

ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Open Access



Causes of child labor and working conditions in Ethiopia: evidence from temporary inter-rural child labor migrants from *Sekela* district

Birhanu Mengist Zewdie^{1*} , Arega Bazezew Berlie¹ and Linger Ayele Mersha²

*Correspondence:

Birhanu Mengist Zewdie
birhanumengist2013@gmail.com

¹Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Bahir Dar University, Bahir Dar, Ethiopia

²Department of Geography and Environmental Studies, College of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Gondar, Gondar, Ethiopia

Abstract

Child labor migration is a critical issue that has received limited attention from academic and policy domains in many developing countries. This article analysis the causes of child labor migration and working conditions at the destination of temporary inter-rural child labor migration from *Sekela* district, Northwest Ethiopia. Mixed research methods is employed. Quantitative data is collected from randomly selected 204 respondents engaged in child labor migration. Focus group discussion, informal conversational interviews, and observation are also undertaken to gather qualitative data. Most child labor migrants participate in child labor migration due to localized economic constraints, which are reflected through a desire to have modern goods and cloth, food scarcity, and resource degradation. Also, the expansion of commercial farms at destination areas directly or indirectly due to the globalized market indicates that migrant children's local labor cannot be delinked from material realities created by both national and international economic policy. The income from child labor migration supports children and their households' livelihood, though it is at the expense of children's education as well as exposure to worse working conditions at their destination in terms of exploitation, underpayment, malnutrition, breaching of an agreement by employers, and harassment. Hence, to exploit the benefits and minimize the risks, balanced measures should be taken at the origin and destination. Education programs should be supportive in increasing food productivity and assisting households to diversify their means of income by allowing them to participate in non-farm activities. It is also essential to the establishment of support groups in migrant destination places and the expansion of labor inspectorates who continuously supervise the safety of child labor migrants.

Keywords Inter-rural migration, Child labor, Amhara, Ethiopia

Introduction

Child labor is a common phenomenon in all parts of the planet. In 2016, across the globe, an estimated 152 million children were in child labor, and almost half of them in the worst forms of child labor(OECD, 2019). Africa constitutes the highest share of

child laborers, holding 19% of children in child labor¹ (ILO, 2017). In Ethiopia, regardless of the regulations² against child labor, the prevalence of child labor has been very high – 42.7% in 2015 (UNICEF, 2020). The figure for Amhara region was 45.1%

Child labor migrants are types of child laborers and vary by destination, the type of agreement they enter, the type of occupation they engage in at the destination, and the nature of challenges they experience at the destination. The causes of their migration are diverse and complex and must be viewed within the socio-demographic, economic, cultural, and environmental contexts in which they live (Anarfi et al., 2003; Beazley, 2015; Dad, 2021; Dejenie, 2013). It is widely noted that poor living conditions at origin are the main drivers of child labor migration (Abeje, 2021; SARDP 2010). Thus, they usually move to search for better living conditions for themselves and others around them (Castelli, 2018).

It is noted that although child labor migrants move to escape poor living conditions at origin, they are also exposed to various forms of challenges at destination (Asfaw, 2007; Ayele and Degefa 2018; Bakker, 2009). These include worse working conditions & exploitation (Anyidoho & Ainsworth, 2009; Arhin, 2012; Crepeau, 2013; De Lange, 2007; Hashim, 2007; Huijsmans, 2011), unemployment and health shocks (Acharya, 2010; Aschale et al., 2018; Asfaw et al., 2010; Hashim & Thorsen, 2011; Lu et al., 2019; Mentis, 2016), violence and insecurity (de Vries & Guild, 2019; Hashim, 2007; Hashim & Thorsen, 2011; Heissler, 2008; Mentis, 2016; Swanson & Torres, 2016), leading isolated life (De Regt, 2016; Lu et al., 2019), hunger & malnutrition (De Regt, 2016; Lu et al., 2019; Mentis, 2016), market shocks (Adger, 2006; Whitehead et al., 2007) and natural hazards like flooding (Gänsbauer et al., 2017). Their exposure to such challenges vary depending on one's level of preparedness and endurance and the prevailing socio-cultural, economic, institutional, and political circumstances at destination and other places (Anyidoho & Ainsworth, 2009; Crepeau, 2013; Hashim, 2007; Kwankye et al., 2009).

In the previous researches (Asfaw, 2007; Ayele & Degefa, 2018; Bakker, 2009) as well as in labor force and child labor surveys (UNICEF, 2005, 2020), child migrants often disappear in aggregate statistics. Youth, adults, and children are commonly intermixed in many migration research studies, hindering focused intervention on child migration. By and large, children are on the side-lines of migration researches since migration is well known to be dominantly practiced by the youth. Cognizant of this, this study builds upon the extant literature on child labor and migration by taking evidence from temporary rural-rural child labor migration in *Sekela* district of Ethiopia. In this regard, rural-rural migration from a spatial perspective and temporary migration from a temporal perspective are given rather limited attention in migration studies in general and child labor researches in particular regardless of the fact that temporary rural-rural labor migration is a widely practiced livelihood diversification strategy in many developing countries of Asia and Africa (Ayele and Degefa, 2020).

The article has five sections. Following the introduction, the second section deals with theoretical and conceptual frameworks. While the study area and methodology come in

¹ (ILO, 2017): Child labor is defined as children in labor employment from 5 to 17 years of age.

² Labor Proclamation of Ethiopia No. 42/1993 ; The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, 2003; United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), 1989; The International Labor Organization (ILO) Convention 138.

section three, the results and discussion section is presented in section four. The last section covers the conclusion and the way forward.

Theoretical and conceptual frameworks

Though the issue of child labor has been explained from different perspectives, this study uses the socio-cultural and political economy views. In early discussions of child labor, every job performed by children was viewed as harmful (Arhin, 2012; Crepeau, 2013; Jérôme & Augendra, 2019). In the work-free childhood view, which is seen as the Western model, only leisure activities such as play, socialization, and school are the desirable areas for engagement (Balcha, 2018; Palgrave Macmillan, 2009). This view is criticized as deviant from Third World childhood realities (Boyden & Levison, 2000). On the other hand, the tribal child approach emphasizes the otherness' of childhood, explaining the differences in childhood's cultural world from that of adults, arguing the necessity of letting children act autonomously with their rituals and rules (Abebe & Bessell, 2011a; Balcha, 2018). This view goes with the socially constructed child (Ali et al., 2017; Kibrom et al., 2015; Punch, 2007).

In the mid-1990s, a consensus was reached that some child work could be valuable for satisfying material demands (Rogers & Swinnerton, 2007). While stressing children's right to protection from exploitation, the socio-cultural perspective considers childhood as a link that drives them to adulthood. It posits that any preventive attempt to working children is condemned as insensitive and euro-centric to their context, and children's work is taken as an integral part of their day-to-day life and essential to family livelihoods (Abebe & Bessell, 2011a; Beazley, 2015). This view is perceived to be an applicable approach to understanding the social and cultural meaning attached to children's involvement in child labor (Abebe & Bessell, 2011b). In reflection of this, in rural areas of the Amhara region, Ethiopia, children are viewed as an indispensable source of labor supporting household livelihood, including through engagement in child labor migration (Abeje, 2021; Kassa & Abebe, 2016; Pankhurst et al., 2015).

Additionally, family structure which is expressed through the number of children (Gebru & Beyene, 2022; Webbink et al., 2015a, b), and the birth order where the older (first-born) children may be expected to engage for employment and assist their younger siblings for schooling (Alvi & Dendir, 2011; Edmonds & Shrestha, 2013) are expected reasons for child labor migration. Furthermore, the culture of supporting educational expenses from labor migration (Abeje, 2021) and perceiving labor migration as an opportunity to exercise self-autonomy independent from parents have a lot to do with engagement in child labor migration. On the other hand,- the political economy perspective contends that children's involvement in labor is grounded in particular politico-historical, ecological, and economic contexts (Abebe & Bessell, 2011a; Kibrom et al., 2015). It assumes that economic and political transformations across the globe have varied & complex impacts on children. These include poverty, inappropriate policies, debt, structural adjustment programs (SAPs), geopolitical conflicts, corruption, war, and unjust trade. In the context of rural Ethiopia, the connection between inadequacy of natural resources versus more prevalence of child labor migration has been strong (Balcha, 2018; Bezu & Holden, 2014; Dejenie, 2013), and child labor migration is generally seen as a strategy utilized by poor households to survive (Bezu & Holden, 2014; Gubhaju & De Jong, 2009). Regarding policy, Ethiopia's land policy permits the government to work

on land provision to rural communities, but for the last two decades, no new land allocation has been done (Dessalegn et al., 2020), which may initiate children to migrate for employment opportunities.

Additionally, in the country, over the last few decades, the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) strategy encouraged the expansion of cash crops that rely on migrant laborers (Ayele & Degefa, 2022; Mueller et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the government is not expanding institutions and infrastructures at commercial farms, which influence the working conditions of laborers at the destination (Ayele & Degefa, 2022). The role of legal institutions and formulation of rights, especially in the context of migration, is to reduce individual's vulnerability (Pongiglione & Sala, 2019; Van de Glind & Kou, 2013). In this context, Ethiopia lacks a well-designed internal migration policy which may impede development benefits and increase the scope for migrant laborers vulnerability at the destination (Ayele & Degefa, 2022; Dessalegn et al., 2020). Furthermore, the Ethnic-based Regionalism policy may also discourage child labor mobility across regions and it may influence spatial and temporal patterns as well as the employment situation of laborers (Dessalegn et al., 2020; Pankhurst et al., 2015). Hence, it is assumed that the political economy view behind child labor in the context of migration would explain the processes, structures, and policies at local, national and international levels behind the causes of child labor migration as well as influencing their working conditions. Absence of child labor protection, government negligence, absence of government investment on infrastructure at destination, absence of social welfare at the destination, absence of laws and institutions that regulate worker-employer relation at the destination are indicators of the political-economy variables that impact child labor working conditions at the destination.

Generally, child labor migration decisions and migrant children's working conditions (Ayele & Degefa, 2022; Dessalegn et al., 2020) at a given local level cannot be separated from social, cultural, political, economic, and ecological factors at various geographical scales. Like wise, the age and level of education they migrate make them to engage in informal sector such as daily labor which receives limited government protection. This contributes for their vulnerability at the destination (Ayele & Degefa, 2022). Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework developed based on the socio-cultural and political economy perspectives considered above. In this study, the focus is only on child labor migrants who took part in temporary migration for work outside of their place of origin as migrant laborers for at least one month but not more than one year. In the context of this study, the term children comprise those whose age is between 5 and 17 years. The five years age as a lower limit is used assuming that children below the age of 5 years could not participate in child labor migration, which is in line with the ILO (2017) definition.

