood of the household. This aspect also resonates with the Sustainable Livelihoods Strategy for migration which postulates that migration is often adopted by

households to improve household economic resources and their livelihoods (Thieme, 2008). This means that households engage in rural-urban migration as a survival strategy to secure income and support their livelihoods in the face of the persisting challenges in rural areas.

#### **5.4 Socio-economic impact of rural-urban migration on KwaNokweja**

The second objective of this study was to explore the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration in terms of poverty, education, and agricultural production on households in KwaNokweja. A total of 141 of 172 participants responded that they have family members residing in urban areas. However, only 109 participants stated that they receive migrant remittances from urban-based family members, whilst 32 of the 141 participants do not receive any remittances. It is not surprising that most participants responded that they receive remittances because the major reason for migrating from KwaNokweja was to seek employment in the urban areas. As noted in the preceding section, some of these individuals migrated with promised employment positions in the urban areas, while some left the rural areas anticipating employment but have been challenged with urban unemployment. Therefore, some migrant households do not receive remittances because household members have not found employment yet, or they barely earn enough to support the expensive urban lifestyle and remit back home to support family members, or because they did not migrate for economic reasons.

##### **5.4.1. Impact of rural-urban migration on poverty reduction**

Based on the results of this study, the specific use and impact of remittances varied among households (Figure 5.4). For example, a total of 106 out of 109 (97%) recipients of remittances responded that they use remittances for food and household needs. A total of 88 of 109 participants responded that remittances reduced their household financial constraints and enabled them to spend more on household needs, education, and healthcare among others. This figure comprises participants who cited both positive and negative overall impacts of migration on their livelihoods. The use of remittances is influenced by various factors including the characteristics of recipients such as household size, and the priorities of the recipient households. According to Dridi et al., (2019), these, therefore, influence the role and impact of remittances.

A total of 76 participants confirmed that migration impacted their livelihood positively. However, only 67 of these participants responded that remittances improved household financial income. Remittances in this case increased incomes, improved expenditure and consumption, and assets of the recipient households. These participants responded that remittances enabled them to supplement income and meet their household needs such as food, education, healthcare, and acquire assets, thus making them less likely to suffer from food insecurity and poverty, compared to their non-remittance-receiving counterparts. Most respondents in this study stated that before migration they were more vulnerable to food insecurity and poverty as they only depended on child grants and old age pensions. These income sources were not enough to cater for the entire needs of these households, and their situations were worsened by unemployment. For example, participant 87 responded that the remittances he received from his siblings in the urban areas had enabled him to maintain their home which they had inherited from their late parents. He further noted that he was able to renovate and extend the house to accommodate the whole family when they return during the holidays. According to this participant, he would not have been able to repair the falling walls and leaking ceiling of his home if he did not receive remittances from his siblings because he was unemployed (Interview with Participant 87, KwaNokweja, July 2022).

These findings supported existing studies (see e.g., Nshimbi and Moyo, 2017; Moyo et al., 2012), which noted that remittances impact positively food security, and access to health care and education. Participants in this study confirmed that after receiving remittances they were better able to support their livelihoods and needs than their non-remittance-receiving counterparts. The findings of this study, therefore, suggest that remittances play a significant role in reducing poverty in rural areas. These results resonate with that of Ebadi et al., (2020 cited by Onyango et al., (2021) that remittances from urban-based migrants' impact positively food security and poverty reduction in rural areas. These impacts of remittances on recipient households are in line with the neoclassical and pluralist perspectives of migration which argue that migration has developmental benefits on the migrant area of origin (household, region, or country), especially through remittances (Moyo et al., 2012).

A total of 16 of 109 participants responded that migration has had diverse impacts on their livelihoods, and as a result, were not quite sure whether to classify these impacts

as negative or positive. However, 7 of these participants noted that migration resulted in improved access to household economic resources. Only 5 participants responded that remittances enhanced their economic resources to a certain extent but they further if they still struggled to make ends meet. Lastly, 4 participants responded that although migration impacted positively on their livelihoods, remittances did not necessarily improve their household finances due to several household expenses and the number of household members dependent solely on these remittances. These participants noted that food bought with remittances ran out even before the month ended, and they had to survive on hand to mouth until they received more money from the urban-based household member(s). These findings, therefore, evidence that the number of people dependent on remittances influences the use and impact of remittances on households.

More than that, this hand-to-mouth existence and dependency on remittances seems to illuminate the pessimistic perspective of the impact of remittances on migrant-sending regions/areas. This pessimistic school of thought states that remittances encourage a dependency syndrome in recipient households and undermine the ability of these households to generate income on their own (Moyo et al., 2012). This implies that remittances discourage the incentives to work because they come in certain intervals, thus encouraging recipients to depend on these instead of seeking other alternatives to generate income. Although this might be applicable in some cases, in this study the dependence on remittances was influenced by several factors including high unemployment rates, limited economic opportunities especially for women in rural areas, and environmental challenges which discouraged the involvement of the community in agriculture. These factors challenged the ability of the community to generate their own incomes and supplement the remittances received. These remittances were, however, used to improve the livelihoods of the recipient households, thus reducing the incidence of food insecurity, starvation, and poverty in these households.

The pessimist perspective also argues that remittances stimulate inequality between the recipient households and non-remittance receiving households (Lubambu, 2014), and encourage more people to migrate from the rural areas. This accounts for the loss of labour and delayed rural development due to skilled migration. This study, however, challenges this notion by emphasizing that in KwaNokweja rural-urban migration is

adopted as a livelihood strategy to maximise household income sources and cope with several adversities that persist in rural areas, including unemployment, food insecurity and poverty. This argument was supported by the ULM Youth Representative who responded that “despite the possible negative impacts of rural-urban migration, it was important for me to move to Ixopo and find a job to support my family. It makes no sense for everyone to remain in rural areas where there are no jobs.” (Interview with ULM Youth Representative, Ixopo, July 2022). Instead of remaining in the disadvantaged area, individuals from KwaNokweja perceive it is better to migrate to access opportunities that improve the welfare of their families. This is further evidenced by the number of migrants who remit back home, and the participants who responded that remittances improved their livelihoods.

This study further argues that the migration of individuals in KwaNokweja presents an opportunity for potential migrants who also want to diversify income, secure employment, and improve household welfare. These migrants provide information about job opportunities in the urban areas and help new migrants with shelter once they arrive in these destinations. This minimizes the risks associated with migration and enhances the flow of benefits and resources, particularly remittances to the place of origin. In this case, rural-urban migration poses several positive implications that surpass the negatives, especially in terms of improving the well-being and livelihoods of migrant families and migrant-sending areas.

