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**UNIVERSITY OF GHANA  
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES  
CENTRE FOR MIGRATION STUDIES**



**MIGRATION FOR BEGGING: EXPERIENCES OF NIGERIEN  
MIGRANT PARENTS AND THEIR ACCOMPANIED CHILDREN IN  
ACCRA, GHANA**

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**DECLARATION**

I, Owusuaa Joyce Eshia, hereby declare that except for the references to other people's work which have been duly acknowledged, this PhD thesis "Migration for Begging: Experiences of Nigerian Accompanied Children and their Parents in Accra, Ghana", is the result of my independent research conducted at the Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana, Legon, under the joint supervision of Professor Mary Boatemaa Setrana, Dr Alhassan Osman and Professor Margaret Delali Badasu. I also declare that as far as I know, this thesis has neither in part or in whole nor been presented to any other institution for academic award.



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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my husband Mr Samuel Narku Nortey, and children Nii Noi Nortey and Naa Shormeh Nortey. A special dedication to my late parents, Mr Nicholas Kwame Eshia and Mrs Elizabeth Araba Eshia. Finally, I dedicate this work to all transnational migrants from the sub-region including children who migrate for the purpose of begging.



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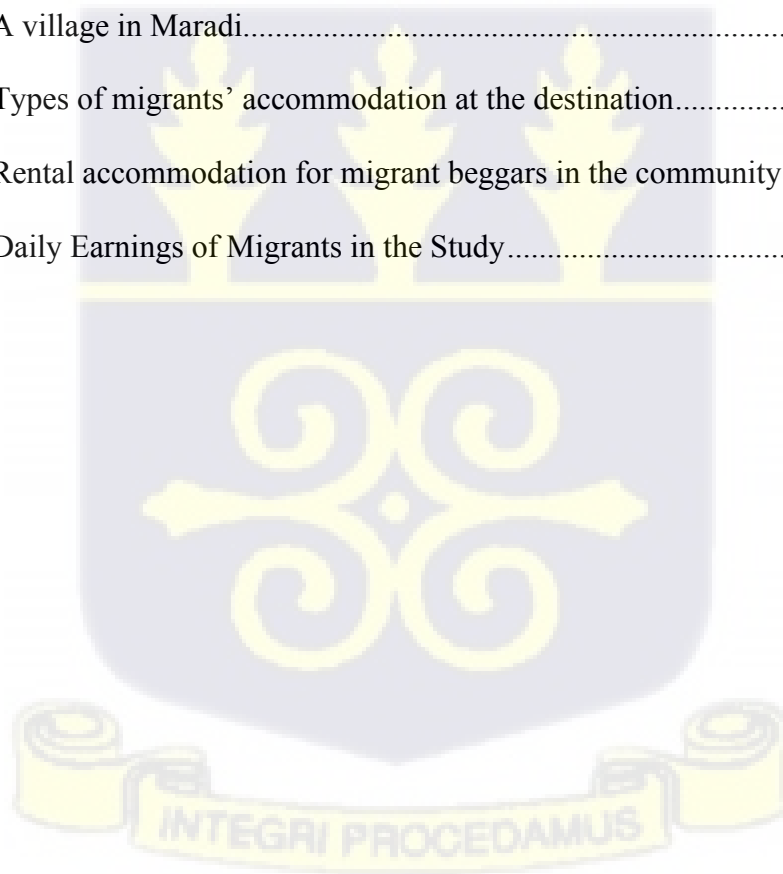
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**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

AbCMA	Ablekuma Central Municipal Assemble
AOU	Organisation of African Unity
ECH	Ethics Committee for Humanities
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West Africa States
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
GLSS	Ghana Living Standard Survey
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
UN	United Nations
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
EU	European Union
CBD	Central Business District
GCM	Global Compact for Migration
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
FRP	Free Movement Protocol

## ABSTRACT

This research explored the Phenomenon of “Migration for Begging” among Nigerien migrants. The dominant view of the migration of street beggars has so far paid attention mainly to the Organised Criminal Networks with profit motives as the major facilitators of beggars with less focus on the Personal Networks that help in facilitating the migration of this type as well as the trajectories. This study fills this gap by examining beggars from Niger by specifically looking at who qualifies to migrate for begging, why they migrate, how they migrate, what they come to do apart from begging and their migration outcome. A mixed method approach was used to study Migration for Begging among Nigerien migrants in Accra. The study techniques included mainly survey questionnaires and in-depth interviews. A total of one hundred and thirty-six (136) respondents were sampled for the quantitative study while twenty-seven (27) parents and twelve (12) children were selected for the in-depth interview after following the due ethical procedures.

The findings show that to qualify for social network support, a migrant must possess some qualities which include having children to migrate with. Secondly, personal networks were found to influence migrants’ experiences regarding their journeys and access to financial resources plays a huge role in migrants’ choice of route and journey experiences. The study found that migration for begging is mainly facilitated by Personal Network support rather than Organized Criminal Networks. Again, migrant parents were identified as having control over their earnings and that of their children. The role of the personal network was largely to support and not to exploit migrants. Though the majority of respondents were found to be supported by their personal networks, a significant number migrated on their own without personal social network support. Using the Migration and Livelihood Framework, this study found that the variables age, job opportunity, housing, income/wage, personal network and remitting were statistically significant at 0.05. The Multinomial Logistic Regression model concluded that the older migrants become they are more likely to experience the same migration outcome, likewise, those who migrated for better job opportunities compared to those who did not. Again, those who reported having personal network support experiencing the same migration outcome are higher than those who did not have social support. Also, comparing the baseline (better migration outcome), it was found that as migrants grow older, they are less likely to experience worse migration outcomes, while the probability of those who own their own place of residence experiencing worse outcomes is higher than those who are squatters. Again, the probability of migrants who had personal network support experiencing worse migration outcomes is higher than those who did not have support.

The Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4) concerning quality education emphasises the role migration can play in providing children with access to better education. The study recommends measures towards educating migrant children in Ghana and the need for both Ghana and the government of the Republic of Niger to ensure that migrant children are off the streets to the classroom. Also, providing schools in rural communities in Niger to have children educated and providing access for those who are already here, will lead to improved standards of living for Nigeriens and ultimately, breaking the chain or stopping migration for begging among Nigeriens.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1 Background

*“I am a Muslim, and in Islam ‘sadaka’ (alms) are given to the poor and needy. Madam, if these beggars are able to fund their journey from Niger to Ghana, then I can tell you, they are not poor or perhaps they are, but someone is funding their migration”*

The above is a quote from a key informant expressing his opinion on how an appreciable number of Nigerian migrant beggars have found their way to Ghana in recent times. The use of children in begging is an old tradition where children were used to assist disabled beggars. However, in recent times children are used by their parents and relatives for alms solicitation for various reasons. The phenomenon of migration for begging has been on the rise in Ghana which involves children from the ECOWAS sub-region. Societies, cultures, and even the geographic distribution of humans have all been influenced through migration (Castles, 2016). The movement of nationals from Niger to Ghana is an international migration internal to Africa. However, this movement is recognized and managed within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) protocols. It is important to note that the inception of the ECOWAS and the free movement of people policy, has made the movement of people and goods easy for migrants within the sub-region (Alabi, 2020). It is estimated that more than five out of eight migrants from the region continue to stay in countries within the same region (UN DESA, 2020). The ECOWAS Protocol on Free Movement of Persons, Residence, and Establishment, adopted in 1979, provides a legal framework for facilitating the movement of ECOWAS citizens within the region. This protocol guarantees the right to enter, reside, and establish economic activities in any member state, subject to certain conditions (ECOWAS Treaty, 1979). There are many reasons why people move within the ECOWAS sub-region, including job possibilities, educational opportunities, trade, and

family reunions. It must be noted that recent development in West Africa, shows a new actor in the region: the Alliance of Sahel States (AES). The countries in this alliance include Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The Heads of State in these countries signed the Liptako-Gourma Charter on the 16<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 to establish the alliance (Grutjen, 2024). The three countries are currently suspended from the ECOWAS as a result of the military takeover in these countries.

### **1.1.1 The Study Context (Ablekuma Central Municipal)**

Ghana is one of the countries in West Africa, situated on the coastal front of the Gulf of Guinea, it is bordered to the northwest and north by Burkina Faso, to the east by Togo, and to the west by Cote d'Ivoire. The 2021 Population and Housing Census (PHC) of Ghana estimated the total population to be 30,792,608 made up of 15,610,149 females and 15,182,459 males. (GSS, 2021). Ablekuma Central Municipality is located in the northern part of the Greater Accra Region. It is situated between Latitude 5° 81'3" N and Latitude 5° 67'7" N, between Longitude 0° 24'0" W and 0° 13'1" W, and covers a total land area of 9.14 square kilometres. It is bounded on the west by the Ablekuma West Municipal, on the east and south by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, and on the north by Ablekuma North Municipal. The population of the Municipality according to the 2021 population and housing census stands at 169,145 with 82,594 males and 86,551 females (GSS, 2021). Out of a total population, 73,545 are immigrants (GSS, 2021). The site was selected due to its diverse immigrant population including migrants from Niger.

The location of the municipality is closer to the Kaneshie Market complex, Abossey Okai Spare Parts Centre, Agbogbloshie and Makola markets, which serve as an attraction to migrants in the informal sector who work in these markets and serve as a big attraction for beggars due to the high population of shoppers in these marketplaces. Within the Municipality, Sabon Zongo is the community with the highest number of immigrants from

the ECOWAS sub-region. Zongo has its etymology from the Hausa language, which means “new settlement”. The community is also attractive to Nigeriens because it is predominantly a Muslim community and most people in the community speak the Hausa language which is the native language of the migrants of the study.

### **1.1.2 Migration in the Context of the Sahel Region**

People in West Africa look for greater possibilities in other member states because of the disparity between West African nations' economic progress and opportunities (Garba & Yeboah, 2022). A recent study in West Africa investigating the impact of soil moisture anomalies on West Africa and migration towards Europe indicates that weather anomalies negatively affect agricultural production, leading to financial constraints that prevent people from moving internationally (Flores et al., 2024).

For instance, in West Africa, the Sahel region contributes magnificently to the migration flows within the region. Numerous issues, including desertification, droughts, food insecurity, poverty, political unrest, and conflicts, affect the region and have contributed to the increase in migration from the area (Barry et al., 2018). Climate change has had a substantial influence on the Sahel, creating prolonged droughts, desertification, and decreasing agricultural output. People are now looking for better opportunities abroad as a result of the food shortages, job losses, and increased poverty that these environmental challenges have caused (Afiifi, 2011). For instance, Food Security Outlook (2022) on Niger reports that food access remains one of the major challenges for poor households in the country. This is not only because of the civil insecurity in the region which has a severe toll on livelihood, but also because it is a result of rising food prices which reduces the purchasing power of households (Food Security Outlook, 2022). Migration out of the Sahel has also been influenced by poor economic prospects, high unemployment rates, and the absence of basic services like healthcare and education (Boas, 2019). Consequently, people in the region often

migrate in search of better economic opportunities to improve their living conditions and support their families. Several Push and Pull factors, as well as other variables, may be responsible for migration from the Republic of Niger (Castilli, 2018). Dick & Schranven (2021) argue that the consequences of environmental and climate change on harvest failures, infrastructural damage, and drought have become critical drivers of human mobility in West Africa as they increase both existing patterns of labour mobility, forced displacement and all forms of migration (Dick & Schraven, 2021).

### **1.1.3 The Origin of Migrants: Maradi and Zinder Region in Niger**

Niger being one of the poorest in the world means it has insufficient funds to develop its resource base (Painter, 2021). It is bordered by Mali and Burkina Faso in the West, by Nigeria and Benin in the South, by Chad in the East, and by Libya and Algeria in the North (Painter, 2021). The country comprises eight key regions namely, Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua, Tillabé'ri, and Zinder (Yeboah et al., 2019). With a population estimate of 24,484,587 (2022, estimate), it is largely an agrarian and subsistence-based economy with frequent disruptions to droughts common to the Sahel region. In Niger, migration is seen as an adaptation mechanism that people use to mitigate the pressures of climate and environmental change. According to IOM (2021), 85% of the population of Niger depend on the environment for their livelihood. Unfortunately, these environmental and climate shocks impact the livelihoods of communities. This is causing a growing number of people to leave their homes as a result of poverty (Cantrell et al., 2012)

Both Maradi and Zinder are two of the regions in Niger and are located in the southeastern part of the country. Geographically Maradi Region covers 41, 796km square and Zinder covers an area of approximately 145, 430 km squared. Maradi region is characterised by a rainfall gradient from 200mm to 750mm in the extreme southern part of Maradi, the normal annual rainfall is 600-750m, and the rainy season lasts for 3-4 months. The average

temperature of the region varies from 23.5 degrees Celsius to 32.7 C in April and May. The region is situated in the Sudanian savanna, a transitional zone between the Sahara Desert to the north and a more humid savanna to the south. The climate is hot and semi-arid, with very little rainfall throughout the year. The region has a population of approximately 3.4 million people. The major ethnic groups in the Region are Hausa, Zarma and Fulani. The region is a very important hub, with crops like millet, sorghum, and cowpeas being major staples. The region is well known for its livestock production, particularly cattle, goats, and sheep, which significantly contribute to the regional economy. However, it faces several challenges, including poverty, food insecurity, and limited access to education and healthcare. In Maradi, agriculture is the primary occupation, engaging more than 80% of the population. According to Na Abou (2012), rainfall in the region has decreased considerably. Seasons are becoming shorter, and annual temperatures are rising, making rain-fed agriculture increasingly unproductive and adversely affecting rural livelihoods. Reports indicate that annual yields are no longer sufficient to meet household food needs before the next harvest (Na Abou, 2012). A study found that less than 17% of households surveyed could rely entirely on their harvests from September to December to meet their food needs until the next harvest. The remaining 83% reported being able to depend on their food production for less than nine months a year. The average annual rural income in Maradi is only 50,000 CFA (approximately 100 USD). The most vulnerable households are typically headed by unemployed individuals. Urbanization, deforestation, and extensive agriculture have further degraded soil fertility. Fertilizers, though essential, remain out of reach for the majority of farmers due to poverty and a lack of government subsidies. As part of the coping strategy of villagers in Maradi include selling animals, and crafts to finance purchase of food and temporary migration to neighbouring countries to conduct income generation activities and make remittances in advance of the following rainy season. Permanent migration to long-distance countries where work opportunities are available (Na Abou, 2012). Zinder on the

other hand is situated in the Sahelian zone. It has a population of 3.5 million people. Just like Maradi, the region is inhabited by various ethnic groups including the Hausa, Zarma and Fulani. The rural economy is based on mixed farming such as agricultural and livestock production. The region also faces food insecurity, poverty and limited access to education and health (Walton et al., 2024).

#### **1.1.4 Political Instability in the Region**

Further, Audu and Ibrahim (2019) indicated that political unrest and random fighting have also occurred in Niger, particularly in its northern regions close to Nigeria's and Mali's borders. People may leave unsafe places and migrate to safer regions or neighbouring countries as a result of insecurity and violence. UNHCR (2020), reports that violent conflicts in Burkina Faso, Mali, Nigeria and Niger in recent times have prompted the movement of about 5 million forcibly displaced persons, promoting internal migration to urban areas in the process. Given the above, households and individuals often use migration as a means to improve their livelihoods and also to enhance their well-being (Serrano, 2020). According to an International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2019) study from Niger and specifically in Zinder which is one of the country's regions and a significant migration hub of the country has traditionally been known for men migration and often directed at Nigeria. However, recent migration patterns in the area show this migration has become more gender-based. Women and children travel from Zinder to cities in Niger or Algeria where they join in begging networks or other informal activities (IOM, 2019). Again, since 2014, Algeria has become the preferred destination for Zinder migrants for all types of work, including begging. These migrants, who are frequently women and children, apparently remit significant amounts of money home, but many of them live in poor conditions and depend on prostitution and begging for a living (Benattia et al., 2015). Studies have established that one of the reasons people migrate from Niger is to engage in begging activities (IOM, 2019, 2020;

Torchiato et al., 2021; Benattia et al., 2015). As previously mentioned, this thesis focuses on 'Migration for Begging' among Nigerian migrants. Reports and studies indicate that this phenomenon is associated with Nigerians who migrate to countries within the sub-region and beyond in search of better livelihoods for themselves and their families (IOM, 2019; Amuzu et al., 2019; Ojedokun, 2015). These migrants often purposefully engage in begging as a means of survival.

### **1.1.5 Child Begging**

Begging is an activity engaged in by all manner of persons including children. The International Labour Organisation considers child begging as forced labour (ILO, 2017). Globally the issue of child begging is an established and complex social issue that has been observed across various cultures and socioeconomic contexts (Aliyu & Kayode, 2024). The general assumption about children is that they are to go to school. However, poverty, lack of access to education, broken homes, cultural and religious practices, displacement and migration may cause children to stay out of school to engage in begging (Sharma, 2020; Khan & Mohammed, 2023). Poverty is reported to be one of the major drivers of child begging (Ezeaku et al., 2023). Child poverty on the other hand is a situation in which children below eighteen years live in poverty, with limited access to essential resources such as food, clothing, education, sanitation, water, health, nutrition, and housing among others. It is an extension of household or family poverty (Ezeaku et al., 2023). Again, displacement and migration can cause children to be out of the educational system. Conflict, disasters, or economic crises can displace families, leaving them without a stable source of income. This often forces children into begging to contribute to family survival. For example, refugee children or internally displaced persons in camps often resort to begging in nearby cities (Khan & Mohammed, 2023). A study in Pakistan by Khan and Mohammed (2023) show how

internal displacement causes displaced victims to become street beggars. In recalling how she became a street beggar, this is what a 13-year-old girl reported in Khan and Mohammed's study. "First, we were displaced and accommodated at Muhammad Khwaja Camp in Hangu, but later we were shifted to Peshawar due to the worst living conditions at the camp. We were facilitated with food and cash through Ration Card by the government but now the cards have been blocked and got expired. So, begging has become the only option to fulfil the basic needs" (Khan & Mohammed, 2023).

Children are involved in all types of begging including street begging, accompanied and unaccompanied begging, religious begging, forced begging among others (Serrano, 2020).

In the current study child beggars are accompanied migrants who are also often accompanied by their parents when begging. The use of children by adults to beg is common among able bodied women in this study. These adult beggars are of the view that alms givers give more to children, the aged and people with disability. For example, a study in Nigeria found that women beggars often accompany children and sometimes use new-borns or multiples to evoke sympathy from givers (Ezeaku et al., 2023). The type of begging children and their parents in the study engage in, is determined by the location where the act of begging takes place, the mode of begging and the appearance of the child beggar. These types of begging include street begging, shop-to-shop begging, combining begging with hawking, passive and active begging, deceptive and genuine begging among others.

Against the above backdrop, it is indeed not surprising to see an increasing population of immigrants from neighbouring countries in Ghana, including the glaring sight of Nigerien transnational beggars on the streets of Accra and other parts of the country. The thesis is set to explore "The lived experiences of Nigerien migrant Parents and their children who have migrated purposely for begging in Accra, Ghana" using the livelihood framework and

sequential mixed method. In addition, the researcher is also interested in investigating the link between the proliferation of Nigerien beggars on the streets of Accra and the activities of intermediaries in their migration process. Irrespective of the fact that immigrant beggars lack both educational and economic resources to embark on international migration, they can do so successfully. Migrant beggars' ability to engage in transnational migration is mediated by the involvement of intermediaries with different roles and motives to help facilitate these beggars. Dominant views on migration for begging have linked the migration of beggars to the activities of Organised Criminal Networks (Cherneva, 2011; UNODC, 2014; IOM, 2019; Serrano, 2020). The thesis argued that it is mainly migrant beggars' social networks that facilitate rather than an Organised Criminal Network.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

The phenomenon of begging has long been a social issue. However, the increasing presence of child beggars, along with the influx of beggars of all ages from other countries onto the streets of Accra, has become a growing concern in recent years. This has raised questions about why and how these migrant beggars arrive, as well as issues related to children's rights to education and national security. According to Child Rights International Ghana, over 60% of child beggars in Ghana come from other countries. This issue has drawn attention not only from city authorities but also from researchers, the media, and the general public (Tetteh, 2018). A 2019 United Nations report estimated that 150 million children worldwide live and work on the streets. In Greater Accra alone, 61,492 individuals under the age of 18 work on the streets, with 65% of them living there permanently a figure that continues to grow (Dankyi, 2021).

The magnitude and seriousness of this issue, along with the recognition of child begging as life-threatening and risky, prompted the Nigerien authorities, in collaboration with the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), to repatriate 1,320 Nigeriens to their home country on June 7th

and 8th, 2022. This group included 620 children, 400 women, and 300 men (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, 2022). This effort was part of a government initiative to reduce child begging and streetism. Despite these measures, the problem persists. The streets of Accra remain flooded with beggars from Niger, including children, elderly individuals, people with disabilities, and women with very young children, all seeking alms. In the world, migration for begging and the phenomenon of begging in general have been associated with the works of Organised Networks such as traffickers, who send these people forcefully onto the streets and profit from their labour. There are two schools of thought associated with the migration of beggars in the literature. One school is of the view that the international migration of beggars cannot take place at the rate it is in recent times without the widespread involvement of external actors who organize, exploit and profit from this migration (UNODC, 2014), and the other school that believes that Social Networks play a very important role in the migration of beggars (Tyldum & Friberg, 2023).

The migration of beggars has long been associated with organized networks. This is so because of the yearly reports from the UNODC country, regional and global levels on trafficking in all its forms including trafficking for begging (UNODC, 2014). Aside from these yearly reports, some studies on trafficking have also reported on child beggars as victims of trafficking in some parts of the world including West Africa. For example, a study by Boiro and Einarsdottir on child beggars in Senegal identified Guinea-Bissau Quran schoolboys begging in Senegal cities as victims of trafficking implicating Quranic school teachers as the traffickers (Boiro and Einarsdottir, 2024). Given the economic impoverished characteristics of the Nigeriens that engage in begging on the streets of Accra, the dominant narrative regarding the influx and their migration has been associated with the involvement of migration intermediaries such as traffickers who finance and facilitate the migration of

these beggars (UNODC, 2014; Serrano, 2020; IOM, 2019; ILO, 2009), and less attention on the social networks involved in their migration.

A significant aspect of the discourse surrounding transnational begging is that these beggars are often forced to work under harsh conditions for their so-called “bosses,” who control and regulate their daily begging activities. Research on forced child begging indicates that traffickers typically collect all the money these beggars manage to solicit from sympathizers (Serrano, 2020). In this context, begging has become institutionalized as a business designed to generate profits. This practice poses a serious human rights concern, as migrants are frequently exposed to exploitation, violence, and abuse during their journeys at the hands of these actors (Hall, 2016). The situation is particularly troubling for children, whose rights are systematically violated. They are deprived of formal education and opportunities to acquire vocational skills, which are crucial for improving their future employability.

This heavy “internal” focus on the begging phenomenon within the academic literature in Ghana and the limited academic interest in transnational beggars in Ghana is problematic given the glaring presence of transnational beggars on the streets of Accra and the documented evidence from other countries about their mode of migration as irregular migrants. This supports Kyereko's (2018) assertion that intra-West Africa migration has received less research attention despite the significant numbers involved.

With regards to specific studies on Nigerien migrant beggars in Ghana, two studies stand out: Amuza et al. (2019), examines the language socialization practices of the Tamasheq-speaking (a Tuareg language) beggars in Accra, with the aim of understanding the language context that migrants are exposed to. On the other hand, Osei (2021), examined Nigerien Migrants on the streets of Accra. The study explores why begging is common among the Tuaregs in Ghana, the extent of their integration and the future aspirations of these beggars. Given the

above, it can be seen that less attention is given to the Nigerian Hausa beggars in Accra, 'how' they migrate to Ghana who brings them. This and other gaps are what the current study seeks to address.

As a point of departure, the current study seeks to examine the migration for begging among Nigerian migrants in terms of, who migrates, why they migrate, how they migrate, what is involved in what they come to do and the consequences of their migration on themselves and their households. The current study addresses these gaps in the literature by presenting and discussing, first, the socio-demographic characteristics of migrant beggars and the reasons for migration, followed by the migration trajectories of migrants. Other sections discuss the intermediaries involved in the migration and finally discuss the relationship between the work migrants do and their living conditions in Ghana. It explains the findings, using concepts derived from Migration Network Theory, Migration Industry Concepts and the Migration and Livelihood Framework. Employing a sequential mixed method approach, 136 Nigerian begging migrants were engaged in the study.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

The general objective of the study is to explore Migration for Begging among Nigerian migrants in terms of who comes, why they come, how they come, what they come to do and the outcome of the migration. To achieve the general objective, the following specific objectives are outlined:

1. To examine the socio-demographic characteristics of Nigerian migrant beggars and the reasons for migrating to Ghana.
2. To explore the migration trajectories of begging migrants from Niger to Ghana.
3. To examine the nature of intermediaries involved in the migration for begging of Nigerian migrants.

4. To investigate the relationship between Nigerian migrants' work and their living conditions in Ghana.
5. To examine the migration outcome of Nigerian beggars in Accra.

#### **1.4 Justification of the study**

Every research work must fulfil core mandates, including contributing to knowledge, theory, practice, and policy. This thesis is relevant in several ways and targets all stakeholders, including state and non-state actors responsible for managing migration in Ghana. Firstly, this study addresses a critical gap in understanding the influx of Nigerian migrant beggars on the streets of Accra. It bridges the knowledge and academic gap regarding who migrates, why they migrate, how they migrate, and what activities they engage in upon arrival. The study also examines the relationship between the work these migrants do and their living conditions at their destination. Migration has recently gained prominence due to its inclusion in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), highlighting its potential role in personal, community, and national development.

Secondly, the migration and livelihood framework links migrants' characteristics, macro-environmental factors, institutional pressures and procedures, and the necessary capital for deciding on a particular livelihood strategy. While the concept of the migration industry has been explored separately, this study enhances the migration and livelihood framework by incorporating the role of "intermediaries." This addition is vital in understanding how migration becomes a livelihood strategy, providing insights into the roles different migration actors play in facilitating migration for begging.

Thirdly, by focusing on the nature of migration intermediaries involved in the migration of migrant beggars from Niger, the study fills a significant gap in understanding how Nigerian illiterate, undocumented, rural dwellers and their children manage to migrate to Ghana in

large numbers to engage in begging. The finding will help stakeholders such as the Ghana Immigration Service and the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection to easily identify the intermediaries supporting beggar migration from Niger to Ghana. It also maps the routes, journeys, and trajectories of these migrants, offering a visual representation of their migration paths. While trajectory mapping is not new, this study innovatively incorporates details such as migrants' modes of transport and transit durations, providing a more comprehensive view than traditional mobility maps.

Also, by critically exploring the migration process and the living conditions of migrant beggars, this study provides valuable empirical data to the academic community in the field of migration studies. It also equips practitioners with the necessary data to make informed decisions regarding migrant beggars. Furthermore, the study contributes to building academic knowledge in migration studies by offering empirical evidence on the transnational migration experiences of accompanied child beggars in Ghana. This knowledge will help practitioners and policymakers understand the conditions under which these children migrate. Additionally, it aims to inform policymakers and implementers about the need to ensure the safe and orderly migration of individuals and groups migrating to Ghana for begging. The study also intends to guide the Immigration Service in devising strategies to control the activities of service provider networks that transport migrants in cargo trucks, ensuring the safety of these migrants.

Finally, the findings will inform policy decisions on Welfare interventions by providing the different categories of beggars and their specific needs example targeting both migrant children and the aged. Again, by way of supporting evidence based practice, the findings provide the necessary information for the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social protection, the Immigration and police service to understand the alternative ways in explaining beggar migration.

## **1.5 Definition of concepts**

For the purpose of this study, some key concepts need to be operationally defined to explain their use in the study. Because of their centrality in the analysis of the study and the diverse meanings in their application, it is important to define the key terms of migration for begging and the concept of begging.