The study area and methodology

Study area

The study area, *Sekela* district (see Fig. 2), is one of the Amhara National Region districts sending inter-rural child labor migrants. It is situated in the West Gojjam zone, bordered on the southwest by *Bure*, on the southeast by *Jabitehinan*, on the west by *Banja* and *Fagita Lekoma*, on the north by *Mecha*, on the northeast by *Yilmana Densa*, and on the

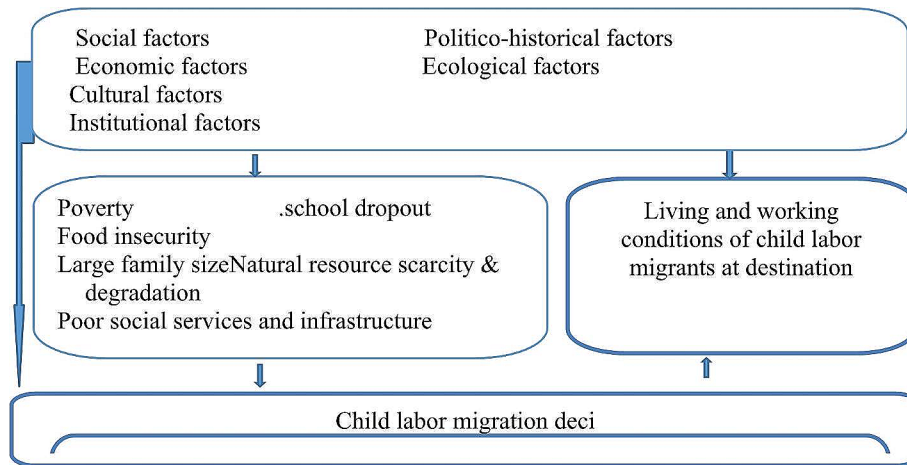


Fig. 1 Conceptual framework of the study. (Source: Developed by authors based on literature)

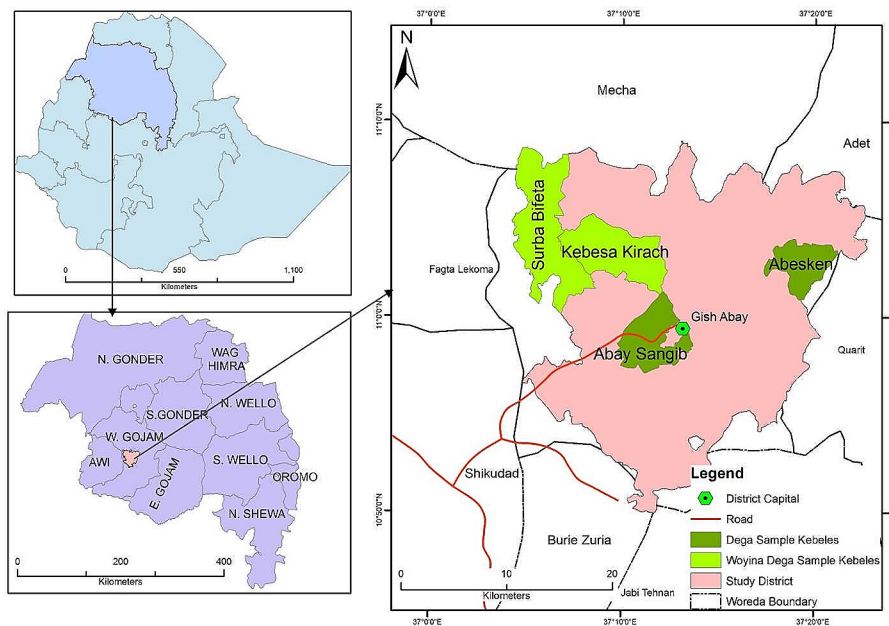


Fig. 2 Map of the study area. Source: compiled by authors

east by *Quarit* districts. The district is composed of 3 urban and 30 rural *Kebeles*³. The district's total area is 768.83 km² (Ayalew et al., 2019). *Gish Abay* is the district's administrative center, and it is named after the nearby Mount *Gish* and the *Abay* River (the Blue Nile).

The district's total population in 2021 is estimated to be 171,792, of whom 85,256 are males and 86,536 are females (CSA, 2021). Only 13,759 are urban residents (SDPO, 2021). The district's population density is about 218.9 p/km², which is higher than the

³ *Kebele* is the lowest administrative unit that contains villages.

average for the zone (158.25 p/km²). The economic base of the inhabitants is crop production and animal raising (SDPO, 2021). About 98% of the population is engaged in agricultural activities, and the remaining 2% practice off-farming economic activities such as trade and local alcohol distilling (Geremewe, 2019). In the area, crop farming highly depends on *Kiremt* (summer) rain, which falls from June to September. A negligible number of households use irrigation, particularly for potato production. Crops cultivated in the district include potatoes, barley, lupin, and beans (SDADO, 2021).

Based on the traditional agro-ecological zonation, the district is *Dega(cool)* and *Woyina dega* (temperate), covering 70% and 30% of the district's area, respectively. The mean annual rainfall of the district is 1524 mm, and its average daily temperature is 20.24 °C.

The district is one of the region's most degraded and resource-poor areas, where the food safety net program has been undertaken since the mid of 2022.

Methodology

The study uses mixed methods to ensure the research results' trustworthiness (Creswell, 2014). The complex nature of child labor and migration issues demands employing a mixed methods research design. From types of mixed methods, sequential embedded mixed method research design is used (Bartholomew & Brown, 2012; Plano Clark et al., 2008). This study's qualitative data is embedded within the primary quantitative data (Plano Clark et al., 2008).

Selection of Sample sites and Sample households

The study employs multi-stage sampling that involves both probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling techniques. Child labor migration is prevalent in different districts at varied levels and is a source of endogeneity. To reduce the endogeneity problem in research, the literature recommends utilizing a multi-stage sampling procedure (Ibrahim, 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2022). To this end, first, purposive sampling is used to select research locations (migrant sending and receiving study areas) based on information obtained from five government bodies such as food security, agricultural extension, labor and social affairs, and health officers and experts at the zonal level administration. It has been reported that child rural-rural labor migration is a more common practice in *Sekela* district than in other migrant-sending districts in the zone as it is degraded, food insecure, and incapable of feeding its population. It is also found that *Burie zuria* and *Jawi* districts from the Amhara region, *Dangur* district from *Benishangul* region, and *Abe Dengoro* district from *Oromia* region are more common destination areas than any other destinations.

The second stage involves randomly selecting migrant-sending *kebeles* from the selected migrant-sending district. With the consultation of government representatives and experts at district-level offices of labor and social affairs, health office, disaster management & food security, plan commission, and agriculture, it could be understood that the entire *kebeles* in the district do practice child labor migration. Hence, four *kebeles* are randomly chosen- two from *dega (cool)* and the other two from *Woyina dega* (temperate) agro-ecology. Accordingly, Abesken and Abay Sangib *kebeles* from *dega* agro-ecology (whose average elevation is from 2300-3200 m a.m.s.l.), and *Kebesa kirach* and *Surba bifeta* *kebeles* from *Woina dega* agro-ecology (whose average elevation is from 1500-2300 m a.m.s.l.) are randomly selected for the study. The sampling frame of these

kebele administrations have 804 (*Abay Sangib*), 891 (*Abesken*), 734 (*Kebesa kirach*), and 1085 (*Surba bifeta*) households, respectively (Table 1) (SDHDO, 2021).

In the third stage, experts at the district level, elders, health extension workers, and development agents at the *kebele* level are consulted to choose 31 sample villages from the four sample *kebeles*. The villages are selected from as places that accommodate a high number of child laborers engaged in temporary inter-rural migration in the last twelve months. Similar technique is employed by other researchers elsewhere (Ayele & Degefa, 2022; Geda & Yusufe, 2009) to analyze adult labor migration. The sample size is determined based on precision rate and confidence level (Kothari, 2004).

$$n = \frac{z^2 p \cdot q \cdot N}{e^2 (N - 1) + z^2 \cdot p \cdot q}$$

Where;

n=sample size;

e=margin of error (0.05);

N=total households (3514);

z=standard variate at a given confidence level(1.96);

p=0.5.

q=0.5.

So, to assess the causes of child labor migration and their working conditions, 204 child labor migrant households are surveyed. The list of households registered by *kebele*-level health extension officers (which they use for vital registration) is used as a sampling frame to select samples randomly. Based on the list, the names of household heads in each *kebele* are written on pieces of paper, and they are thrown on a bowl-shaped material and a blindfold is put on a data collector, and samples are picked from the pieces until the needed number of samples are got. Accordingly, 204 child labor migrants are considered at their place of origin while they came to their parents from January to May when agricultural work is less available at the destination.

Based on the collected survey data from 204 sample child labor migrants, they are grouped into three groups: full-time wage laborer(121), casual wage laborer(78), and own crop farmer(5). The classification is based on the type of primary occupation child labor migrants participated in at the destination.

Temporary child labor migrants, in this case, are those who have participated in inter-rural child labor migration in the last 12 months prior to the survey period and who have waited from one month up to a year in their place of destination/s as migrants.

Data Collection Instruments: Data sources of this paper include questionnaires as the primary source of quantitative data, whereas focus group discussions (FGDs), key

Table 1 The distributions of sample households from each type of household across

Sample Kebeles	Total HH size	Number of villages	Sample Villages	Non-child labor migrant HH	Child Labor Migrant HH	Agro-ecology
Abesken	891	9	5	(30)302	(58)589	<i>Dega</i>
Abay sangib	804	12	6	(38)390	(41)414	<i>Dega</i>
Kebesa kirach	734	14	7	(25)250	(47)484	<i>Woyina Dega</i>
Surba bifeta	1085	18	8	(49)497	(58)588	<i>Woyina Dega</i>
Total	3514	58	31	(142)1439	(204)2075	

N.B. numbers in the bracket are the size of sample. Source: authors survey, 2022

informant interviews (KIIs), informal conversational interviews (ICIs), and direct observation as qualitative data sources. Initially, qualitative data-gathering tools are used to get preliminary information to comprehend the dynamics of child labor migration and devise data collection instruments. Then, all qualitative tools and secondary sources are employed to yield data that supplemented quantitative information gathered through a questionnaire (Caruth, 2013; Creswell, 2014). The questionnaire comprises both close and open-ended types of questions and covering various issues: reasons for migration, background information about child labor migrants, spatial and temporal patterns of migration, working conditions of migrants at the destination, and the contribution of migration to rural households. During data gathering, attempts are made to collect data with the presence of more than one respondent, including household head and migrant, to obtain reliable data on the various issues raised. The questionnaire is piloted before the actual study began. The researcher and data collectors who speak the local language conducted the survey.