On the contrary, 17 participants noted that migration negatively impacted their livelihoods. Of these, 11 participants responded that although migration improved their financial constraints, it also posed negative impacts on their livelihoods. These negative impacts were attributed to the inconsistency of remittances received by households in KwaNokweja, and the psychological and social costs of migration, such as the migration of a parent, thus leading to parent absenteeism. In rural areas, such as KwaNokweja, elderly women often assume childcare roles for migrant children whose parents are in urban areas. To further attest to this, participant 95 stated that “my daughter migrated for education to the urban areas. Although she sometimes sends money home, this money is used for the needs of her baby that she left under my care” (Interview with Participant 95, KwaNokweja, July 2022). As a result, this participant noted that migration impacted negatively on her livelihood because it

resulted in increased household responsibilities, and the household incurred more financial stress as a result of infrequent remittances.

The economic analysis of the impact of remittances and migration on sending households tends to overlook the potential psychological effects of rural-urban migration. However, rural-urban migration can affect the psychological well-being of the sending household. While the existence of urban-based household members can elevate the status of the household in the rural community through remittances, it is, however, important to note the psychological and social costs of rural-urban migration. These include family disruption, prolonged separation, and reconstruction of household roles, which pose negative impacts on household members that remain in rural areas (Nyoni & Kollamparambil, 2022). Furthermore, migration is blameable for shifting family life and gender roles in households, which may add to a household's emotional and physical burden due to additional household responsibilities and diminished labour supply.

Of all participants who receive remittances (109), only 9 participants responded that remittances do not improve their household financial situations. This figure represents only 8% of all remittance-receiving households. The majority of these participants responded that remittances were less frequent ranging from 2-6 months to once a year. This is because some migrants are employed in the informal sector, which is vulnerable to market uncertainties, while some are students who remit part of their bursaries. In some cases, participants responded that they received remittances monthly, but the remittances were only enough to cater for food due to the household size, and the number of people dependent on the remittances. Furthermore, expenditure on food was worsened by the high prices of food (Interview with Participant 120, KwaNokweja, July 2022). Most of the respondents in this study linked the high food prices and decreased incomes (remittances) to the economic crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is in line with the postulation by Kothari (2002, cited in Nyoni and Kollamparambi, 2022) that the recipient households might become vulnerable to food insecurity and poverty through the infrequency and insufficient remittances and other forms of support from urban-based household members. The conclusions drawn from these findings reinforce that rural-urban migration and remittances present varied implications on recipient households.

However, there were significantly more participants who responded that they experienced migration positively as a result of remittances.

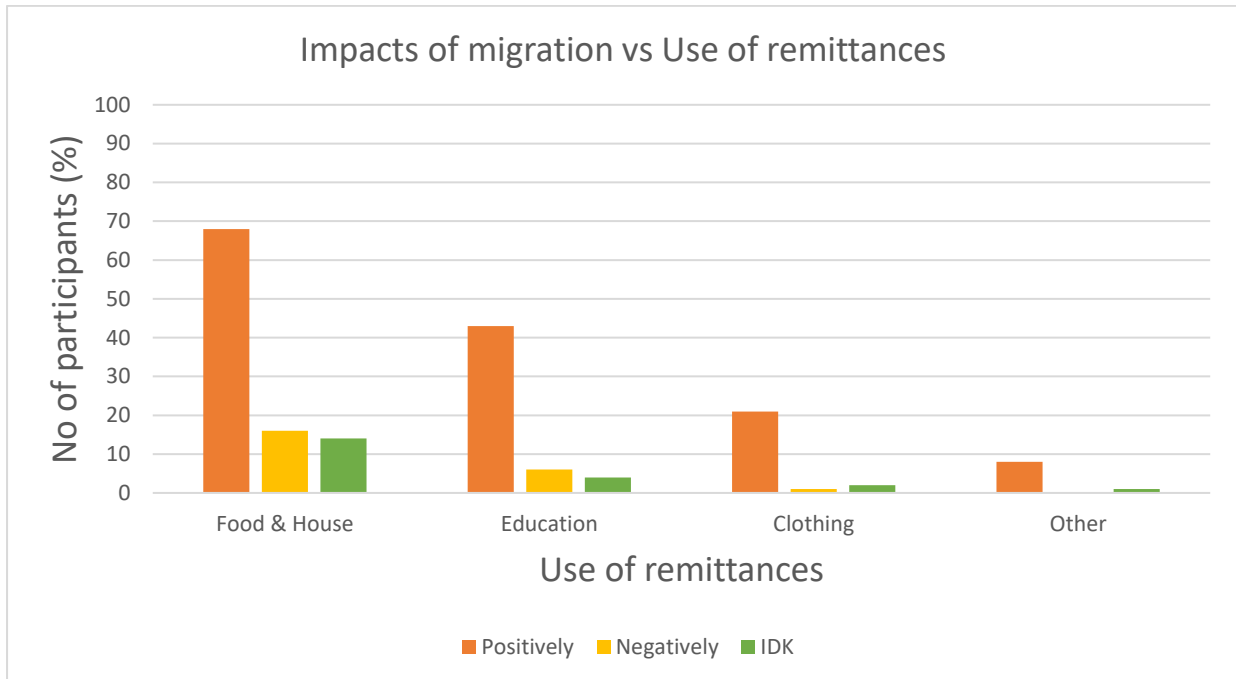


Figure 5.4: Impact of rural-urban migration on households and the use of remittances received from the migrants. (Source: Author, September 2022)

#### 5.4.2. Impact of rural-urban migration on education

Findings from this study indicate that remittance-receiving households in KwaNokweja invest more in food and household needs than in education and other expenditures (Figure 5.4). This finding on the use of remittances on consumption is consistent with that by Crush and Caeser, (2009 cited in Onyango et al., 2021). This is also consistent with the pessimist perspective on migration which states that remittances do not encourage sustainable development because they are often used for non-investment purposes or consumptive investment.

However, this study's findings suggest that migration has a positive impact on the education of family members who remain in rural areas. This is proven by the number of participants who responded that migrant remittances enabled them to invest in the education of their children and family members, thus enabling improved educational attainment. Investments in education meant that the recipients were now able to pay school fees and buy school uniforms, stationery, and books. This is something which they could barely afford to do before they received remittances. These findings are

consistent with the study by Docquier et al., (2012) reviewed by (Dridi et al., 2019), which noted that remittances boost the ability of recipient households to spend on human capital investments, including food, health, and education. Furthermore, education is usually perceived as a route to success and out of poverty, therefore, the education of children is anticipated to result in economic gains for the households in the long run.