### ***1.5.1 Migration***

According to King (2012), contemporary migration has become increasingly diverse and complex due to the social, cultural, and political contexts in which it occurs. Social scientists view migration as another social phenomenon, characterized by related patterns, social processes, arrangements, actions, and outcomes, the study of which enhances our understanding of human life (Adepoju, 2010). At its core, migration is often defined as the movement of individuals or groups across space, entering or leaving a specific area.

Hauser and Duncan (1971) define migration as the movement of people from one geographical unit to another, crossing an administrative or political border to settle permanently or temporarily in a place other than their place of origin. Similarly, Perruchoud and Redpath-Cross (2011), in an IOM publication, define migration as the movement of a person or group of persons across an international border or within a state. This definition includes all types of population movements, regardless of their length, composition, or causes. It encompasses refugees, displaced persons, economic migrants, and individuals moving for purposes such as family reunification.

In this study, migration refers to the temporary or permanent movement of people from one geographical area to another for various reasons. It specifically considers migrants who have been in Ghana for at least one month. The three-month criterion was selected because the study's primary objective is to examine migrants' trajectories and the types of support they receive during their journey from Niger to Ghana. This timeframe does not require an

extended stay to collect the necessary information. Furthermore, three months is sufficient for migrants to settle at their destination and engage in economic activities.

### ***1.5.2 Parent***

A parent is typically defined as a person who has a biological, adoptive or social relationship with a child, taking on responsibilities such as caregiving, nurturing and providing for the child's needs (Ali et al., 2021). In this study, a parent is conceptualized as a migrant who is either a mother, father, uncle, or relative who has migrated with a child or children and assumes responsibility for their care and supervision during the act of begging at the destination. The study also recognizes instances where children take care of their parents due to disabilities.

### ***1.5.3 Child***

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the Children's Act of Ghana define a child as a person under the age of 18 (UNCRC, 1989; Children's Act of Ghana, 1998). For the purposes of this study, a child is defined as anyone below the age of 18 who has migrated in the company of a parent and resides with the same parent at the destination.

### ***1.5.4 Begging***

The phenomenon of begging has become a global concern. The International Labour Organization (ILO) (2004) defines begging as a range of activities in which an individual solicits money from strangers, often citing poverty, health needs, or religious reasons. Lenhard (2021) further explains begging as the act of requesting money without offering work or goods in exchange. In both public perception and academic literature, begging is

frequently portrayed as a one-sided activity associated with passivity, marginalization, and a means for disadvantaged individuals to earn a minimal income (Lenhard, 2021).

Begging generally involves a beggar asking for money or material items from another person usually due to poverty and without providing labour or services in return (Owusu-Sekyere et al., 2021; Oluwole, 2016). However, for this study, begging is defined more comprehensively. In this context, begging refers to the act of earning a livelihood by requesting and receiving both cash and non-cash items from a willing donor, either in public or private, without providing work that corresponds to the gift. This often involves displaying signs of dependency, exposing disabilities, invoking religious or moral appeals, or employing deceptive tactics.

#### ***1.5.5 Migration for begging***

Migration for begging often involves individuals or groups relocating to another country or geographical area with the intention of using begging as a means of subsistence (Friberg, 2020). In this study, migration for begging is defined as transnational migration undertaken specifically to engage in begging as an income-generating activity. This definition is particularly relevant given the transnational lifestyle of the migrants being studied.

#### **1.6 Organisation of the Thesis**

The thesis is structured into nine chapters, including the introduction, literature review, theoretical and conceptual framework, methodology, four results chapters, and a summary, recommendations, and conclusion chapter. Chapter One comprises the introduction, which summarizes the most relevant aspects of the thesis. It includes the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, definitions of key concepts, the significance of the study, and the organization of the thesis. Chapter Two discusses and reviews relevant

literature, organized under the following sub-headings: international migration, irregular migration (trafficking and smuggling), the nature of intermediaries, migrant smuggling and child trafficking, West African migration determinants, the country contexts of Ghana and Niger, migration intermediaries and their role in facilitating migrant beggars, the phenomenon of begging, and empirical studies on begging behaviour. Chapter Three presents the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the study, including the social network theory, the migration industry concept, and the migration and livelihood framework. Chapter four is the Methodology of the study. The chapter discusses the philosophical underpinning of the study and also describes the methodology and the methods used in studying the phenomena. Chapters five, six, seven and eight are the results chapters and chapter nine is the Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation. Chapter five describes the sociodemographic characteristics of the migrants and their reasons for migration. Chapter six assesses the migration trajectories of begging migrants from Niger to Ghana. Chapter seven examines the nature of intermediaries involved in the migration of begging among Nigerien migrants. Chapter eight examines the relationship between migrants' work and living conditions and finally, Chapter nine provides readers a summary of the Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations and Future Research recommendations.

### **1.7 Summary**

The chapter gave an overview of the entire thesis. It gave a background and the problem statement of the study. The chapter also gave the general object and an outline of specific objects of the study. It also outlined the research questions that needed to be answered to address the research problem. The study also justifies the study and the definition of some key concepts. It narrates the study plan and concludes with a summary.

## CHAPTER TWO

### REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

#### 2.0 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the background of the study. This second chapter is in two parts; the first presents a review of relevant literature on Migration from Niger to Ghana, the migration process of transnational beggars and other relevant literature. The literature review covers relevant themes that help to address the research objectives and the research questions among others and also based on the central issues in connection with the study. This is divided into six broad sections; country contexts (Ghana and Niger), migration within the ECOWAS sub-region (processes, trajectories and routes), irregular migration (trafficking, smuggling and the migration industry), determinants of migration from West Africa, the begging phenomenon and review of related Empirical Studies.

#### 2.1 Migration for Begging

Migration for begging is not peculiar to Africa. Begging is considered a global phenomenon that affects many nations (Zoumanigui, 2016). According to Friberg (2020), migrating for the purpose of begging commonly referred to as “migration for begging” has become a prevalent livelihood strategy among many Romanian Roma communities in Western Europe. In Europe, Roma migrants are particularly known for engaging in migration for begging (Friberg, 2020; Tyldrum and Friberg, 2023).

Migration for begging is a complex issue observed in various parts of Western Europe (Memetovic, 2020). It often involves individuals or groups relocating to another country or region with the intention of using begging as a means of subsistence (Friberg, 2020). Notably, the reasons behind migration often overlap with the factors driving transnational begging

(Friberg, 2020). Tyldrum and Friberg (2023) argue that in Western Europe, factors such as a lack of job opportunities, extreme poverty, structural deprivation, and conflicts in the migrants' home countries often contribute to migration for begging. Some individuals view migration as a way to escape challenging circumstances and seek better opportunities elsewhere. However, due to limited legal migration pathways and difficulties in securing employment or social support, begging may remain their only viable option.

Migration for begging is not confined to Western Europe; it is also prevalent in various regions of West Africa and the continent as a whole (Ojedokun, 2015; Hall, 2016). Like in Europe, it is a multifaceted problem with diverse causes and consequences. In Niger, for example, migration for begging often involves seasonal or temporary movements within the country or across borders to neighbouring countries such as Nigeria, Mali, and Algeria (Benattia et al., 2015). Ojedokun (2015) notes that individuals and families frequently migrate to urban areas or regions with higher economic activity, believing these locations offer better chances of receiving alms or finding informal work. Economic factors are thus pivotal in driving migration for begging from Niger (Torchiato et al., 2021). A lack of job opportunities, particularly in rural areas, compels people to seek alternative means of subsistence. While begging is informal, it enables some individuals to generate a modest income to support themselves and their families (Hall, 2016).

According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2021), children from Niger are especially affected by migration for begging. Many families send their children to urban centres within Niger or to neighbouring countries to beg for financial support. This practice is often driven by poverty, insufficient resources, and the hope of securing a better future for their children through education or other opportunities. However, migration for begging from Niger presents significant challenges and risks. Beggars often face exploitation, including physical and psychological abuse, trafficking, and violations of basic rights (Ojedokun and Aderinto, 2018). They may also encounter discrimination, social exclusion, and precarious

living conditions, lacking access to proper shelter, healthcare, and education (Kyereko, 2020). Ojedokun (2015) highlights that some Nigerian migrants, particularly those who travel to Algeria and Nigeria, engage in transnational begging as a primary livelihood strategy (Ojedokun, 2015; IOM, 2021; Boyer & Mounkaila, 2018). Cherneva (2011) defines begging as the act of asking for money as charity, typically in public spaces.

Migration for begging has also been linked to unsafe and irregular migration, as migrant traffickers and smugglers often facilitate the movement of these migrants. This is primarily due to the lack of documentation among rural migrants who rely on begging as their primary means of livelihood (Torchiaro et al., 2021). Migration studies (Salt and Stein, 1997; Zhang et al., 2018; Antonopoulos & Winterdyk, 2006; UNODC, 2018) have documented that many instances of irregular migration are associated with "criminal" organizations or networks. These networks sponsor migrants' entry into specific countries, often linking transnational migration to smuggling, trafficking, forced labour, and modern-day slavery (IOM, 2021; ILO, 2009; Cherneva, 2011).

This assertion is grounded in the observation that irregular migration typically requires the involvement of intermediaries who are key actors within the "migration industry." Ambrosini (2017, p. 1825) defines a "migration intermediary" as "a single person or collective actor who provides various forms of support to migrants' ventures, mediating between their aspirations and opportunities for settlement in receiving societies." Other studies highlight the diverse forms migration intermediaries can take, including smugglers, brokers/recruitment agents, migration agents, travel agencies, employment/placement agencies, coyotes, village heads, and even teachers (Harvey et al., 2018).

According to Coen (2011), the idea that irregular migration and human smuggling constitute transnational organized crime has been central to debates on the social organization of human smuggling and trafficking (Baird, 2013). Almost all migrants in the current study migrated without any form of documentation, rendering their migration both irregular and illegal.

## 2.2 Ghana: Country Context

Ghana is a West African country located on the coastal front of the Gulf of Guinea. It is bordered to the northwest and north by Burkina Faso, to the east by Togo, and to the west by Côte d'Ivoire. The 2021 Population and Housing Census (PHC) estimated Ghana's total population at 30,792,608, comprising 15,610,149 females and 15,182,459 males (GSS, 2022). The country covers a land area of 23,537 sq. km and is divided into 16 administrative regions. These regions include six metropolitan areas, 109 municipalities, and 146 districts, totalling 261 administrative divisions (ghanadistricts.com). Ghana operates as a unitary state with a presidential and parliamentary system. It is also a constitutional republic, with its current constitution drafted on March 31, 1992, approved and promulgated on April 28, 1992, and coming into force on January 7, 1993. Major export products include gold, cocoa, bauxite, timber, electricity, and oil (GSS, 2022).

The Ghanaian economy has grown steadily over the past three decades despite challenges affecting growth, redistribution, and sustainability (Alagidede et al., 2013). Ghana's economy is a mix of private and public enterprises, with approximately one-fifth of the GDP derived from agriculture, one-fourth from industry, and three-fifths from the service sector (World Bank Group, 2018). According to the World Bank (2018), Ghana experienced rapid economic growth at an average of 7% annually from 2017 to 2019, but this trajectory was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The poverty rate rose from 25% in 2019 to 25.5% in 2020, with a GDP growth rate of 5.4% in 2021. Ghana's GDP was estimated at USD 77.59 billion in 2021, with GDP per capita income recorded as USD 2,084.64 in 2021. However, GDP growth slowed to 3.3% in the first quarter of 2022, down from 3.6% during the same period in 2021.

Ghana is predominantly an agricultural economy, with over 50% of the population relying on the sector. It is one of the world's leading exporters of cocoa. The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO, 2023) notes that the forest zone is known for significant farming activities, including cocoa, oil palm, coffee, and rubber. Food crops in this area include maize, plantain, cocoyam, and cassava. The middle belt cultivates maize, legumes, cocoyam, and yam, with tobacco and cotton as prominent cash crops. In the northern sector, key crops include sorghum, maize, millet, cowpeas, groundnuts, and yam, while rice is important across all regions.

The Greater Accra Region, where the research site is located, serves as Ghana's administrative capital and is often referred to as the gateway to the country. This region contains two major industrial and commercial hubs and is the most densely populated and urbanized area in Ghana, according to the 2021 PHC. Accra, the capital city of Ghana, is the most populous city in the country and a major attraction due to its numerous commercial centres. Gaisie et al. (2019) describe the Accra Metropolitan Area as the headquarters of multinational corporations, organizations, and most industrial and service firms in Ghana. Housing in Accra caters to both high- and low-income groups. High-income residents live in affluent, first-class residential areas, while low-income groups settle in informal communities. However, the rapid population growth and inadequate infrastructure have turned many inner-city areas into densely populated slums (Arguello et al., 2013).

The existence of informal settlements in Accra attracts migrants, particularly from other parts of West Africa. Popular residential areas for these migrants include Nima, Mamobi, Fadama, Sabon Zongo, Sukura, Teshie, and other low-income communities (Awumbila et al., 2014). In terms of religion, more than half of Ghana's population are Christians, about one-fifth are Muslims, and a small portion adheres to traditional religious practices (Gaisie et al., 2019).

### **2.3 Irregular Migration, Migrant Smuggling and Trafficking**

Previous studies on migrant smuggling have compared the social organization of smuggling with other forms of organized crime and linked it with the broader literature on ‘irregular’ migration (Constantino & Di Nicola, 2021; Whittle & Antonopoulos, 2022). Adugna et al. (2021), assert that irregular migration is driven by individuals from less developed countries who are determined to move, settle, and work in a new country to improve their living standards and socio-economic conditions, often as a means of escaping poverty. Additionally, some recent literature reviews on smuggling have been documented for law enforcement to assist states and inter-governmental organisations fight against transnational organized crime (Baird, 2013; Katona, 2020). According to Coen, (2011), the thesis that irregular migration and the issue of human smuggling being a transnational organised crime has been the core of the debate on the social organisation of human smuggling and trafficking (Baird, 2013). Most, if not all, migrants surveyed migrated through illegal means without proper documentation, making their migration irregular and, in some cases, illegal.

Article 3 of the UN Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants defines migrant smuggling as “the procurement, to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident.” Human trafficking, on the other hand, refers to the “recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, through threats or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or a position of vulnerability, or of giving or receiving payment or benefit to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation” (UNODC, 2000; Malakooti, 2020, p. 5).

Understanding the distinction between these two concepts is critical, as women and child beggars are hypothesized to be trafficked and smuggled outside their countries for exploitation (UNODC, 2018). The differences between trafficking and smuggling are outlined along five key dimensions: Action, Crime, Means, Purpose, and Trans nationality (IOM, 2016). Trafficking involves the transportation and transfer of people with the intent to exploit them, whereas smuggling entails facilitating the transportation or irregular crossing of person(s) across an international border, without the intent of exploitation (UNODC, 2018). In smuggling, the relationship between the smuggler and the migrant ends once the fee is paid and illegal entry is achieved, and it always involves the crossing of an international border (UNODC, 2018; IOM, 2016).

Furthermore, literature strongly links child trafficking to child begging and other forms of exploitation (Jones et al., 2007; Makisaka, 2009; UNODC, 2018). A significant number of cross-border migrants from Niger lack proper travel documentation to migrate from their place of origin (Yendaw, 2022). Even within the ECOWAS free movement framework, migrants are required to present documents such as a travel passport, an ECOWAS card, or other acceptable identification to demonstrate their nationality (Teye et al., 2019). Without these documents, potential migrants may be denied access to regular migration.

#### **2.4 Migration Intermediaries**

Generally, migration intermediaries are actors—both formal and informal—who facilitate migration for millions of individuals seeking to improve their living conditions (Adugna et al., 2019; Zack et al., 2019). Studies indicate that migration intermediaries can take diverse forms, including brokers or recruitment agents, smugglers, migration agents, travel agencies, employment or placement agencies, coyotes, village heads, and teachers (Harvey et al.,

2018). Other researchers have documented the various roles played by migration actors, such as money lenders, recruitment agencies, individual brokers, transportation providers, travel agents, contractors, lawyers, legal and advisory firms, formal and informal remittance services, and courier service owners. These actors include formally established businesses (e.g., agencies) as well as those operating in informal economies (e.g., brokers, smugglers, coyotes), each facilitating either regular or irregular migration (Jones and Sha, 2020; Salt and Stein, 1997).

Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen (2013) classify migration actors into four categories: Facilitators, Controllers, Exploiters, and Rescuers. Migration intermediaries facilitate both regular and irregular migration and operate in every country. Their activities are diverse and span the entire migration process, including acquiring travel documents such as passports and birth certificates, arranging transportation and accommodation, and providing training, among other services (Baird, 2013; Ambrosini, 2017; Jones & Sha, 2020).

Migration intermediary literature often distinguishes between migrant social networks—such as friends, family, community members, and ethnic group members and companies or individuals who profit financially from facilitating migration (Jones & Sha, 2020). Social networks are generally believed to operate on principles of reciprocity and altruism rather than monetary gain. However, Gammeltoft-Hansen and Sørensen (2013) highlight that profit-driven business sector actors, in addition to friends and family, also play significant roles in aiding migration. Adugna et al. (2019) assert that intermediaries are deeply embedded within migrant communities, with some studies noting that many intermediaries are migrants or former migrants themselves.

The activities of migration intermediaries are widely recognized globally and are not limited to migrants from the Global South. Zack et al. (2019) emphasize that there is nothing inherently illegitimate about the actions of migration intermediaries; however, questions of legitimacy often arise depending on whether the migration is regular or irregular. These

intermediaries are meso-level actors typically connected to migrants, their local communities, employers, and nation-state governments in both origin and destination countries. While some intermediaries maintain social connections with migrants, others operate purely as service providers (Zack et al., 2019).

A 2024 study by Sha and Khor found that many participants had friends, family members, or neighbours who had worked or were working in Malaysia. These networks play significant roles in inspiring migration and influencing decision-making by providing information about job opportunities, migration processes, and life in Malaysia (Sha and Khor, 2024). One participant in their study shared: “Many people I know very well are all in Malaysia, and they asked me to come to Malaysia. This is the best country for us, they said. That is why I was inspired by my friends and came to Malaysia.” Similarly, in the current study, the most influential intermediaries associated with the migration of immigrant beggars from Niger to Ghana are their family and friends.

## **2.5 Migration Within the West Africa sub-region**

Literature evidence by Adepoju (2008) asserts that, in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), both intra and inter-regional migration has become part of the lives of the people. In as much as these movements are predominantly intra-regional, they take place within political, economic, socio-ethnic and ecological settings. According to Adepoju, migrants include temporary cross-border workers, traders, unskilled and contract workers, undocumented migrants, highly skilled professionals, and refugees. These categories of intra-regional migration are often facilitated by shared language, culture, and colonial heritage (Adeboye, 2008).

Teye (2022) notes that West African countries often receive migrants from neighbouring nations while also serving as popular destinations for emigrants from the same regions. Ethnic ties are a significant factor influencing migration within the region. Migration remains

a major issue across Africa and its sub-regions (Idehen & Ikuru, 2019). Teye and Nikoi (2022) report that the most recent data indicates migration movements within the sub-region surpass those directed towards European countries. Migration has long been an integral component of labour markets and livelihoods across much of the continent, involving highly skilled, semi-skilled, and unskilled individuals seeking employment across borders. Countries within the West African sub-region have been migrating across each other's borders for various reasons over centuries now. In the sub-region, the countries with the penchant of migrating with the highest values include, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali and Ghana (UN DESA, 2020).

According to Adeboye (2008), the landscape of migration patterns continues to evolve. Key trends include an increase in female migration, diversification of migration destinations, transformation of labour flows into commercial migration, emigration of skilled health and other professionals, human trafficking, and changes in refugee flow dynamics. The drivers of migration in some parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly emigration, are fuelled by an unstable political environment, ethnic-religious conflicts, poverty, and growing populations (Adeboye, 2004; Akanle et al., 2021).

The region hosted 7.64 million international migrants in 2020, with 34% (2.6 million) residing in Côte d'Ivoire and 17% (1.3 million) in Nigeria (UN DESA, 2020). Contrary to the dominant perception that most migrants from the Global South head towards the Global North, the majority of migrants from the West African sub-region remain within the region.

Migration within and from the West African sub-region encompasses temporary cross-border workers, female traders, farm labourers, professionals, clandestine workers, and refugees. These migrations are predominantly intra-regional, short-term, and male-dominated, driven by the economic interdependence of neighbouring countries. Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana have

traditionally been the primary destinations for migrants. Nigeria gained prominence in the 1970s during its oil boom, which created employment opportunities in the oil industry (Teye et al., 2015).

Setrana and Keist (2022) observe that in recent years, the number of women migrants within the region has increased, both in formal and informal sectors. Many women use migration as a survival strategy to supplement limited family incomes. Commercial migration, which is predominantly female, plays a significant role in promoting intra-regional trade among smaller countries such as Benin, Togo, and The Gambia (Thadani and Todaro, 2019).

In the area of human trafficking within the sub-region, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), in collaboration with the National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), reported that cases recorded between 2016 and 2019 in West Africa involved more victims compared to other regions in sub-Saharan Africa. The victims are predominantly children, and the primary purpose is forced labour. According to Danso (2013), trafficking in West Africa affects all 15 states, with victims either recruited or abducted for onward migration within the region or externally beyond its borders.

## **2.6 Drivers of migration**

Evidence in the literature shows that manifold reasons can drive people out of West Africa (Adepoju, 2008). According to Teye (2022), the drivers of West African migration can be categorized under Van Hear et al.'s (2012) four typologies of "drivers of migration": proximal drivers, precipitating factors/drivers, predisposing factors/drivers, and mediating factors/drivers. Predisposing factors are those that contribute to the creation of an unfavourable socio-economic environment, making migration possible. These unfavourable conditions may include globalization, unequal terms of trade, unfair trade practices, and demographic transformations. Proximate drivers, on the other hand, directly cause migration

and are outcomes of the predisposing factors. At the origin, these include macroeconomic challenges, security problems, and environmental changes. At migrant destination areas, proximate drivers include economic opportunities and the presence of peaceful communities. Precipitating drivers are conditions that trigger migrants' departure. In West Africa, these are often economic, such as high unemployment rates, low incomes, poverty, and declining prices for agricultural products (Van Hear, 2012). Other precipitating factors include inadequate health care, education, and welfare services. In addition, the push and pull factors influencing migration include human rights abuses, violent conflicts, population pressure, natural resource degradation, poverty, and climate and environmental change (Chamie, 2020). A study by Osei, 2021, participants in the study reported, dire economic hardship, financial poverty, lack of rainfall, shortage of food among others as the reason for their migration. For example a participant noted that:

*“There is fight. Terrorists are everywhere. They are in Burkina, they are in Côte d’Ivoire, Nigeria is the mother of all. Niger is the father, Mali the same thing. That is why we are praying so that they won’t reach here in Ghana. My people that you see over here, they don’t stay at a place for a long time, in a short while they will go to another place” (4th June 2021).*

## **2.7 ECOWAS Migration Protocol on Free Movement**

The literature further reveals that migration within the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sub-region has significantly increased due to implementing the free movement of goods and persons (Garba & Yeboah, 2022). Citizens of member countries are granted the rights of entry, residence, and establishment in each other’s countries, implemented in three phases: Phase I (Right of Entry and Visa Abolition), Phase II (Right of Residence), and Phase III (Right of Establishment) (ECOWAS Treaty, 1979).

Garba and Yeboah (2022) explained that the ECOWAS protocol aims to facilitate the right of entry for nationals of member states and safeguard opportunities for citizens to reside and establish sustainable businesses within member states. By addressing barriers to the free movement of people and goods, the protocol seeks to promote regional economic integration (Garba & Yeboah, 2022; Yendaw, 2021). Challenges in international trade further underscored the need to liberalize trade among member states, removing trade barriers. Member states include Burkina Faso, Benin, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Guinea, Ghana, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mauritania, Mali, Senegal, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Togo (ECOWAS Treaty, 1979).

The promotion of economic development in the West African sub-region necessitated efficient cooperation and integration, with an emphasis on self-reliance. The free flow of goods, services, and people stimulated the enactment of several protocols aimed at removing trade barriers. The 1979 protocols on free movement, residence, and establishment guaranteed free entry for citizens of member states without a visa for up to 90 days. These protocols were ratified by all member states in 1980. The right of residence protocol became effective in 1986, but the right of establishment remains unimplemented (ECOWAS Treaty, 1979).

Under the treaty, visas and other entry requirements for citizens traveling within member states were abolished. Citizens need only an international health certificate and valid travel documents for stays of up to 90 days. However, Article 4 of the ECOWAS treaty allows member states to deny entry to individuals deemed inadmissible under their laws, protecting against criminals and those who might undermine member states' legal systems (ECOWAS Treaty, 1979). Studies suggest that the formation of the ECOWAS treaty was driven by a collective need to address political, economic, and socio-cultural challenges for sustainable population welfare improvements. Pooling resources, particularly human capital, was

considered critical for rapid and optimal economic growth in the sub-region (Yeboah et al., 2021). Member states strive to achieve the treaty's goals, aiming for higher living standards for their populations.

Intra-regional migration within the ECOWAS sub-region accounts for about 60% of movements in West Africa, a figure approximately seven times greater than movements toward Europe, making it one of the most mobile regions globally (OECD, 2018). Cross-border movements provide opportunities for people to enhance their livelihoods. Teye et al. (2019) noted that these movements have been facilitated by ECOWAS free trade protocols established since the 1970s. The top migration destinations in West Africa include Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Mali, Ghana, Benin, Niger, Togo, Senegal, and The Gambia, with Côte d'Ivoire leading (UN DESA, 2020). The top migration corridors are led by Burkina Faso (1,376,350 migrants) to Côte d'Ivoire, followed by Côte d'Ivoire to Burkina Faso.

Despite the protocol's aim to promote mobility within the sub-region, the full implementation of the Rights of Residence and Establishment, as outlined in the 1979 Treaty, remains incomplete (Devillard et al., 2015). According to Yeboah et al. (2020), all member states have implemented Phase I, allowing visa-free entry for 90 days for ECOWAS citizens. However, implementing Phases II and III has proven challenging, attributed to the reluctance of member states to ratify supplementary protocols (Awumbila et al., 2014). This indicates a disconnect between the protocol's objectives and the practical experiences on the ground.

## **2.8 Migration in the Sahel Context**

Another central theme in the literature regarding Niger is its location within the Sahel climatic zone. The Sahel region faces numerous challenges, including poverty, fragile states, transnational organized crime, climate refugees and migrants, and jihadist insurgencies, which present significant challenges for both regional and global policymakers (Boas, 2019).

Countries within distinct climatic zones often experience unique root causes of migration. For the Sahel region, desertification and cyclical famines frequently trigger waves of environmentally displaced persons crossing national borders within and outside the sub-region (Lenshie et al., 2021).

Boas (2019) highlights that no individual country within the Sahel is adequately equipped to address the livelihood challenges confronting its population, making migration an inevitable survival strategy for many. The harsh economic conditions—marked by a lack of sustainable livelihood opportunities and a bleak outlook for the future—are exacerbated by widening income disparities between the northern and southern countries. This has driven migration, fuelled further by political factors such as poor governance and human rights abuses, especially among young educated persons (Adepoju, 2008).

However, the migration phenomenon is not limited to educated youth. The unskilled and uneducated youth, elderly men and women, the physically challenged, and even children are compelled to leave their homes in search of better opportunities. The Sahel is one of the poorest and most environmentally degraded regions globally. It is also among the most vulnerable to climate change, with temperatures estimated to rise 1.5 times faster than the global average (USAID, 2017).

According to a 2018 UNEP report, over 20 million people in the region faced food insecurity in 2015, with 6 million children classified as malnourished. This dire situation is reflected in the increasing number of migrant mothers and their children from the region now visible on the streets of Accra. Furthermore, the Sahel's annual population growth rate of 3%, widespread poverty, political instability, extremist activities, and severe water scarcity contribute to new conflicts and forced migration (UNEP, 2021).