On the other hand, key informant interviews with experts and concerned bodies are vital as the interviewees' job experience links them with child labor migrants. In key informant interviews, issues such as reasons and migration patterns are addressed to complement data gained from household heads and child labor migrants. The interviews are carried out on a pre-arranged schedule.

The FGDs with child labor migrants comprise twelve focus groups (three from each kebele involving one from each type of occupation that child labor migrants engaged in) with 8–10 participants. Independently, eight focus groups (two from each kebele) with 8–10 migrant-sending households are undertaken. KIIs are made with purposely selected 15 experts from five relevant offices at the place of origin: Agriculture, Health, Education, Labor and Social Affairs, and Police. All key informants are recruited based on their awareness and potential to give the required information. KIIs are also made with 12 officers, taking four from each of the three leading destination areas (Wemberma, Bure zuria, and Jawi districts) with informants from different offices to have complete data regarding their working conditions at the destination. The interviews are carried out on a pre-arranged schedule. Audio recorders and note-taking are employed to record interviews after orally assuring the consent of informants.

In addition, informal conversational interviews (ICIs) are conducted with child labor migrants in a casual setting, such as while meeting a child labor migrant or their parent over coffee or lunch, which gives them the freedom to disclose their experiences freely. Follow-up interviews are also carried out through mobile phones at times when additional information is required.

Furthermore, field observation is also made to gather data on the physical characteristics of the place of origin and assess the working environments of child labor migrants at their destination.

Data Analysis

To make an analysis of the quantitative data, STATA version 14 is employed. Descriptive statistics is used to treat tables, percentages, and frequencies, while chi-square as inferential statistics to test association. Qualitative data analysis is used to supplement the quantitative results. All interviews are subjected to transcription and then translated into English. For managing transcript and supporting data analysis, NVivo version 11

Table 2 The relationship between age and sex the of respondents

Child Migrants Age	Child Labor Migrants' Sex					
	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	f	%	F	%
8–10	8	4	3	12	11	5
11–13	38	21	3	12	41	20
14–17	132	74	20	77	152	75
Total	178	100	26	100	204	100

Source : authors survey, 2022

Table 3 Types of the occupation and age of child labor migrants

Occupation types	Mean	Std. Dev.	f
Full Time Wage Labor	14.809917	2.4910307	121
Casual Daily Labor	14.679487	1.7909846	78
Own Crop Farmer	15.4	1.8165902	5
Total	14.77451	2.227932	204

Source : authors survey, 2022

qualitative data analysis software is used. It sorts and links clusters of codes and retrieves qualitative data (Miles & Huberman, 1994). This study employs a thematic analysis tool as part of the qualitative data analysis. Issues raised in each interview session are grouped under similar folders based on their connections and relevance. Under each folder, thematic issues are identified and analyzed as causes of child labor migration, occupational patterns, spatial patterns, temporal patterns of migrants, etc., to look at the causes of child labor migration and their working conditions at destination areas.

Finally, discussions are made by presenting the results of the quantitative strand followed by the supportive qualitative findings which is named by as a side-by-side comparison.

Ethical considerations Prior to the actual data collection, the aim of the study and the issue of confidentiality are addressed to the respondents. To facilitate the research, formal letter of support is written by Bahir Dar University.

Results and discussions

Demographic and socio-economic characteristics of the respondents

The majority of child labor migrants (87% or 178 out of 204) are male, reflecting gender roles in child labor migration (Table 1). The lower proportion of girls is due to concerns about their vulnerability to sexual abuse and their responsibilities for domestic activities at home. In the Amhara region, there's a cultural perception that domestic chores are girls' duties, while labor migration is seen as men's responsibility (Abeje, 2021). This gendered division of labor devalues girls' work as migrant laborers in rural communities. The dominance of males in inter-rural labor migration stems partly from the patriarchal norms of society, supported by studies in Ethiopia (Asfaw, 2007; Asfaw et al., 2010), Ghana (Hashim, 2005), and Uganda (Czuba, 2012).

Regarding age, 75% of child labor migrants are aged 14–17, and 20% are aged 11–13 (Table 2). The minimum age is 8, with a mean age of 14.7 overall, 14.6 for casual daily laborers, 14.8 for full-time wage laborers, and 15.4 for own crop farmers (Table 3). Many child labor migrants are too young for formal employment, often migrating

during vacations or deferring schooling to save money for education. Similar findings are reported in other studies in Ethiopia (Dad, 2021). Child labor-sending parents in the FGDs in all kebeles disclose that though children of better ages are more favored, they encourage children of all ages to engage in activities they're willing to do, reflecting the gendered and aged structure of rural labor markets and the collaborative agency of households in child labor migration asserting the socio-cultural context behind the practice.

Relation to household heads, marital, and educational status of child migrants

Relation to household head

The vast majority (92%) of child labor migrants are children of household heads, followed by grand children (4%). Brothers, sisters, and other relatives each account for 2% (Table 4). Despite concerns about mistreatment by stepparents driving migration, most migrant children come from intact families, reflecting the socio-cultural acceptance of child labor migration. This aligns with findings in other studies on youth migration in Ethiopia, such as those by Dad (2021) in the *Mecha* district.

Marital status The vast majority (95%) of child labor migrants are single, with only 3.4% being divorced and 1.5% married (Table 4). Due to their young age, child labor migrants are not yet of marriageable age, leading to single men dominating this demographic. This finding is supported by previous studies (Abeje, 2021; Asfaw et al., 2010).

Educational status

During the survey period, the largest share of child labor migrants (44%) were in grades 1–6, followed by 25.5% in grades 7–8 and 19.6% in grades 9–12 (Table 4). The majority (90%) of child labor migrants have completed primary education or higher. This trend is supported by the argument that the expansion of education in rural areas motivates

Table 4 Marital status, relation to hhs, and educational status of child labor migrants

Marital Status	Frequency	Per cent
Single	194	95.1
Married	3	1.5
Divorced	7	3.4
Total	204	100.0
Child Labor Migrants' Relation to Household Heads		
Child	187	91.7
Grandchild	9	4.4
Relative	4	2.0
Brother/sister	4	2.0
Total	204	100
Educational background		
Illiterate	12	5.9
Read and write	9	4.4
Grades 1–6	91	44.6
Grades 7–8	52	25.5
Grades 9–12	40	19.6
Total	204	100

Source : authors survey, 2022

Table 5 Primary occupation of child labor migrants at their place of origin

	Primary occupation at origin	f	%
1	Student	145	71
2	Child farm worker	25	12.3
3	Child farm labor	22	10.8
4	Child labor in non- farm activities	12	5.9
	Total	204	100

Source : authors survey, 2022

Table 6 Causes of child labor migration

Primary causes for the prevalence of child labor migration	Primary occupation at destination			Total	X ²
	Full time child labor	Casual daily child labor	Own crop farming		
Food scarcity	43(35.5%)	9(11.5%)	2(40%)	54(26.5%)	P = 0.000
Indebtedness	1(0.8%)	0(0.0%)	0(0.0%)	1(0.5%)	
Socio-cultural practice	10(8.3%)	4(5.1%)	0(0.0%)	14(6.9%)	
Expansion of commercial farmlands	27(22.3%)	17(21.8%)	0(0.0%)	44(21.6%)	
Low return of education	7(5.8%)	4(5.1%)	0(0.0%)	11(5.4%)	
Resource degradation	10(8.3%)	1(1.3%)	3(60.0%)	14(6.9%)	
To cover festival expenditure	1(0.8%)	1(1.3%)	0(0.0%)	2(1.0%)	
To buy modern goods and cloths	22(18.2%)	42(53.8%)	0(0.0%)	64(31.4%)	
Total	121(100%)	78(100%)	5(100%)	204(100%)	

Source : authors survey, 2022

labor outmigration by exposing children to socio-economic opportunities elsewhere (Dad, 2021).

Primary occupations at the place of Origin

At their origin, the majority (71%) of child labor migrants are students (Table 5). In focus group discussions (FGDs), it is observed that these students engage in temporary migration to earn money for education costs. This aligns with the cultural practice of funding education through temporary labor migration. This finding is consistent with research by Boyden (2013) in West Africa and Beazley (2015) in Southeast Asia, highlighting the prevalence of child labor migration in areas where social aspirations cannot be met. Child farm unpaid workers paid farm laborers, and non-farm laborers constitute 12%, 11%, and 6% of respondents, respectively, reflecting the limited involvement in non-farm activities in rural Ethiopia (Ayele & Degefa, 2022).

Primary causes of child Labor Migration

The primary motivation for casual daily laborers (53.8%) is the desire to purchase goods and clothing, while resource degradation drives migration for own crop farming (60%) at the destination (see Table 6). A significant association exists between the cause of migration and the type of occupation at the destination ($P < 0.01$). Food scarcity is the predominant reason (35.5%) for full-time wage laborers.

Desire for goods and clothes The majority of child labor migrants (31.4%) cite the desire for goods and clothes as their primary motivation for migration. This is in line with a finding in Burkina Faso (De Lange, 2007), who assert that the personalized demands of the boys for goods and clothes are the major push factor behind their migration. Among casual daily laborers, predominantly students, this desire is even more pronounced

(53.9%). In FGDs with casual daily laborers it is noted that limited parental resources, compounded by large family sizes, lead to a lack of basic educational amenities like exercise books and uniforms, driving them to seek work to satisfy personal needs. This phenomenon is reported previously in Ethiopia (Kassa & Abebe, 2016). Regarding this, many of the participant children in the FGDs with sorrow describe the challenge of attending school, especially when their school is far from their parent's house (high schools are found in few *kebeles* of the district). This emerges specifically in FGDs with casual child labor migrants in *Surba bifeta*, *Abesken*, and a number of interviews in *Kebesa*. One respondent from *Kebesa* recalls.

My parents have three school children who need a fee for uniforms, exercise books, and registration. As a high school student, my school is far from my parents' home. And more than two of my younger siblings, I have to secure a dormitory at Kebesa, which demands rent cost. So, from June to August, I engage in temporary labor migration to Kuchi to support my family and siblings' education (Interview, 2022).