Of the 109 recipients of migrant remittances, 66 participants noted that remittances led to improved school attendance and educational achievements among children in their households (Figure 5.5). For example, some participants (participant 96 and 102) responded that they were able to send their children to better schools outside of KwaNokweja, while some participants could afford to pay for transport for their children to minimise the distance and time taken to walk to school (Interview with Participant 96 and Participant 102, KwaNokweja, July 2022). Further evidence for this was provided by the principal of Nokweja High School who noted that “many children travel from KwaNokweja every day to attend schools in other places and leave the schools that are here in KwaNokweja.” (Interview with the Principal of Nokweja High school, KwaNokweja, July 2022). Of these participants, a total of 51 responded that migration impacted positively on their livelihoods through remittances which enabled them to afford better livelihoods. The remaining 15 participants responded that migration either impacted negatively (10) or had presented diverse impacts (5) on livelihoods (Figure 5.5). Explanations for these cases are similar to those provided in the previous section such as the psychological and social costs of migration.

A total of 15 participants responded that even though they did not invest remittances in education, these afforded them more financial stability and therefore indirectly improved the education of children and household members to some extent. As a result, they were able to buy better-quality school uniforms for their children. On the contrary, 28 participants noted that the remittances they received hardly had an impact on the attainment of education in their households because they were invested in other household needs. However, the general conclusion formulated based on these findings is that remittances have positive implications for the education of migrant households in KwaNokweja. Figure 5.5 below summarises the impact of migrant remittances on the educational attainment of children in remittance-receiving households.

These findings, therefore, suggest that remittance recipients in KwaNokweja invest remittances according to their priorities and to meet their needs. For example, some households had children who still attend school, while other households did not. As a result, the use of remittances varied among these households. The use of remittances was also influenced by the gendered aspect of remittances. For example, many female participants responded that they spent remittances on food, education, and clothes, while male participants spent on food, household needs and other expenditures. To further reinforce this, one male participant had used remittances to extend and renovate his home and had also purchased a tractor (Interview with Participant 87, KwaNokweja, July 2022).

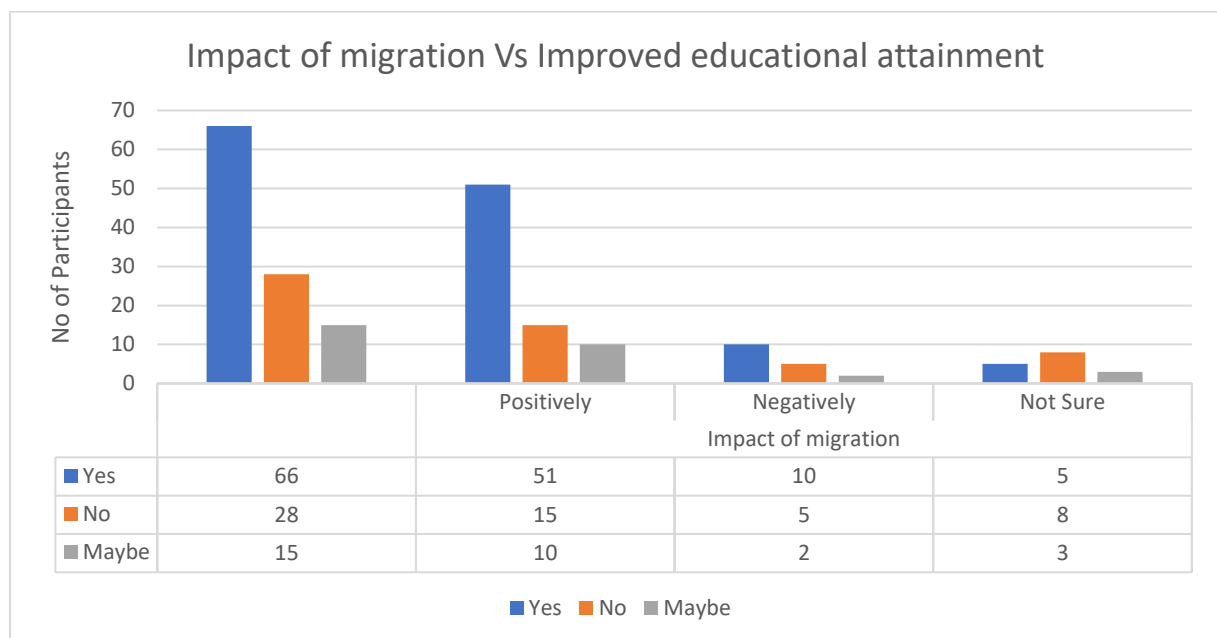


Figure 5.5: Impacts of migration and the influence of remittances on improved educational attainment. (Source: Author, September 2022)

### 5.4.3. Impact of migration on agricultural production

According to FAO IFAD IOM WFP (2018), the impact of the migration of youth and men on rural agriculture include increasing household responsibilities and the workload of women in the agricultural sector. Similarly, a study by De Brauw (2017), found that rural-urban migration results in the feminization of decision-making in households including decisions on the crops to grow, sell, or investment-related decisions, which then influences the input and output in the agricultural sector. This study established that households in KwaNokweja are highly dependent on agriculture as their primary source of livelihood. Participants in this study, however, noted that

their agricultural production is only enough for household consumption and not for selling. As illustrated in Table 5.5, a total of 164 of 172 participants provided their responses on the impact of rural-urban migration on their involvement in agriculture, while 8 participants did not provide their responses. Of these, 81 participants stated that they were actively involved in agricultural activities, primarily as smallholder farmers who grow crops (maize, cabbage, spinach, etc) for household consumption. A total of 55 of the 81 participants who are actively involved in agriculture also receive remittances from urban-dwelling family members. However, these participants reported that they mainly make use of the seedlings that are available to them, and hardly ever purchase seeds to plant.

Table 5.5: Participant involvement in agricultural activities

Participant households	Participant involvement in agricultural activities			Total
	Yes	Sometimes	No	
Remittance receiving	55	24	24	103
Non-remittance receiving	19	4	5	28
Non-migrant	7	5	21	33
<b>Total</b>	81	33	50	164

(Source: Author, October 2022)

Table 5.5 illustrates that 33 participants responded that they sometimes engage in agricultural activities. This comprised remittance-receiving (24), non-remittance receiving (4), and non-migrant participant households (5). On the contrary, 50 participants answered that they are not involved in any agricultural activities. Of these, 24 participants (15%) receive remittances from urban-based migrants, while 5 participants (3%) do not receive remittances. Lastly, 33 participants (20%) did not have migrant family members and were excluded from further analysis. In total, 53% of the remittance-receiving households and 67% of non-remittance-receiving participants responded that they continue to be involved in agriculture regardless of the absent

family members. A total of 23% of recipients of remittances and 14% of those without remittances responded that they were sometimes involved in agricultural activities. Only 29 of the 131 participants considered in this section responded that they were not involved in agricultural activities.