The migrant profile from this region is broadly classified into two groups: economic migrants and forced migrants (Adepoju, 2010). Recent years have seen an intensification of migration due to the Sahel's deteriorating vegetation, climate, and environmental conditions (USAID, 2017). According to the African Union's (2018) migration framework for Africa, migration on the continent has increased in recent years. This trend is characterized by young people under 30, a rising number of female migrants, rural-to-urban migration, seasonal work migration, and labour migration. Amuzu et al (2018) however indicated that most of the Nigerien migrants who are found on the streets of Accra begging are mostly from the hinterlands of Niger where farming is their preoccupation, signifying rural-urban migration in a different dimension.

## **2.9 The Niger Context (Culture and History)**

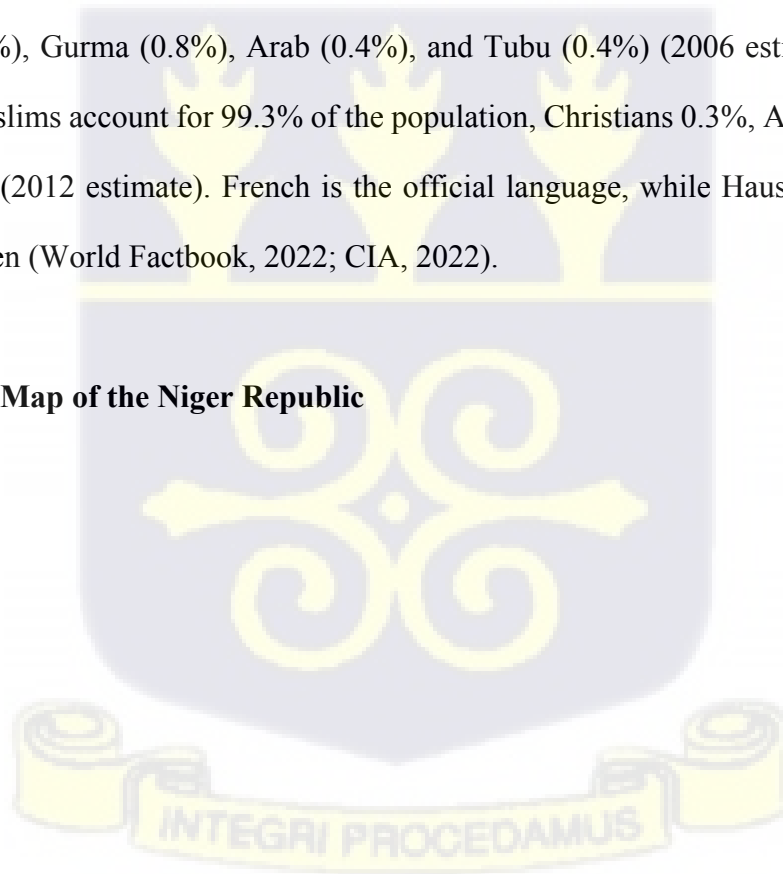
The country profile of Niger, the origin of the migrants considered in this study, highlights its economic, political, social, and environmental challenges, as well as the resources available for its development. Niger gained independence from France in 1960 and, along with Burkina Faso, Mali, and Mauritania, is among the poorest and most fragile states in the world. This fragility is largely attributed to instability, chronic violence, humanitarian crises, and widespread migration or displacement (Boas, 2019).

Niger's poverty significantly limits its ability to develop its resource base (Painter, 2021). It shares borders with Mali and Burkina Faso to the west, Nigeria and Benin to the south, Chad to the east, and Libya and Algeria to the north. The country consists of eight key regions: Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua, Tillabéri, and Zinder (Yeboah et al., 2019). Its population is estimated at 24,484,587 (2022), and the economy is largely agrarian and subsistence-based, frequently disrupted by droughts common to the Sahel region.

Geographically, Niger covers a total area of 1.267 million square kilometres, with 1,266,700 square kilometres of land and 300 square kilometres of water. A significant portion of its landmass, approximately three-fourths, lies within the Sahara Desert, making the country predominantly hot, dusty, and dry. The southern region experiences a tropical climate. Niger's climatic conditions include very high temperatures year-round, a long dry season from October to May, and a short, irregular rainy season from June to September (Adamou et al., 2021).

Niger is endowed with natural resources such as phosphates, uranium, coal, iron ore, gypsum, tin, gold, molybdenum, salt, and petroleum. Its population comprises eight major ethnic groups: Hausa (53.1%), Zarma/Songhai (21.2%), Tuareg (11%), Fulani (Peuhl) (6.5%), Kanuri (5.9%), Gurma (0.8%), Arab (0.4%), and Tubu (0.4%) (2006 estimate). Regarding religion, Muslims account for 99.3% of the population, Christians 0.3%, Animists 0.2%, and others 0.1% (2012 estimate). French is the official language, while Hausa and Djerma are widely spoken (World Factbook, 2022; CIA, 2022).

**Figure 2. 1: Map of the Niger Republic**





Source: The World Factbook (2022).

Boas (2019) notes that the United Nations has classified Niger as one of the least-developed countries in the world. Since gaining independence, the country has experienced an unstable political history characterized by several coups and prolonged periods of political instability. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM, 2021), approximately 85% of Niger's population relies on the environment for their livelihood. Unfortunately, environmental and climate shocks significantly disrupt these livelihoods, forcing an increasing number of people to abandon their homes due to poverty (Cantrell et al., 2012).

## 2.10 Trajectories and Networks for Migration

Migration journeys are often challenging, complex, and perilous, encapsulating what Snel et al. (2021) term "complex migration trajectories." Schapendonk et al. (2020) describe these trajectories as open spatio-temporal processes with transformative dimensions, involving

multiple journeys in various directions. Literature on migrant trajectories highlights the diverse and non-linear nature of migration, continuous shifts in decision-making and identity, interactions with policies, and the inherent complexities (Mainwaring & Brigden, 2016; Schapendonk et al., 2021).

Traditional migration frameworks, such as the departure-movement-arrival-integration model (Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003), often oversimplify the process as linear. Cresswell (2010) critiques this view for reducing migration to a straight path from origin to destination, overlooking the dynamic and multifaceted realities of migration (Zhang, 2018). Recent research argues for a more nuanced perspective, recognizing the complexity and dynamism of migration journeys (Awumbila et al., 2019; Schapendonk et al., 2020).

Schapendonk et al. (2020) employed "trajectory ethnography," tracking informants over several years to study the mobility and immobility patterns of itinerant miners in West Africa and West Africans in the European Union. Their findings highlight non-linear movements and circulations in West Africa, deviating from the notion of staged journeys. Similarly, Awumbila et al. (2019) examined Ghanaian migrants' use of multiple trajectories to reach Libya, navigating routes through Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Togo, or Benin, with key transit points such as Paga, Bawku, and Aflao in Ghana, and Agadez and Niamey in Niger.

Recent studies also explore the role of digital technologies in migration trajectories. Godin and Donà (2021) emphasize the transformative impact of mobile devices, which enable connectivity and facilitate various aspects of migrant journeys, from route planning to securing funds. While digital tools are lifesaving and multifunctional, they also introduce constraints, such as constant availability and traceability, which can create contentious dynamics in transnational lives (Donà and Godin, 2019).

Similarly, to Schaub's findings on the role mobile phones play in migrant journeys, Zijlstra and Liempt (2017), find that mobile technology shapes and facilitates parts of the journey like the decisions on routes and modes of travel, final destinations and financing of irregular migration. For most migrants in their study, contacting family members in the country of origin was a crucial condition for reaching the preferred destination in Europe. At different points during their journey, they relied heavily on the funds that their families were able to send; these were all transferred with the help of mobile technology. Some of the informants in the study travelled overland from Greece to Hungary with the help of a smuggler. However, in Hungary, the police arrested their smuggler, and they did not know where to go from there or how to organise the rest of their journey (Zijlstra and Liempt, 2017).

### **2.11 Migrant Livelihoods within an urban setting**

Migrant livelihoods refer to the strategies migrants use to support themselves and their families (Ellis, 2003; De Haas, 2010). Recent studies highlight the diversity and complexity of ways in which different groups sustain their living (Kaag, 2004). The livelihoods of migrants in destination countries vary significantly, influenced by factors such as legal status, skills, education, language proficiency, and social networks (Adugna, 2019). For low-skilled and poor migrants, livelihood opportunities are shaped largely by the constraints and opportunities presented by their location, as well as the job options available to the urban poor, whether migrants or native-born city residents. These opportunities are closely tied to the skills of the individuals (Meikle, 2014).

Meikle further explains that the short- and long-term livelihood objectives of poor men and women are shaped by their contextual environment, which determines their access to opportunities and their ability to secure sustainable livelihoods. For the rural Nigerien migrants under study, their location in the capital city of Accra presents an urban setting that

influences their livelihood choices. As Rakodi (2002) notes, non-agricultural economic activities tend to concentrate in cities, with urban centres often serving as hubs for manufacturing and service enterprises that attract immigrants. While urban economies are generally more resilient than rural ones, they often face challenges such as high levels of unemployment and underemployment. As a result, many urban poor individuals, including migrants, sustain themselves by engaging in informal sector activities (Meikle, 2014).

The informal sector often employs migrants in industries such as construction, domestic work, agriculture, and street vending. However, these jobs are typically precarious, involving irregular hours, low wages, and hazardous working conditions, often without formal contracts, legal protections, or benefits (Skinner et al., 2021; Dodman et al., 2023). For migrants without legal status, informal work may be the only available option (Narula, 2020). Xu et al. (2015) identify common types of migrant livelihoods, including wage labour in construction, agriculture, and domestic work, as well as self-employment through small businesses in either their origin or destination countries.

In Nigeria, Iwuoha (2020) notes that most foreign labour migrants are employed in the informal sector, working in industries such as mining, construction, manufacturing, transport, and other services. Additionally, many are involved in small-scale private economic activities, such as tailoring, baking, hairstyling, pedicures/manicures, artistry/painting, carpentry, masonry, and retail trade. In Ghana, Oteng-Ababio et al. (2019) found that internal migrants often move to Accra for opportunities in "kayayei" (head porter) and waste scavenging. However, their study revealed that migrants are not limited to menial jobs, as many demonstrate entrepreneurial creativity to earn substantial income.

Similarly, Alhassan (2017), in a study on rural-urban migrants and urban employment in Ghana, discovered that migrants engage in various informal sector activities to achieve their

primary goal of earning money. Common jobs include scrap metal trading ("condemn") and load carrying for fees ("kayayei"). The study also noted that around 84.3% of migrants (n=89) participated in more than one livelihood activity. Beyond these primary occupations, migrants also engaged in construction work, hairdressing, food vending, plumbing, security services, electrical work, petty trading, carpentry, and small business ownership.

## 2.12 Living Conditions

Living conditions refer to the various factors and circumstances that contribute to the quality and comfort of a person's daily life. These encompass the physical, social, economic, and environmental aspects of an individual's living situation. Key components of living conditions include housing type, room density, access to basic utilities, healthcare services, income level, employment opportunities, education, communication networks, and the cleanliness of air, water, and surroundings (Djuve et al., 2015; GLSS-7, 2019).

In Ghana, the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) report provides reliable welfare and living condition statistics and serves as a key resource for understanding living conditions in the country (GLSS-7, 2019). The GLSS-7 identifies numerous indicators to measure the living conditions of the Ghanaian population. These indicators include education, health, employment, migration, housing, household income, expenditure, and agriculture.

The health indicator measures aspects such as the cost of medical care and the use of available health services and facilities, including visits to medical facilities, expenses on medical services and medicines, and information on the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) coverage for household members. To "consult" a health practitioner means being examined by a doctor, medical assistant, nurse, pharmacist, midwife, traditional healer, or other health

practitioners, including drug store operators, drug peddlers, or spiritualists, to diagnose an illness and prescribe treatment. A consultation is defined as a visit to a health practitioner for treatment.

Regarding housing, the data collected include information on dwelling unit types, main construction materials for walls, floors, and roofs, tenure arrangements, types of housing, lighting sources, water supply, and toilet facilities by locality. Several studies have reported a direct association between overcrowding and adverse health outcomes, such as infectious diseases and mental health problems (Goux and Maurin, 2005). For example, overcrowding is defined as having more than three people per habitable room (United Nations, 2007). Globally, crowding is often a marker of poverty and social deprivation (Krieger and Higgins, 2002). Income constraints may compel people to live in dwellings with inadequate space for their needs.

Home ownership or tenure arrangements are also critical aspects of living conditions. The Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) (2022) outlines six categories of tenure indicators: ownership, renting, squatting, rent-free, perching, and caretaking (GSS, 2022, report on migration). The report indicates that a higher proportion of non-migrants (64.7%) compared to migrants (47.1%) are homeowners. Conversely, migrants (38.3%) are more likely than non-migrants (21.89%) to rent dwelling units. Additionally, the report highlights that no non-migrants are squatters, indicating that all squatters (0.1%) are migrants.

Room density has been used as a proxy indicator of individual socioeconomic position and is considered a marker of deprivation, health, and well-being (Cable and Sacker, 2019; Boamah, 2012). The United Nations-Habitat defines overcrowding as more than three people per habitable room (United Nations-Habitat, 2007). Livelihood types can significantly influence living conditions. Poor living conditions in a household's original home often

trigger migration as a strategy to improve livelihoods and enhance well-being (Serrano, 2020). Overcrowded housing conditions pose serious health and safety risks, increase the likelihood of theft, and limit access to social amenities (Nasreen & Ruming, 2019). In view of this, respondents were asked the number of people they sleep in a room with.

### **2.13 The phenomenon of begging**

The phenomenon of begging is not unique to developing countries; it is a universal issue, as evidenced by various scholars (Falck, 2021; Friberg, 2020; Djuve et al., 2015). In social science, begging is often seen as a consequence of homelessness, poverty, and economic marginalization, except for cases of religious begging. While many studies associate begging with extreme poverty, Jelili and Mnitp (2013) argue that not all beggars are motivated by poverty, nor are all poor individuals' beggars. This perspective highlights the need to re-examine the concept of begging and its underlying causes.

Groups most affected by begging, as noted in the literature, include migrants, refugees, Roma, street children, marginalized individuals with disabilities or drug addictions, and those experiencing homelessness (Friberg, 2020; Ibrahim et al., 2022). Begging is often described as an informal income-generating activity or street-level economic engagement. However, it is typically perceived as an unconventional occupation with minimal positive potential. Kassah (2008) identifies begging as one of the active informal economic activities in Ghana, involving both young and old individuals.

The International Labour Organization (ILO, 2004) defines begging as a range of activities where individuals solicit money from strangers, often appealing to poverty or charitable needs related to health or religion. St. Fatmawati and Abdillah (2022) describe beggars as those who earn a living by seeking alms in public spaces, often driven by poverty or limited employment opportunities. Mesele and Addis (2020) argue that begging arises from factors

in both origin and destination countries, asserting that it is a persistent phenomenon unlikely to be eradicated.

While eradicating begging may seem unrealistic, understanding its social and economic roots is crucial. Begging is often seen as a result of social exclusion and economic deprivation (Matei et al., 2013). Although some perceive begging as a lucrative and easy way to earn money, it entails significant social and psychological challenges. Ibrahim et al. (2022) note that challenges such as accidents, harassment, and low self-esteem are common among beggars. Their study also highlights verbal abuse from passers-by as a major daily issue for beggars. Similarly, Ojo and Benson (2017) identify challenges like inferiority complexes, loss of dignity, limited social interaction, and a perpetuated mindset of poverty among those who engage in begging.

With regards to the modes of begging, Luther and Hotten, (1860), the authors' show how religious beggars (mendicants) and tramps get their livelihood and identify twenty ways people can be cheated and fooled. The book identifies three types of beggars in the medieval era in the early 15th century. The first is the "Breger". These are beggars, who have neither the sign of the saint nor other good qualities, but they come plainly and simply to people and ask for alms for God's or the Holy Virgin's sake. The second type of beggars the author called "Stabulers" or "bread gatherers". These are homeless people or vagrants who trudge through the country from one town to another with their wives and children. Their hats and cloaks hang full signs of all the saints. They go to peasants, who give them bread, and each of them usually has six or seven sacks and carries a pot, spoon, plate, flask and whatever is needed for the journey with them. These Stabulers never quit begging, nor do their children they beg to the day they die. When they enter a town or village to beg, in one house they may beg for God's sake, at another house for St Valentine's sake, at a third house for St Kurine's sake. The third category of beggars the author called "losers" or liberated prisoners. These

are dishonest and unsuspecting men who say they have been in prison for years. They carry their chains with them wherever they go and also have forged letters from princesses and lords of foreign lands as a confirmation of their story, though all these are deceit and lies.

Again, Andriotia (2016), identified three types of beggars in his study on the strategies beggars use to ensure almsgiving from tourists. These are the “classic beggars”, “table-to-table beggars” and “performing beggars”. The study explained that “classic beggars are those passively sitting and waiting for passers-by for alms who also use some psychological pressure on those unwilling to give. Table-to-table beggars on the other hand are those who ask for money or sell items in return for money that may have little to do with the value of the item, and finally the “performing beggars” are those beggars who play musical instruments and sing. Additionally, Gowreesunkar et al. (2020) study in India identified five types of beggars. The typologies identified are “Professional beggars”: these are beggars operating and trading with an organised gang. The second is the “Performing beggars”: they are those who solicit money in return for a performance or sexual services. The third category is the “Passive old age beggars”; these are those who either sit or stand in one place and expect donations from passers-by. The fourth group is the “Active beggars”; these are those who move from place to place asking for gifts and money. The final category is the “Aggressive beggars”; these are those who follow and force people to give money and if not successful, harsh words, curses and intimidation are used. The study aligns with Bukoye's (2015) categorisation of street beggars. According to Bukoye (2015), beggars can be classified according to their appearance and technique or mode of begging. Based on their appearance they can be grouped into; “Professional Beggars”; are those who find themselves in this trade on the grounds of disability, “those who street-beg on account of old age” and “those who voluntarily force themselves into begging. Technique or mode of begging can also be grouped into; “Passive Begging”, this type involves the person either sitting or

standing in one place with songs or receptacle expecting donations from passers-by, “Active Begging” it the type where beggars move from place to place with their containers soliciting money and gifts and finally “Aggressive Begging”, This technique is one which harsh words and intimidations are used in soliciting for help.

#### **2.14 Empirical Study on Migration Intermediaries and Migrant Beggars Facilitation**

Intermediaries, migration networks, and migration facilitators are concepts often used interchangeably to represent formal and informal players within the migration industry. While evidence exists in some countries of organized criminal groups being involved in transnational begging activities (Cherneva, 2011), the literature on trafficking in West Africa remains limited (Adepoju, 2005). However, the global discourse on the criminalization of begging has influenced perceptions within the sub-region.

The UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) defines an "organized criminal group" as a structured group of three or more persons that exists for a period and acts in concert to commit one or more serious crimes or offenses established by the convention, to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit. Global reports from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) indicate that 1.5% of identified trafficking cases involve trafficking for begging (UNODC, 2014).

In a study by Ojedukun and Aderinto (2015) on transnational organized street begging in Nigeria, government officials interviewed highlighted the illegal means by which immigrant beggars enter the country. One key informant emphasized that, according to records, most transnational organized street beggars enter Nigeria through illegal routes. These routes are used because the beggars often lack valid documents, passports, travel certificates, or what is known as *Laissez-Passer* in French. Migrants rarely use illegal routes without assistance from facilitators or smugglers.

Similarly, a study by Friends International and the United Nations Inter-Agency Project (2006) on Cambodian child beggars in Thailand identified a connection between organized groups, commonly referred to as "Me Kyhol," and the migration of beggars from Cambodia to Thailand. According to Healy (2018), in the UNODC report on trafficking from 2010–2012, trafficking for exploitation through begging was rare at the international level. It was classified under the broader category of exploitation forms other than forced labour, sexual exploitation, or organ removal.

Cherneva (2011) documented cases where traffickers transported women, children, and young people across borders for begging purposes. Another study in Cambodia revealed recruiters who targeted women and children for begging roles, often based on specific profiles, such as mothers with babies, children, elderly women, and young girls carrying flowers. In many cases, the traffickers or pimps retained nearly all the money earned by the beggars under their control (Healy, 2018). Ojedukun and Aderinto's (2015) study further confirmed the involvement of smugglers in facilitating the entry of organized street beggars into Nigeria. This underscores the significant role played by intermediaries in transnational organized begging and the exploitation of vulnerable populations.

### **2.15 Empirical Studies on Nigeriens' Migration and Begging**

This section discusses the migration characteristics and the begging phenomenon among Nigeriens in Ghana and elsewhere.

#### **2.15.1 Migration Behaviour of Nigeriens**

The characteristics and migration behaviour of Nigerien migrants are crucial for understanding this population in the study. According to Weihe et al. (2021), Niger has historically been a country characterized by internal migration and emigration to neighbouring countries in West, Central, and North Africa. Much of Nigerien migration is

regional, temporary, seasonal, and circular, a pattern linked to the country's agricultural practices (Afifi, 2011). Circular and seasonal migration, in particular, is commonly associated with Nigerien migrants in Ghana and other parts of West Africa.

Painter (2021) highlights that Nigeriens typically leave the country between October and December and return between April and May, aligning with preparations for the rainy season's cultivation in May or June. In Western Niger, local dwellers and administrators mark this period as the beginning and end of the "migration season" (Painter, 2021). Similarly, Yendaw (2021) observes this pattern among immigrant itinerant retailers in Ghana, with Nigerien migrant retailers forming the majority.

Migration, whether within Niger or across borders, is deeply ingrained in the lifestyle of many rural Nigeriens (IOM, 2021). Regarding inter-regional migration, an IOM report (2021) on Niger migration outlines a well-established circular migratory pattern between Niger and Libya via the Séguédine route. This migration is tied to trade and seasonal work. However, the number of migrants traveling this route decreased significantly, from 131,731 in 2016 to 64,000 in 2019, due to Libya's insecurity and declining economic opportunities (Hall, 2016).

For internal migration, Cantrell et al. (2021) explore the experiences of young male migrants who leave their villages for Niamey in search of better opportunities. They argue that migration serves as a financial strategy for rural families, enabling them to earn additional income from their sons working in the city to address the persistent issue of poor harvests in rural areas (Cantrell et al., 2021). This finding aligns with Amuzu et al. (2019), who emphasize that Niger's poor living conditions are the primary driver of migration among its people.

### **2.15.2 People of the Hausaland**

The Hausas of West Africa are predominantly found in the north-western part of Nigeria and the adjacent southern regions of Niger. Their language, Hausa, belongs to the Chadic family of Afro-Asiatic languages and incorporates numerous Arabic words due to the influence of Islam. This influence spread during the latter part of the 14th century from the Mali Kingdom, shaping not only the Hausa language but also their beliefs and customs (Britannica, 2023).

The Nigerien migrants in this study predominantly originate from Hausaland in southern Niger, specifically the Maradi and Zinder regions. Niger is home to eight ethnic groups: Hausa, Zarma/Songhai, Tuareg, Fulani (Peuhl), Kanuri, Gurma, Arab, Tubu, and a small percentage classified as "other/unavailable" (0.9%) (World Factbook, 2022/CIA, 2022). The Hausa people, who constitute 56% of Niger's population, are the largest ethnic group in the country and reside primarily in central Niger, between Dongondoutchi and Zinder.

The Hausa are believed to descend from Saharan populations who were pushed southward by the Tuaregs. They have a notable reputation as farmers, cultivating millet and groundnuts, as well as skilled leather and textile craftsmen. Many Hausas are also engaged in trade. In Niger, the Hausa are divided into several subgroups, including the Kourfeyaoua or Soudje, who inhabit the Filingue District. This group is thought to have originated from the Maine-Soroa region and to have lived for a time in the Adar Tahoua. While Hausa is their primary language, nearly all Kourfeyaoua also speak Zarma (Britannica, 2023).

### **2.15.3 Studies involving Nigerien beggars**

A study by Kyereko (2020), on “the case of out-of-school migrants in Ghana” examines the experiences of migrant child beggars in Accra and the factors that prevent them from enrolling in schools. The study’s analysis is based on interviews with, migrant parents, migrant children and school authorities and defines out-of-school migrants as children and youth between the ages of 6 and 21. The study categorises migrant child beggars on the streets of Accra and puts them into two distinct categories. The first group comprises children who

have never attended school in their country of origin, Ghana, or any other host country. These the researcher stated are child beggars who are mainly from Mali and Niger and are found on major streets in Accra in the company of parents and siblings. The second group were those who engaged in street begging as child migrants accompanying elderly disabled parents or guardians. The parents' motivations for coming to Ghana include; for a better life, looking for economic opportunities and drought conditions in the country of origin.

Amuzu et al.'s (2019) study on Nigerien migrant beggars and traders in Ghana discusses the multilingualism and language practices of these migrants. The study identifies two major Nigerien language groups: Tamasheq-speaking beggars and Hausa/Zambarima/Buzu-speaking hawkers. Conducted in Accra and Akuapem Ridge, the research shows a strong correlation between migrants' socioeconomic integration and their sociolinguistic practices. Adult Tamasheque-speaking beggars in Accra face difficulties learning a new language, often because they choose to remain marginalized. However, the children of these migrants, who beg to support their families, manage to learn Akan, the language of the host community. In line with findings by Isphoring (2015), the study highlights that immigrants' ability to learn a language depends on their motivation and daily use. Children tend to learn the local language effortlessly, while adults' motivation often stems from their ability to secure employment and earn income.

Again, a study by Osei (2021) on the 'Nigerien Migrants on the Streets of Accra', mainly examined the sociocultural dimensions and the historical antecedents of the migration of Nigerien (Tuareg) beggars in Accra. The study found that the 1970 and 1980 drought and the various Tuareg rebellions in their country during the same period triggered the Tuareg migration to Ghana. The study also found that Tuareg migration was facilitated by their ability to finance their international journeys and the ECOWAS protocols that made migration easy for them. It was also found that many of the migrates stay in Ghana was

temporal while some young ones stayed longer. The study pointed out that Tuareg migrants did not migrate to come to beg, however, it is the community in which they reside that influenced their appetite to beg linked with the lack of implementation of laws on begging encourages Tuareg migrants to beg.

Also, a study by Ojedokun and Aderinto, (2018) on “Social Organisation and Survival Strategy of Nigerian Child Begging in south-western Nigerian” revealed that a rising dimension in child street begging is the increasing number of child migrant beggars soliciting alms alongside their local co-beggars on the streets of Nigeria. Respondents cited various reasons for leaving Niger to beg in Nigeria, including drought (30.7%), famine (40.6%), poverty, and war (23.8%). Similarly, Oluwole’s (2016) study identified reasons for street begging, such as meeting daily needs, raising money for school fees, securing a livelihood, supporting family, paying medical bills, parental divorce, and disability.

Amuzu et al. (2019) pointed out that, the beggars on the streets of Accra migrated from the south-western and northern parts of Niger. The migratory route of most of these migrants is through Bolgatanga, Tamale, Kumasi and finally Accra. In contrast, migrants in the current study mainly use the Aflao border route and originate from southeastern Niger, specifically Maradi and Zinder regions. In Amuzu et al.’s study, the native language of the migrants is Tamasheque, with some also speaking Hausa and Nigerian Pidgin English, learned during their previous stays in Nigeria. However, the primary language of migrants in the current study is Hausa, with some proficiency in French, the official language of Niger. Upon arrival in Accra, Tamasheque-speaking migrant beggars and their families typically live in makeshift wooden structures known as “kiosks.” The presence of street beggars, including migrant children and their parents, in Accra has sparked public and media discussions (Kyereko, 2020; Ansah, 2022). Questions are raised about their origins and the government’s

lack of intervention to address the issue. These discussions highlight concerns not only about foreign beggars but also about Ghanaian street children who rely on begging to survive.