In FGDs, parents note their children's strong desire for goods like mobile phones and shoes alongside essential educational materials. Having a mobile phone is particularly emphasized among casual child laborers, symbolizing modernity and sparking competition among them.

Food scarcity: 26.5% of participants cite food scarcity as their major push factor for migration (see Table 6). In FGDs with migrant-sending parents and key informant elders, it's observed that the district's harsh conditions and degraded land limit crop cultivation. Cold weather restricts crop growth, with only potatoes being reliably productive among crops like barley, lupin, and beans (SDADO, 2021). Regarding this issue, a food security officer in *Sekela* district emphasizes: "Our district faces food insecurity due to poor agro-ecology. Crop farming relies solely on *Kiremt* (summer) rain, which occurs from June to September. The rugged topography makes irrigation impractical. As a coping strategy, many parents involve their children in labor migration." (Interview, 2022).

In rural areas of the Amhara region, having many children is common, with migrant-sending parents having an average household size of 5.39. This abundance of dependent yet consumer children may lead some parents to send their children for labor migration, as argued elsewhere (Abeje, 2021; Adedeji, 2022; Dad, 2021). In FGDs with migrant-sending parents, child labor migration is seen as a survival strategy to reduce the household's dependency ratio, even if the child returns without money. This practice is supported because it decreases household consumption demands, with parents relying on remittances to purchase food items. These findings underscore the prevalence of poverty as a driver of child labor migration, aligning with the political economy view of child labor.

Expansion of commercial farm lands This study reveals that the expansion of commercial farm lands is the third major driver of child labor migration, with 21.6% of respondents citing it as a cause. FGDs with labor and social affairs officers confirm the presence of full-time wage labor employment on commercial farms in areas like *Burie zuria*, *Kuchi*, *Pawi*, and *Jawi* driven by the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) policy. This aligns with research on cocoa farms in other West African countries (Anyidoho & Ainsworth, 2009), where rural children work alongside adults. The noted areas

are favorable for cash crop production, attracting investors in crops like sesame, pepper, soya bean, and maize, which employ many child labor migrants. The establishment of the *Bure* Integrated Agro-industrial Park further encourages commercial farming (Abay, 2020). This trend reflects agro-ecological, market, and policy contexts, confirming the political economy view of child labor. The government's promotion of agricultural product export drives child labor out-migration from *Sekela* to these sites, highlighting the impact of national development policies (Pankhurst et al., 2015; Tegegne & Penker, 2016). Globalization plays a role, with increasing demand for oil seeds creating job opportunities that attract migrants. This highlights how globalization offers diverse job opportunities for child labor migrants, whose participation depends on household asset possession, as argued by others (De Haan, 2000; Linger Ayele, 2019). Child labor migration thus becomes a livelihood strategy, confirming the political economy view behind migration for child labor.

FGDs participant child labor migrants highlight their high demand in commercial farms. In this regard, a Labor and Social Affairs officer at *Sekela* district describes the situation as follows;

Just on the onset of seedlings of crops such as Maize, Soyabean, Sesame, Red Pepper, Teff, and others, employers from different areas of Amhara region come to Gish Abay (the district's capital), and our office has outsourced the task of linking employees to employers to a private agency. Accordingly, there is one agency in Gish Abay named as Getahun, Teshome and His Friends' Employee-employer Linking Agency. Child laborers gather in a small field in front of the agency's office every Friday. Employees come with their identification cards. The agency prepares contractual agreements stating the duties and obligations of both parties in three copies-one for the employee, the second for the employer, and the third copy remains at the agency. As a supervisor of the agency, our office never lets children be employed. However, we are facing challenges in restricting child labor. First, children under 18 come with an identification card prepared in their respective kebele with falsified age. A child of 15 years old may come with a card indicating the age as if it is 18. In such circumstances, we order them to bring their parents. Unfortunately, almost all parents support the argument of their children and reaffirm the falsified age to promote their children's migration for labor. Rarely, if their physical appearance is recognizably below 18 years, the agency will never link them with employers. However, these denied children go to commercial farms by themselves (Interview, 2022).

The script indicates that age-related regulations and laws in recruiting child laborers are rarely enforced. This is partly due to the deliberate actions of children and their households, as well as the weaknesses of lower administrative institutions like *Kebele* in accurately issuing identification cards reflecting the actual age of children.

Socio-cultural factors About 7% of child labor migrants cite socio-cultural factors as their primary reason for labor migration. FGDs with migrant children and their parents reveal that children who engage in labor migration and bring assets back home are highly esteemed in society, indicating that culture plays a significant role in driving child labor migration. This finding is consistent with research in the Amhara region (Abeje, 2021), which found positive attitudes towards migration in districts like Este and Mecha.

Elderly informants affirm that child labor migration is perceived positively in the district, regardless of parental wealth. Impoverished and relatively affluent families see it as a means of survival and supplemental income, leading children to prefer migration over staying home. In connection with this, one child labor migrant sending father shares his perspective.

I have two girls and a boy. My son helps me significantly with farm work. However, once the school year ends in June, he insists on leaving for wage labor migration. Now, I've accepted that if I find another male assistant, I'll hire him for farm work or work with my daughters, while my son migrates for wage labor." (Interview, 2022).

The script strengthens the notion that the culture of migration is deeply ingrained in the society, especially among boys. In FGDs with casual daily laborers, it's emphasized that migration carries an aspirational aspect as it offers opportunities to explore new areas. Returnees, as observed in ICIs with children, showcase their success through the visible use of purchased goods, notably clothing and electronic equipment, which attracts other children to join the migration stream. Additionally, casual daily laborers perceive migration as a chance to develop their self-autonomy, highlighting the socio-cultural factors driving engagement in child labor migration.

Resource degradation: About 7% of the child labor migrants state it as their primary reason. Disaggregated by type of occupation, there is a statistically significant difference among own crop farming(60%), casual daily laborers(1.3%), and full-time child laborers(8.3%). During FGDs with parents, it is illustrated that the adjacent districts, such as Bure and Jabitehnan, are incomparably endowed with fertile soil and favorable agro-ecology. The inhabitants' grievances in their district include resource degradation (infertile soil), poor agro-ecology, crop failure due to torrential rainfall, and landlessness, as argued elsewhere (Abeje, 2021; Dad, 2021). This demonstrates that child labor migration in the district reflects the political economy view, which argues that children's involvement in labor is grounded in poverty, maladministration, and poor ecological context reflected in resource degradation and landlessness. In line with this, recent data gathered by the Ethiopia Socio-economic Survey (ESS) uncovered that the youth in rural areas have less access to farmland, resulting in labor migration for employment (Abeje, 2021; Mueller et al., 2019).

Low return of education, intent to cover the cost of festival, and indebtedness are the other primary causes for the prevalence of child labor migration altogether, explained by 6.9% of the respondents. Similar argument is rendered by Adedeji (2022) in Nigeria, describing illiteracy and poverty as causes of labor migration. FGDs with child labor migrants reveal how unemployed graduates in the district discourage school attendance. Concerning this, informants from the Labor and Social Affairs office at the district level addressed that unemployment of graduated youth is one of the district's chronic social problems, pushing school children to wage labor migration.

Spatial patterns of child Labor Migration

Child labor migration in the study area exhibits strong intra-regional patterns, with the majority (92%) migrating within the Amhara region and smaller proportions moving to adjacent regions like Benishangul (7%) and Oromia (1%)(Fig. 3). This pattern aligns with previous studies in Ethiopia (Alemayehu & Fekadu, 2019) and Vietnam (Ligam, 2013),

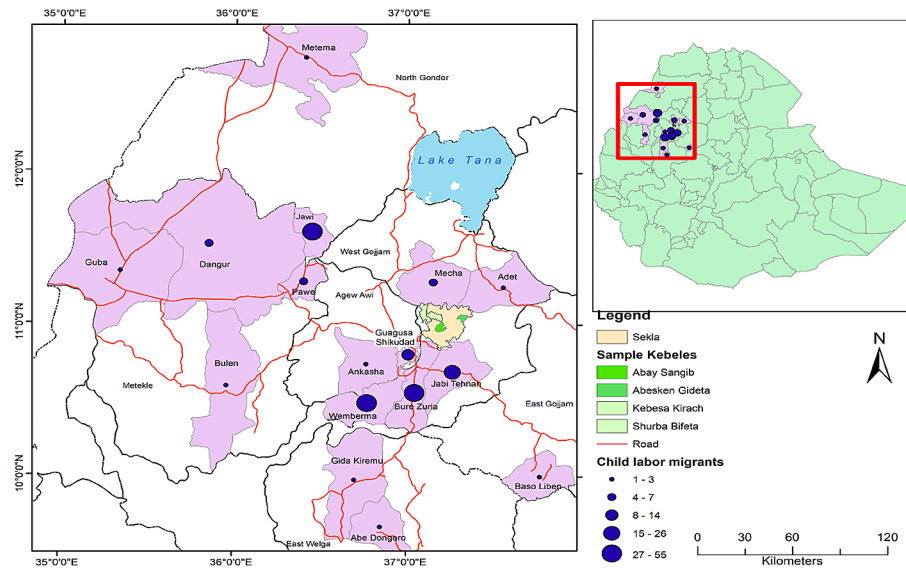


Fig. 3 A map showing the destination areas of child labor migrant. Source: compiled by authors

Table 7 Months of stay away from the place of origin across types of occupations

Main Occupation at Destination	Months of stay away from home				Total
	1–3 Months	4–6 Months	7–9 Months	10–12 Months	
Full time wage Labor	29(23.9%)	59(48.7%)	18(14.8%)	15(12.4%)	121(100)
Casual Daily Labor	56(71.8%)	22(28.2%)	0	0	78(100)
Own Crop Farming	1(20%)	2(40%)	2(40%)	0	5(100)
Total	86(42.2)	83(40.7)	20(9.8)	15(7.3)	204(100)

Source : authors survey, 2022

and the destination regions are notable for their cash crop production. Several factors contribute to this intra-regional dominance: (1) Ethnic-based administration of the present government (Ayele & Degefa, 2018; Gebreselassie, 2006) worsens inter-ethnic conflict (FAO, 2022), mainly targeting Amhara migrants in *Oromia* and *Benishangul Gumz* regions (Ayele & Degefa, 2018; Gebreselassie, 2006). (2) The establishment of the *Bure* Integrated Agro-industrial Park promotes cash crop production, aligning with the Agricultural Development Led Industrialization (ADLI) policy and fueling child labor migration (Alamineh & Bitew, 2022). (3) Linguistic, religious, and cultural differences may deter migrants from crossing into other regions. (4) Inter-regional migration may be costlier than intra-regional migration. (5) The primary occupation of child labor migrants as students may favor shorter journeys to minimize school disruptions. Major intra-regional destination districts include *Womberma*, *Bure zuria*, and *Jabi tehnan* in West Gojjam zone, accommodating 63% of migrants, followed by *Jawi* and *Guagusa shikudad* districts in *Agew Awi* Zone, constituting 23% of migrants.