It is believed that rural-urban migration demotivates participation in agriculture. However, participants considered in this section proved that their participation in agriculture was to a greater extent discouraged by severe climatic events in the area, such as frequent floods than by migration. The impacts of the floods had been severe to an extent that when this study was conducted most crops had been destroyed and the gardens/fields were bare and dry. Additionally, the challenge of water provision made it difficult for these participants to water their crops. According to the Chief, only a few people in the community were fortunate enough to have water taps within their dwellings, while most of the people depended on water from community boreholes (Interview with the Chief, KwaNokweja, 2022). As noted earlier in this chapter, the community sometimes went for weeks and months without water. Although there is a river where the community members collect water in times of need, it is not easily accessible, especially for the vulnerable populations including young children, women and elders who are usually left in the rural areas because of migration. These factors have therefore impacted significantly agricultural involvement in KwaNokweja.

Notwithstanding, remittance-receiving households are better involved in agricultural activities than the other participants. In this example, remittances assisted the households to use machines and install water taps which increased agricultural production and decreased the hours spent on agricultural labour. Participant 87 also owned a tractor which he had purchased with remittances from his siblings in the urban areas. This participant noted that he used the tractor for his household agricultural purposes, and he also generated income by ploughing for households who hired him (Interview with Participant 87, KwaNokweja, July 2022). This was not possible before the migration of family members, and before the remittances received from these members.

These findings, therefore, suggest a direct positive relationship between remittances and agricultural production. To further support this, the Chief of KwaNokweja, responded that some households can afford to employ cattle herders from Lesotho to

herd their cattle and other livestock to substitute for the absence of men in KwaNokweja (Interview with the Chief, KwaNokweja, July 2022). Those people who did not receive remittances could not afford to do this. As a result, remittance-receiving households had higher numbers of livestock which were properly taken care of by cattle herders from Lesotho, than those who did not receive remittances. Again, this shows the direct impact of remittances on agriculture. This impact of remittances on agricultural activities is consistent with the findings by Anaglo et al., (2014 cited in Mbatha and Mofokeng, 2021) which established that migration impacts positively agriculture when migrant remittances are used to hire agricultural equipment or employees to compensate migrated rural labour force.

### **5.5 The perceptions of rural residents in KwaNokweja towards rural-urban migration**

As illustrated in Figure 5.8, 104 of 172 participants responded that they support rural-urban migration. This portion comprises 50 males, representing only 29% of all participants, and 54 females (31%). The most frequently mentioned reason for supporting rural-urban migration was the vast economic opportunities that are better accessible in the urban areas which enable urban-based individuals to remit back home. A total of 45 of the 78 participants who had never resided in another area except KwaNokweja reported that they wished to migrate to urban areas for various reasons including employment (11), education (6), better livelihood opportunities (10), and other reasons such as personal willingness to explore other areas, and experience (12). The researcher deciphered from these findings that residents in KwaNokweja associate rural-urban migration with better livelihood opportunities including employment, educational facilities, public amenities, and improved standards of living. Donsanda (2016) noted that rural residents tend to view rural-urban migration as an escape from poverty because it enables them to improve their socio-economic conditions by making economic and livelihood opportunities more accessible.

The youth representative from ULM responded that “I would say that I support migration because it has benefitted me and my family positively. I believe it makes no sense for everyone to remain in rural areas when there are no economic opportunities. I migrated to Ixopo for employment to help support at home, I would not have gotten the job I have had I not moved from KwaNokweja to Ixopo.” (Interview with ULM Youth

Representative, Ixopo, July 2022). This evidences that rural residents in KwaNokweja perceive rural-urban migration as a positive livelihood strategy and anticipate better livelihood opportunities in these urban areas. These findings, therefore, coincide with Nyoni and Kollamparambi (2022), who noted that in South Africa rural-urban migration is often employed as a household's survival strategy to sustain the family members living in rural areas.

The youth had more positive perceptions about rural-urban migration, and aspirations about moving to the urban areas for personal experience, education, and employment than any other group. The positive perceptions of these individuals towards rural-urban migration were influenced by the benefits that they associate with migration to urban areas such as economic returns and improved livelihoods. These perceptions are also shaped by desires for economic independence and to support one's family, the successes of the migration of peers, and the lack of job opportunities in the areas. These findings are consistent with the findings by Minaye and Zeleke, (2017), which established that the youth tend to have positive attitudes towards migration.

Other reasons for supporting rural-urban migration include that when migrants return to the rural areas, they bring skills and innovation that contribute to the development of rural areas. According to the response given by ULM Youth Representative "there are diverging perceptions towards rural-urban migration based on the experiences and impacts that result when people move from rural areas, such as KwaNokweja to urban areas. However, I support rural-urban migration when migrants return to the rural areas to support and equip community members with skills, knowledge, and technology which enhances their livelihoods and the development of rural areas (Interview with ULM Youth Representative, Ixopo, July 2022). This can be demonstrated by a workshop which was organised by the urban-based youth from KwaNokweja and Ubuhlebezwe Municipality, held in Nokweja High School on the 27th of July 2022. The purpose of this workshop was to encourage educational attainment, provide career guidance and equip grade 12 learners with relevant information about higher education institutions and bursaries (Figure 5.6).



Figure 5.6: A career exhibition organised by urban-based youth from KwaNokweja in partnership with Ubuhlebezwe Municipality for Grade 12 learners in Nokweja High School. (Source: Author, July 2022)

A total of 30 participants responded that they did not wish to migrate. The majority of these respondents were elderly people who have either retired or settled and own households in KwaNokweja. One participant stated:

“I understand why the youth choose to migrate to urban areas because there are very limited employment opportunities in the KwaNokweja. However, I experienced the negative impacts of migration because my son left home for employment in the urban areas, but he was involved in a car accident and died.” (Interview with Participant 115, KwaNokweja, July 2022).

This reinforces that individual perceptions towards migration are shaped by previous exposure to migration. Furthermore, migration presents diverse impacts on individuals and households, therefore, previous exposure to migration plays a significant role in shaping the beliefs and perceptions of people towards rural-urban migration. Migration perceptions and behaviours are also influenced by external forces such as social factors (families, friends) and pre-existing conditions in the place of origin, such as unemployment and environmental factors. These findings, therefore, demonstrate similarity with the findings by Minaye and Zeleke (2017), which established that migration decisions are influenced by several factors including beliefs about migration.