#### **2.15.4 Studies on the Phenomenon of begging**

Further, a study by Ibrahim et al. (2022) assesses the psychological experiences of visually impaired street beggars in Ghana. The results of the study indicate that visually impaired street beggars often experience personal losses, such as relationships, jobs, and hobbies, after losing their vision, which leads to negative emotions like fear, sadness, and anger. The study also found that support from family, the public, other visually impaired beggars, and their spiritual beliefs are key contributors to the successful adjustment of visually impaired street beggars in Ghana. This study was a qualitative research and focused on the visually impaired population in Accra. Though it contributes to the literature on the phenomenon of begging, it has little to do with the phenomenon of migration for begging.

Unlike Ibrahim's study, which focused on the psychological challenges faced by street beggars, a study conducted in Bolgatanga, in the northern part of Ghana, specifically looked at street begging and the factors that motivate people to beg in the municipality. The study found that most of the beggars are non-Ghanaians from neighbouring countries, such as Burkina Faso and Togo. The reasons motivating begging among these respondents include: 55% majority reported poverty as the reason for begging, 40% said it's because of their disability and 5% said they beg because their culture and religion permits begging. The study also identified that though begging is frowned upon, able bodied persons who are under privileged also take advantage of the public and resort to begging (Nanaglakong et al, 2019). The study also contributes to the begging literature, however the study did not consider the migration process of these non-Ghanaian

A similar study on the "Emotional Journey of Street Beggars" in Ghana by Ibrahim et al. (2022) sought to understand the experiences of street beggars with vision impairment. This

qualitative study sampled 25 participants from three busy streets in the Greater Accra Region and used a semi-structured interview guide to collect data. The study found that visually impaired individuals resorted to street begging due to limited or lack of family support to meet their basic needs. Begging is a controversial phenomenon with diverse perspectives on its causes and effects (Matei et al., 2013; Jamil et al., 2019). It is also a complex phenomenon because it evokes mixed feelings and opposing views on its morality. The two extreme viewpoints are usually those who empathize with beggars and those who criticize the act (Saeed, 2016). Within the literature, the perspectives range from viewing beggars and the act of begging as indicative of "poverty, economic deprivation, and social exclusion" (Matei et al., 2013; Fatmawati & Abdullah, 2022; Mesele & Addis, 2020) to considering it an antisocial, deviant behaviour and a security issue. Other perspectives argue that begging is a result of organized crime (such as trafficking) and forced labour (Vilhermsson & Faller, 2016) versus voluntary migration and willing beggars (Salami & Olubgayo, 2013).

In a study conducted by Matei et al. (2013), which aimed to determine why the phenomenon of begging remains pervasive and has become overwhelming in recent years, despite the legal measures in place to end it in Bucharest City, it was found that locals have come to accept begging as a sign of social exclusion and economic deprivation rather than an antisocial act. Social sympathy for beggars has contributed to the persistence of begging in Bucharest. Locals believe that beggars see it as their last resort for daily sustenance. This view is supported by Mesele and Addis (2020), who sought the thoughts and opinions of members of a beggar community to assess their circumstances and the perceived causes of begging. Some respondents expressed sympathy for beggars, describing their situation as troublesome, depressing, and degrading (Ntumba, 2015).

In a study conducted on Romanian beggars in Sweden, respondents explained that the organization of beggars is unclear. While the mass media emphasizes the idea that beggars

are organized in networks with well-established begging spots, the interviews revealed that this is not always the case (Matei et al., 2013). Some form of organization exists among certain beggars in Bucharest, with reports indicating incidents where individuals bring handicapped beggars to the streets and later collect the money they have raised. Beggars near churches, for example, often have bosses. However, others must defend and fight for their begging territories independently, as highlighted in one of the study's findings. This suggests that while some beggars belong to networks that support their work, others work alone. Further, Vilhermsson and Faller's (2016) study in Sweden identifies a section of Swedish society that views beggars as part of organized crime. Some advocate for a total ban on begging to eliminate the issue. Contrasting with the notion of forced begging and beggars being controlled by bosses behind the scenes, Tetteh's (2018) study on Child Street beggars in Accra found that her respondents are influenced by their peers to remain on the streets. They are not the primary breadwinners for their families, nor are they coerced into begging by their families or others. Also, the money they earn from begging is kept by the children themselves. In Ghana, some media outlets and segments of the public play a crucial role in criticizing the practice of begging (Ansah, 2022; Abisa, 2022).

Again, linking migrant activities such as begging to security and threats may become a reality if we ban begging without providing alternative livelihoods for migrants. Ramcharan (2018) observed that the protection of migrants is still greatly neglected, and this neglect is evident in UN reports on the violation of norms. This neglect is tied to unequal access to education and healthcare services, marginalization, and abuse, often linked to restrictive immigration and employment policies, economic and social factors, and anti-migration sentiments in certain societies (Ramcharan, 2018). For adult migrants to effectively care for their children whether left behind, accompanied, or born at the destination they must secure decent jobs, be allowed to run their own businesses, or become self-employed. Without these opportunities, begging becomes the viable alternative for many immigrants worldwide (Fredrichsson &

Jonsson, 2018; Jonsen, 2015). The informal sector is often the dominant field in which migrants operate and earn a living at their destination (Awumbila, 2015). Parents can only care for their children's well-being if they have the financial resources to do so. In the absence of stable jobs and income, adult migrants will face significant challenges (Kofman, 2018). This, in turn, means that accompanied children will struggle to access education, healthcare, decent housing, and other basic needs necessary for their current and future development unless authorities and stakeholders responsible for child welfare intervene (Gateley, 2015).

The rate at which people are involved in begging in Africa is increasing. In the view of Salami and Olugdayo, (2013), this occurrence is a result of the inequitable distribution of scarce resources and economic hardship. Although not all people face the same risk, different social vulnerabilities determine the solutions that they seek. To some, begging is the solution to their economic adversities. Migration has its way of creating gender-based violence, sexual harassment and exploitation, discrimination, and the task of combining childbearing, rearing and working at the destination all combine in their unique way to serve as a hindrance to some sections of migrants. Migrants such as refugees are identified as highly challenged and highly marginalized communities, experiencing diverse disadvantages such as economic, and social vulnerabilities and poor education.

In some parts of Asia, the phenomenon of begging is often linked to religion and culture. Religious mendicancy is widely tolerated in many Hindu and Muslim societies, and it is sometimes supported on religious grounds (Al-Dulaimi, 2019). For this reason, religious mendicancy is frequently exempted from general laws that prohibit begging in India. Obligatory almsgiving, or zakat, is one of the five pillars of Islam and is incumbent upon all Muslims. From an Islamic perspective, almsgiving helps bridge the gap between the rich and the poor (Taylor, 2015). While Islam and Christianity have long emphasized the importance

of almsgiving, the practice is also central to Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism (Taylor, 2015).

## **2.16 Chapter Summary**

The chapter highlighted the literature surrounding the topic, including extensive coverage of the broader study area in Ghana, the origin country of the study's respondents, Niger, migration from the Sahel region, and the drivers of migration in West Africa. Additionally, the nature of migration, international migration, and migration protocols as outlined in the ECOWAS policy were also reviewed. The literature on irregular migration, migrant smuggling, and trafficking revealed that irregular migration facilitation is carried out by individuals and groups who may or may not be associated with criminal organizations. Migrants' social networks are instrumental in facilitating migration and may not necessarily be part of any organized criminal group. Further, the literature on migration intermediaries, migrant beggars' facilitation, and child trafficking was reviewed. This shows that intermediaries serve as migration facilitators representing both formal and informal players within the migration industry. The review extensively highlighted debates in the field of irregular migration and its linkage with smuggling and trafficking. A detailed review was also conducted on migrants' livelihoods, living conditions, and the phenomenon of begging. It was shown that the livelihoods of the poor, which may also include low-skilled and poor migrants, are primarily determined by the context in which they live, the constraints and opportunities presented by the destination, and the job opportunities available for the urban poor, whether migrants or city dwellers. This, in turn, affects the living conditions of migrant beggars at the destination, which were shown to generally be poor.

## CHAPTER THREE

### THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVES ON MIGRATION FOR BEGGING

#### 3.0 Introduction

This section focuses on the theoretical and conceptual perspectives on migration for begging. Viewing the research problem through a theoretical lens provides a framework for researchers to refine their research questions and procedures, increasing the likelihood of effectively addressing the research problem (Levitt et al., 2021). To tackle the research problem and objectives, this chapter reviews theories and approaches related to the Migration Industry Concept, Migration Network Theory, and the Livelihood Approach. There are two theoretical views on the migration of beggars in the migration literature. The first to be explored is the Business Model which is of the view that migration is facilitated by intermediaries (migration industry actors) with profit motives and the Social Network Model of migration which proposes that migrant networks make migration possible for potential migrants. The Social Network Model helps to explain objectives one to five and the Business Model helps to analyse objectives three. Also, the livelihood framework helps to analyse chapters one, two, four and five.

#### 3.1 The Business Model of Migration

The dominant view about migration and begging in the media, international organizations' documents and academic literature in migration studies has been the Business model of migration (ILO, 2009; UNODC, 2014; IOM, 2016; Serrano, 2020). Migration as a business model in this context implies that migration generates employment opportunities and economic activities for those who link prospective migrants at origin to the destination (Spaan and Hillmann, (2013). It involves the movement of people from one country or region

to another, often for economic or political reasons (Cranston et al., 2018). This movement can create opportunities for businesses that specialize in facilitating migration services. In the literature, different terminologies relating to the same idea of the ‘commercialisation of migration’ are evident. Within this set of literature, both regular and irregular labour migration, trafficking and smuggling have dominated (Salt and Stein, 1997; Xiang and Lindquist, 2014). In Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) human trafficking has been identified to be part of how people move within the region in recent times. Trafficking in humans takes place within, outside and into the region, involving intermediaries such as criminal gangs in the trafficking of women and children (Adepoju, 2005). Among the various forms of trafficking and exploitation, there are notable regional differences according to the UNODC. For instance, Europe and Central Asia dominate begging and human trafficking, sub-Saharan Africa dominates child-soldier traffic and the Asian continent stands for forced marriages (UNODC, 2014). Again, the dominant literature on street begging is characterised by the involvement of organised criminal networks and huge profits, exploitation and abuse have influenced most legislation on begging in Europe and other countries (Cherneva, 2011; Vilhelmsson & Faller, (2016).

The different terminologies used in describing actors involved in this model include ‘industry’, ‘business’ or ‘infrastructure’ (Cranston et al, 2018). The main idea of this model as proposed by Salt and Stein was how intermediaries are profiting immensely through the facilitation of international migration in the context of trafficking. Conceptualising International migration as a ‘business’, Salt and Stein (1997), defined it as a ‘system of institutionalized networks with complex profit and loss account, including a set of institutions, agents and individuals each of which stand to make a commercial gain” (p. 468). The focus here is on the illegal/irregular trafficking of migrants. Migration researchers in recent times, have developed interest in the cross-border business activities that facilitate

migration (Gammeltoft- Hansen & Nyberg Sørensen, 2013). Hernandez-Leon (2013) contends that migration theories have ignored the part the migration industry plays in the facilitation, regulation, control and institutionalization of international mobility. In recent years, empirical studies have sought to address this gap using concepts such as the “migration industry” (Kyle and Goldstein, 2011; Cranston, 2016), the “business of migration” or “global business” (Salt & Stein, 1997; Vertovec, 2010), “migration merchants” (Kyle, 2002), and “immigrant place entrepreneurs” (Light, 2002). These concepts aim to theorize the actors and infrastructures that support human mobility across borders (Hernandez-Leon, 2013). These ideas trace their origins to Harvey’s (1977) work, “Commerce of Migration,” which examined the role of labour, transportation, and money brokers in facilitating emigration from Italy during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Hernandez-Leon, 2013; Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg Sørensen, 2013).

The concept of the “migration industry,” introduced by Cohen (1997), is defined as comprising private lawyers, travel agents, recruiters, fixers, and brokers who sustain the links between the country of origin and the destination country (Gammeltoft-Hansen & Nyberg Sørensen, 2013). This concept highlights the facilitation of labour migration for individuals who, due to restrictive migration policies, are unable to migrate through conventional internal mechanisms. Businesses within this industry provide necessary documentation and other resources migrants need to reach their destinations.

Xiang and Lindquist (2014) expanded on this discussion with their concept of “Migration Infrastructure,” which focuses on labour migration facilitation. They define it as “the systematically interlinked technologies, institutions, and actors that facilitate and condition mobility” (Xiang & Lindquist, 2014, p. 122). Schapendonk and Cranston (2020) view the migration industry more broadly as a network of commercialized actors who influence migration processes. These authors argue that the concept helps to understand how a wide

range of non-state actors shape migration and mobility patterns through the services they offer. This perspective shifts attention from migrants themselves to the services that facilitate migration (Hernandez-Leon, 2008, p. 154).

According to Schapendonk and Cranston (2020), the concept of the migration industry has advanced for two interrelated reasons. First, migrants require assistance to overcome the costly, time-consuming, spatial, legal, social, and economic barriers of international migration. Second, neoliberal policymaking has led states and supra-state institutions to increasingly rely on non-state actors to manage migration. The migration industry, therefore, spans all phases of the migration process—beginning before migrants decide to move, continuing through their journeys abroad, and extending to their voluntary or involuntary return. This industry performs a wide variety of functions, including enticement and detention, market expansion through knowledge creation about migration, facilitating the moral economy behind remittances, and enabling smuggling across fortified borders.

Similarly, Hernandez-Leon (2013) defines the migration industry as “the ensemble of entrepreneurs, firms, and services which, chiefly motivated by financial gain, facilitate international mobility, settlement and adaptation, as well as communication and resource transfers of migrants and their families across borders” (Hernandez-Leon, 2013, p. 2). Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg Sørensen (2013) identify a broad range of business opportunities tied to migration, including specialized transportation, labour migration contracting companies, and organized criminal networks profiting from human trafficking and smuggling. These activities encompass labour recruitment, money lending, trafficking, and a variety of legal, transportation, remittance, documentation, and communication services that stimulate and facilitate migration. The strength of this model lies in its ability to address the various intermediaries and facilitators involved in migration, particularly with an emphasis on irregular migration. However, a critique of the theory is its heavy reliance on

the assumption that traffickers and smugglers play a central role in most migration processes, often overlooking the contributions of other actors.

### 3.2 Social Network Model

Another perspective on the migration for begging is the Migration Network, which posits that social networks play a crucial role in the migration of the majority of migrant beggars (Djuve et al., 2015; Tyldum & Friberg, 2023). Both internal and international migration, and how they are perpetuated, have been largely linked to differences in economic factors at both the origin and destination (King, 2012). However, proponents of social networks argue that migrant networks are instrumental in facilitating the international migration of potential migrants (Massey et al., 1993; Boyd and Nowak, 2012). This form of migration was previously referred to as ‘chain migration’ (Price, 1963). Massey et al. (1993) define migrant networks as ‘sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin’ (Massey et al., 1993: p. 448).

Network Theory, as proposed by Massey et al. (1993), explains that networks increase the likelihood of international migration by lowering the costs and risks of movement while enhancing the expected net returns of migration. Network connections constitute a form of social capital that individuals can leverage to gain access to international job opportunities. Once the number of migrants surpasses a certain threshold, the networks continue to expand because the growth further reduces the costs and dangers associated with migration. The conceptualization of migration as a self-sustaining diffusion process, within the context of Network Theory, assumes that once initiated, international migration tends to expand over time. This expansion continues until network connections are so widespread in a sending region that all individuals who wish to migrate can do so without significant difficulty, at

which point migration begins to decelerate. Moreover, as networks become established and developed, international migration becomes more institutionalized and less reliant on the structural or individual factors that originally motivated it. Consequently, the flow of migrants becomes more representative of the sending community or culture and less selective in terms of socioeconomic status, as networks grow and migration costs and risks diminish (Massey et al., 1993). Settled migrants then act as ‘bridgeheads,’ reducing the risks as well as the material and psychological costs for subsequent migrants (De Haas, 2010).

Researchers who interrogate the networked nature of migration consider the fact that individuals do not act in a vacuum but rather that their actions are interdependent with those of others through the relations that bind them socially, which are regarded as viable conduits for the flows of both material and non-material resources (Bilecen & Lubber, 2021). According to Bilecen and Lubber (2021), in migration research, networks are investigated mainly from two angles: a social network analytical perspective and a relational approach. The authors explain that social network analysis conceptualizes interpersonal relationships as embedded within a larger set of ties (or network) and has a specific interest in how these relationships are structured and what implications this has for individual action.

Bilecen and Lubber (2021) identify two major steps in network research in the literature. The first step in the investigative process of networks is to define their boundaries or the “set of nodes.” This can be defined either socio-centrally or egocentrically. The socio-centric boundary refers to the set of relationships among the members of an already defined group. Egocentric boundaries, on the other hand, refer to the set of social relationships that a main actor has with others and that these others have among each other (Ryan and D’Angelo, 2018). Bilecen and Lubber (2021) note that in migration studies, most network research focuses on individuals, often adopting an egocentric (or personal network) perspective to investigate individual actions and the relationships that influence migrants within the

contexts in which they were created (e.g., family relationships, work ties). According to the authors, the second step is to draw the linkages (or ties) between the actors, which can be of any type depending on the investigation, such as communication, friendship, money transfers, information, emotional support, and other relevant types of relationships.

Awumbila et al. (2017) refer to 'social network' as ties, connections, or relations between individuals or actors that vary in strength, type, and duration and are usually based on bonds of trust and reciprocity or shared goals (Ryan and D'Angelo, 2018; Awumbila et al., 2017). From Boyd and Nowak's perspective, the approach also outlines the linkages, connections, and relationships among individuals and between individuals and community-wide relations (Boyd and Nowak, 2012). According to Awumbila et al. (2017), several studies in Ghana indicate that migrants do not just move to cities in search of jobs; they do so because they have connections. Boyd and Nowak (2012) argue that the social networks approach emphasizes the networks that connect individuals across time and space (p. 78). Studies have also shown how migrant networks are a valuable resource for migration processes and the perpetuation of migration, demonstrating how migration is embedded in social networks (Awumbila et al., 2017; Zaami, 2020; Turolla & Hoffmann, 2022). This may explain the rationale behind its extensive use in migration research. According to Boyd (1989), despite the popularity of Social Network Theory, it is not new in international migration research. Its origins date back to the 1960s and 70s, when scholars studying chain migration identified the role kin and friends played in providing vital information and facilitating migration (MacDonald & MacDonald, 1964; Ritchey, 1976 in Boyd, 1989).

Again, the social component of the concept of "migration infrastructure" (Xiang and Lindquist, 2014) discusses the significance of social networks in the migration process, including the involvement of family members, friends, strangers encountered en-route, kinship groups, and others. Kleist and Bjarnesen (2019) explain that West African migration

is not mediated through institutionalized and formal brokerage, such as recruiting agencies, but rather is self-organized, stepwise, and draws on social networks through kinfolk or peers, including friends, co-workers, or "strangers" met en route.

According to De Haas (2010), besides financial and human capital, social capital needs to be considered as the third most important determining factor that motivates and enables people's ability to migrate. The question of "what is a social network" can be ascertained from a definitional perspective. Simply put, Wasserman and Faust (1994) define a network as "a set of actors and the ties among them." Boyd (1989) defines migrant networks as 'recurrent sets of interpersonal ties that bind migrants and non-migrants together within a web of reciprocal obligations that can be drawn upon to facilitate entry, adjustment, and employment at points of destination.' The role social networks play in the migration of people is of enormous significance to potential migrants who have little knowledge about the journey they want to embark on, the costs involved, and the conditions at their preferred destination. Bilecen and Lubbers (2021) assert that social networks are especially significant during international migration when decisions about migration routes are made, and when ties, belongingness, and attachments are imagined, re-imagined, negotiated, or re-negotiated. Faist (2021) posits that the seemingly irrational decisions of certain illegal migrants can be explained through the network approach. A study by Kinsella (2006) shows that some members of illicit transnational networks value prestige and power more than profit. According to Boyd and Nowak (2012), labour, personal (family), and illegal migrant networks are the three social networks commonly involved in the migration process. Applying the current study to the network approach, the target population is considered irregular/undocumented migrants.

One of the strengths of this approach is its ability to examine the active connections between migrants and individuals in both the sending and receiving countries, along with the utilization of migrants' resources from families and communities, rather than viewing the

individual migrant as an isolated and helpless actor (Boyd, 1989; Massey et al., 1993). Additionally, Boyd and Nowak (2012) highlight another notable contribution of the social networks approach: its explanation of how social networks develop and sustain migration flows over time. The approach addresses not only why people migrate but also why migration persists over time. Boyd and Nowak (2012) further argue that social networks have shifted migration research beyond the traditional push-pull economic forces and world system inequalities that shape migration flows. Instead, they emphasize how migrants themselves influence migration outcomes through their use of social resources and connections. It is argued that rather than individuals autonomously deciding to migrate, their entire household is often involved in choosing who migrates, based on who has the best chance of succeeding at the destination (Castle, 2000).

Boyd and Nowak (2012) further explain that individuals from the middle-income bracket are often the first to migrate because they have the financial means to cover transportation and settlement costs. This initial group of migrants, after settling in the destination country, maintains links with their community of origin, establishes communication flows, and provides resources to facilitate the migration of their family members in the future (Massey et al., 1993). A final contribution of the social network approach, according to Boyd and Nowak (2012), is that it does not restrict its understanding of the household to the physical structure where migrants reside but considers migrants' continuous connection with their families through transnational linkages. This approach broadens the scope of research by including meso-level and transnational networks, helping researchers to fully consider the numerous actors and forces that influence where and why individuals choose to migrate. It also enables researchers to identify the resources and actors involved in migration decision-making (Boyd & Nowak, 2012). Moreover, it explains the role social networks play through ties of kinship, friendship, and shared community. However, social network theory has been

criticized for assuming a single unified network, whereas in reality, individuals and groups may belong to multiple, overlapping networks with different structures and properties (Burt, 1992). Since the two models could only explain the actors involved in the migration for begging among Nigeriens, the livelihood approach was used to explain migrants' decision to select "migration" as a livelihood strategy.

### **3.3 Livelihood Approach**

The Livelihood approach has been widely used in contemporary writings on poverty and rural development (Ellis, 2000). It is not a new concept in migration and is usually centred on household livelihood security. The Livelihood Approach essentially comprises capabilities, assets (including both material and social resources), and activities required for a means of living (Carney, 1998). Ellis (2000) defines livelihood as "the assets (natural, physical, human, financial, and social capital), the activities, and the access to these (mediated by institutions and social relations) that together determine the living gained by the individual or household" (p.10). According to Chambers and Conway (1992), a livelihood comprises people, their capabilities, resources, and activities necessary to support a means of living, including food, income, and assets. The authors explain how certain needs can be satisfied by combining material and human resources. De Haan (2012) highlighted that the livelihood approach focuses more on how people organize their lives based on opportunities and agency, rather than focusing on their impoverishment (p.346). Chambers and Conway (1992) assert that the basics of the Livelihood Approach are livelihood assets, livelihood strategies, livelihood outcomes, and vulnerability context. According to Tanle et al. (2020), the livelihood approach helps identify the major constraints and opportunities experienced by poor people as expressed by them.

For their livelihoods, people and households draw on five categories of assets or capitals: natural, social, human, physical, and financial, which may be owned or accessed (Chambers,

1991; Carney, 1998; de Haan, 2012). It is assumed that livelihoods are organized not individually but within the wider social context of households, village communities, and ethnic groups (Ellis, 2000). Certain migrants have human capital, which might affect what they do when they get to their destination. As a result, characteristics such as individuals' capabilities, the accessibility of material resources, and their daily activities are concepts shared by migration and livelihood (Ellis, 2003). For Ellis (2003), the term "livelihood" tries to encompass not only what people do for a living but also the resources that enable them to build a fulfilling life, the risk factors they must consider when managing their resources, and the institutional and policy framework that either supports or impedes their pursuit of a viable or better living. According to Scoones (1998), establishing suitable institutional and organizational contexts is essential to sustainable livelihoods, and the framework should guide the questions that must be posed to achieve this.

At the rural level, migration is seen as one of the key components of initiatives to diversify, secure, and possibly improve rural families over the long term, along with other components such as agricultural intensification and local non-farm businesses (Ellis, 2000). In recent times, researchers have documented the use of migration as a livelihood strategy in various migration processes (Tanle, 2015; Awumbila et al., 2017; Yendaw et al., 2019). The Sustainable Livelihood (SL) framework, developed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Development (DFID), emphasizes the connection between rural poverty and the environment. Its five primary components are the vulnerability context, livelihood assets, transforming structures and processes, livelihood solutions, and livelihood outcomes.

Chambers and Conway (1992) define a 'livelihood' as the capabilities, assets, and activities required for a means of living. They emphasized that an individual's or household's 'asset status' is fundamental to understanding the options available to them and the strategies they can adopt to achieve a desired alternative livelihood. Regarding financial assets/resources or capital, money lending availability and savings constitute financial capital. Loan accessibility

and availability are crucial for migrants' decision-making and migration outcomes. In the study, some migrants reported taking loans from families and friends, while others reported converting their livestock into cash to fund their migration. Additionally, networks and associations constitute social capital. Social networks facilitate access to information about economic opportunities, ease migration processes, and reduce anxieties and uncertainties previously associated with migration, particularly with advancements in communication technology.

Skills, knowledge, experiences, and good health are considered forms of human capital. These factors significantly influence migration decisions, especially when seeking employment. Having these resources can help migrants find employment. Relating these to the study, the migrants had the skills and training to practice begging. Those who have worked for a long time possess significant experience and help train new entrants. Regarding good health, this resource is not always present for those who work as beggars. In fact, the study found that for some, one of the major characteristics of success in the begging business is having poor health rather than good health.

Also, the types of physical capital needed to facilitate livelihood activities include infrastructure such as housing, education, health, roads, and electricity. The most important ones for my participants are housing and health facilities. The promise of having accommodation at the destination influences migration decisions among the study participants. Further, lands, water, plants, and wildlife are examples of natural resources. These resources can affect a person's decision to migrate at their place of origin and the kind of activities they partake in after they arrive. They influence the type of livelihood that migrants may choose to pursue. In relation to the study, the availability of begging spaces and locations facilitated the progress of this type of work in the city. Finally, both cultural and traditional capital comprise beliefs, values, language, and the aspirations of individuals or households. According to Tanle, these factors can influence migration decisions. With

regards to the study participants, similar religious culture and language are the reasons they find themselves in the study community. The Hausa language is one of the known spoken languages in the study community, which happens to be the native language of the study participants.

Institutional processes and procedures. Institutional structures and processes such as laws, policies, programs, and norms, beliefs, and incentives can have either positive or adverse effects on livelihood strategies and their outcomes. In the case of this study, the ECOWAS migration protocol framework was used to assess the migration process of migrants in terms of the required needs to move within the sub-region. Also, at the destination, migrants are able to engage in begging activities because of poor implementation of laws, for example, the Beggar and Destitute Act 1969 (NLCD 392). The act makes begging an offence. For instance, section 2, sub-section 1 states: “Any person found begging and any person wandering or placing himself in any premises or place for the purpose of begging may be arrested by a police officer without warrant and shall be liable on conviction to a fine not exceeding 50 new cedis or to imprisonment not exceeding 3 months or to both” (Beggar and Destitute Act, Ghana). The implementation of this law will help minimize the population of beggars on the streets of Ghana.

Again, livelihood strategies are activities in which people engage in order to earn a living. Migration is one of such strategies, among others such as agricultural intensification. Any reasonable individual would select livelihood options that will enable them to fulfill their migrating objectives or have a positive migration outcome. In the study, participants chose migration and begging as the economic activity at the destination as a livelihood strategy.

Better outcomes: improved food security, income, housing quality, social capital, sending remittances, increased access to land or land ownership, reduced vulnerability, and ultimately improvement in livelihood status at the origin. Worse outcomes: deterioration or a decrease in all these factors, increased vulnerability, and deterioration in a person’s livelihood status.

Same outcomes: denote neither positive nor negative changes in these outcomes or in livelihood status (Frankenberger et al., n.d., as cited in Tanle, 2015). The study participants cited similar reasons for achieving their migration aims.