Temporal patterns of child labor migration

Child labor migrants depart from their place of origin for an average of 4.6 months. The majority (42%) stay away for 1–3 months, while 41% leave for 4–6 months (see Table 7). This pattern is consistent with findings in Southern Ethiopia (Dejenie, 2013). Disaggregated data by occupation types show significant variation: 72% of casual daily laborers stay away for 1–3 months, reflecting the seasonal nature of their job. In contrast, 49%

Table 8 Primary occupations of child labor migrants at destination

Primary Occupations at Destination	Child migrant's sex		Total	χ^2
	Male	Female		
Full time Wage Labor			121 (59.3%)	0.005
Casual Daily Labor	98	23	78(38.2%)	
Own Crop Farming	75	3	5(2.5%)	
Total	5	0	204(100%)	

Source : authors survey, 2022

Table 9 Primary occupations and forms of child labor migration

Primary occupation types at destination		Form of child labor migrant		Total	χ^2
		Independent migrant	Accompanied migrant		
Full time Wage Labor	<i>f</i>	85	36	121	0.000
	%	70.2%	29.8%		
Casual Daily Labor	<i>f</i>	73	5	78	
	%	93.6%	6.4%		
Own Crop Farming	<i>f</i>	2	3	5	
	%	40%	60%		
Total	<i>f</i>	160	44	204	
	%	78.4%	21.6%		

Source : authors survey, 2022

of full-time wage laborers depart for 4–6 months, while 80% of child labor migrants engaged in own crop farming leave for 4–9 months. Statistical analysis using one-way ANOVA confirms significant variation in the average months of stay away from home among different types of occupation ($F(2, 201)=29.81, P=0.000$). Specifically, own crop farmers have the longest duration of stay (5.8 months), followed by full-time wage laborers (5.4 months), while casual daily laborers have the shortest duration (2.8 months). This highlights how the nature of the occupation influences the length of time child labor migrants spend at their destination.

Primary Occupations of Child Labor Migrants and Working conditions at the destination

The primary occupations of child labor migrants at their destination fall into three major categories: full-time wage labor, casual daily labor, and own crop farming. Others make similar categorization (Ayele & Degefa, 2020; Kware, 1988). The majority (59%) engage in full-time wage labor, consistent with findings in Nigeria (Agbonlahor & Phillip, 2015). Casual labor and own crop farming account for 38% and 2% of child labor migrants, respectively (see Table 8). Disaggregated data by sex show that girls are absent in own crop farming, and the Chi-square test confirms a significant association between occupation at the destination and the sex of the migrant ($P<0.01$). This aligns with previous work in Ethiopia (Balcha, 2018) and Ghana (Huijsmans, 2011), where girls are predominantly engaged in domestic chores. Similarly, occupation at the destination is associated with forms of child labor migration: independent child labor migrants dominate casual and full-time wage labor employment types, while accompanied child labor migrants dominate own crop farming occupation, as confirmed by the Chi-square test ($P<0.01$) (see Table 9). Here, the nature of the occupations and working conditions are discussed in the succeeding sub-topics.

Full-time wage labor

Child labor migrants enter contracts as farm laborers in commercial farms with their own camps, at private farms (known as *Qenja*), and in non-farm activities. The majority (60%) work in commercial farms with camps, followed by full-time wage employment at private farms (33%) and non-farm activities (7%) (see Table 10). Full-time wage laborers, as reported in FGDs, sign monthly contracts with a daily cash payment of 100ETB⁴. They receive their payment in bulk at the end of each month, which they perceive as a form of saving, a practice observed in rural Burkina Faso (De Lange, 2007). Participants in FGDs note that conflicts among child laborers are common in camps, with those involved facing financial deductions from their per diem as punishment.,

In this regard, a 17-year-old labor migrant from *Kebesa* describes the working conditions of full-time wage employment in a camp as follows:

Others and I, employed full-time, typically work for the entire month, with food and shelter provided, but face various challenges. Firstly, working on Sundays conflicts with our Orthodox Christian religious beliefs, which we are not accustomed to while living at home. Secondly, the food provided is substandard and repetitive. Breakfast consists of bread and water (no tea). Lunch is often roasted maize (niffero), and dinner is one Injera (traditional flatbread) with tasteless Shiro (Ethiopian chickpea stew). The repetitive meals lead to boredom and hunger, exacerbated by irregular lunch times. As the water is impure, waterborne disease is common. The living conditions are also poor, with overcrowded rooms accommodating 20 to 30 laborers sleeping on plastic sheets with no blankets. Every laborer wears his own Gojjama-zene (traditional handmade cloth worn in Gojjam). Conflict among laborers often arises, and the camp manager imposes disciplinary actions, such as deducting 2–4 days of pay per incident, contributing to labor exploitation (Interview, 2022).

The story highlights the prevalence of conflicts at work sites, potentially linked to poor mentoring. Additionally, the punishment mechanism employed by the camp manager is financially exploitative to child laborers, indicating a lack of government labor supervision to regulate working conditions for migrants. Even the government's labor proclamation (42/1993) (Transitional Government of Ethiopia, 1993), which permits child laborers aged 14–18 to take weekends off, is not respected. This vulnerability stems from various factors, such as the lack of social services and infrastructure, inadequate protection for children, and the absence of migration policies. These issues align with the concept of political economy, where economic factors intersect with political and social structures to influence labor conditions. Focus groups with full-time wage child labor migrants also reveal instances of employers breaching agreements, particularly

Table 10 Full time occupation types of child labor migrants at destination

Full time occupation types	f	%
1.Full time wage labor in cash at Camp	72	59.5
2.Full time wage farm labor in kind(<i>Qenja</i>) at a farmer	9	7.4
3.Full time wage non- farm labor (Cafe, shop, restaurant)	9	7.4
4.Full time wage labor in cash (<i>Qenja</i>) at farmer	31	25.7
Total	121	100.0

Source : authors survey, 2022

⁴ ETB=Ethiopian Birr, the National Currency, and 1USD=49.5 ETB.

regarding payment. Police officers in destination areas confirm receiving complaints from children when they are not paid what they are owed, prompting intervention to ensure proper payment by employers.

Here, stating the explanation of a police officer in *Womberma* is worth mentioning:

Child laborers often report being forced to work long hours, usually starting from 1:00 in the morning and lasting until 11:00, exceeding the workload indicated in their contracts. They also complain about payment deductions, where they may have worked for 30 days but are only paid for 20 days. Additionally, there are grievances about the per diem, where employers may verbally agree to pay 100 ETB/day during the contract but recruit self-migrating laborers at a lower cost of 80 ETB/day at the campsite. At the end of the month, both groups are treated equally, leading to complaints from those who came through agencies(Interview, 2022).

They face under payment and non-payment by their employers, which is called consensual exploitation (Adedeji, 2022), which may lead children to stay away from home longer than planned. It can be argued that their vulnerability to these problems emanates from the absence of a national comprehensive migration policy (Ayele & Degefa, 2022; Dessalegn et al., 2020), and it tackles migration-related development initiatives and processes (Dessalegn et al., 2020) reflecting the political economy context behind child laborers exposure to exploitation. A similar report is made by Beazley (2015) in Southeast Asia. Mistreating them in payment meant that they may not return home due to lack of transportation fees or the shame of failing to acquire the finances they need for themselves or their parents (Hashim & Thorsen, 2011). In this sense, regulating the working environment of child labor migrants is critical to lessen the risk of children and thereby initiating sustainable rural development. At this juncture, it is important to say that the key implication of this findings points to the fact that even though significant efforts have been made by the government and international child right advocator agencies (for instance, eradicating child labor by 2025, sustainable development goals, education for all, etc.) to improve the life of children and the household well-being at large, it is suggested that these efforts are largely misguided; they are not geared towards monitoring the living and working situations of child laborers.

Another form of full-time wage employment is working at individual farmers' homes, known as *Qenja*⁵. In this arrangement, child laborers negotiate contracts with individual farmers to work on specified farming activities for certain months, with payment either in-kind or cash. The employer typically provides food. Contracts are made verbally or in writing, with two guarantors—one representing the child and the other representing the employer. In case of disputes, the guarantors play a crucial role in settling the issues between the contracting parties.

Child labor migrants involved in *qenja* work report variations in payment based on age, sex, and destination. Those below 14 years old are typically hired to primarily tend to keep livestock, receiving monthly cash payments ranging from 400 to 500 ETB. In some cases, they may receive payment in kind. These reports are particularly noted in FGDs in *Abesken*, as well as in various individual interviews conducted in *Kebesa* and *Surba bifeta*.

⁵ *Qenja* denotes a child labor migrant who is employed on an individual farmer's home just for certain period of time in exchange for in-cash or in-kind payment.

In this regard, one respondent, aged 13, from *Abesken* recalls ;

In June 2021, I traveled to *Kamashi* in *Benishangul Gumz*, where my sister and her husband reside. My brother-in-law introduced me to three farmers who owned goats. One farmer had 13 goats, and the other two had 14 goats each. Each farmer promised to give me one lamb after I served them for three months. So, for three months, I spent my days herding their goats. I would have breakfast in the morning, take my lunch with a plate provided by one of the farmers, and then graze the goats throughout the day. I would return them to their homes around 5 P.M. After three months of this work, I received three medium-sized goats as my reward. My sister's husband sold them for 2800 Birr. With the money, I returned to *Abesken*, where my mother used 2400 Birr to purchase a female sheep for me (Interview, 2022).

On the other hand, children aged 14 and above are typically chosen for hiring by employer farmers during the cropping season. However, child labor migrants often face challenges of over-exploitation in these roles. During the sowing season, they are required to feed oxen at dawn and engage in plowing from morning until sunset on all days of the week, which violates Ethiopia's Labor Proclamation No. 42/1993, setting conditions for child labor employment (Transitional Government of Ethiopia, 1993). This indicates that the mere existence of labor laws cannot ensure the rights of child laborers without proper implementation.