A total of 68 of 172 participants responded that they oppose rural-urban migration and the most frequent reason for their opposition was that elders, children, and households were neglected, especially when the youth migrated to the urban areas and did not wish to return to KwaNokweja. Some respondents in this study were the elderly aged 50 and above who were living alone as a result of the migration of younger household members. Participant 54 indicated that she opposed rural-urban migration because when people migrate to urban areas, they leave their belongings and families behind (Interview with Participant 54, KwaNokweja, July 2022). This implies that when people migrate from rural areas, they leave their homes and families, and in some cases, they never return after migration. Thus, leading to families and households being neglected and destroyed. For example, in Figure 5.7, the researcher was told that the house was left neglected after the children migrated and behind an old woman who later passed on.

The traditional leader noted that “some of the young people migrate to urban areas and become criminals and steal from us when they return because they have learnt different and negative lifestyles in the urban areas” (Interview with the Traditional leader, KwaNokweja, July 2022). This evidences that in some cases when people migrate to urban areas, they adopt various lifestyles and behaviours which are not socially acceptable in the rural areas including such vice as theft, alcohol, and drug use among others.



Figure 5.7: An abandoned house in KwaNokweja. (Source: Author, July 2022)

This study also found that in some cases rural-urban migration led to the destruction of families, and hatred, especially when the migrated family members refuse to return to the rural areas. The researcher interviewed an old woman who was staying alone after her granddaughter migrated to a nearby town and refused to return. This participant expressed her anger towards her granddaughter and complained that she is sick, but her family has neglected her and left her to die alone (Interview with Participant 115, KwaNokweja, July 2022). Several other cases like this emerged from this study where older women were left alone while their children and grandchildren were living in urban areas. The cases provided here confirm the negative impacts and experiences that can be associated with rural-urban migration.

Participant 89 responded that “I oppose rural-urban migration because skills are transferred from rural areas to urban areas.” (Interview with Participant 89, KwaNokweja, July 2022). The Chief of KwaNokweja was also of the view that rural-urban migration negatively impacts the development of rural areas especially when skills are being transferred from the rural areas to urban areas, although he did not necessarily oppose rural-urban migration because of the several other benefits associated with this trend of population mobility such as poverty reduction and better livelihoods (Interview with the Chief, KwaNokweja, July 2022). This negative perception of rural-urban migration stems from the adverse impacts posed by this trend of population mobility on the development of rural areas because skills flow and accumulate in urban areas, thus resulting in urban development at the expense of rural areas. Ubhlebezwe Municipality is challenged with the migration of skilled professionals for better economic opportunities in urban areas.

Rural-urban migration is blameable for the stagnant pace of rural development, especially when skilled professionals migrate to urban areas. The Ward Councillor provided that among other challenges associated with rural-urban migration in the areas is that people apply for services and migrate to urban areas before they have received the services, or shortly after receiving these. This challenges the municipality in tracking progress in terms of addressing backlogs and deprives other residents of the opportunity to benefit from such services. He further made an example that some individuals receive electricity prepaid meters and take them with them when they migrate to other areas. (Interview with Ward Councillor, KwaNokweja, July 2022). In this case, rural-urban migration is perceived as being negative because it poses

negative challenges to the development and progress of rural areas in terms of infrastructural and economic development.

This study also found that the perceptions of people were also shaped by their preferred destination. For example, the Chief responded that “I was once based in the urban areas for a few years, and I experienced the lifestyle in the urban areas. However, I decided to come back and stay in the rural areas because I prefer the simple rural lifestyle over the expensive urban lifestyle”. A total of 61 of the 172 participants, predominantly elders responded that they preferred rural areas, while 47 participants, mainly youth preferred urban areas due to personal aspirations including experiencing different places and accessing greener pastures. Of the total 172 participants, 56 individuals responded that they preferred both rural and urban areas because of the set of positive and negative factors present in both these areas. The remaining participants did not specify their preferred location.

Figure 5.8 below illustrates the varied migration perceptions among males and females in KwaNokweja. These findings demonstrate that more people support migration influenced by the various positive benefits associated with migration, including the positive experiences associated with rural-urban migration. However, the positive perceptions towards rural-urban migration do not necessarily mean that these participants have intentions to migrate. For example, one female participant stated that “I support migration to urban areas because my husband found a job in Johannesburg and he sends us money, but I have no intentions to join him.” (Interview with Participant 75, KwaNokweja, July 2022). This was corroborated by other participants who noted that they support rural-urban migration but have no intentions to engage in rural-urban migration due to age, level of education, gender, previous experiences, and personal interests among others. Fewer people oppose rural-urban migration as a result of negative experiences and the adverse implications posed by this trend of population mobility on the sending households/regions. People generally have different migration experiences, and aspirations, and are influenced by diverse push and pull factors that shape their migration perceptions. The migration perceptions, decisions, and behaviours of people are also influenced by their destination preferences.

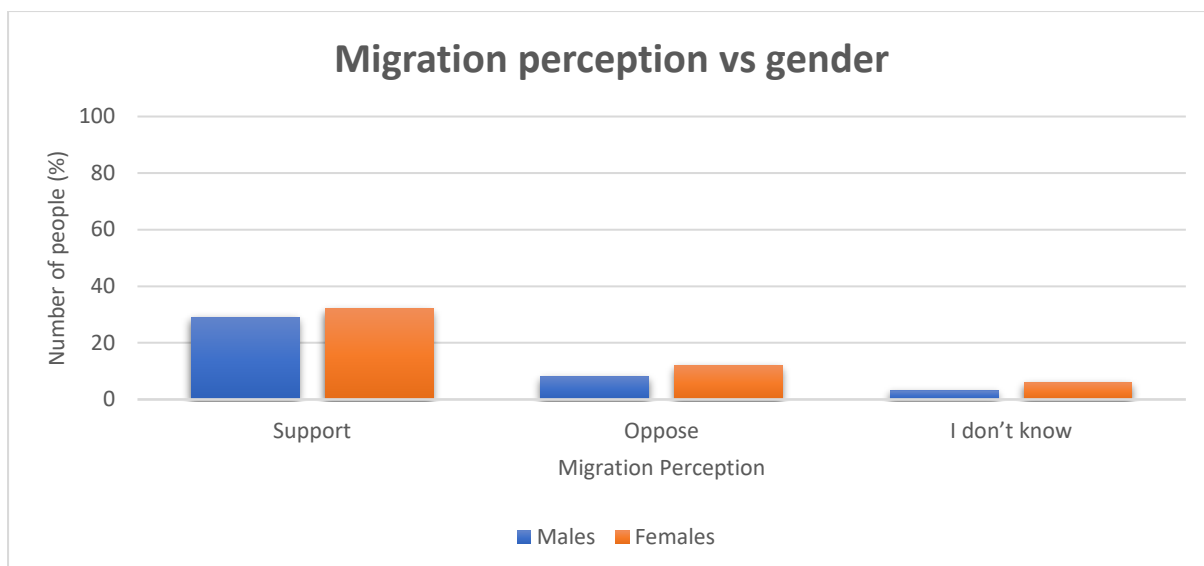


Figure 5.8: Migration perceptions among the different genders in KwaNokweja (Source: Author, October 2022)