The strength of the livelihood framework is that it applies an integrated approach of background factors, vulnerability context, processes and procedures, and assets as factors that influence the choice of a livelihood strategy such as migration. It can also be applied to multiple rural settings where rural livelihoods are affected by environmental shocks. On the other hand, the livelihood approach does not consider power relations in household decision-making which may hinder the migration of women. Again, the framework oversimplifies the complex motivations and decision-making processes involved in migration and therefore does not fully capture the multifaceted nature of migration.

### **3.4 Conceptual Framework of the Study**

The conceptual framework adapted in the study modifies Tanle's (2015) Migration and Livelihood Framework to emphasize the notion of Multiple Social Networks as a major intermediary more strongly. It was adapted to provide conceptual guidance for this study, which sought to analyse the migration of beggars from Niger to Ghana and their income-earning activity at the destination. Yendaw et al. (2020) explained that the main advantage over other livelihood frameworks (e.g., DFID and the Pacific Islands' SL frameworks) is that it has direct links to issues of migration and livelihoods and includes in its analysis the personal characteristics of migrants and the background characteristics of both the places of origin and destination (Tanle, 2015; Yendaw et al., 2019).

Unlike the other frameworks, Tanle's (2015) framework comprises six main components: background characteristics, livelihood resources and capitals, vulnerability context, institutional structures and processes, livelihood strategies, and livelihood outcomes or well-

being. The background characteristics include economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental factors that provide the context within which migration (either internal or international) can occur. The differences in background characteristics between places of origin and destination account for outmigration from one area to another within a country in cases of internal migration or emigration from one country to another. These personal and background characteristics, in the view of Tanle (2015), are essential components in migration and livelihood analysis, particularly on topics relating to the sorts of livelihood strategies migrants can undertake and the effects of their livelihood strategies.

The vulnerability context in the framework comprises three major elements: seasonality, shocks, and household dynamics. Shocks that occur unexpectedly and without warning or signs, such as illness, vehicle accidents, job termination, earthquakes, floods, droughts, conflicts, and agricultural issues like pests and diseases, are some of the challenges individuals face in their quest for a better living (Tanle, 2010). The modification to the framework explains vulnerabilities within the context of the background characteristics that deal with macro-level factors (economic factor/economic shock, environmental factor/environmental shock, political factor/political shock, and others), as explained by some aspects of the DFID livelihood framework. Again, seasonal variations can influence prices, output levels, job prospects, and health conditions, all of which can affect livelihood outcomes. For instance, seasonal climate issues (environmental factors) like droughts and floods impact agricultural output and might lead to outmigration to areas where alternative sources of income are found.

With regard to migrant assets or capitals, the framework includes natural, financial, human, social-cultural, physical, and traditional capitals. The soil, water, trees, and wildlife are examples of natural capital or assets. Some urban dwellers rely on land for housing, small-scale intensive agriculture, or animal husbandry, while others make ends meet by using public resources like trees and waterways (Ashley & Carney, 1999). Human capital consists

of skills, knowledge, education, experiences, ability to labour, and good health. Financial capital consists of owning or accessing money, savings, loans, and credit. It is crucial for migrants to have access to inexpensive financing in order to support their livelihood activities and achieve their desired migration outcomes (Meikle et al., 2001). Associations and networks make up social capital. Social networks make it easier for migrants to obtain information about job prospects and act as a safety net in times of crisis or unexpected events like illness or death. In certain places, both domestic and international migrants frequently develop social networks in the form of migrants' associations. Social networks, as information sources, have the potential to ease migration processes and lessen the kinds of anxieties and uncertainties that previously accompanied migration, thanks to advancements in communication technology (Tanle, 2015). Physical capital, such as housing, health, education, roads, and electricity, is necessary to support livelihood activities. One of the most crucial resources or assets that migrants require for both reproductive and productive goals is housing. Low socioeconomic status migrants tend to live with friends or close relatives upon arrival at their destination, or they may live in squatter settlements as they may not have the money to rent housing.

With regard to institutional structures and processes, the framework refers to institutional structures such as policies, laws, regional migration policies, norms, beliefs, incentive programs, and activities that can have either positive or negative effects on livelihood strategies and outcomes. Also, institutional structures and processes could influence international migration in terms of the need for relevant documents as a prerequisite for departure from the country of origin and for entry into the destination country. People migrating within West Africa do so under the ECOWAS migration protocol framework, permitting them to reside and work in any member country of their choice.

With regard to livelihood adaptation, Scoones (1998) identified three strategies rural dwellers may employ. These include agricultural intensification, livelihood diversification, and

migration. In the case of the study population, migration for the purpose of begging was chosen as the livelihood strategy. Migration in this sense means that one or more household members leave and, in so doing, they are able to contribute positively to the living conditions of those left behind, although such success may not be guaranteed simply due to the act of migration. Migration is identified as one of the common livelihood strategies among the people of Niger (Adepoju, 2010; Afifi, 2011). Migration is an important form of diversification because it opens economic opportunities for many.

According to Tanle's (2015) framework, livelihood outcomes can be positive, negative, or neutral. Positive consequences imply improved income, food security, human capital, housing quality, social capital, increased remittances, increased assets (including landed assets and/or landownership), reduced vulnerability, and, above all, improvement in livelihood status. Negative outcomes imply worsening or a decrease in all these factors, increased vulnerability, and deterioration in a person's livelihood status. Neutral outcomes denote neither positive nor negative changes in these outcomes or livelihood status. However, the proponent of the framework noted that all livelihood outcomes, whether positive, negative, or neutral, are subjective. What some migrants may perceive as improvements in their livelihood status, others may perceive differently. This depends on the differences in their background context, the type of migration involved, and their general expectations in life (Tanle, 2015; p. 263).

Another component of the framework is migrants' characteristics. Individuals who qualify to be candidates for migration for begging are people of all ages and genders. In terms of age, there are both children and adults. With regard to the physical condition of migrants, especially those migrating for the purpose of begging, the elderly, infirm, and disabled persons qualify highly for such work. As part of what influences the decision to migrate is

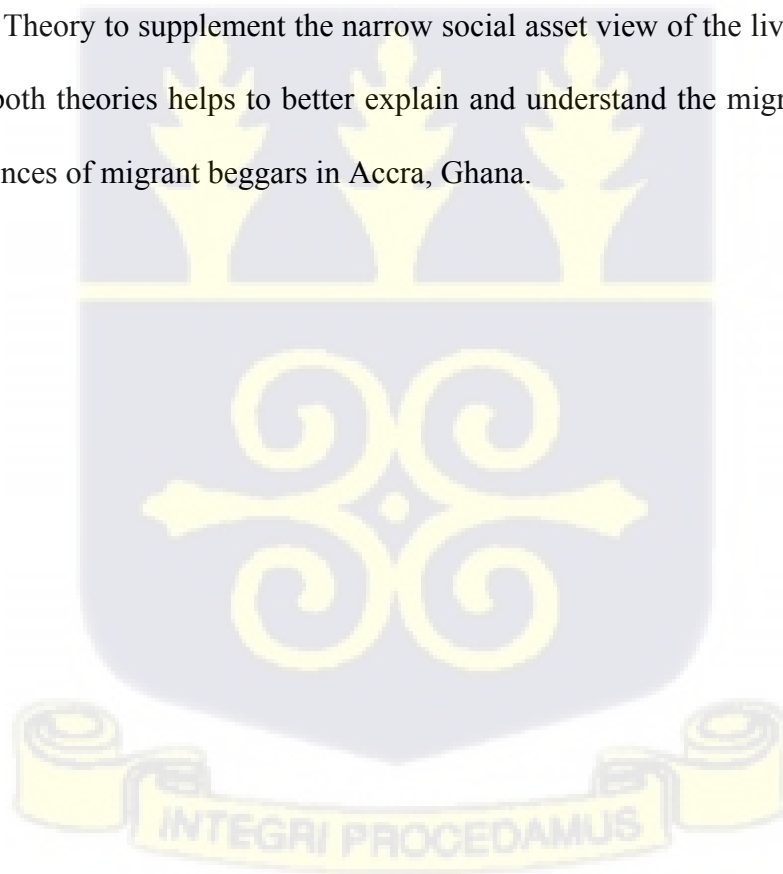
the migration status of migrants. Those who have experience in migrating to beg are motivated to make the journey again and even help others decide to migrate to Ghana.

By merging the vulnerability context and macro-level factors as a single component, the modified conceptual framework introduces another component that seeks to throw more light on the intermediaries that help facilitate migration for begging among Nigerian migrants. The intermediary consists of personal networks, service provider networks, and altruist networks. Personal networks comprise both kin and non-kin networks. Service provider networks consist of actors that transport migrants, migration industry actors, border-crossing agents, and border officials. Finally, altruist networks include strangers, NGOs, philanthropists, and origin community members that help migrants on humanitarian grounds. Intermediaries influence migrants' access to capital and make migration possible. For example, a service provider network member, such as an onion truck driver, may provide credit to potential migrants and take them to the destination for payment later.

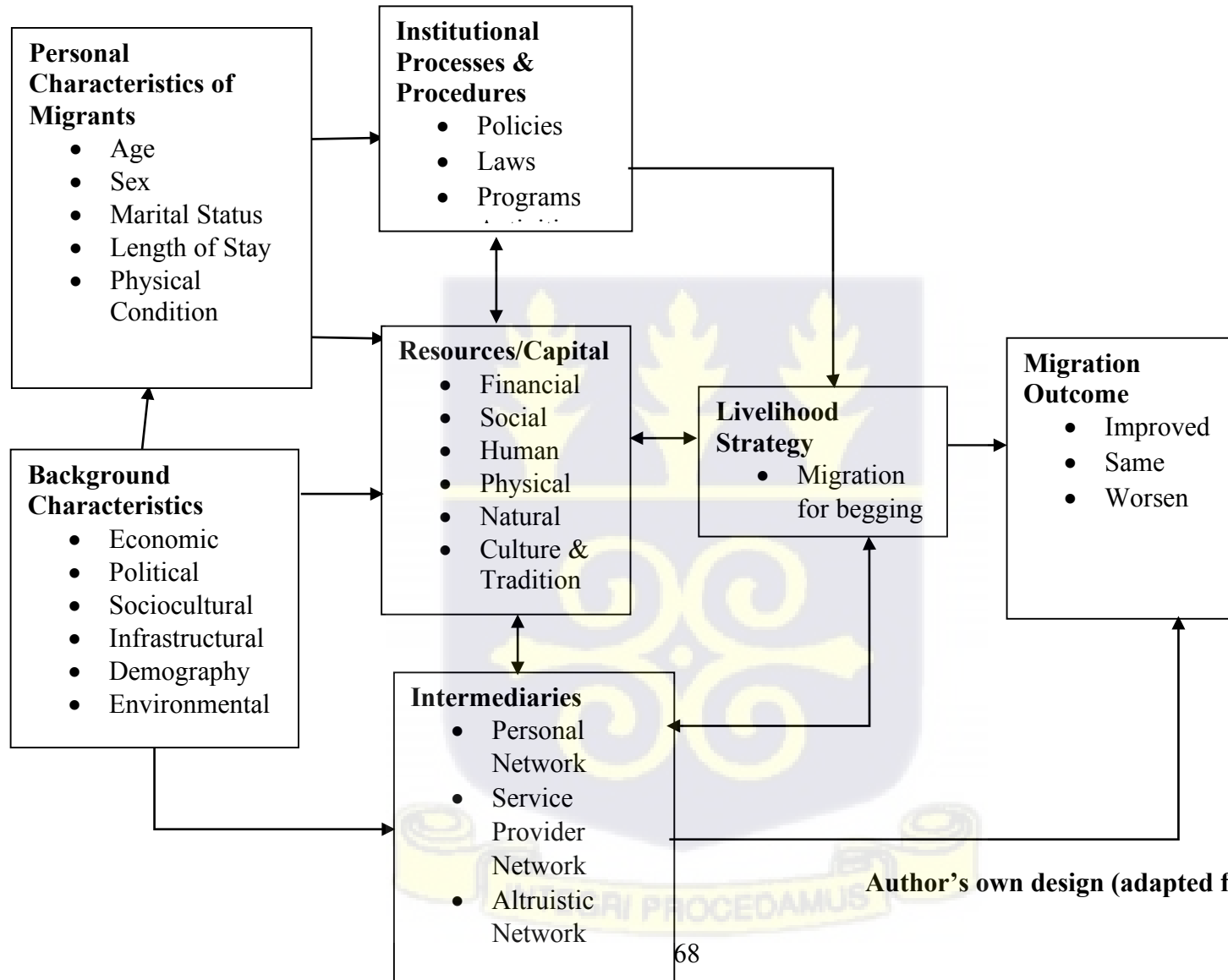
The strength of the livelihood framework lies in its focus on individual and household agency. It emphasizes the role of individual and household decision-making in migration, recognizing that migrants are not passive actors but make choices based on their unique circumstances and goals (Ellis, 2000). According to Scoones (1998), by incorporating the context and diversity in the framework, it acknowledges that migration decisions are shaped by a wide range of factors, including social, economic, political, and environmental conditions, making it applicable to various migration contexts. It can also guide research on policy and institutions and is useful in assessing projects relating to livelihood and development in several countries in Africa and elsewhere (Scoones, 1998).

The following are the limitations of the livelihood framework. The framework has the potential to oversimplify the understanding of migration, risking an oversimplification of the complex motivations and decision-making processes involved in migration. The livelihood strategy is meant to function in multiple sectors. However, most government organizations

and agencies are funded and operated separately according to their respective sectors, making cross-sector development challenging or impossible to achieve (Carney, 1999). Challenges may arise in measuring and assessing assets, capabilities, and migrants' activities. The theoretical concepts of assets, capabilities, and aspirations can be challenging to measure and assess empirically, making it difficult to fully operationalize the framework in research. While the livelihood strategy recognizes multiple motivations for migration, it may underrepresent the role of non-economic factors, such as personal aspirations, identity construction, and social networks, in influencing migration decisions (Carney, 2001). Also, the various frameworks, including Tanle's (2015), exclude the context of varied intermediaries that help facilitate migration for begging. The study, therefore, made use of the Network Theory to supplement the narrow social asset view of the livelihood approach. Combining both theories helps to better explain and understand the migration process and lived experiences of migrant beggars in Accra, Ghana.



**Figure 3. 1: Conceptual Framework for Nigerien Begging Migrants**



Author's own design (adapted from Tanle, 2015)

## CHAPTER FOUR

### METHODOLOGY

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the research methodology and design employed in the study. The methodology and methods of a study lend credibility to its findings in various ways. The primary research problem of this study focuses on the migration process of Nigerian migrant beggars on the streets of Accra. To address this problem, the study adopts an appropriate methodology and specific methods to effectively concentrate on what is necessary to achieve optimal results. The sub-sections of this chapter include the philosophical underpinning of the study, the research methodology and specific methods, the research design, the study population, sampling techniques, sources of data, and data collection and analysis.

#### 4.1 The Philosophical Perspective

The study adopted the pragmatic worldview as its philosophical underpinning. A research paradigm combines three major premises: epistemology, ontology, and methodology (Creswell, 2014). Epistemology refers to how researchers generate and communicate knowledge, while ontology concerns the nature and beliefs about reality. Pragmatism, according to Bacon (2012), is one of the most significant North American contributions to Western philosophy in the 19th century, with key proponents such as Charles Sanders Peirce, John Dewey, William James, and George Herbert Mead. A pragmatic worldview offers an experience-based, action-oriented framework where the purpose of research is to address real-world issues and understand how people experience and interact with the world practically (Bryman, 2016). It is a flexible approach that encourages using "whatever works" in the study. Pragmatism emphasizes application, practical solutions to problems, and effective answers to research questions rather than adherence to a single methodological

approach. The worldview advocates for employing all necessary approaches to thoroughly understand the problem (Creswell, 2014).

The ontological assumptions of the philosophy are the recognition that reality is constructed by individuals and at the same time this is a reconstruction of something relatively stable that exists (Creswell, 2014). They believe in both objectivism and subjectivism and to the pragmatist, reality is constantly renegotiated and interpreted. Again, according to pragmatism as an epistemological system, the ‘truth is what works and knowledge is dependent on the knower (Kitcher, 2012). According to Mitchell and Education (2018), pragmatists do not take sides on what makes good research, rather, they feel that research on subjective, objective and observational phenomena can produce knowledge depending on the research questions of the study. Overall, for pragmatists, it does not matter what research methods you apply, or what approach you take, as far as it can be useful for practice, they endorse it (Leech, 2016).

Methodologically, pragmatism does not commit to one system of philosophy, making it ideal for mixed-methods research. It incorporates both qualitative and quantitative assumptions. Creswell (2014) highlights that this worldview gives researchers the freedom to select methods, techniques, and procedures that best address their study’s objectives. For mixed-methods researchers, pragmatism allows for combining diverse methods, worldviews, and data collection approaches (Shan, 2022). This philosophy is ideal for the study because it enables the researcher to employ various methods to effectively address the research problem and questions.

#### **4.2 Methodological Approach and Design**

A Mixed-methods strategy is therefore used as the methodological approach of the study. This allows the researcher to combine the use of both qualitative and quantitative approaches

to complement the weaknesses of one another (Creswell, 2014). The specific design is the Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method.

**Table 4.1: Mixed Method Approach**

	<b>Quantitative</b>	<b>Qualitative</b>
Data Collection Method	Survey	In-depth Interview Focus Group Discussion Observation
Data Collection Instrument	Questionnaire	Semi-structured Interview guide.
Target Population	Immigrant Parents	Accompanied Child Beggars (ACB) Parents Key Informants
Sample Size	136	57
Sampling Technique	Purposive Snowball Convenient	Convenient Snowball Purposive
Data Analysis	Descriptive statistic, Chi Square test and Regression Analysis.	Thematic Analysis

#### 4.2.1 Explanatory Sequential Mixed Method Design

Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods involve a two-phase data collection approach in which the researcher collects quantitative data first in Phase I, analyses the results, and then uses the findings to plan or build on Phase II, the qualitative phase (Creswell, 2014). The use of this method is supported by other studies on “migration for begging” (Tyldum & Friberg, 2023; Ajedokun, 2015), which emphasize its effectiveness in providing a broader understanding of the phenomenon. In essence, the explanatory sequential mixed method is carried out in phases.

First and foremost, quantitative data was gathered during Phase I utilizing survey questionnaires. The goal of the quantitative phase was to investigate the migration process, the types of intermediaries, and the living circumstances of transnational beggars from Niger living in Accra, Ghana. The results from this phase informed the purposive selection of participants for the second phase.

In the second phase, a multiple case study approach was used to collect data via in-depth interviews to help explain some aspects of the quantitative results. This phase also explored how and why the demographic and migration experience variables observed in the first phase influenced participants' migration and begging activities. Teye (2012, p.383) highlights that using both quantitative and qualitative methods is beneficial for capturing the intensity of cases while unravelling different dimensions of the subject under study. For this reason, the rationale behind this approach was to use quantitative data and results to obtain an overview of the research problem, including frequencies, percentages, and charts. The qualitative data and its analysis further built upon and explained these statistical results by exploring participants' in-depth views on their migration experiences and related activities. One key consideration in designing mixed methods studies is the weight or priority assigned to each approach (Creswell, 2014). In this study, priority was given to the quantitative data because it served as the driving force behind the qualitative method and represented the major component of the data collected and analysed. Below is an illustrative figure to demonstrate the steps.

The advantage and disadvantages of mixed methods have been widely discussed in various disciplines including social science (Creswell, 2014; Creswell et al., 2003; Migiro & Magangi, 2011). The strength of this particular design has been associated with its straightforward nature and the easiness of its implementation because the steps are separated into clear segments and may or may not have a particular theoretical perspective. It is also ideal for single researchers (such as graduate students) because the investigation can be divided into two separate manageable tasks rather than multiple data collection (Creswell, 2012). The main weakness of the design is the length of time involved in data collection because of the two separate phases of the approach. Also, taking a longer period to gather data may have resource implications. With respect to the application of the explanatory

sequential mixed method design to this study, the collection of data took a long time because the quantitative and qualitative data were gathered separately making the collection and analysis process very expensive.

### **4.3 The Preliminary Study**

Choosing an unfamiliar site to conduct a study requires extensive preparation, not only in gathering geographical information about the study site but also in identifying and building relationships with gatekeepers in the host community. These relationships are critical to understanding the target population, their migration process, and their livelihoods in the host community. Initial access was granted in October 2021 and lasted for three months. My first visit was to the Ablekuma Central Municipal Assembly (AbCMA), where I was introduced to some gatekeepers who facilitated access to the participants. The estimated number of migrant beggars residing in the community was between 1,500 and 2,000, based on averages derived from various estimates provided by key informants (field notes, 2022).

An exploratory study was conducted to gather preliminary information about the research participants and assess the feasibility of implementing the research design to achieve the desired results. This stage was instrumental in clarifying conceptual issues and the meaning of certain terms as understood by the respondents. For the exploratory study, eight (8) migrant beggars (parents) were sampled. The data collected during this phase included socio-demographic characteristics and information about their origins, migration journeys, and current livelihood experiences at their destination. This information was critical in refining the survey questionnaire.

Following the refinement of the instrument (the questionnaire) based on the exploratory study, the quantitative research instrument was piloted in April 2022 at Madina Zongo, a suburb of Accra with a significant population of Nigerian beggars. Madina Zongo was chosen

for the pilot because its population shares similar characteristics with the study population. The survey instrument was not piloted in Ablekuma to avoid overlapping participants between the pilot and the main study, which could have led to respondents having prior knowledge of the questionnaire content. The purpose of the pilot was to assess the content validity and reliability of the instrument, ensuring its suitability for the study. It also aimed to determine the time required to complete a single questionnaire, which was crucial for estimating the number of participants that could be surveyed daily during the main data collection phase. This piloting exercise identified flaws in the data collection procedure, which were subsequently addressed. Based on the findings, the instrument was further refined and updated for use in the main data collection phase.

#### **4.4 The Study Area and Justification for Selection**

The selected research site is the Ablekuma Central Municipal Assembly (AbCMA). This site was chosen specifically because of the significant immigrant population in the community. The AbCMA was previously part of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. It is one of the 261 Metropolitan, Municipal, and District Assemblies (MMDAs) in Ghana and forms part of the 29 MMDAs in the Greater Accra Region. The municipality was established by Legislative Instrument (LI) 2376 and inaugurated on February 19, 2019 ([www.ghanadistrict.com](http://www.ghanadistrict.com)). It is a highly urbanized, mixed-use community with both residential and commercial functions. Its capital, Laterbiokorshie, is close to Accra, the national capital, and maintains functional relationships with other key urban centres in Accra. AbCMA is characterized by an urban environment dominated by built-up areas and human ecology, with minimal natural ecology. The municipality comprises seven electoral areas: Laterbiokorshie, Mataheko, Abossey Okai, Gbortsui, Nmemeete, Mambrouk, and Adwenbu. The main communities within the

municipality include Lartebiokorshie, Abossey Okai, Mamprobi, Russia, Sukura, Kaneshie, Mataheko, and Sabon Zongo (Ablekuma Central Municipal Assembly, 2020).

The Municipality's economy is dominated by three sectors and subsectors comprising commerce / retail trade, services and industrial sectors. These key sectors are complemented by agriculture (poultry), construction and real estate. In all the sectors, the economic activity is dominated by Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). It is a predominantly "Informal Economy" characterised by rapid urbanization, massive unemployment and poor land use planning. In addition, businesses spring up daily on pavements, and on the streets, most of which are service-oriented occupations which include dressmaking and other artisan-related jobs. It is worth noting that the informal sector employs about 60 percent of the working population in the municipality (Ablekuma Central Municipal Assembly, 2020). Utilities such as electricity, water, roads and telecommunication facilities also exist in the municipality to facilitate job creation. The majority of the gainfully employed persons are engaged in wholesaling, retailing, petty trading, and repair of motor vehicles and motor cycles and other service-related jobs. Thus, the presence of these economic opportunities attracts more banks to the municipality. According to data (GSS 2021), the municipality is home to several ethnic groups which include; Akan (61,711), Ga-Dangme (38,398), Ewe (22,903), Guan (1,620), Gurma (4,298), Mole-Dagbani (13,032), Grusi (2,462), Mande (4,107) and others (14,743).

Ablekuma Central Municipality is located in the northern part of the Greater Accra Region, between Latitude 5°81'3"N and Latitude 5°67'7"N, and Longitude 0°24'0"W and 0°13'1"W, covering a total land area of 9.14 square kilometres. It is bordered to the west by Ablekuma West Municipal, to the east and south by the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, and to the north by Ablekuma North Municipal. The population of the municipality, according to the 2021

Population and Housing Census, stands at 169,145, comprising 82,594 males and 86,551 females (GSS, 2021).

About education, the Municipality devotes a substantial proportion of its resources to the provision and expansion of education infrastructure. The municipality has more girls enrolled at all levels than boys. The largest gender disparity in enrolment occurs at the primary school level, while the smallest difference is at the preschool level. While girls are not disadvantaged in basic school enrolment, more effort is needed to retain them beyond the basic level. The educational infrastructure includes 23 primary schools, 19 junior high schools, and 19 kindergartens. The municipality also has one senior high school (AbCMA, Education Directorate, 2020).

In terms of health, the municipality is divided into three health zones to facilitate the delivery and administration of health services. Ten CHPS (Community-based Health Planning and Services) zones have been established to enhance primary healthcare provision across communities. The CHPS concept involves health education, maternal health services, vaccinations, and nutrition education. This setup ensures access to health services for residents, particularly those without access to health centres or hospitals. Health facilities are well-distributed across the municipality, granting physical access to the majority of its communities (Ablekuma Central Municipal Assembly, 2020).

As a cosmopolitan municipality, Ablekuma Central is a hub for immigrants from other ECOWAS nations seeking jobs and economic opportunities (Ablekuma Central Municipal Assembly, 2020, p. 59). Migration to the municipality is driven by demographic, geographical, and socio-economic factors. Of the total population of 169,926, 73,545 are immigrants, making up 67.7% of the population, while 34.3% are indigenes. Within the municipality, Sabon Zongo has the highest concentration of immigrants from the ECOWAS

sub-region. Sabon Zongo, derived from the Hausa language meaning “new settlement,” is predominantly a Muslim community where most residents speak Hausa. A significant population of Nigeriens resides in this community, making it particularly attractive for the study participants, who are also native Hausas and Muslims.

Sabon Zongo is overcrowded and faces challenges such as inadequate sanitation facilities. It is a complex, multi-ethnic community with a large migrant population. Historical accounts trace the establishment of Sabon Zongo to 1910 by Mallam Bako, a Northern Nigerian descendant. The community comprises various ethnic groups from Ghana, with Akan leading at 36.2% as of 2000 (Owusu, 2010). Other ethnic groups include Mole-Dagbon, Ga-Dangme, Ewe, and Gurma. The proximity of the municipality to the Kaneshie Market Complex, Agboghloshie, and Makola markets attracts migrants working in the informal sector. The presence of migrant beggars in several communities within the municipality makes it an ideal research site for this study.

#### **4.5 Study Population**

The population of a study refers to a large group of study units targeted for a specific investigation (Bryman, 2012). In this study, the population comprises female, male, and child migrant beggars from Niger, residing in the Ablekuma Central Municipality (AbCMA) as their host community. This group forms the primary study population. The primary population of Nigerien beggars was selected due to reports indicating that migrants from Niger are frequently smuggled and trafficked to other countries for begging activities (Serrano, 2020; IOM, 2022). Additionally, the high visibility of Nigerien beggars on the streets of Accra motivated the researcher to investigate this population further. Regarding the exact number of Nigerien beggars in the study, there was no official register available. However, community leaders maintained a list of the remaining beggars following a forced

return exercise conducted on June 8 and 9, 2022. At the time of data collection, this list indicated a total of 508 beggars. Nevertheless, this figure was deemed unreliable as not all beggars were registered or included in the list. The study sample specifically consisted of women and men who had migrated with children.