According to discussions with children, the food provided by hiring farmers is generally better than what is given in camps. Payment settlement usually involves in-cash payments, with higher wages offered in remote and hot areas like *Jawi*. Very rarely, where farmers have abundant land, male *qenjas* agree to in-kind payment to take proportional payment, which ranges between 1:7, where the child *qenja* takes one quintal of a given product for every seven quintals of the same product taken by his employer. Exceptionally in *Jawi*, it is 1:5. Some child *qenjas* indicate that there is harassment in different ways. The limitless control over them made child *qenjas* vulnerable to verbal and physical harassment from employers, and others render similar support to the argument (Anyidoho & Ainsworth, 2009; Balcha, 2018). If a child *qenja* conflicts with his employer, he will report to clerics in the nearby village, and the cleric will advise the employer to abide by the contracts. Otherwise, he will be discredited in the village and find it more challenging to hire workers in the future. There are notable differences between male and female laborers in terms of job nature, modalities, and payment amounts. Male *qenjas* are primarily employed for agricultural activities, while females are often hired for domestic work, as argued elsewhere (Balcha, 2018; Bargain & Boutin, 2015). However, some tasks require collaboration between both sexes. Regarding wages, boys typically receive higher payments than girls, with annual payments ranging between 8,000 and 10,000 ETB for boys and 6000–7200 ETB for girls during the 2020/2021 cropping season.

During an ICIs with a 15-year-old respondent from Suba Bifeta Kebele, it was disclosed that

I was employed as a qenja in Jawi by a farmer for eight months. Interestingly, there was also a female servant in the same household. My primary responsibility was undertaking farm activities, while the female servant was primarily engaged in cleaning animal dung, cooking food, bringing lunch to me and the household head in the farm field, and performing other domestic chores. Occasionally, the female

servant would join us in the fieldwork. I received a monthly wage of 800 ETB, while the female servant received 600 ETB (Interview, 2022).

The third category of full-time child wage employment involves non-farm labor, particularly in cafes and restaurants, with food and shelter provided. These jobs are typically found close to commercial farm lands. During FGDs with child laborers, it was revealed that they are employed during cropping seasons to sell drinking and edible items. Girls are often preferred over boys for these positions, and boys are only employed if no girls are available for the job. The monthly payment ranges from 600 to 800 ETB for both males and females. Female laborers highlighted that sexual harassment or abuse from customers and/or employers is a major challenge in this type of employment, which aligns with evidence provided in migration literature in Ethiopia by Abeje (2021) and elsewhere by Anthony et al. (2020).

Casual Daily Labor migrants

These child laborers embark on migration to contract temporary casual wage employment in agricultural or non-agricultural activities. It is noted in FGDs with casual daily child laborers that they are employed by carpenters during house construction, and farmers. They are contacted by potential employers in nearby destination towns where child laborers gather. FGD participant casual laborers reveal that the nature of employment has two categories based on the length of the contract- daily labor and contractual casual labor (for 1–3 weeks), referred to as *Senibato*⁶ (Table 11). In daily labor, the agreement is for a day based on a negotiated per diem, usually with only lunch provided for workers. In *Senibato*, the employer deals with child laborers on the per diem and number of days the employees stay with him, and the contract is made verbally. Here, the payment is made collectively at the end of the contract. The employer provides food and substandard shelter- *kenda*, a temporary establishment made of a few pieces of wood covered with plastic. *Senibato* is mainly practiced in remote agricultural areas where social services are lacking.

It is reported in the FGDs by child labor migrants that the severest form of child labor exploitation is in *Senibato*, as the following case illustrates ;

Small investors who rent land from farmers take us on foot to their remote farmland. Every day, we wake up early in the dawn at 6 A.M and work until sunset (7P.M). If the farm is a pepper farm, the workload is the worst. We uproot the pepper seedlings in the evening when no sunlight harms them, and early in the morning, we start planting the pepper seedlings on the land prepared for it. We work for 11 to 13 h per day. I joined Senibato believing the per diem is better here than in camps. The per diem is 150 ETB (Interview, 2022).

Table 11 Casual daily labor occupation types of child labor migrants at destination

Casual daily labor occupation types	Sex of child labor migrant		Total
	Male	Female	
Contract farm/non-farm labor	21(84.0%)	4(16.0%)	25(100%)
Daily Casual labor	4279.2%	11(20.8%)	53(100%)

Source : authors survey, 2022

⁶*Senibato* is a working condition where contractual casual laborers are employed by individual investor or farmer in remote farm areas usually for 1 to 3 weeks.

Hence, *Senibato* poses challenges on multiple fronts. Firstly, the remote working environment limits access to social services, with government labor regulation inspectorates rarely reaching these areas, as observed in rural Nigeria (Ibrahim, 2023; Salihu et al., 2015). Secondly, child laborers lack formal contractual agreements and have minimal autonomy over working conditions.

There are differences between daily labor and *Senibato* in terms of gender accommodation and payment. Daily labor employs both boys and girls, with girls typically receiving lower per diem rates (e.g., 100 ETB for females compared to 150 ETB for males) and payment made on the same day. In *Senibato*, only males are employed, and payment is made in a lump sum upon completion of the work.

The disclosure by casual daily laborers at destinations in *Wemberma* and *Burie zuria* regarding cases where employers return them to towns at night without payment underscores the vulnerability of migrant laborers and the challenges they face in accessing support and protection. The inaccessibility of social institutions, inadequate infrastructure, and the absence of supporting bodies at work sites significantly impact their working conditions. These findings are consistent with studies conducted in Ghana (Anyidoho & Ainsworth, 2009), which highlighted slave-like exploitative conditions for casual migrant child laborers in the agricultural sector.

Similarly, studies in rural Nigeria have also underscored the challenges inhabitants face, particularly in remote areas, where social and financial capital are substantially inadequate, making livelihoods challenging. These parallels suggest that addressing the structural issues contributing to poor working conditions and exploitation among migrant laborers requires comprehensive interventions at both local and systemic levels.

Unsurprisingly, it is disclosed by a number of casual daily laborers that at destinations in *Wemberma* and *Burie zuria* that there are cases where employers return them at night to towns without making any payment. As the work is in remote areas, reporting the case to the police hardly brings results. Here, it can be argued that the inaccessibility of social institutions, the inadequacy of infrastructures, and the absence of supporting bodies for migrant laborers at work sites are influencing their working conditions. These findings align with studies in Ghana (Anyidoho & Ainsworth, 2009; Boyden, 2013), which found that casual migrant child laborers in the agricultural sector work in slave-like exploitative conditions. A study in rural Nigeria (Ibrahim, 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2022) also supports the argument indicating that among rural cattle-raising farmers in remote areas, social and financial capital are substantially inadequate, making the livelihood of the inhabitants challenging. These parallels suggest that addressing the structural issues contributing to poor working conditions and exploitation among migrant laborers requires comprehensive interventions at both local and systemic levels.

Own crop farming

Only a small percentage (2.5%) of child migrants are involved in own crop farming (Table 12). Typically, these child laborers are aged 16 and above and often work alongside helpers or parents. In FGDs with this group, it is mentioned that there is vacant land in *Baso Liben* district along the *Abay Gorge* (*East Gojjam zone*), in the *Jawi* district (*Awji Zone*), and in the *Benishangul Gumz* region. They typically migrate in May and produce cash crops, depending on the agro-ecology of the destination area.

Table 12 Own crop farming destination districts

Casual daily labor engagement districts	f	%
Baso Liben	2	40
Jawi	1	20
Jabitehinan	1	20
Bullen	1	20
Total	5	100

Source : authors survey, 2022

The primary area for this activity is *Baso Liben* district (40%), with *Jawi*, *Bullen*, and *Jabitehinan* each constituting 20% of the destinations. Soybean and sesame are the main crops cultivated, as they are significant high-value agricultural export commodities in Ethiopia, second only to coffee (FAO, 2022).

Regarding this, it seems crucial to tell what has been narrated in an ICIs by one own crop farmer respondent, aged 17, from *Abesken Kebele* ;

Last year, I went to Baso liben district along the Abay Gorge in the Abay desert. I took a girl assistant of my age from my place of origin, Abesken, who primarily cooks food. As soon as we arrived there, we constructed a temporary shelter and began clearing shrubs the next day. Then, I purchased two donkeys (as they are cheaper than oxen and more resistant to the desert climate) from the district capital, Yejube. Then, we engaged in plowing the land, and we cultivated sesame. Since the land was covered with shrubs, it did not demand fertilizer, and the cost of production was cheap. Because the area is remote and has a harsh climate, we used to struggle with diseases, especially waterborne diseases and malaria, and we used to fight malaria by taking chloroquine. Surprisingly, there are mobile private nurses who come to medicate people. By the end of September, we harvested it and got five quintals of sesame product. After collecting the product, I sold the donkeys and returned to my place of origin with my sesame and the girl (now my wife) (Interview, 2022).

The above narrative illustrates the challenges and experiences of child labor migrants engaged in their own agricultural activities. The respondent's journey to Baso Liben district highlights the harsh realities faced by migrant laborers, including the remote and challenging working conditions, struggles with diseases, and lack of institutional support.

Generally, the lack of a comprehensive child labor protection policy at the regional government level, coupled with the absence of institutions regulating worker-employer relations at migrant destinations, contributes to the vulnerability of child labor migrants. Additionally, the inadequate mentoring of child labor migrants, along with the lack of infrastructure and social welfare services at destination places, further exacerbates their trouble. These challenges underscore the importance of addressing structural issues and implementing effective policies to protect child labor migrants and ensure their well-being. Such efforts are essential for upholding the principles of sustainable development goals, particularly those related to decent work conditions (SDG 8) and reducing inequalities (SDG 10) (IOM, n.d.).

Conclusion and the Way Forward

Some scholars argue that inter-rural labor migration has increased in the Amhara region (Abate et al., 2022; Ayele & Degefa, 2020). However, the causes of child labor

and working conditions at the destination remain underexplored and warrant further investigation. Based on our findings from migrant child laborers in Sekela district, Ethiopia, we argue that children's migration for labor stems from socio-cultural and political economy perspectives.

Child labor migrants often cite localized economic constraints such as limited access to modern goods, food scarcity, and resource degradation as reasons for migration, reflecting the political economy perspective. The expansion of commercial farms in destination areas due to the globalized market also influences child labor migration.