## 5.6 Local municipal responses to the consequences of rural-urban migration in the KwaNokweja community

This study found that among the major challenges posed by rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja is stagnant rural development, particularly because the skills and investments are transferred to other areas. In response to this challenge of underdevelopment, food insecurity, and poverty in rural areas, the municipality has implemented strategies including local economic development projects, agricultural programmes, and women empowerment programmes that encourage entrepreneurship, education, and skills attainment for people in rural areas. These strategies are primarily aimed at tackling challenges such as unemployment, service delivery backlogs, and rural development, to discourage rural-urban migration and encourage people to remain in rural areas.

According to ULM Youth Representative, “several strategies have been devised by the municipality to address the socio-economic challenges that result from rural-urban migration in rural areas. Among these are programmes such as the Vuka Mbhokodo Programme aimed at empowering women in rural areas, which equips women with entrepreneurship skills and exposes them to livelihood opportunities such as agricultural markets (Interview with ULM Youth Representative, Ixopo, July 2022). This programme is aimed at encouraging women to take advantage of opportunities to

improve their livelihoods and cope with the adversities in rural areas such as poverty, unemployment, and food insecurity.

The municipality also offers a fully paid bursary to deserving students to promote educational attainment and tackle the challenge of poor literacy rates within the municipality. In hindsight, this is anticipated to benefit the municipality when these students return to work in the municipality and bring the skills and innovation that they gathered in the urban areas. Furthermore, the municipality offers driver's license training and security courses for free to tackle youth unemployment and equip the youth with skills that enable them to participate in the economic opportunities that are available in Ubuhlebezwe, thus reducing the rate of youth migration to urban areas. The municipality also introduced the EPWP programme to address the challenge of unemployment.

Among the municipal initiatives put in place to address the socio-economic impacts that result from rural-urban migration are agricultural projects, which are aimed at encouraging agricultural engagement and the utilisation of land resources available in rural areas. This is because rural-urban migration is believed to result in decreased agricultural involvement when the youth and men migrate to urban areas. This study found that there are active agricultural projects in KwaNokweja which are aimed at benefitting the community and enhancing agricultural production. For example, Figure 5.9 is a picture of a municipal agricultural project awarded to an elderly woman in KwaNokweja. In an interview, she stated, "the municipality sent people to fix my garden and plant vegetables, and also gave me 10 chickens to keep. These will help me support my family and put food on the table." (Interview with Participant 104, KwaNokweja, July 2022).

However, only 15 participants of this study responded that they had benefitted or participated in such programmes, and 17 responded that they sometimes participate in the programmes, while the majority of the respondents in KwaNokweja responded that they scarcely benefitted from such programmes (130 of 172 participants). Most respondents in this study complained about nepotism, unfair distribution, and poor service delivery within the municipality. These respondents stated that they feel neglected by the municipality because the programmes only cater to and benefit certain people.



Figure 5.9: Garden of a participant who received agricultural assistance from the municipality. (Source: Author, July 2022)

## 5.7 Chapter Summary

This discussion of the findings in this chapter highlights that migration is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon that is influenced by a diverse set of factors in the origin and destination areas involved. This is demonstrated by the various reasons cited for the migration of household members, and factors that influence their decision to either migrate or stay in KwaNokweja. The main conclusions established by this study are that rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja is primarily driven by economic factors such as seeking employment and improved economic returns in the urban areas. This study also found that rural-urban migration has diverse impacts on the origin households of migrants in KwaNokweja. These impacts are influenced by various factors including pre-existing socio-economic household characteristics such as household size, among others. The migration of household members impacted positively the livelihoods of most participants who remain in the rural areas through remittances from urban-based household members. These remittances afford rural households the financial ability to spend on food, education, and clothing, among other needs. As a result, many people in KwaNokweja are in support of rural-urban migration due to the positive benefits that they associate it with such as employment. Ubhlebezwe municipality, however, experiences the adverse impacts of rural-urban migration which delay progress and hinder rural development within the area.

## **CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **6.1 Summary**

This study consisted of six chapters. Chapter 1 provided the background and orientation to the study. Chapter 2 discussed the conceptual and theoretical perspectives that provided an analytical framework for this study. The theories which underpin this study as discussed in chapter 2 are neoclassical, neo-Marxist/ historical-structural, as well as pluralist theories of migration. Chapter 3 critically reviewed the literature that is relevant to this research. Chapter 4 presented the setting and methodology of the study. The study was based on KwaNokweja, a rural area under Ubuhlebezwe Local Municipality, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. The chapter also described the research design and methodology, including a discussion on pragmatism as a research paradigm that informed the mixed research methodology of this research. Chapter 5 analysed and interpreted the data in line with the objectives of this study. This chapter evaluates the study's objectives and proposes recommendations based on the analysis of the findings.

### **6.2 Restatement of the research objectives**

The objectives of this study were to:

- a) Analyse the causes of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja.
- b) Assess the socio-economic impacts of rural-urban migration with a focus on poverty, agricultural production, and education in KwaNokweja and the implication of the COVID-19 pandemic on these.
- c) Explore the perception of residents in KwaNokweja towards rural-urban migration.
- d) Evaluate the local municipality's responses to the consequences of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja.

The following section summarises the study's results by responding to the objectives in sequential order.

#### **6.2.1 Causes of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja**

In response to the first objective, the study established that there were many causes of rural-urban migration. The main driver was the absence of economic opportunities such as lack of employment and income-generating opportunities. This illustrates Neoclassical theories of migration in terms of the perceived income-generating

opportunities in the urban areas and the economic considerations that inform migration decisions such as the potential of securing employment in the urban areas. Another driver was the presence of economic challenges such as unstable, poor rural wages, and poor working conditions, in the rural areas and the notable absence of these in urban areas. This is predicated on the history of colonialism and apartheid which created disequilibrium in terms of development and wealth between rural and urban areas (see e.g Ajaero & Onokala, 2013; Okhankhuele & Opafunso, 2013; Mlambo, 2018; Njwambe et al., 2019; Ginsburg et al., 2021). This led to urban areas being better developed, and with abundant economic opportunities than their rural counterparts who were challenged with poverty and underdevelopment.