#### **4.6 Sampling Procedure and strategy**

The study area was purposively chosen due to the significant presence of Nigerien beggars in the municipality. Two sampling techniques were employed in the study: purposive sampling and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling was used to select Nigerien beggars, as other nationalities also engage in begging within the community. Snowball sampling, or chain-referral sampling, was essential for locating migrant beggars and willing participants. Creswell (2009) supports this approach, noting that snowball sampling is particularly effective when the target population is difficult to reach and lacks a proper sampling frame. In this study, Exponential Non-discriminative sampling was utilized, where each participant recruited helps recruit another participant (Etikan et al., 2016). This technique was chosen because it allows the researcher to recruit diverse participants within the population (Etikan et al., 2016).

To gain access to the beggars in the selected research site, key informants who were also gatekeepers in the community were recruited to help the researcher connect with the Nigerien beggars. Initially, the gatekeepers introduced 10 Nigerien female beggars who met the inclusion criteria for the study, and they were selected as participants. Through these initial participants and with the help of the gatekeepers, the researcher was able to gradually expand the sample size and recruit additional participants who might have been challenging to reach. Every participant was allowed to recruit others who were willing to join the study. This snowball process led to the recruitment of a total sample size of 136.

Supporting the views of Atkinson and Flint (2001), snowball sampling was chosen because potential participants are referred by individuals they trust, establishing a rapport and level of trust between the researcher and participants. This was crucial due to the closed nature of the population under study. A limitation of this technique, however, is that the study may exclude some individuals of interest because the initial contacts might form the entire sample, leading to data skewness (Etikan et al., 2016). Despite this limitation, the study made efforts to recruit Nigerien Hausa beggars from the two prominent migrant regions in Niger (Maradi and Zinder) which are noted for migration related to begging in the literature (Benattia et al., 2015; Hall, 2017). Additionally, different age groups and gender were considered during recruitment.

To ensure the dependability, credibility, and consistency of the qualitative data, Anderson (2010) recommends member checking, the use of contradictory evidence, and triangulation to ensure reliability. I ensured that the data collection process was accurate and unbiased. To enhance reliability, I piloted the data collection instrument to ensure it was suitable for addressing the research questions. I also collected data from various sources and triangulated this data during analysis. Furthermore, I discussed the findings with selected participants and key informants from the community to verify that the data accurately reflected the views of participants.

The total number of participants who were surveyed and also interviewed were 166, made up of 136 parent beggars, 12 children, 1 Gender Minister staff, 1 municipal assembly member, 1 Ghana Immigration Service official, 1 Police Officer, 2 social welfare officers, 1 religious leader, 1 Nigerien community leader, 1 local NGO representative and 9 community members. The 136 respondents were interviewed face to face and data captured on the questionnaire by the researcher and three other data collection assistants. At the end of the survey, the selected respondents were asked to give their contacts and locations for further

in-depth interview. The researcher selected 27 of the respondents for the in-depth interview based on age, gender and how interesting their stories were.

**Table 4. 2: Study population, sampling strategy and sample size**

Study Population	Sampling Strategy	Sampling Size
Begging parents	Snowball	136 (both Survey and In-depth Interviews)
Accompanied Child beggars	Snowball/Purposive	12 (In-depth Interview)
Migration officer	Purposive	1
Gender Ministry	Purposive	1
Police Officer	Purposive	1
Assemble member	Purposive	1
Social Welfare Officer	Purposive	2
Local NGO Rep	Purposive	1
Host Community Members	Purposive	9
Religious leader	Purposive	1
Niger community Leader	Purposive	1

Source: Field data, 2022

#### 4.7 Data Sources

The study made use of primary data. The primary sources included a survey questionnaire, in-depth interviews and Key informant interviews.

**Table 4. 3: Data collection methods and Study population**

Methods	Study Participants	No
Questionnaire	Parents	136
In-depth interview	Parent (24 women, 3 men)	27
Key Informant Interview	Children	12
	GIS, Police, Gender Ministry, Social welfare, Assemble member, Local NGO, Religious leader.	8
	Host community members	12
Observation	2 Migrant Parents and their 5 children	2
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent 1 (boy and a girl)</li> <li>• Parent 2 (1 girl and twin boys)</li> </ul>	

#### Chi-square test

This study employed the chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ) test to examine the association between the work of the immigrants and their living conditions (Objective four). The chi-square formula is used for data that comprise variables distributed across categories. It helps ascertain whether the

distribution varies from what is expected by chance. This test checks the association between the observed and expected value. Mathematically, the chi-square is expressed as:

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^n \frac{(O_i - E_i)^2}{E_i}$$

$E_i$  is the expected value

$O_i$  is the observed (actual) value

### **Statistical Technique (Ordered Logit Model)**

The research employed the Ordered Logit Model (OLM) to examine the impact of selected socio-demographic characteristics on the frequency with which migrant beggars remit money. The study investigates how factors such as age, gender, marital status, social networks, and funding affect the remittance behaviour of Nigerian immigrants in Ghana. Given the nature of the dependent variable (an ordinal scale), regression analysis is appropriate for this study. However, since the dependent variable is ordinal, the ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation method is not suitable, as it assumes equal distances between the categories of responses. Due to this violation of the OLS assumption, the Ordered Logit Model (OLM) was chosen. The OLM is a type of logistic regression used when the dependent variable is ordinal. It assumes that the categories of the ordinal response can be ranked, although the distances between these ordered categories are not known.

### **Multinomial Logistic Regression (Statistical Technique)**

The study also employed Multinomial Logistic Regression to address objective five. This method was used to examine the effect of socioeconomic factors on migration outcomes. As previously noted, the dependent variable (migration outcome) was categorized into three levels: "worse," "same," and "better." Given the nature of the dependent variable, the ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation method is not suitable for this analysis, as it assumes equal

distances between the categories of responses. Due to this violation of the OLS assumption, and because the dependent variable consists of more than two categories, we employed Multinomial Logistic Regression. The multinomial logistic regression is a type of logistic regression used when the dependent variable has more than two categories (see pages 236-238 for further details).

#### **4.7.1 Survey questionnaire**

The quantitative survey collected data solely from the parents. The questionnaire was used to address objectives one through four of the study. It was administered to participants in different parts of the host community. A total of 136 participants (24 males and 112 females) took part in the survey and responded to questions posed by research assistants. The quantitative phase of the study focused on the research objectives. The instrument was divided into five interrelated sections based on the research questions and included various item formats, such as dichotomous responses (e.g., “Yes” or “No”), multiple-choice questions (asking for either a single option or multiple applicable choices), and open-ended questions. Supervisors, participants, and field experts were consulted to ensure the content validity of the questionnaire.

The first section of the questionnaire collected data on migrants' socio-demographic characteristics and migration experiences. The second section focused on reasons for migration and origin information. The third section covered intermediaries and documentation, while section four addressed livelihoods and conditions at the destination. Section five examined remittances and related information. The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure content validity and consistency, and to gather feedback from participants for clarification of the content. The questions were administered by the researcher and three data collection assistants.

The use of data collection assistants was necessary due to the language barrier, as the respondents were native Hausas with no knowledge of English. The assistants were trained to understand the purpose of the study and the content of the questionnaire so they could ask questions effectively and elicit appropriate responses. The questionnaires were not self-administered due to the low educational background of the target population. Instead, the data was directly captured by the research assistants. With their assistance, the researcher was able to collect the necessary data for further analysis.

#### **4.7.2 In-depth Interview**

The qualitative phase of the study focused on explaining the results of the statistical tests and data descriptions obtained in the quantitative phase. Altogether, a total number of 39 respondents included: 24 women, 3 men, 10 girls and 2 boys were interviewed (Refer to Appendices H and I for the tables of parents and children participants). These numbers were reached because similar responses were given signifying data saturation. Individual in-depth interviews were conducted involving, migrant parents and accompanied child beggars in the qualitative data collection. Following the sequential explanatory research design steps, the qualitative data collection followed the quantitative data collection (Creswell, 2014). The quantitative results informed the formulation and the content of the interview guide used for the interviews. The primary strategy used was to conduct in-depth interviews with twenty-seven migrants who migrated for the purpose of begging. The semi-structured interview guide was used as the instrument for the data collection. Photographs were taken with participants' concerns about their living environment.

Key informant and Expert interviews were also conducted in the homes and offices of the officials who consented to be part of the study. The selection was based on affiliation to the institutions responsible for handling migration related issues in Ghana. The Ghana

Immigration Service (GIS), Ghana Police, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection and Assembly members were asked questions about the migration process of Nigerian migrant beggars into Ghana, how they manage to cross various borders without any documentation, who they believe is behind their migration and perpetuation on the streets and the probable reasons why they come. The Department of Social Welfare officers were also asked questions about the presence of the migrant child beggars on the streets of Accra particularly their presence in the host community what the department does to assist them and the challenges they face. Again, the community members were asked questions about how long they have lived with the beggars in the community, what attracts them to come and reside there, the reasons for their migration, their views on the popular narrative about the smuggling and trafficking theory surrounding their migration and the impact of the presence of the beggars on the community. The interviews were recorded with permission and notes were taken for quick referencing during the interview. The real names of respondents are represented by pseudo-names chosen by respondents for this study.

#### **4.7.3 Observation**

The researcher followed and observed parents and their children at their various begging locations. Some of the begging spots included the Paloma Traffic Light, 37 Traffic Light area, Kaneshie, Airport Area, and Shiashie Traffic Light. This method of data collection was deemed appropriate for the study as it allowed the researcher to observe the behavioural patterns of the migrants' street begging activities and how they went about their daily routines. Migrants were followed from 5:00 am to 5:30 pm, when they retired to the host community after the day's work. The observations were conducted twice a week for three weeks across the different locations. While observing the children, the parents were also observed to understand how they spent their time when the children were begging.

For instance, one parent had two children (an 8-year-old boy and a 6-year-old girl). Another parent had three children (twin 3-year-old boys and an 8-year-old girl). Both parents were middle-aged women. The older children not only begged but also sold small items in traffic.

Again, different research objectives had different methods of data collection application to help achieve the objectives. Table 4.6 shows which objective and target population utilized which data collection method.

**Table 4. 4: Objectives/Population/methods of data collection**

	<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Methods of Data Collection</b>
<b>Obj. 1</b>	To examine the socio-demographic characteristics of Nigerien migrant beggars and their reasons for migration in Accra.	1. Migrant Parents	Survey Questionnaire and In-depth Interview
<b>Obj 2</b>	To explore the migration trajectories of begging migrants from Niger to Ghana.	2. Children 1. Migrant Parents 2. Children	In-depth Interviews Survey Questionnaire and In-depth Interview  In-depth Interviews and Focus Group Discussion
<b>Obj 3</b>	To examine the nature of intermediaries involved in the migration for begging of Nigerien to Ghana.	3. Key informants 1. Migrant Parents 2. Children	Key Informant Interviews Survey Questionnaire and In-depth Interview  In-depth Interviews
<b>Obj 4</b>	To investigate the relationship between Nigerien migrants' work and their living conditions.	3. Key informants 1. Migrant Parents 2. Children	Key Informant Interviews Survey Questionnaire and In-depth Interview  In-depth Interviews
<b>Obj 5</b>	To examine the migration outcome of Nigerien Migrant beggars in Accra, Ghana.	1. Parents	Survey and In-depth interviews.

#### **4.8 Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria**

To qualify for participation in the study, the following inclusion criteria were used: participants must be native to Niger (both males and females), must have migrated to Ghana for begging, and must reside in the host community (ACMA). Participants must be 15 years or older, must have migrated to Ghana accompanied by a child or children, must have been in Ghana for at least one month, and must have the ability to give consent. Regarding the child beggars, the age of the child was an important consideration in the selection process. Only children aged 9 to 12, who were capable of speaking and understanding the questions in order to respond appropriately, were included. Consent from the parents was required for their participation. Children outside of this age range or those unable to respond to the questions were excluded from the study. Similarly, participants who did not meet the criteria were excluded from the study.

#### **4.9 Methods of Data Analysis and Interpretation**

Data analysis is a crucial component of research because poor analysis can lead to inaccurate reports, which in turn can result in incorrect decisions. Therefore, it is essential to select a suitable data analysis technique that ensures reliable and useful insights are drawn from the data (Eteng et al., 2022). The mixed-method approach necessitated the use of different data analysis techniques, depending on whether the data was quantitative or qualitative.

For the quantitative data, a computer-assisted questionnaire was used to collect and generate data for processing. The study utilized frequencies and percentages, as well as chi-square and regression analyses (Ordinal and Multinomial regression). Objectives 1, 2, 3, and part of 4 used descriptive statistics and chi-square tests, while regression analysis was applied to some sections of objectives 4 and 5. For the quantitative data, the study used “R” as the analytical tool. R offers a wide range of statistical and graphical tools, including regression analysis,

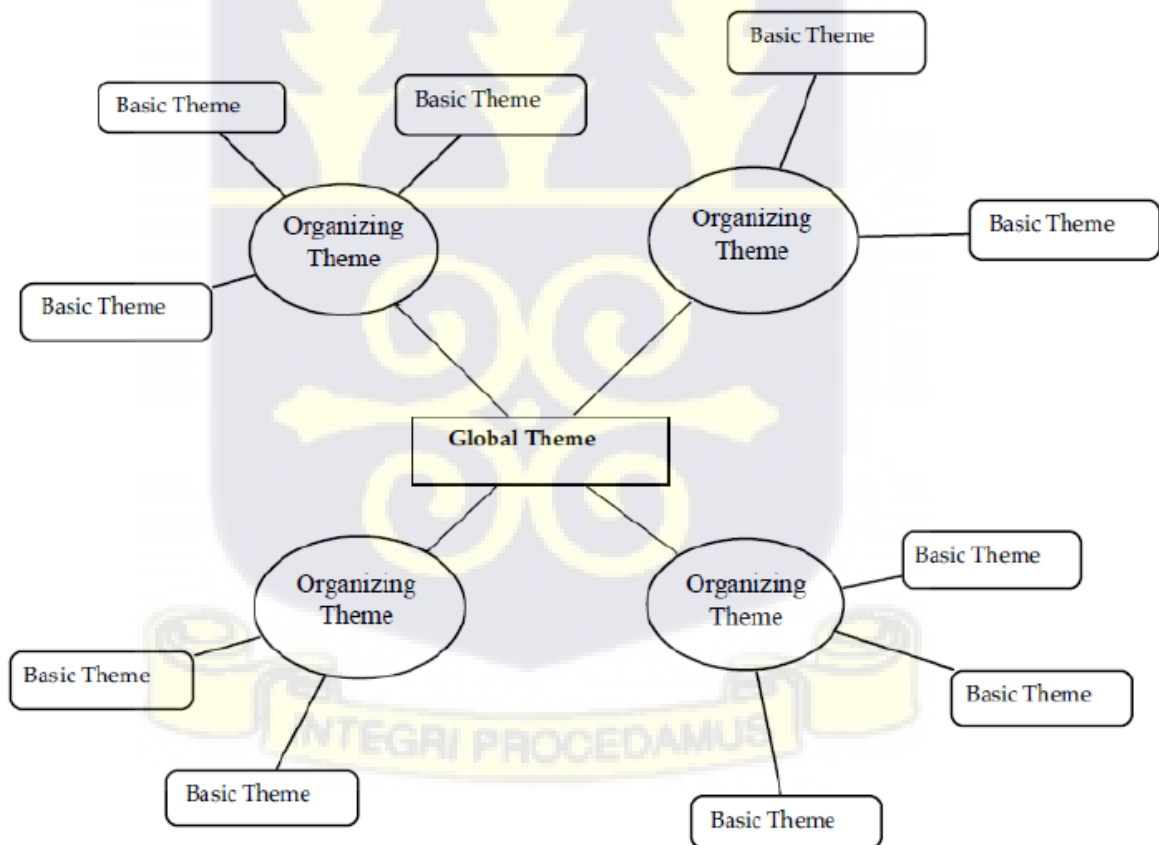
hypothesis testing, time series analysis, clustering, and many other built-in functions and packages. R is ideal for various fields, including social sciences, finance, healthcare, and environmental studies, due to its robust statistical capabilities (Kabacoff, 2022).

In most cases, frequency distribution tables were used to describe the data and make comparisons between variables. Socio-demographic and migration experience variables were described, and cross-tabulations were conducted for socio-demographic and other variables. Comparative analyses examined the relationships between reasons for migration and socio-demographic characteristics, as well as between socio-demographics and migration experiences. This analysis addressed objective one and provided descriptive statistics related to migrants' routes and journeys.

As part of objective four, the study explored the impact of age, gender, marital status, social networks, and length of stay on the frequency of remittances among respondents. The study also aimed to investigate the relationship between migrants' work and living conditions. Since quantitative analysis allows for statistical description and testing of associations, chi-square tests were used to determine if there is an association between types of work (e.g., beautician, begging, trading, fetching water, helping food vendors, washing) and living conditions (e.g., income, healthcare, overcrowding, type of housing). The descriptive statistics of the survey are summarized in the text and reported graphically in tables and charts. Frequency analysis was conducted to identify responses to all questions in the questionnaire. The results of the analysis are presented in the form of a discussion. As mentioned earlier, quantitative data alone do not provide in-depth information about the 'why's and 'how's of a phenomenon. Therefore, the lived experiences of Nigerien beggars were captured using qualitative interviews.

In the qualitative phase of the mixed-method design, recorded in-depth interviews were transcribed, coded, and analysed. It is important to note that transcription occurred in two phases. The first transcribed data was reviewed by another Hausa- and English-speaking assistant to ensure that all information was captured accurately, especially since the Hausa language was translated into English. The purpose of this double-check was to ensure that the stories and narratives provided by migrants were captured authentically. Figure 4.1 shows the structure of the thematic network analysis. According to Attride-Stirling (2001), qualitative data must be analysed methodically to bring rigor to the final analysis.

**Figure 4.1: Structure of a thematic network**



Given this, the Thematic Networks Analysis was adopted to help in the organization of data into themes and aims to facilitate the structuring of these themes (Attride-Stirling, 2001: 387). The procedure involves three organizational levels, which include; basic themes, organizing themes and global themes. Basic themes are the lowest order theme that is derived from the data. It is a statement of belief anchored around a central idea that contributes to the significance of the higher order themes. Basic themes must be read in the context of other basic themes in order to make sense. Organising theme on the other hand is a middle-order theme that organises the basic themes into a cluster of similar issues. It simultaneously groups the main ideas proposed by several Basic Themes in this way a number of Organising Themes together makes a Global Theme. Finally, a Global Theme is a super-ordinate theme. Global Themes group sets of Organising themes that together presents a position about a given reality (Attride-Stirling:389).

The steps in the qualitative data involved: i) coding the material ii) identifying themes, iii) constructing thematic networks iv) describing and exploring the networks, v) summarising thematic networks and vi) Interpreting patterns. In the study, basic themes were generated from the transcribed data, organised and finally put into global themes to assess the bigger picture. Applying this to the work, the transcribed data was read over and over again familiarise myself with the data. After a, thorough observation of data, I designed a coding frame using the concepts and variables in the theories and literature I reviewed. I then coded the transcripts by going through them line by line to identify codes in the data. Both deductive and inductive was used. Deductive coding is where the codes are driven by the researcher's theoretical or analytical interest. Inductive coding on the other hand is where the process is done without trying to fit it into a pre-existing coding frame (Patton, 1990). I was unbiased in the coding process in the sense that I coded themes that were outside the coding frame that I found to be new in the literature but speaks to a broader theme. I then put the data into basic

themes. The basic themes were grouped into Organising themes to make a broader meaning of the data. And finally, global themes were developed to put the data into a much broader perspective. The process was done manually. The themes were put in a network format to help observe the patterns for easy analysis.

#### **4.10 Ethical Consideration**

It must be emphasized that the overall credibility of the research and the ethical procedures outlined by the Ethics Committee for Humanities (ECH) of the University of Ghana were strictly adhered to at every stage of this study. The confirmed Ethical Clearance reference number was (ECH 241/21-22). The consent of respondents was obtained before they were selected to participate in the study. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was clearly communicated to all participants.

Since children were involved in this study, informed consent was obtained from both the parents and the children. Appropriate steps were taken to ensure that participation in interviews and surveys was voluntary and that the anonymity of participants was preserved. Every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of the facts, and any information that could not be verified as fact was clearly indicated as such. The research team maintained professionalism throughout the study, engaging with the migrants, institutions, and groups involved in a respectful manner and upholding their rights. For confidentiality and anonymity, the researcher replaced the actual names of participants with pseudonyms. Participants were informed of their right to opt out or discontinue an interview at any point should they feel uncomfortable with the process.

Interviews were scheduled in such a way that they did not interfere with the participants' income-generating activities on the streets. This approach was also taken for the key informants, whose interviews were arranged for their convenience. In addition, COVID-19 protocols were followed and strictly adhered to during all stages of the research, especially

in the field. Research participants were provided with facemasks prior to interaction, and bottles of hand sanitizers were made available for use when needed. National laws, institutional regulations, and individual preferences regarding COVID-19 restrictions were respected throughout the process.

#### **4.11 Reflexivity and Researcher's Positionality**

The concept of positionality is based on the idea that a researcher's characteristics, in relation to the respondents, can influence the data produced (Teye, 2012). Although the research design employed a mixed-method approach, using both qualitative and quantitative methods, I believe it is important to document my positionality. This is particularly relevant because a substantial portion of the data is qualitative, and I also worked with interpreters. Positionality refers to how researchers view themselves and how they are viewed by others, including aspects like being an insider or outsider, having power or feeling powerless, or coming from a privileged or disadvantaged background (Ozano & Khatri, 2018).

Savin-Baden and Major (2013) expanded on this concept by suggesting that a strong positionality statement includes potential influences on the research, such as age, political beliefs, social class, race, ethnicity, gender, religious beliefs, and previous career experiences. It also involves describing the researcher's philosophical, personal, and theoretical perspectives, as well as their relationship to the participants (e.g., insider or outsider), and explaining how these factors may influence the research process.

One aspect of positionality that significantly impacted my interactions with informants is the insider/outsider dynamic. This concept refers to whether the researcher is familiar with the culture and behaviour of the group being studied (Holms, 2020). In this case, I consider myself an 'outsider' because I am an educated Ghanaian woman, a Christian, and do not

speak the primary language of the target population (Hausa). Researching a population that speaks a different language necessitated the use of interpreters.

To address this, I recruited four insiders as research assistants and interpreters. They were familiar with the community, fluent in Hausa (the language spoken by the respondents), and included two Nigerian Hausas and two Ghanaians who spoke and understood Hausa. Temple and Edwards (2002) argue that, like researchers, interpreters bring their own assumptions and concerns to the research process. This situation creates what is called "triple subjectivity," involving the interactions between the researcher, the participant, and the interpreter. Reflexivity was therefore essential, especially when working with interpreters. During training, I emphasized the importance of ensuring that the interpretation was faithful to the participants' words, without adding their own interpretations.

The use of interpreters who were considered insiders not only helped me gain trust but also facilitated easy access to the migrant population during the selection process and interviews. Although the participants saw me as an outsider, I positioned myself as an "outsider friend" and emphasized my role as a student researcher interested in understanding their migration experiences and livelihoods. With the help of opinion leaders, interpreters, and research assistants, I was gradually accepted into the migrants' community. The trust that the research team built with the participants made it easier to reach more migrant beggars in the area through referrals.

My status as an outsider was also affected by my religion, as I am a Christian in a predominantly Muslim community. This could have posed a challenge in terms of acceptance and trust. To overcome this, I decided to adapt my appearance to fit in better with the community. I wore long dresses, skirts, covered my hair, and wore a hijab when conducting fieldwork. This strategy was adopted for three reasons: to help complete the research, to be accepted by the migrants and the community, and to blend in. Creating bonds of friendship and trust with the participants was crucial, especially since some migrants initially viewed

me as a government official seeking to find fault and facilitate their repatriation. However, adopting the role of a friend did not affect my professionalism as a researcher, and I adhered to all ethical standards throughout the study.

Despite not sharing the same cultural or religious background as the migrants, I found that there were still ways to relate to them. Mercer (2007) notes that an insider is someone whose personal characteristics (such as gender, race, class, or sexual orientation) provide them with a "lived familiarity" of the group being studied. As a female researcher working with predominantly Muslim women, I benefited from the gender advantage, as Islamic teachings caution married Muslim women about interacting with non-family men (Dutter, 2022).

One strength of being an outsider is that researcher bias and over-sympathy toward the culture or practices of the group are minimized (Holmes, 2020). To fully understand the migration processes and the role of intermediaries in facilitating the migrants' journey and stay at the destination, I refrained from making assumptions or taking any question for granted. Every question on the interview guide was carefully probed to ensure a thorough understanding of the migrants' experiences and circumstances.

#### **4.12 Limitations and Challenges of the Study**

The study encountered several challenges during data collection, particularly in the field. One of the main challenges was gaining access to the migrant population. Due to the close-knit nature of the community, it became necessary to rely on opinion leaders to help establish trust between the researcher and the respondents. This approach was particularly effective as the migrants initially mistook the researcher for a government official who might be involved in their forced repatriation. Once the purpose of the study was clearly explained, and the researcher's identity as a student researcher was confirmed with appropriate identification, this issue was resolved. Another challenge involved the issue of acceptability, particularly because most of the participants were Muslims. To facilitate acceptance and create a peaceful

environment for the interviews, one of the opinion leaders would offer a Muslim prayer before the researcher began speaking. This practice helped ensure a more receptive atmosphere and supported the success of the research.

The researcher also faced difficulties during the interview process, primarily due to the noisy living conditions of the participants. Finding a quiet location for interviews was often a challenge. However, thanks to the relationships the researcher had built with some community members, a secluded space was usually provided for interviews, ensuring a conducive environment for data collection. Another significant challenge was determining the actual ages of the respondents. Many of the adult participants, as well as some of their children, did not know their exact ages. While younger participants were usually able to provide their ages without hesitation, older participants often guessed their ages. For example, one older woman, who had migrated to Ghana with her two grandchildren, initially claimed to be 20 years old. After being informed that this was unlikely, she revised her age to 30. In such cases, the researcher used additional background questions, such as asking about the number of children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren, to estimate a more accurate age. These questions helped both the participants and the researcher agree on a more specific age.

Also, the study focused exclusively on Nigerian migrants who had migrated with children, with a particular emphasis on female migrants. As such, the findings may not be representative of all beggar populations. Generalizing the results to other populations may therefore be misleading. The study was also a case study focused on a single community and ethnic group. While the findings align with the experiences of other beggar populations both within Ghana and internationally, the results are most applicable to the specific study area and populations with similar characteristics to those studied.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF NIGERIEN MIGRANT BEGGARS IN ACCRA

#### 5.0 Introduction

The chapter presents the socio-demographic characteristics of Nigerien migrant beggars who participated in the study and the reasons for their migration with the main purpose of addressing the first objective of the study. It discusses age distribution, sex, marital status, educational status, length of stay, and economic activities. The target population comprises of Nigerien migrants who migrated to Ghana purposely for begging, otherwise known as “Migration for Begging”. The section includes both mono-variate and bi-variate descriptions of the socio-economic data.

#### 5.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristic

The study recruited 136 respondents to participate in the survey. More than three-quarters (80%) of the respondents in the study constituted the working-age group, while 65 years and older accounted for (20%) of the population. Also, respondents in the age group 45-55 years and 65 years and older accounted for close to 20% (19.9%) each of the study population while those aged between 55-64 years accounted for 18.4% of the respondents. in the study. Among the respondents, 82% were women while men constituted 18%. With respect to the 18% of males, 100% of them had various forms of disabilities. Begging was more pronounced among the illiterates as the majority (93%) had no formal education. The population of migrant beggars with primary education was (6%) while that of secondary was only (1%).