Additionally, children's positive perception of labor migration as an opportunity for autonomy and exploration reflects socio-cultural factors. The dominance of male children in labor migration highlights deep-rooted gender divisions stemming from the patriarchal system.

It is evidenced that the main area of labor at the destination is full-time wage labor, followed by casual daily labor and own crop farming. Regarding their working conditions, their experiences are not homogeneous. It is noted that full-time wage labor migrants, unlike casual daily labor migrants, are more secure in having jobs, though they are challenged by unsafe shelter and malnutrition. Casual daily labor migrants are lodged with better shelter, relatively better per diem, and food, though breaching of agreement and exploitation are their major challenges. In general, this study contends that while supplementing the cost of education and overall family livelihood are the merits of child labor migration, it exposes them to underpayment, harassment, and over-exploitation, which are related to the lack of comprehensive national migration policy that could determine the rights and obligations of employees and employers in the context of labor migration, as well as the inability to implement the national labor proclamation. The key implication of the findings uncovers the fact that though there are limited efforts made by the government and international child rights advocator agencies (such as the attempt to eradicate child labor by 2025, sustainable development goals, education for all, etc.) to upgrade the livelihood of children, it is suggested that these plans are not being materialized; they are not geared towards monitoring the living and working situations of child laborers. The existing efforts are chiefly politically motivated and focus primarily on the monetary indicators of well-being rather than ensuring human well-being.

Understanding the causes of their migration for labor and their working conditions at their destination should be given due consideration if policies are to be child-centered, context-fitting, and sustainable.

Since environment-induced food scarcity and poverty are the primary reasons behind their migration, the government's primary role is ensuring sustained and multidimensional poverty reduction tasks. Resource degradation-induced child labor migration could be minimized through strengthened soil and water conservation works to improve productivity. Moreover, expanding school feeding programs (which has already started in the country's capital city) in impoverished rural areas could significantly minimize the cost of education and raising a child, which in turn might avert child labor migration. Hence, the research in this manuscript supported the Valletta process by identifying some of the drivers of child labor migration.

Parallely, since child labor migration also has a supportive role in their livelihood, working on minimizing the vulnerability of migrant child laborers has a paramount role. Hence, considering micro measures, such as giving life-skills training in schools at their

place of origin, the establishment of support groups in migrant destination sites, and the expansion of labor inspectorates that continuously supervise and warrant the safety of child labor migrants, are vital. We recommend that when such forward-looking and balanced measures are taken both at the place of origin and destination, policymakers would genuinely be able to materialize their efforts of protecting the best interests of migrant child laborers. Finally, it is essential to disclose that previous studies on child labor used political economy view to explain the causes of child labor (Abebe & Bessell, 2011a, b; Ali, 2019), but in this work, the political economy view is applied to explain both the causes of child labor and its effect on the working conditions of child labor migrants at the destination. As a limitation, due to time and financial constraints, this study considered child labor migrants from one district.

It is essential to note that expanding the study to include multiple districts would have offered insights into the variations in child labor migration patterns, living and working conditions, and socio-economic factors across different regions. This broader perspective could have enriched the analysis and enhanced the robustness of the findings.

However, despite this limitation, the study still provides valuable insights into the experiences of child labor migrants in the selected district. Future research could build upon these findings by conducting similar studies in additional districts or regions to better understand child labor migration in Ethiopia.

Abbreviations

FGDs	Focus group discussions
ICIs	Informal conversational interviews
KIIs	Key informant interviews
HHS	Household heads
Hhs	Households

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the research participants who offered their ideas which have been utilized for this manuscript. We are also indebted to Biniam Sisheber for preparing the maps.

Author contributions

The corresponding author contributed in data collection, entry, organization, summary and analysis, while the second and third authors contributed in data organization and analysis. All of the three authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

Not applicable.

Data availability

Household survey data is available.

Declarations

Competing interests

We the authors assure that there are no competing interests to declare.

Received: 30 January 2023 / Accepted: 25 April 2024

Published online: 13 June 2024

References

- Abate, K. A., Alemu, B. A., & Habteyesus, D. G. (2022). The implication of intra-rural migration on crop output commercialization in Ethiopia. *Migration and Development*, 11(1), 126–141. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21632324.2020.1723212>.
- Abay, A. (2020). MARKET CHAIN ANALYSIS OF RED PEPPER: THE CASE OF BURE WOREDA, WEST GOJJAM ZONE, AMHARA NATIONAL REGIONAL STATE, ETHIOPIA. 108.
- Abebe, T., & Bessell, S. (2011a). Dominant discourses, debates and silences on child labour in Africa and Asia. *Third World Quarterly*, 32(4), 765–786. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2011.567007>.
- Abebe, T., & Bessell, S. (2011b). Dominant discourses, debates and silences on child labour in Africa and Asia. *Third World Quarterly*, 32(4), 765–786. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01436597.2011.567007>.

- Abeje, A. (2021). Causes and effects of Rural-Urban Migration in Ethiopia: A Case Study from Amhara Region. *African Studies*, 80(1), 77–94. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00020184.2021.1904833>.
- Acharya, A. (2010). *Impact of Rural-Urban Out-Migration on Child Health: A Case Study of Ganjam District of Odisha* [PhD Thesis]. Gokhale Institute of Politics and Economics (GIPE), Pune (India).
- Adediji, A. O. (2022). *THE SOCIAL-ECONOMIC IMPACT OF CHILD TRAFFICKING ON HUMAN SECURITY IN NIGERIA*. 17.
- Adger, W. N. (2006). Vulnerability. *Global Environmental Change*, 16(3), 268–281. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2006.02.006>.
- Agbonlahor, M. U., & Phillip, D. O. A. (2015). Deciding to settle: Rural-rural migration and agricultural labor supply in southwest Nigeria. *Journal of Developing Areas*, 49(1), 267–284.
- Alamineh, A., & Bitew, B. (2022). The Nature and Efficacy of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment in Bure Integrated Agro-industry Park, North-West Ethiopia. *Innovations*, 67, 39–52.
- Alemayehu, A. A., & Fekadu, I. A. (2019). Home truths behind closed doors: Reciting the lived experiences of child domestic workers in selected towns of Gedeo Zone, Southern Ethiopia. *International Journal of Sociology and Anthropology*, 11(5), 59–67.
- Ali, F. R. M. (2019). In the same Boat, but not equals: The Heterogeneous effects of parental income on child labour. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 55(5), 845–858. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2018.1438595>.
- Ali, M. A., Ali, M. V., & Abbas, F. (2017). Hidden hazardous child labor as a complex human rights phenomenon: A case study of child labor in Pakistan's brick-making industry. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 3(1), 1369486. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2017.1369486>.
- Alvi, E., & Dendir, S. (2011). Sibling Differences in School Attendance and Child Labour in Ethiopia. *Oxford Development Studies*, 39(3), 285–313. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13600818.2011.598923>.
- Anarfi, J., Kwankye, S., Ababio, O. M., & Tiemoko, R. (2003). Migration from and to Ghana: A background paper. *University of Sussex: DRC on Migration, Globalisation and Poverty*.
- Anyidoho, N. A., & Ainsworth, P. (2009). *Child rural-rural migration In West Africa*.
- Arhin, A. (2012). Conceptualizing child labour trafficking and exploitation: The case of Roma children in Montenegro. *Temida*, 15(3), 161–186. <https://doi.org/10.2298/TEM1203161A>.
- Aschale, Y., Mengist, A., Bitew, A., Kassie, B., & Talie, A. (2018). Prevalence of malaria and associated risk factors among asymptomatic migrant laborers in West Armachihio District, Northwest Ethiopia. *Research and Reports in Tropical Medicine*, 9, 95–101. <https://doi.org/10.2147/RRMT.S165260>.
- Asfaw, W. (2007). *Seasonal Migration and Rural Livelihoods: The Case of Bahir Dar Town and Three Rural Kebeles in Amhara Region* [Thesis, Addis Ababa University]. <http://etd.aau.edu.et/handle/123456789/11993>.
- Asfaw, W., Tolossa, D., & Zeleke, G. (2010). Causes and impacts of seasonal migration on rural livelihoods: Case studies from Amhara Region in Ethiopia. *Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift - Norwegian Journal of Geography*, 64(1), 58–70. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00291950903557696>.
- Ayalew, T., Alemu, S., & Merawi, E. (2019). Woody Plant Species Diversity of Gechi In-situ Forest Conservation Site, Sekela District, North Western Ethiopia. *Ecology and Evolutionary Biology*, 4(4), 60.
- Ayele, L. (2018). T. Degefa (Ed.), Vulnerabilities of migrants at Destination: The case of Temporary Rural-rural labour migrants from Quarit District, West Gojjam Zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia. *Ethiopian Journal of Development Research* 40 2 Article2.
- Ayele, L., & Degefa, T. (2020). Temporary rural–rural labor migration from Quarit District, Northwest Ethiopia: A search for the determinants. *African Geographical Review*, 39(4). <https://doi.org/10.1080/19376812.2020.1728561>.
- Ayele, L., & Degefa (2022). Translocal vulnerability of temporary rural–rural labor migrant-sending households in Quarit district, Northwestern Ethiopia. *Comparative Migration Studies*, 23.
- Bakker, C. (2009). *The Impact of Migration on Children in the Caribbean*. 19.
- Balcha, Y. T. (2018). *Child domestic work in Ethiopia: The experiences of rural girls who migrate to take up jobs as domestic servants in Addis Ababa*. 107.
- Bargain, O., & Boutin, D. (2015). Remittance effects on Child Labour: Evidence from Burkina Faso. *The Journal of Development Studies*, 51(7), 922–938. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220388.2015.1010154>.
- Bartholomew, T. T., & Brown, J. R. (2012). Mixed methods, culture, and psychology: A review of mixed methods in culture-specific psychological research. *International Perspectives in Psychology: Research Practice Consultation*, 1, 177–190. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0029219>.
- Beazley, H. (2015). Multiple identities, multiple realities: Children who migrate independently for work in Southeast Asia. *Children's Geographies*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2015.972620>.
- Bezu, S., & Holden, S. T. (2014). *Rural-urban Youth Migration and Informal Self-Employment in Ethiopia*. 97.
- Boyden, J. (2013). We're not going to suffer like this in the mud': Educational aspirations, social mobility and independent child migration among populations living in poverty. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 43(5), 580–600. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03057925.2013.821317>.
- Boyden, J., & Levison, D. (2000). *CHILDREN AS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS*. 66.
- Caruth, G. D. (2013). Demystifying mixed methods Research Design: A review of the literature. *Mevlana International Journal of Education*, 3(2), 112–122. <https://doi.org/10.13054/mije.13.35.3.2>.
- Castelli, F. (2018). Drivers of migration: Why do people move? *Journal of Travel Medicine*, 25(1). <https://doi.org/10.1093/jtm/tay040>.
- Crepeau, F. (2013). *Preface: The rights of all children in the context of international migration* (pp. 1–4). <https://doi.org/10.18356/71cba847-en>.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. 342.
- CSA (2021). Central Statistical Agency. In *Wikipedia*. https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Central_Statistical_Agency&oldid=1100302926
- Czuba, K. (2012). *The Causes and Mechanisms of Karimojong Child Migration*. 86.
- Dad, K. (2021). *Determinants of rural outmigration of children and youth in a rapidly urbanizing nation: The case of Ethiopia*. 15.
- De Haan, L. J. (2000). Globalization, localization and sustainable livelihood. *Sociologia Ruralis*, 40(3), 339–365. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9523.00152>.
- De Lange, A. (2007). Child Labour Migration and Trafficking in rural Burkina Faso. *International Migration*, 45(2), 147–167. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2007.00407.x>.