These structural patterns, therefore, cause rural-urban migration even in a place like KwaNokweja. To this extent, the proposition of the Neo-Marxist theories of migration finds credence in this study (see Chapter 2, section 2.2). What was also discovered in this study is that educational needs also lead to rural-urban migration as people migrate from KwaNokweja to access better quality education and higher education institutions that are absent in rural areas. In addition to this, there were also other causes linked to the migration of people from KwaNokweja to urban areas, such as poor infrastructural conditions and family incentives. However, these causes were not sufficient to cause people to migrate. The decision to migrate was a complex process which involved family members selecting who migrated to urban areas (see e.g Black et al., 2006; Nyoni & Kollamparambi, 2022). All this affirms the NELM perspective and livelihood diversification strategy theory which posits that migration is employed as a strategy to diversify household income sources, minimize risks, enhance the financial well-being of households and support family livelihood respectively. It also illustrates the complexity of the migration phenomenon (see e.g De Haas, 2007; Moyo et al., 2012; Castelli, 2018; Chikanda et al., 2020).

### **6.2.2 The socio-economic impacts of migration on KwaNokweja**

The second objective of this sought to assess the impacts of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja, a migrant-sending area. The findings show that most participants with urban-based family members expressed that migration impacted positively on their livelihoods due to remittances which enabled them to better afford to meet their needs and support their livelihoods. The use of remittances varied among recipients; however, they were used to enhance the welfare and livelihoods of recipients.

Remittances from the urban-based migrants were largely used for household consumption of food, healthcare, and education. Some respondents used these remittances to improve and/or acquire assets such as houses, water tanks, and tractors. This resonates with the developmental perspective on the impacts of migration (see e.g Moyo et al., 2012; also see Chapter 3, section 3.2)

The negative impacts that were associated with rural-urban migration in this study related to the neglect of belongings such as homesteads, and elders being left to live and fend for themselves because of younger migrants refusing to return to the rural areas. Rural-urban migration was also accused of delaying the pace of development in Ubuhlebezwe municipality, especially the migration of skilled professionals for higher salaries and better working conditions in the urban areas. All this suggests that rural-urban migration has diverging impacts on the sending households/regions. This finding reinforces and amplifies existing research (see e.g., Mlambo, 2018, Kanayo et al., 2019; Baloyi et al., 2021).

### **6.2.3 Perceptions towards rural-urban migration**

In the study area, people tend to attach various meanings to their perceptions of rural-urban migration, as a result, there are diverging perceptions towards this trend of human movement. The majority of participants in this study viewed migration as an important route out of the misery faced by rural communities. This study established that people are largely in support of migration to urban areas because of the positive benefits associated with it. These participants responded that according to their personal experiences, rural-urban migration had impacted positively on their livelihoods because they received remittances which improved their livelihoods. These remittances enabled them to enjoy lifestyles they were not able to live and afford before migration. Furthermore, younger people had more positive beliefs towards rural-urban migration, being influenced by their aspirations and the successful migration of peers, among others.

On the contrary, some individuals attached negative experiences to how they view rural-urban migration. These were attributed to the psychological and social costs of migration such as parent absenteeism, illness, and death. Some people, however, opposed rural-urban migration because it resulted in the transfer of skills from rural areas to urban areas, therefore, delaying the development of rural areas. While some

viewed it as negative because it leads to elders, children, and vulnerable populations being left in the rural areas and being victims of crime.

#### **6.2.4 Local municipal responses to the consequences of rural-urban migration in the KwaNokweja community**

In response to the third objective of the study which sought to evaluate the responses of Ubhlebezwe Local Municipality to the consequences of rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja. The findings show that ULM rolled out several strategies aimed at curbing the rates of unemployment including EPWP programmes (see e.g IDP 2021/22; 2022/23). Bursaries and entrepreneurial training programmes are aimed at encouraging education, and participation in the economic sector of the municipality while decreasing the dependence of the population on remittances and grants.

Agricultural and LED projects have been implemented in attempts to tackle challenges with poverty and food insecurity. Other strategies have been devised to empower women, who are often left behind as a result of male migration to urban areas, and also encourage. These strategies are anticipated to result in rural development, retain skills within the municipality and discourage migration to urban areas. However, only a few participants noted that they had benefitted from any municipal initiatives. Most participants in this study noted that they were often only informed about services or programmes in place, but only certain people benefited, or certain criteria were used to exclude them from benefitting from these programmes, such as having a working spouse, or more assets (cars, brick houses, water taps) despite being faced by the same challenges as other people in the community.

#### **6.3 Recommendations**

The study's findings show that rural-urban migration in KwaNokweja is well established and will most likely continue, while at the same time posing both benefits and challenges. Against this backdrop, it is recommended that:

a) The Ubhlebezwe Local Municipality must implement job creation and infrastructural development projects which will address the challenge of unemployment, services backlogs, and poor development conditions.

b) Skills enhancement programmes and educational facilities should be made accessible to rural communities to equip them with the relevant skills that enable them to generate their own income.

c) Rural agricultural involvement should be encouraged by offering farming skills and training to rural communities and making agricultural markets available to these communities.

d) Communities must be afforded just treatment and be given a fair chance to benefit from services provided to reduce dissatisfaction with the role of the municipality in addressing the socio-economic challenges faced by communities.

e) Investments should be made in local businesses to encourage entrepreneurship, enhance job creation, and promote local economic development.

#### **6.4 Suggestions for future research**

Certain elements were not explored in this study as they fell outside the scope of this research. Therefore, the suggested areas of future research are:

a) The impact of remittances in this study suggested that the majority of recipients depend on these remittances as their primary source of livelihood in KwaNokweja. The contribution of remittances to rural economies should be analysed further, taking into consideration more dimensions to determine their significance on the economic performance of rural municipalities.

b) A further study should be conducted to understand the extent of the migration of women from KwaNokweja to urban areas in South Africa. This will assist the understanding of how and to what extent as well as with what implication the gender dimensions are changing or have changed.

c) The coping mechanisms/survival strategies/institutional arrangements to countermeasure the negative impacts of rural-urban migration need to be explored by looking into living conditions of the elderly persons who are left behind.

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## APPENDIX A- QUESTIONNAIRE



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND**

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND AGRICULTURE**

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

### **QUESTIONNAIRE FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

Researcher: Lunika Buhle Adorable

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather relevant information for an academic study titled “**ASSESSING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON KWANOKWEJA, KWA-ZULU NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA**”. This study is conducted in fulfilment of obtaining a Master of Arts degree from the University of Zululand. All responses will be treated with confidentiality. Your participation and support are highly appreciated.