The high illiteracy level among the migrants reflects the illiteracy rates prevalent in many African countries, particularly Niger (Afifi, 2011). The UN has rated Niger as one of the poorest countries with the lowest basic school enrolment levels in Africa (Boas, 2019). However, qualitative data indicated that a few respondents attended "Makaranta" (Quranic school). All respondents (100%) were predominantly from the Hausa ethnic group of the Maradi and Zinder regions. Although formal Western schools are scarce in most villages in Niger, some rural dwellers attend "Makaranta" (Islamic schools) and thus receive Quranic education (Alidou, 2005). Qualitative interviews revealed that some respondents, including child beggars, had Quranic education. For instance, Madam Naru, a 63-year-old beggar, attended "Makaranta" until the age of 17 when she married and stopped. Others, like Madam Aria, a 23-year-old, had no formal education due to the lack of schools in their villages.

The findings support Ojedokun's study, in which the majority of respondents reported having no formal education (47.1%) or Quranic education (36.1%). Almost all respondents in this study were Muslims, which is unsurprising given that Niger is predominantly a Muslim country, with 99.3% of its population adhering to Islam (2012 estimate, World Factbook, 2023). The study also found that there were more married persons (57%) than other categories of marital status among the respondents. Widowed migrant beggars constituted 20%, single respondents represented a little over a tenth (12%), divorced individuals made up less than a tenth (6%), and only 5% reported being separated. Refer to Appendix F for the demographic tables.

Migrants' decision to migrate and the duration of their stay in the destination is not cast in stone. These major decisions may change over time depending on their migration outcome (Erdal & Hahen-Zanker, 2022). In the study, close to 50% (46.33%) of respondents have stayed within a year, followed by (30.88%) who have been here between 2-3 years. Again (13.97%) reported staying between 4-5 years while a little 3% (2.95%) have stayed over eight

years. A study by Sapeha (2017) shows that migrants may continue to stay in a destination where there is economic growth leading to employment, established business and the continuous demand for their skills. Bilecen and Lubbers, (2021), emphasise that people who are migrants may stay longer if they have relatives or social connections in the destination country. This view is also espoused by the Network theory. The decision to stay longer or even settle permanently may be influenced by social relationships because they can offer support and a sense of belonging (Sapeha, 2017). The livelihood approach posits that laws, regulations and policies may enhance or constrain people’s livelihood strategies. Relating to the influence of immigration policy within the ECOWAS sub-region and migrants’ stay in countries within the region, migrants do not need visas to enter or stay in sister countries and it is not subject to renewal after staying for ninety days. This policy makes deciding to stay temporarily or permanently becomes easy. Table 5.1 shows the breakdown of respondents’ age and gender:

**Table 5. 1: Cross tabulation representing Age and Gender**

AGE CATEGORY	Male		Female		Total	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
[15-24]	4	16.7	13	11.6	17	12.5
[25-34]	2	8.3	15	13.4	17	12.5
[35-44]	1	4.2	20	17.9	21	15.4
[45-54]	3	12.5	25	22.3	28	20.6
[55-64]	6	25	19	17	25	18.4
[65+]	8	33.3	20	17.9	28	20.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data, 2022

Regarding the age and gender distribution of respondents, Table 5.1 revealed that the majority of female respondents between the ages of [45-54] were most represented (22.3%). Again, females in the age bracket of 35 – 44 years were close to 18% and those above 65 years were same. However, the least recorded age group in the female category was 15 – 24 years (representing approximately 11.6%). Regarding the distribution of age categories for male respondents, the majority were above 65 years old (representing approximately 33.3%).

On the other hand, the least recorded age group for males was 35 – 44 years (representing 4.7%). As evidenced in Table 5.1, there was a difference in gender concerning the age distribution relating to Nigerian transnational beggars in Accra. The difference in the ages of females in the study was qualitatively explained by the fact that the age group 35–54, which represents 40.2%, migrated due to the lack of alternative livelihoods in the villages aside from farming. Additionally, they are often out of work during periods of drought, as noted by Afifi (2011).

The cross-tabulation between age and marital status shows the number of respondents who are in various forms of relationships and their ages. This is represented in Table 5.2 below.

**Table 5. 2: Cross tabulation of Age and Marital status**

AGE CATEGORY	MARRIAGE STATUS					Total
	Never married	Married	Divorce	Widowed	Separation	
[15-24]	62.5	9.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5
[25-34]	12.5	19.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	12.5
[35-44]	18.8	18.2	25.0	7.1	0.0	15.44
[45-54]	6.3	20.8	37.5	14.3	57.1	20.59
[55-64]	0.0	16.9	12.5	28.6	42.9	18.38
[65+]	0.0	15.6	25.0	50.0	0.0	20.59
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100

Source: Field data, 2022

Table 5.2 above shows that the majority of the never married respondents are in the age bracket of 15 – 24 years, representing approximately 62.5% of never married respondents in the sample. However, none of the very older respondents (i.e., respondents who are 55 years and above) were never married. Thus, the age categories, 55 – 64 years and 65+, recorded 0.0% each for the never married category in the sample. It can also be observed that the distribution age categories across married respondents were fairly uniform but the “15 – 24” category deviated (recording approximately 9.1% of married respondents). Interestingly, the majority of divorced and separated respondents were found to be in the age bracket of 45 – 54 years. Thus, approximately 37.5% of divorcees and 57.1% of separated respondents were

in the age bracket of 45 – 54 years. As expected, the majority of widowed respondents were found in the age bracket of 65+ years (representing a whopping 50% of widowed respondents)

The cross-tabulation of the length of stay and age of respondents indicates which of the age groups reported to have lived in the destination the longest or shortest. Table 5.3 below represents the data on the subject under discussion.

**Table 5.3: Age & Length of Stay**

AGE CATEGORY	LENGTH OF STAY					Total
	[0-1]	[2-3]	[4-5]	[6-7]	[8+]	
[15-24]	23.7	2.3	5.3	12.5	0.0	12.5
[25-34]	13.6	11.4	10.5	25.0	0.0	12.5
[35-44]	15.3	13.6	15.8	0.0	60.0	15.44
[45-54]	13.6	29.6	26.3	12.5	20.0	20.59
[55-64]	11.9	25.0	15.8	37.5	0.0	18.38
[65+]	22.0	18.2	26.3	12.5	20.0	20.59
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100

Source: Field data, 2022

The results presented in Table 5.3 indicate that the majority of respondents who have not stayed in Ghana for more than a year are found in the age bracket of 15 – 24 years (representing approximately 23.7% of respondents who have stayed in Ghana for more than a year). The populated category (in terms of respondents who have not stayed in Ghana for more than a year) is those above 65 years; they also recorded approximately 22% of respondents who have stayed in Ghana for more than a year. Aside from the aforementioned age categories, the distribution of age categories for less than a year stay in Ghana was fairly uniform. It can also be noticed that the majority of respondents who have lived in Ghana for 2 – 3 years and 4 – 5 years are found in the age bracket of 45 – 54 years. However, the majority of respondents who have lived in Ghana for 6 – 7 years and 8+ years are found in the age brackets of 55 – 64 years and 34 – 44 years respectively.

## 5.2. Economic Activities of Migrants

Migration for the purpose of begging is a deliberate intention by migrants to use begging as their primary economic activity or source of livelihood in Ghana. Four groups of people among the respondents were identified to engage in begging at the destination, namely: children, the elderly and infirm, able-bodied individuals, and physically challenged persons. Concerning economic activities and respondents in the study, though (100%) of respondents engaged in begging, the degree of involvement varies. Those who engaged in begging as their only source of income were (85%) while (15%) of migrants reported combining begging with other secondary jobs such as beautician, petty trading, water vending, laundry and helping food vendors. The qualitative interview revealed that migrants' physical characteristics, age, sex and physical condition determined whether a migrant chooses begging as the only source of income or combines begging and other jobs. Massey et al. (2010) asserted that people do not engage in begging just for the fun of it, the use of begging as a livelihood strategy is underpinned by ageing, ill health, poverty and economic insecurity. With regards to sex, the men (100%) were found to be engaged in begging as their only source of income while only women were engaged in other secondary jobs.

Qualitative interviews also revealed that women who migrated with physical disabilities or those with congenitally ill children, whom they purposefully used as "begging tools," were part of the population who relied solely on begging for income. This strategy of using children to beg is what Agyemang et al. called "child advertisement". This is where able-bodied women actively exhibit their children as a way of gaining sympathy (Agyemang et al., 2014). One young migrant narrated the following in an interview with her at Abossey Okai on the reasons why she had to come and beg given the fact that she has the potential of venturing into other types of work in Ghana. Aria a 23-year-old married female migrant from Zinder is in Ghana with her two-and-a-half-year-old child to engage in begging. Her stayer

husband mooted the idea for her to come with their congenitally ill child to engage in begging. Aria decided to come to work as a beggar using her son as the point of persuasion. She said the only work she could do was to beg with her child. Her son is getting to 3 years but still looks like a six-month-old baby, he cannot sit, crawl or walk; thus, she has to always carry him. For this reason, she cannot go anywhere or do any other work apart from begging.

She however narrated that:

*“I know I cannot be in Ghana forever doing this begging. I will one day go back to Niger after Allah gives me what I came here to seek so we can have a better life when we go back” (Aria, 23 years, September 2022).*

There is an indication that the plan to return or stay is dependent on the outcome of migration. Until migrants can achieve their aims of migration, return is hardly considered, making prolonged stay their only way to fulfil their migration agenda (Tyldum & Friberg, 2021).

Qualitatively the study identified three broad ways by which begging can be categorised among Nigerian beggars in the study area. This includes (1) the specific begging locations where the act is conducted, (2) the technique and mode of begging and (3) the physical appearance of the beggar, this is in line with Bukoye (2015) and Lynch (2005) categorisation. Among migrant children the types of street related work they engaged in included selling cotton swaps, shoe polish, paint brushes, toffees, bitter cola, face masks and cleaning windscreens of vehicles in traffic. The begging locations of respondents were found to be on the street or major traffic intersections, communities, markets/shop-to-shop, street corners and in and around the premises of mosques and churches. Specific places include Achimota Overhead and Station, St Johns, 37 Military Hospital Traffic Light, Kasoa Barrier, Kaneshie, Odorkor, Dansoman, Paloma, Circle, ATTC, Malam Market, Shiashie, Airport Traffic Light, Accra Central, CMB, among others. Refer to Appendix I for children’s economic activities and begging locations.

### 5.3 Reasons for Migration

This section aims to answer the research question: Why do Nigerien transnational beggars migrate to their current destination (Ghana)? Details of this section include both origin-related and destination-related reasons. These were the reasons that informed migrants' decision to move from their villages in Niger to Ghana. The migration process, as explained by the Network Theory, is primarily motivated by social reasons, with the ultimate goal of economic prospects through employment or job opportunities (Massey et al., 1993). However, beyond this economic motive, the study revealed an interesting finding: some respondents migrated to Ghana to engage in begging as a means to fulfil cultural obligations, specifically to fund the marriages of their daughters. This contrasts with the dominant literature in migration studies, which often highlights the migration of young women and future brides who move to earn money in preparation for their own marriages (Awumbila & Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2008; Tufuor & Sato, 2017; Deen-Ziblim & Yidana, 2019). Respondents were asked to give the major reason for migration Table 5.4. presents migrants' major reasons for migration.

**Table 5.4: Major reasons for migrating to Ghana**

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Job Opportunity	50	36.76
Had Personal Networks in Ghana	34	25.01
It is safe in Ghana	23	16.91
Better Income	15	11.03
Others	14	10.21
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data, 2022

The reasons to migrate by transnational beggars from Niger to Ghana are multifaceted and far from simple.

### 5.3.1 Job Opportunity

The most important reason chosen by respondents was the availability of job opportunities in Ghana (36.8%), followed by a quarter of the respondents (25%) that reported they are here because they have personal networks (family, friends, neighbours) while 17% said they came to Ghana because it is a safe place to live. Again 11% reported they were in Ghana because they thought they would get a better income, while another (10.2%) reported they were in Ghana because they were running away from shortage of food and hunger, cultural obligation, ill-health and disability and escaping conflict. Job opportunities here include various avenues for migrants to earn income which includes begging and other alternative jobs at the destination (see chapter seven for details). During the in-depth interview, respondents elaborated more on the reasons they came to Ghana, this included the following themes: better job opportunities, poverty, hardship, low/no income at the origin, money for investment, drought and Famine (shortage of food, hunger, starvation), personal characteristics (ill-health, ageing, disability, widowed/divorced), family, friends and neighbours in Ghana, cultural obligations, and escaping conflict. This is in line with studies in West Africa that show that numerous drivers such as desertification, droughts, famine, poverty, political unrest and conflict affect the region and has contributed to the increase in migration from the region (Ajedepo, 2010; Teye, 2022).

Many of the migrants included in this study indicated that they were compelled to migrate due to a lack of jobs and alternative livelihood opportunities at the origin (36.8%). This is not strange because the Sahel Region that includes the Republic of Niger has cyclical famine with long off-farming seasons that affect agricultural production rendering farmers in the region redundant with seasonal employment (Lenshie et al., 2021). Most of them use this long farming period to migrate for alternative livelihoods to supplement their family income. This serves as both natural and economic shocks to individuals and households as proposed

by Livelihood theories. While some of the migrants (44.1%) made personal decisions to migrate with their children, others (55.9%) sought the opinions of their kinship networks to do so. One of the respondents was compelled to migrate due to the economic hardship and lack of alternative job opportunities in her village. Madam Atu, a fifty-year-old, migrated with her youngest daughter from Maradi. Atu has been in Ghana for four years and this is her third visit. Before she came to Ghana, she was selling food such as tuo, koose and maasa. She got divorced after the birth of her daughter which according to her was the beginning of all her economic woes. Atu decided to come to Ghana due to the economic hardship she was going through after her divorce. Before Atu came, she had lost everything and lost hope in living in her village. What motivated her most was the positive stories returnees usually share when they visit home, coupled with the fact that she had one of her elderly relatives who is also a beggar in Ghana and knows how her relative's life had changed since she started coming to Ghana. This indicates that migrants use migration to seek alternative livelihoods as proposed by the livelihood theory. Atu did not mince words, she stated emphatically that she came to Ghana purposely for begging.

This was what she narrated:

*Personally, I came to Ghana just to come and beg for money because of the economic hardship I went through after I got divorced. There was nothing else to do in the village. I had lost hope, I had to come because I was told I could make it here when I come. (Atu, Female migrant beggar, 50 years, September, Accra)*

Migrants who were divorced coupled with contextual factors influenced the migration of some respondents. The migrant explained that she had to come because of the hardship she went through and the lack of alternative livelihoods after her divorce. Atu's narration shows that her divorce, economic hardship, lack of alternative job opportunities and hopelessness contributed to her reasons for leaving Maradi (Niger) to Ghana for the purpose of begging. At the same time, the positive accounts from Ghana attracted her to come to Ghana in

particular. The opportunities in Ghana for Atu have not only been within the begging space but also, she does laundry as an alternative work for additional income. At her age, Atu thinks she is too old to farm and decides to come and beg in Ghana. They migrated in search of economic opportunities to enhance their living conditions. Unemployment and lack of employment opportunities is one of the biggest banes of Africa which contributes to the migration of its people including the youth to cross the Sahara Desert to the Mediterranean Sea to embark on a dangerous journey to Europe (Adesanya et al., 2023). Respondents came to Ghana because they believed there were opportunities for them in Ghana. They came with the hope of changing the economic fortunes of themselves and their families back home by engaging in street begging with their children on the streets of Ghana. Some of them faced economic challenges due to the loss of their spouses. Madam Buya, a sixty-year-old beggar from Maradi, whose husband died eight years ago, came with two of her grandchildren. She indicated that she decided to come to Ghana to work as a beggar after the death of her husband. She had issues with farm work at the origin due to the absence of her husband. She came to Ghana to work in order to take care of herself and others in her household. (Field notes, September 2022).

**Table 5. 5: Relationship between Age of Immigrants and Job Opportunity**

Age	Job Opportunity		Total
	No	Yes	
15-24	4 (11%)	13 (13%)	17
25-34	2 (5%)	15 (15%)	17
35-44	6 (16%)	15 (15%)	21
45-54	9 (24%)	19 (19%)	28
55-64	11 (30%)	14 (14%)	25
Above 64	5 (14%)	23 (23%)	28
<b>Total</b>	<b>37 (100%)</b>	<b>99 (100%)</b>	<b>136</b>
	<b>Chi-Square Value</b>	<b>DF</b>	<b>P-Value</b>
	7.23	5	0.2

Source: Field data, 2022, Figures in parentheses are conditional probabilities

Table 5.5 gives a vivid picture of the relationship between the age of Nigerian immigrants and the reason (better job opportunities) for migrating to Ghana. It can be seen clearly that 99 out of the total respondents agreed to have migrated to Ghana for better job opportunities. This represents a whopping 73% of the entire sample. On the other hand, we found approximately 27% of immigrants did not migrate to Ghana because of better job opportunities. Diving deeper into the age specifics, notice that the conditional probability of an immigrant belonging to the age category 15-24 given that he/she migrated to Ghana because of better job opportunities is 13%; whilst those who did not migrate to Ghana because of a better job opportunity is 11%. Regarding the age category 25-34, the conditional probability of being in this age category given that the person migrated because of better job opportunities is 15% and 5% for those who did not migrate because of this reason. Interestingly, the age category that migrated most to Ghana because of better job opportunities was those above 64 years. They were 23% of the 99 respondents who admitted having migrated to Ghana for better job opportunities.

Regarding the relationship between the age of Nigerian immigrants and the reason for migrating to Ghana (better job opportunity), it is observed that the p-value recorded under the chi-square analysis is 0.20. This indicates that the relationship between the age of Nigerian immigrants and the motive for migrating to Ghana for better job opportunities is not statistically significant. Therefore, an immigrant's age category is not associated with their motive to migrate to Ghana in search of better job opportunities.

### **5.3.2 Existing Personal Social Networks in Ghana**

The second major reason respondents gave for coming was the fact that they had social networks here (25%). The study found that some migrant beggars migrated because they had family members, friends and neighbours who resided in Ghana. With regards to social

networks, 25% responded that the major reason for coming was because they had social networks in Ghana. Studies have shown that migration for begging is facilitated by Criminal Networks rather than Social Networks (Kaushik, 2014, IOM, 2019). However, the study argues that Social Networks rather than Criminal Networks facilitate and hinder the migration of beggars (Tyldrum & Friberg, 2023) (See chapter six for details on Migrant Social and Transnational Networks). The study revealed that migrant social networks provide resources such as vital migration information and support concerning where to sleep, choice of route, financial support, encouragement, begging spots and how begging activities are conducted at the destination to yield the maximum benefit. The finding is in line with another study that found similar results (Awumbilla et al., 2017; Adugna et al., 2019; Tyldum and Friberg, 2023). Some respondents explained they came to Ghana because their families encouraged them to join them there. The information they had from their networks assisted in their decision to migrate to Ghana (See Chapter Six for details on social networks). This is in line with Harbison's (1981) assertion that social networks influence migration decisions because the social structure of families usually determines the incentives for migration. The network support given to new migrants helps reduce migration costs and risks which helps facilitate the migration process (Tyldrum and Friberg, 2023). Further, respondents observed that their family members and friends upon return from Ghana, lived an affluent lifestyle: wore nice clothes, had mobile phones, had assorted packaged foods and above all had enough money to sponsor projects. This supports studies that identified that migration improves the lives of migrants for the better (Dako-Gyeke et al., 2020; Afifi, 2011). The city life that migrants' social networks exhibit coupled with other family pressures contributed to the decision to migrate. The ability to migrate with the support of kin members means an increase in the house income through remittances (Fabien et al., 2015). Mr Hadala, a sixty-five-year-old from Zinder has been in Ghana for more than eight years and shared his experience. Though Hadala has been here for more than eight years, he has visited home three times. Hadala is

partially blind and currently lives in Ghana with her youngest son. The first time he came she brought one of his teenage sons who was 14-year-old to serve as his aid. After about a year and a half, Hadala found his son a job in the scrap collection business to bring additional income to the family. On his second visit, Hadala sponsored one of his nephews who was about ten years old to serve as his aid in the begging. According to Hadala, he was paying his nephew 10 GHS every day and was sending this money to his mother every month. He worked with his nephew for five years and bought him a wheel barrel to trade in cola nuts, bitter cola, tiger nuts and dates. It was on his third visit to Niger two years ago that he brought his youngest son who is now twelve years old. Hadala said he came to Ghana because his family members were here. They asked him to join them, so it is his turn to also help others to come. The finding exemplifies the chain migration concept where members of households follow their family members to a destination and are sent to operate in different markets to effectively distribute the family's financial risks (Massey et al., 1993). In the study, the return was a sure predictor of the chain migration of Nigerien beggars. Hadala narrated his reason for migrating to Ghana and this is what he said:

*I had some family members and friends staying here in Ghana. They were those who encouraged me to join them. They came to Ghana at the end of every harvesting season went back home when the rains came and travelled again after the harvest. Migrating is something that is part of us. I lived in Nigeria for some time because my brother was there. It was when I started experiencing eye problems that was when those in Ghana told me to come because I could earn a living as a blind beggar here. As I speak now they are also into begging because they are old and can no longer work on the farm as before (Hadala, 65 years old, October 2022).*

### **5.3.3 Safety and Political Stability in Ghana**

The safe and peaceful political environment in Ghana also played a role in the migrant beggars' decision to come to Ghana. The study showed that nearly 17% of respondents disclosed that they came to Ghana because it is safe here. This implies that some respondents migrated to escape conflict and violence. Conflict situations bring discomfort, stress,

disruption of livelihood activities, and other challenges. Respondents explained that the worst part of the conflict was the loss of human life. Most civilians are often killed or injured during armed conflict, and running away from conflict zones is a way to prevent further deaths. Indeed, the causes of such conflicts in West Africa include civil wars, coups d'état, and ethnic and religious conflicts (Kuerschner, 2013). There were instances where some respondents reported that all their hard-earned money was stolen in Nigeria due to conflict, making such places unsafe to live. This finding aligns with other studies that indicate conflicts in West Africa are one of the major drivers of migration, as they make conflict zones unsafe to live in (Flahaux & De Haas, 2016; IOM, 2021). A few respondents who reported fleeing conflict to a safer environment managed to escape with some of their children but lost almost everything they had due to the conflict. These individuals were fortunate to have left the zone safely. Their farms and traditional silos were destroyed, and they lost some of their relatives in the process.

Madam Yisha, aged sixty, came to Ghana before Christmas (2021). She lost some of her family members, including her husband, because their village in Zinder, near the Nigerian border, was attacked by people they suspected to be Boko Haram. She managed to come with three of her children, leaving five behind. Those she came with were all below seventeen years old. The children are currently selling onions at the onion market. Though she was not a beggar in Niger, she has become one because of her circumstances. Yisha came to Ghana because she knows Ghana is more peaceful (Field notes, September 2022). Indeed, some respondents had information from return migrants about how safe and peaceful Ghana is. Their decision to come to Ghana was based on the conflict they experienced, which led them to seek a safe and peaceful environment. Such respondents said that back home in Niger, they heard that Ghana is one of the peaceful countries, coupled with the idea that Ghanaians are very sympathetic toward poor people and that there is money here in Ghana. For example,

Sister Fati, a twenty-six-year-old mother of one from Maradi, elaborated on her reasons for coming to Ghana. As part of Fati's numerous reasons for migrating, she also pointed out that information reaching them in their villages indicated that Ghana is a peaceful country, the people are hospitable, and they are sympathetic toward beggars (Field notes, September 2022).

### **5.3.4 Income differential between Origin and Destination**

Though income differential was identified to be fourth in the ranking (11%) of the major reasons for migration among respondents in the study, some respondents had issues with the fact that the income they had in their farming activities was nothing to write home about so the begging they are engaged in at the moment pays better than what they were doing at the origin. Qualitatively, most migrants were assured of making a lot of money through begging in Ghana. Findings from the literature show migrants move to destinations where they can maximize their earnings (Adejokun, 2015; Oteng-Ababio et al., 2019). Madam Atu's narrative above and others exemplify such assurances. For instance, Madam Auda, a fifty-year-old from Maradi explained that though her family had farmland she did not have a farm. She said land becomes a farm if it's cultivated and nurtured to produce food crops which she does not have the capacity to invest in that venture. Auda's main occupation at the origin was harvesting firewood and selling it. According to her, she did not earn much income from her business; her daily income was what her family used to buy food. She had no savings, and the work was just hand to mouth. Auda, however, explained that she now combines begging with doing laundry. Comparing what she earns now to what she earned at her origin, she said the income she receives here is far better. She is currently saving to invest in her farmland when she returns (Field Notes, September 2022).

Similarly, Madam Kiya, a seventy-five-year-old from Zinder, was motivated by the money she would earn here in Ghana. Kiya, a seventy-five-year-old physically challenged beggar, decided to migrate to Ghana primarily because of the higher income she expected to earn in Ghana compared to what she was earning as a beggar in the capital of Niger, Niamey. Kiya was advised by her family to move because she could earn more in Ghana than in Niger. As argued by the New Economics of Labor Migration (NELM), families also compare income differentials when deciding on migration. This finding supports Massey et al.'s (1998) argument that decisions about who migrates, where to go, for how long, and what to do are not made individually, but are jointly taken by the family and the individual to maximize income (Massey et al., 1998).

### **5.3.5 Food Insecurity in Niger**

Again, inadequate supply of food and food shortage at the origin was key factor in the beggar migration decision. With regards to “other reasons”, some (10.2%) of the respondents reported food shortage, hunger and starvation as the major reason for coming to Ghana. Respondents in the in-depth interviews linked the reason for leaving their country of origin to irregular rainfall patterns at the origin (drought) and shortage in food supply (famine). It must be noted that these reasons are not stand-alone reasons, migrants’ responses showed a myriad of reasons that influenced their decision to migrate. Qualitatively majority of the respondents (20 out of 27) representing (74%) said one of the reasons for coming was running away from the frequent drought and food shortage experienced at the origin. This finding is not strange because most studies on Niger and the Sahel region in general attribute the massive exodus of people from the region to mostly drought and famine (Afifi, 2011; Adepoju, 2010). As explained in Chapter 2, harsh climate and environmental conditions which result in low yields contribute to this perennial food scarcity in the country of Niger (Lenshie et al., 2021; Boas, 2019). Also, drought, famine and food shortage featured

prominently in Afifi, (2011) and Ojedokun's (2015) study on Niger and West African migrants. Similar findings were revealed in this study in that, trans-migrants' narratives pointed to the prolonged low rainfall and long periods of dry season leading to food shortages in their villages and homes. A respondent who came to Ghana because of food shortage explained how serious the situation was. They came because they couldn't look on for them and their families to starve. They therefore considered migration as an option to change the poor living conditions in their households as posited by the Livelihood Framework. This is how Madam Naru a 63-year-old migrant narrated her experience:

*It was not easy in our village at all. The reason why we are in Ghana is that the rains stopped falling regularly for some time, which made planting impossible for many farmers. We planted our usual crops that year, but the rain did not fall, and all our efforts went to waste. So, that year we had very little food which was not enough to sustain the whole family. The first time I came it was a blind man in our village (a beggar in Ghana) who came to tell us that begging in Ghana fetches a lot of money so we can join him when he is returning, and we did. (Naru, 63 years old, August 2022).*

Some respondents cited the high household population as a contributing factor to the inadequate food supply in their households consequently leading to them leaving the origin to find food in Ghana. Naru's experience is a result of economic and environmental factors such as drought, leading to low yields and subsequently food shortages in her household which influenced her decision to migrate. According to USAID (2018), Niger's agricultural productivity continues to decline making the food insecurity situation in the country more difficult because of recurring environmental shocks and high annual population growth. Few of the respondents also alluded to the fact that they did not have food at home because the majority of the men in their households had left for the cities and other countries leaving mostly women and children behind. This situation is a typical example of a negative consequence of migration where breadwinners migrate leaving the left behind in a more vulnerable position to also decide to follow. Though migration is largely discussed as bringing development its consequences on development are most often silent in recent

migration and development conversations, migration is both a cause and consequence of development (Bakewell, 2011). Respondents explained that the men were usually those who worked on the lands for farming. The men living in the village meant there would be nobody in most households to farm which is the reason why they had no food. The majority of respondents couldn't wait for their children to starve to death which is why they came. One of the child respondents Hardi a nine-year-old girl shared her experience. The case of Hardi's household was not a matter of excessive migration in a never married household but rather a high household population. Hardi confirmed that food shortage and hunger contributed to the reasons for coming to Ghana with her family. The food they had in their house was not enough to feed the household. Hardi said their household population was so high that they did not get enough to eat. The food they cooked could no longer feed every member as it used to, causing them to go hungry all the time. Hardi also mentioned that they did not have what they needed in the family, so they were advised to come and work, so they could send money home to buy food and also save some (Field notes, September 2022). This finding supports Castelli's (2018) assertion that environmental changes, such as droughts leading to famine, are major contributors to migration.