- De Regt, M. (2016). Time to Look at Girls: Adolescent Girls' Migration in Ethiopia. *Geneva: Swiss Network for International Studies*.
- de Vries, L. A., & Guild, E. (2019). Seeking refuge in Europe: Spaces of transit and the violence of migration management. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 45(12), 2156–2166. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2018.1468308>.
- Dejenie, T. (2013). *Children on the Move: The Hardships of Migrant and Trafficked Children of Gamo Highlands in the Transit and Destination Town of Arba Minch* 109.
- Dessaiegn, M., Nicol, A., & Debevec, L. (2020). *From poverty to complexity? The challenge of out-migration and development policy in Ethiopia*. 2, 8.
- Edmonds, E. V., & Shrestha, M. (2013). Independent child labor migrants. *International Handbook on the Economics of Migration*, 98–120.
- FAO (2022). *FAO Ethiopia Newsletter, 1st Quarter 2022—Issue #4*. 8.
- Gänsbauer, A., Bilegsaikhan, S., Trupp, A., & Sakdapolrak, P. (2017). *Responses of Rural-Urban Migrants to the Floods of 2011 in Thailand*. 6, 33.
- Gebreselassie, S. (2006). Intensification of Smallholder Agriculture in Ethiopia: Options and Scenarios. *Discussion Paper*, 16.
- Gebru, G., & Beyene, F. (2022). *Causes and consequences of out-migration on rural households' livelihood in Gulomekeda district, Tigray, Ethiopia*.
- Geda, N., & Yusufe, A. (2009). Gender Differentials in Migration Impacts in Southern Ethiopia. *Anthropologist*, 11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09720073.2009.11891092>.
- Geremew, Y. T. (2019). *Determinants of Potato Marketed Surplus Among Smallholder Farmers in Sekela District, West Gojjam Zone of Amhara Region, Ethiopia*. <https://www.iiste.org/Journals/index.php/FSQM/article/view/46256>.
- Gubhaju, B., & De Jong, G. F. (2009). Individual versus Household Migration decision rules: Gender and Marital Status differences in intentions to migrate in South Africa. *International Migration*, 47(1), 31–61. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2435.2008.00496.x>.
- Hashim. (2007). Independent Child Migration and Education in Ghana. *Development and Change*, 38(5), 911–931. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2007.00439.x>.
- Hashim (2005). *Research Report on Children's Independent Migration from Northeastern to Central Ghana*. 65.
- Hashim, & Thorsen, D. (2011). *Child Migration in Africa*. 161.
- Heissler, K. (2008). *Children's migration for work in Bangladesh: The extra- and intra-household factors that shape 'choice' and decision-making*
- Huijsmans, R. (2011). Child Migration and Questions of Agency: Review Essay: Child Migration and questions of Agency. *Development and Change*, 42(5), 1307–1321. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-7660.2011.01729.x>.
- Ibrahim, S. S. (2023). Livelihood transition and economic well-being in remote areas under the threat of cattle rustling. *In Nigeria GeoJournal*, 88(1), 1–16. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-022-10583-x>.
- Ibrahim, S. S., Ozdeser, H., Cavusoglu, B., Shagali, A. A., & Mukhtar, S. (2022). Rural attachment and income inequality in rural communities of Nigeria under the threat of cattle raiding. *Geojournal*, 87(3), 1695–1708. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10708-020-10335-9>.
- ILO (2017). *Global estimates of child labour: Results and trends, 2012–2016*.
- IOM. (n.d.). *Migration, Sustainable Development and the 2030 Agenda*. International Organization for Migration. Retrieved November 27 (2023). from <https://www.iom.int/migration-sustainable-development-and-2030-agenda>.
- Jérôme & Augendra (2019). Child Exploitation in the Global South. In *Child Exploitation in the Global South* (pp. 157–171). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-91177-9_10.
- Kassa, S. C., & Abebe, T. (2016). Qenja: Child fostering and relocation practices in the Amhara region, Ethiopia. *Children's Geographies*, 14(1), 46–62. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14733285.2014.974508>.
- Kibrom, A., ATINKUT, H., YEHUALA, S., & PETROS, T. (2015). *THE DETERMINANT FACTORS FOR INTERNAL MIGRATION IN RURAL AREAS OF NORTH GONDAR: THE CASE OF DABAT DISTRICT* [PhD Thesis].
- Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research methodology: Methods and techniques*. New Age International.
- Kwankye, S., Anarfi, J., Tagoe, A. C., & CASTALDO, A. (2009). *Independent North-South Child Migration in Ghana: The Decision Making Process*.
- Kwate (1988). *Economic differentiation among Ghanaian migrant Cocoa farmers*. 9.
- Ligam, M. (2013). *Child Labour & Migration*. 82.
- Linger Ayele, T. D. (2019). *Linking local vulnerability to global sesame market price: The case of temporary rural-rural migrants from Quarir district, Ethiopia* | Elsevier Enhanced Reader. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.resglo.2019.100004>.
- Lu, Y., Yeung, J. W. J., Liu, J., & Treiman, D. J. (2019). Migration and Children's Psychosocial Development in China: When and why Migration matters. *Social Science Research*, 77, 130–147. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2018.09.002>.
- Mentis, A. F. A. (2016). Child migration: From social determinants of health to the development agenda and beyond. *Medicine Conflict and Survival*, 32(3), 221–227. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13623699.2016.1258806>.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. sage.
- Mueller, V., Thurlow, J., Rosenbach, G., & Masias, I. (2019). Africa's Rural Youth in the Global Context. In V. Mueller, J. Thurlow, G. Rosenbach, & I. Masias, *Youth and Jobs in Rural Africa* (pp. 1–22). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198848059.003.0001>.
- OECD (2019). *Child labour: Causes, consequences and policies to tackle it* (OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers 235; OECD Social, Employment and Migration Working Papers, Vol. 235). <https://doi.org/10.1787/f6883e26-en>.
- Palgrave Macmillan (2009). *New Social Studies of Childhood*. <https://ukdiss.com/examples/social-studies-childhood.php>.
- Pankhurst, A., Crivello, G., Chuta, N., Tiemelissan, A., Wilson, E., & Medhin, L. W. (2015). *Child work and labour in Ethiopia*: 54.
- Plano Clark, V. L., Huddleston-Casas, C. A., Churchill, S. L., O'Neil Green, D., & Garrett, A. L. (2008). Mixed methods approaches in Family Science Research. *Journal of Family Issues*, 29(11), 1543–1566. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X08318251>.
- Pongiglione, F., & Sala, R. (2019). Vulnerability, responsibilities and Migration. *Phenomenology and Mind*, 16, 58–66.
- Punch, S. (2007). *Migration Projects: Children on the Move for Work and Education*. 20.
- Rogers, C. A., & Swinnerton, K. A. (2007). A theory of exploitative child labor. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 60(1), 20–41. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oepp/gpm019>.
- SARDP (2010). *Land Registration and Certification: Experiences from the Amhara National Regional State in Ethiopia*. Booklet. Sida-Amhara Rural Development Program and Bureau of Environment Protection, Land Administration and Use (BoEPLAU).

- Salihu, I. T., Muhammed, H. U., Abdullahi, A., & Muhammed (2015). *CAUSES AND PERCEIVED SOCIO – ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF RURAL – RURAL MIGRATION ON LIVELIHOOD OF SELECTED COMMUNITIES IN MOKWA AREA OF NIGER STATE, NIGERIA*.
- SDADO (2021). *Sekella District Agricultural Development Office. Unpublished document. Google scholar*
- SDHDO (2021). *Sekella District Health Health Development Office. Unpublished document. Google scholar*
- SDPO (2021). *Sekella District Plan Office: Complied information about Sekella district. Unpublished document. Google.*
- Swanson, K., & Torres, R. M. (2016). Child Migration and Transnationalized Violence in Central and North America. *Journal of Latin American Geography*, 15(3), 23–48.
- Tegegne, A. D., & Penker, M. (2016). Determinants of rural out-migration in Ethiopia: Who stays and who goes? *Demographic Research*, 35, 1011–1044.
- Transitional Government of Ethiopia. (1993). *The Department of Labor's 2001 findings on the worst forms of child labor: Trade and Development Act of 2000*. DIANE Publishing.
- UNICEF. (2005). *The state of the World's children 2006: Excluded and invisible*. UNICEF.
- UNICEF (2020). *Child Labour Analysis in Ethiopia 2020*.
- Van de Glind, H., & Kou, A. (2013). Migrant children in child labour: A vulnerable group in need of attention. *Children on the Move*, 27.
- Webbink, E., Smits, J., & de Jong, E. (2015a). Child labor in Africa and Asia: Household and Context determinants of hours worked in Paid Labor by Young Children in 16 low-income countries. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 27(1), 84–98. <https://doi.org/10.1057/ejdr.2014.19>.
- Webbink, E., Smits, J., & de Jong, E. (2015b). Child labor in Africa and Asia: Household and Context determinants of hours worked in Paid Labor by Young Children in 16 low-income countries. *The European Journal of Development Research*, 27(1), 84–98. <https://doi.org/10.1057/ejdr.2014.19>.
- Whitehead, A., Hashim, I. M., & Iversen, V. (2007). *Child Migration, Child Agency and Inter-generational Relations in Africa and South Asia*. 46.

Publisher's Note

Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.