#### **Consent form for participation**

I, the respondent voluntarily agree to take part in this study. I am fully informed and aware of what the aim of this study is, and I willingly give my consent to participate in this study. I understand that I am not obliged to participate and that I can withdraw whenever I feel the need to do so. I have been made aware that the information I give will be treated with confidentiality and remain strictly between the researcher and me and that it will be utilised for academic purposes only.

Participants' Signature:

Date:

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## SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Please indicate your choice with a cross (X) on the appropriate box.

1. Age:

Below 20	
21-30	
31-40	
41-50	
51 and above	

2. Gender

Female	
Male	
Prefer not to specify	

3. Marital status:

Single	
Married	
Divorced	
Other	

4. Level of education

Primary	
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Secondary	
Tertiary	
Other	

5. Employment Status:

Unemployed	
Employed	
Self-employed	
Retired	

**SECTION B: HOUSEHOLD PROFILE DATA**

1. How long have you resided in the area?

Less than a year	
2-5 years	
6-10 years	
Over 10 years	

2. How many household members reside in this house?

One	
Two	
More than two	
Less than five	

More than five	
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3. Are you involved in any agricultural activities?

Yes	
No	
Sometimes	

**SECTION C: IMPACTS OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON RURAL HOUSEHOLDS**

4. To the best of your knowledge, are there any members of your household living in another urban area?

Yes	
No	
Maybe	

5. If yes, how many?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. What was the reason for migrating?

Education	
Employment	
Family	
Other	

7. How long have they been away?

6-12 months	
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1-5 years	
More than 5 years	
I don't know	

8. How has the absence of family members affected the livelihoods of the family members left behind?

Positively	
Negatively	
I don't know	

9. Do the migrated household members send remittances back home?

Yes	
No	
Sometimes	

10. How often do they send remittances?

Weekly	
Monthly	
2-6 months	
Yearly	
Never	

11. What are these remittances used for?

Food and household	
Clothing	
Education	
Other	

12. Do these remittances improve household financial well-being?

Yes	
No	
To some extent	

13. Do these remittances contribute to improved education for the family members?

Yes	
No	
To some extent	

14. How has the absence of household members affected your involvement in agricultural activities?

Good	
Bad	
Neutral	

15. From the options below, how has it impacted your agricultural production?

Good and fast production	
Bad and poor production	
No change in production	
I don't know	

16. Are your agricultural outputs able to support the livelihood of your family?

Yes	
No	
To some extent	

17. If not, where else do you receive support from?

Grants	
Migrant remittances	
Employment	
Other	

**SECTION D: IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON THE LIVELIHOODS OF HOUSEHOLDS**

18. How has COVID-19 impacted the household?

Positively	
Negatively	
Both	
I don't know	

19. Please provide a reason for the response stated above

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20. Has COVID-19 resulted in job loss for you or any of your household members?

Yes	
No	

21. If yes, how did you/ they respond?

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22. How has it influenced the chances of finding employment?

Positively	
Negatively	
I don't know	

**SECTION E: MIGRATION EXPERIENCE, PERCEPTIONS, AND INTENTIONS**

23. What is your view on people moving from KwaNokweja to urban areas?

Support	
Oppose	
I don't know	

24. State your reason for the response provided above.

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25. Have you ever resided in another area?

Yes	
No	

26. If Yes, what was your reason for migrating?

Education	
Employment	
Family	
Other	

27. If No, would you ever move to another area?

Yes	
No	
Maybe	

28. Please provide a reason for the response stated above.

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29. Which of these areas do you prefer?

Urban area	
Rural area	
Both	

30. Based on the following options, how easy would it be for you to move?

Extremely easy	
Easy	
Moderate	
Hard	
Extremely hard	

31. How soon would it be?

6-12 months	
1-5 years	
More than 5 years	
I don't know	

32. Of the following option, which option(s) influence your migration decision?

Economic resources	
Household ties	
Life course events	
Social network	
Other	

33. Has any of your household members moved/returned from a different area to KwaNokweja?

Yes	
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No	
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34. If Yes, what is their reason?

Education	
Employment	
Family	
Other	

35. Do they wish to migrate again?

Yes	
No	
Maybe	

36. Please provide a reason for the answer above

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**SECTION E: LOCAL MUNICIPALITY RESPONSES TO RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION**

37. To the best of your knowledge, how has the municipality responded to challenges faced by the community?

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38. Do you participate in any local municipality programmes?

Yes	
No	
Sometimes	

39. How have the programmes impacted your livelihood?

Positively	
Negatively	
I don't know	

40. Please provide a reason for the answer above.

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Thank You!!

## APPENDIX B- INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RELEVANT AUTHORITY



**THE UNIVERSITY OF ZULULAND**

**FACULTY OF SCIENCE AND AGRICULTURE**

**DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES**

**INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY, MUNICIPAL  
OFFICIALS AND WARD COUNCILLOR**

Researcher: Lunika Buhle Adorable

The purpose of this questionnaire is to gather relevant information for an academic study titled “**ASSESSING THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF RURAL-URBAN MIGRATION ON KWANOKWEJA, KWA-ZULU NATAL, SOUTH AFRICA**”. This study is conducted in fulfilment of obtaining a Master of Arts degree from the University of Zululand. All responses will be treated with confidentiality. Your participation and support are highly appreciated.

### **Consent form for participation**

I, the respondent voluntarily agree to take part in this study. I am fully informed and aware of what the aim of this study is, and I willingly give my consent to participate in this study. I understand that I am not obliged to participate and that I can withdraw whenever I feel the need to do so. I have been made aware that the information I give will be treated with confidentiality and remain strictly between the researcher and me and that it will be utilised for academic purposes only.

Participants' Signature:

Date:

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## **INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What is your understanding of rural-urban migration?
2. Do you encourage or discourage the migration of people from kwaNokweja to other areas, particularly urban areas? And why?
3. What are the impacts that can be associated with rural-urban migration on kwaNokweja?
4. Would you classify these impacts as positive or negative? Why?
5. What impacts does rural-urban migration have on agricultural production and the economic performance of the area?
6. To the best of your knowledge what motivates the people of KwaNokweja to migrate?
7. What municipal measures have been implemented to address the challenges faced by rural communities?
8. How has COVID-19 impacted these challenges?
9. What are the implications of COVID-19 on the rates of rural-urban migration?
10. What strategies has the municipality implemented in response to the impacts of rural-urban migration in the area?
11. How effective have these response strategies been?