### **5.3.6 Fulfilling Cultural Obligation**

Fulfilling a cultural obligation was one of the major reasons why migrant beggars came to Ghana. The study identified an interesting result which revealed that it is rather the future bride's mother who migrates to gather resources towards the marriage of their daughters instead of the future bride or young woman herself. This finding challenges the dominant literature in migration studies that asserts that it is the bride that migrates in preparation towards her marriage (Tufour & Sato, 2017; Awumbila & Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2008). The survey data shows that the "other reasons (11%) included "cultural obligations" as a major reason for migration among respondents. Additionally, the in-depth interviews elaborated

further on the reasons. Five out of the twenty-seven respondents explained that they came to Ghana to find money to support their daughters to prepare for marriage. As stated earlier in this work, the respondents of the study are predominantly Hausa-speaking people from Maradi and Zinder in the Niger Republic. Respondents with female children have the responsibility to ensure that their daughters have a memorable wedding. For example, Chiya, a 50-year-old woman, explained that as part of the Hausa tradition and marriage custom, the husband is required to rent an empty room or house, while the bride's family is responsible for furnishing the house. Such cultural practices are passed down from one generation to the next and are to be followed regardless of the social or financial position of members of that culture (Field notes, September 2022). This finding illustrates how socio-cultural practices, combined with economic factors as shown by the livelihood framework, help shape migration decisions. These practices are adhered to because they are seen as an essential part of their cultural heritage and may be deeply connected to religious beliefs and practices (Gatawa, 2015).

For instance, Muslims, consider marriage as one of the noble traditions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) (Ismail, 2020). Cultural practices may also have historical significance. Respondents said there was no way they could abandon their responsibility as parents and family members of the bride. Though they struggle to make ends meet, it is their responsibility to support their daughters in preparation for marriage. It was observed that almost all the women who said they were here to work to support their daughters were widows. In the absence of their husbands, it has become their sole responsibility to help their daughters. They were afraid of being stigmatised if they refuse to support. The migrants did not want their children to be the laughingstock of the village. According to one of the respondents by name, Abi, daughters are supposed to be married one day, and it is the responsibility of their family to ensure they send them away to their husbands in a respectful

manner. The last remittance she sent home was her contribution towards one of her niece's traditional weddings (Abi, age not known, September 2022). Studies in Ghana show that the reason why young women and never married women migrants from rural communities in the Northern region of Ghana come to the south is to gather financial resources in preparation for marriage (Tufour & Sato, 2017; Deen-Ziblim & Yidana, 2019). However, in this study the future brides are in the origin but rather the mothers who have migrated to mobilize resources to organise the wedding of their children. For example, Madam Atu, a 50-year-old from Maradi has nine children, five girls and four boys. Seven of them are married and living with their families. She is in Ghana because of her two unmarried daughters who are in Niger. Atu is currently here with 2 of her grandchildren who are helping her to raise the needed amount for their traditional marriage. She has two unmarried daughters, which makes her responsibility a very challenging one because she has no money. She couldn't see how staying in Niger could help fulfil her traditional responsibility towards her daughters.

*I came here to find money to support my two daughters to marry. I took the decision with my mother I told my mother that my female children are matured to get married so I'm coming to Ghana to work so I can support them. Now in our country marriage has become more of a competition because traditionally if your daughter is about to get married you are required to buy all the items that she would need and I don't have money, that is why I'm here (Atu, 50-year-old, August 2022).*

#### **5.4 Chapter Summary**

This chapter presented and discussed the demographic characteristics (age, sex, educational background, marital status, and religious background) and socio-economic background characteristics of the respondents. The chapter showed that most of the Nigerien migrants who migrated for the purpose of begging, accompanied by children, were predominantly female. The majority of the respondents were married, had no formal education, and were

predominantly Muslims. Some reported attending "makaranta" (Islamic education). The age category of migrants ranges between 15-65 and above, with a notable group of never-married individuals. The age distribution was fairly even across the various categories. The age categories [45-54], [55-64], and [65 and above] each had a percentage close to 20%, while the young adult categories [15-24] and [25-34] each hovered around 13% of the total respondents. Among the respondents, the majority were married, and only a few were divorced. The socio-economic background of respondents, which includes economic activities, shows that transnational migrant beggars engage in begging and other secondary jobs. The majority engaged in begging as their primary source of income, while a few combined begging with other menial jobs.

Regarding migrants' major reason for coming to Ghana, the majority came to seek better job opportunities available in the country, while having social networks in Ghana ranked second. Safety and peace in Ghana ranked third, and better income ranked fourth. Additionally, some indicated that they migrated to Ghana because they faced food shortages, hunger, and starvation back home, as well as for cultural reasons. Long periods of drought leading to low yields and subsequent food shortages in their villages contributed to their decision to migrate to Ghana. Others migrated to escape conflict, finding Ghana a safe place. For these reasons, they made a bold decision to migrate to Ghana to improve their lives and that of their families. While the women in the study attributed their migration to diverse reasons, the men mainly migrated in search of alternative job opportunities to earn money for investment back home. Unlike those who migrated due to drought and famine, those who came because they had family, friends, and neighbours in Ghana also made it their responsibility to bring other family members to help maximize the family income. Others, who migrated to support their children in having a befitting traditional marriage, viewed it as an uncompromising responsibility that they could not disregard.

## CHAPTER SIX

### MIGRATION TRAJECTORIES IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION FOR BEGGING FROM NIGER REPUBLIC TO GHANA

#### 6.0 Introduction

This chapter aims to answer the research question: "How did Nigerien migrant beggars manage to move from Niger to Ghana?" The focus is to examine the migrants' trajectories and journey experiences. The chapter presents and discusses pertinent issues necessary to ensure safe migration, including the migrants' social networks, financial preparedness, and whether they possessed travel documents and a functional mobile phone before embarking on the journey. It also focuses on the challenges they encountered while migrating from Niger to Ghana.

#### 6.1 Destination Options for Nigeriens who Migrate for Begging

The Republic of Niger comprises eight key regions namely, Agadez, Diffa, Dosso, Maradi, Niamey, Tahoua, Tillabe'ri, and Zinder. However, the research found that migrants of the study originated from villages in the Maradi and Zinder Regions of the country. It was found that 65.4% of respondents came from Maradi Region while 34.6% were from Zinder Region. Studies have shown that regarding migration for begging especially among women and children of Niger, the popular destinations over the years had been Libya, Algeria, Senegal and Nigeria (Benettia et al., 2015; Torchiato et al., 2021) and also internally to Agadez and Niamey (Hall, 2016; Affifi, 2011). This implied that respondents had the option to take the Northern route to Northern Africa or the Southern route toward Ghana. Given this background, respondents were asked about their preferred choice of begging destinations. Either towards the North or the South. The study found that (38.5%) would have preferred going to North Africa to beg, while (61.5%) reported they preferred the Southern route to

Ghana. Those who had other options apart from Ghana explained that their family and relatives were in those countries, while others said they knew some of their community people who travel to Algeria, Libya, Nigeria and other countries. Some respondents, they came to beg in Ghana because their families and friends asked them to come. The flooding of migrant beggars from Niger Republic especially women and children on the streets of Accra is a recent phenomenon according to some community members interviewed in the study (Field notes, October, 2022). One key informant in the community with insights into Nigerien migration made it clear that the community started experiencing a daily influx of migrants into the community around 2010 and 2011. Though the community is a migrant hub, the rate of arrivals had increased in recent years, he said. The key informant attributed the increasing number of beggars towards Ghana to the exploitation and violence against Nigerien beggars especially in Nigeria and the clumping down of irregular migration towards Libya and Algeria. He knew people in Niger stopped going to Libya after Gaddafi was overthrown in 2011 because the economy became unfavourable, there were fewer jobs and also became dangerous to live there. Migrants in Niger who move to Libya must first reach Agadez in the northern part of Niger and continue further north to either Madama or Sebha. However, it has become increasingly difficult for Nigeriens to migrate to Libya in recent times. He mentioned that some of his family members ended up working in Agadez because they were unable to cross to Libya to work. It is natural for people to desire to move to countries where money is lucrative, he said. So, it is not their fault; these beggars can no longer move to Libya or Algeria to beg, and that is why they have come here. The Niger-Aflao route is open to everybody. There are no strict border controls to stop them from coming unlike the Agadez, Libya and Algeria routes that are currently difficult to ply (Key informant 3, community member, November, 2022). This narrative is supported by Weihe et al.'s (2021), report on the Niger government 's issuing and implementation of law 36-2015, which forbids Nigeriens from transporting international migrants up north from Agadez

towards Libya or Algeria. According to the authors, the Nigerien government was under pressure from its European partners to prevent West Africans from coming to Europe. The findings of the study go to suggest that specific legal regimes and regulations implemented in Niger contributed to the influx of migrant beggars especially women and children into Ghana in recent times. This claim is supported by Weihe et al.'s (2021) assertion that the northern routes have become more dangerous, clandestine and expensive since drivers are forced to use unapproved routes that include higher payment of bribes to local security officials. While the purpose of the law was to target international migrants heading to Europe, a critical look tells its extended impact on seasonal and circular migration on the local population. which has eventually affected the movement of Nigeriens to Libya and Algeria (Weihe et al., 2021). To buttress the claim of the study, the United Nations report on conflicts shows that, during the same period of the civil unrest in Libya, Cote d'Ivoire was also an unfavourable destination which led to massive return of Nigerien migrants in 2011(UN.org, Country chapter-Niger). In any case, disappointed migrants who would have wished to move to Libya, Algeria or Cote d'Ivoire to beg had to find alternative destinations contributing to the increasing numbers of Nigerien migrant beggars in Ghana.

## **6.2 Nigerien Migration to Ghana**

International migration is conceptualized in most migration studies literature as the movement across national borders (Castle et al., 2012). Therefore, Nigerien migration to Ghana is conceptualized in this study as international migration internal to West Africa. The research identified four options available to Nigerien begging migrants to embark on a successful journey from Niger Republic to Ghana. (1) migrate in the company of a personal network with migration experience (2) Migrate in the company of an escort (3) migrate alone by relying on network information and directives and (4) the fourth is the ideal way, buying a ticket from the destination and coming straight to Ghana. Some basic things are needed to

make international migration and migration within the ECOWAS sub-region possible. These include possession of valid travel documentation, their social network before their journey, their source of financial support, and possession of a mobile phone or contact information. The relevance of these questions stems from the fact that the migrants' journeys often require serious preparations involving social connections, documentation, financial capital, contacts, and other factors for successful migration. International migration literature acknowledges that migrants' social networks provide tremendous support and information to new migrants (Akanle et al., 2021; Zaami, 2020), as noted by Massey (1998). In light of this, migrants were asked two very important questions about their migration journeys: (1) whether they had networks before embarking on their journeys, and (2) their main source of funding for migration. These questions were deemed important in understanding migrants' journeys because the livelihood strategy approach posits that both social and financial capital are necessary for any livelihood strategy agenda (Addo, 2008).

Having networks is important in migration. Altogether, more than half of the respondents (58.8%) indicated that they had social networks at the destination, while close to half (41.2%) reported they had no social networks before embarking on their journey for the purpose of begging at the destination. According to migrants who knew someone at the destination, their networks helped them with what to expect on the journey and also ensured they reached Ghana safely. Some had their aunts, daughters, brothers, sisters, nephews, and nieces, among others, in Ghana before coming. Those who had personal networks visiting the origin before their migration had the opportunity to travel in the company of their networks. This was seen by some respondents as a form of stress relief for new migrants. This was important to them because becoming familiar with the route meant that new migrants would be able to make the journey without any assistance, and also help others follow the same route in the future. Though others reported not knowing anyone at the destination before migration, the

qualitative interview revealed that some had encountered returned migrants at the origin who gave them information about the destination and how to make the journey with or without financial capital. In the study, migrants who had the privilege of travelling in the company of transnational migrants expressed their gratitude to their networks for helping them understand what it takes to make the journey to Accra.

Another important factor in migration is the availability of financial capital. It is a fact within migration studies that international migration is expensive. This implies that potential migrants must have sufficient resources, including financial capital, to be able to realize their migration dreams. Table 6.1 below presents the main sources of funding for transnational beggars from Niger to Ghana.

**Table 6.1: Transnational beggars' main source of funding for migration**

VALUE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
Loan	84	61.7
Personal resources/savings	38	27.9
Household savings/resources	13	9.6
Sponsorship	1	0.73
Total	136	100

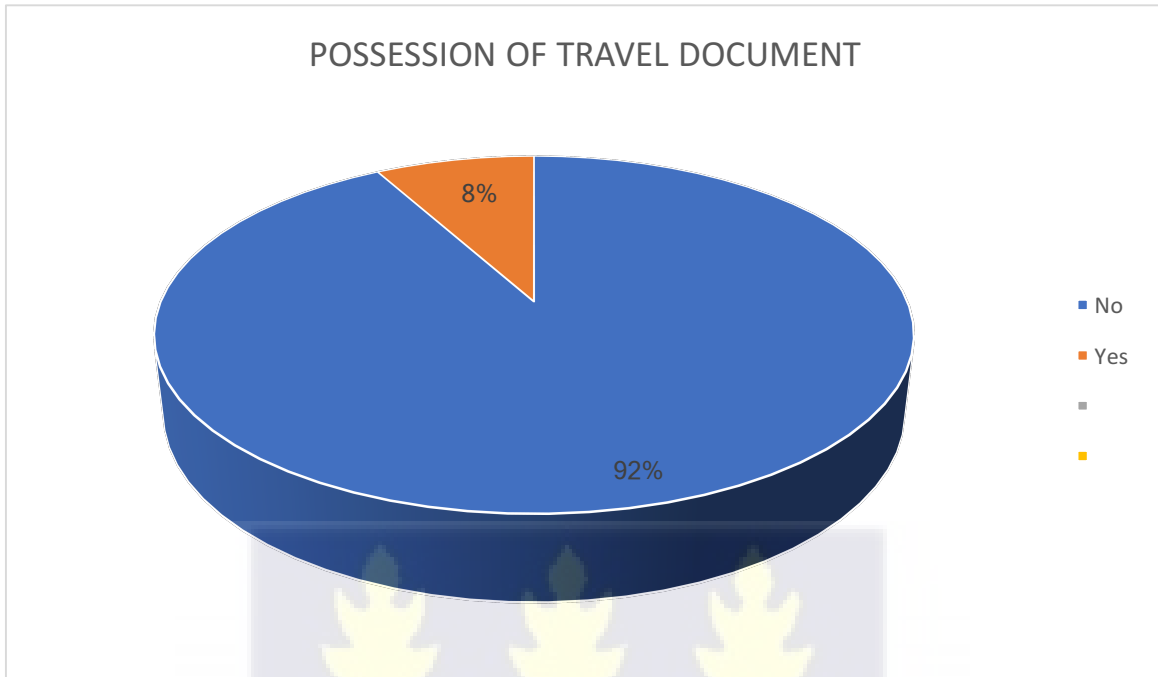
Source: Field data, 2022

The majority (61.7%) of the respondents took loans to fund their migration while close to 28% funded their migration through their resources. Again, less than 10% said they used their household resources to fund their journey. Taking a loan to fund migration was one of the common means of funding migration among the respondents of the study. The qualitative interviews indicated that most of these loans were given by migrants' personal networks either from those at the origin or the destination. Those who reported coming to Ghana with their personal and family resources had to sell their small animals such as goats to raise the needed amount. Financial support was needed to buy bus tickets and make other preparations for the journey.

Another important requirement for international or cross-border migration is the need to possess a valid travel document. In view of this, the study sought to find out how many of the respondents migrated with valid travel documents. The study found that 92% of migrants migrated without any documentation while 8% said they did travel with valid documentation. The study argues that migrating without documentation is one of the contributing factors to border exploitation among migrant beggars in the study. The need to possess travel documents is well explained by the ECOWAS migration framework, which underpins the movement of the respondents in this research. The ECOWAS free movement protocol seeks to provide ECOWAS citizens the right to settle in another country and access economic activities. Movement within West Africa is made possible within the ECOWAS free movement protocol framework (Yeboah et al., 2021). In 2008, member states adopted the ECOWAS Common Approach on Migration to address the challenges in the implementation of the Free Movement Protocols (FMP). The common approach provided guidelines to member states on effective migration management based on six principles. Among the principles is "promoting legal (regular) migration as an integral part of the development process" (cited in Yeboah et al., 2021). Migrating with travel documents ensures safe migration, and without them, migrants are forced to resort to irregular means to migrate. The responses on possession of travel documents when coming from the origin to the destination is presented in Figure 6.1 below.



**Figure 6.1: ECOWAS Documentation Status**



Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Regarding the possession of travel documents by people moving from one country to the other within the ECOWAS sub-region, the Free Movement Protocol (FMP) requires governments in the sub-region to provide their citizens with valid travel documentation, such as a passport or identity card as stated in the ECOWAS Supplementary Protocol A/SP.1/7/85 (Garba & Yeboah, 2022).

This finding was also evident in the qualitative interviews where almost all the participants had no travel documents when coming to Ghana with very few having a Nigerian national card. Madam Diya, a forty-year-old new migrant who migrated with three children from Maradi, narrated that she did not travel with any passport or identification card. This is what she narrated:

*I did not come with any travelling documents. We live in a village where we don't even have a school or a clinic, how would we get a travel document?*

*Those who live in the big towns have it, I don't. Because of this getting to the other side of the border on our way here became a challenge, but we managed to come "Insha Allah" (Diya, 40-year-old female).*

The account by Diya and others explained that they had not travelled with documents because they were rural dwellers. They saw it as an impossibility. It was also clear that the perception of travel documents and their possession was far from the reach of people in rural communities, and that those in the larger towns were the ones who had access to such documentation. Respondents did not see the need to possess a travel document in situations where money was taken from them at the border. The finding of the study supports Yeboah et al.'s (2021) assertion that the border crossing experience of poor people and the active or working class is often not smooth because they have no travel documents (Yeboah et al., 2021). A fifty-five-year-old Madam Chiya, who is in Ghana for the third time from Zinder Region explained that she has a French card and often shows it to the border officials when asked to do so at the border (Field notes, October 2022). The above narrative by Chiya indicates that she had her National Identity Card as a form of documentation before embarking on her journey to Ghana. Though the majority of migrant beggars did not travel with any of the travelling documents prescribed by the ECOWAS protocols of free movement they managed to cross from one country to another to enter Ghana.

Further, the research explored respondents' channels of migration regarding their migration pathways and routes migrants used to move from one place to another. The study found that (100%) of the respondents made the journey by land from Niger to Ghana. Among this population, the majority (87.5%) used the Niger-Aflao route while (12.5%) used the Niger-Bawku route. The Aflao route includes places such as Niger, Katsina, Lagos, Seme, and Aflao, and those who use the Bawku route also pass through Bolgatanga, Tamale and southwards to Kumasi (Amuzu et al., 2019). It is also important to note that those who used the Niger-Aflao route majority reported going through Nigeria while few said they came to

Aflao via Benin. Those who used Benin came from Maradi to Dosso, from Dosso to Gaya and from Gaya to Benin then to Aflao. Figure 6.2 shows the pictorial presentation of the routes migrants use to enter Ghana.

Figure 6.2 shows the route migrants used from Niger to Ghana. The research found that the choice of route was usually determined by the intermediary or migrant networks facilitating the migration, the region the migrant is migrating from, the financial resources available for migration and which also determines migrants' mode of migration. It was identified that networks suggest routes that they are familiar with and are certain to get migrants to their destination at all costs. Those who migrated from other regions to Niamey to beg and continue their journey to Ghana and those who board onion trucks directly from the villages were found to prefer the Burkina Faso- Bawku route because they indicated that trucks that ply that route charge lesser fares compared to buses. Among the reason why migrants use the Niger, Burkina Faso, and Bawku route was for the insufficient money they had for the journey. In the study, mostly women and the children they migrated with were found to use this route and almost all the men used the Aflao route and for the men it was simply by choice (See chapter six for detailed discussion).

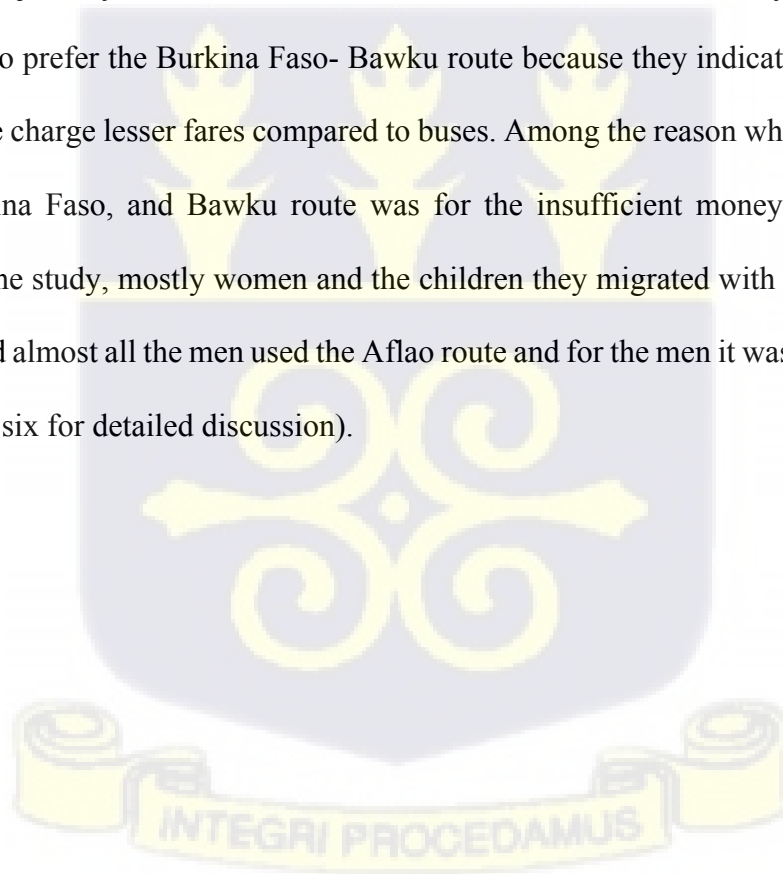
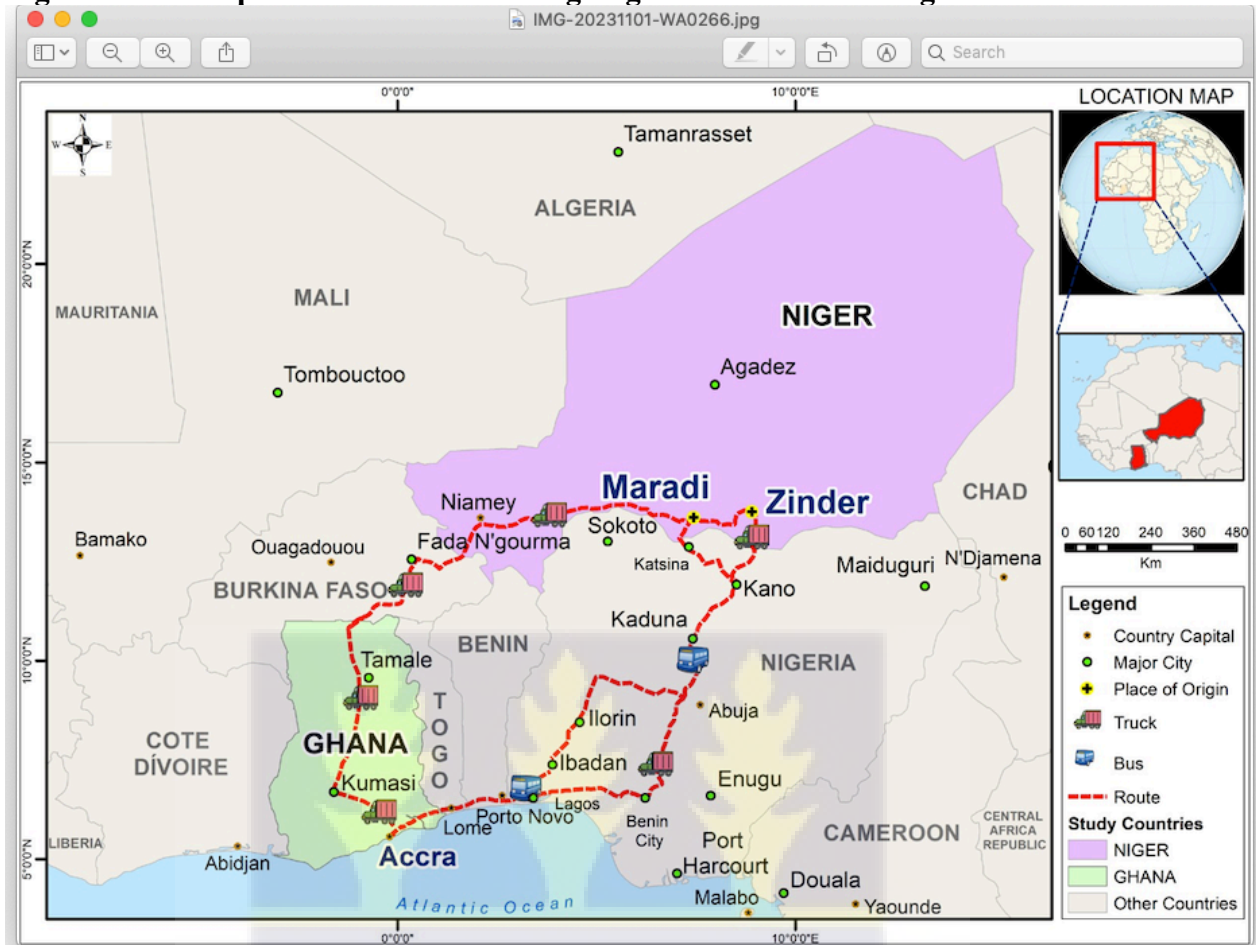


Figure 6. 2:A map of West Africa showing migrant’s route from Niger to Ghana



Source: Field data, 2022

One migrant beggar narrated the following during an interview with her on her mode of migration and journey experience: Madam Tuya is a 55-year-old woman from Maradi, who came to Ghana with four children and has been here for a little over a year. She currently helps as a food vendor during weekdays and begs along the Kaneshie- Kasoa road during weekends until then she goes to the street to beg daily. Before coming to Ghana, she was trading in children’s ware with money she borrowed from her sister until she lost all her capital during the period of COVID-19. She came to Ghana with the help of a friend who introduced her to one Nigerien truck driver who plied the Burkina Faso-Bawku route. Because Tuya was facing a lot of economic challenges, she did not have enough money to buy a bus ticket for herself and the four children she came with. However, Tuya was

determined and willing to leave Niger Republic by all means necessary. Tuya, who had limited resources migrated from a village in Maradi but had to come to the Capital Niamey which is the capital city of Niger Republic to board a truck to Accra. According to Tuya, she and the group of women she came to Ghana with did not use the Aflao route for financial reasons. Though the journey was rough, inconvenient and tiring she and the children and the group were able to make it to Ghana safely (Field notes, September 2022). Tuya and the group stayed in Kumasi for some time, and they went their separate ways. She and her four children came to Accra, some went to Koforidua and others stayed in Kumasi. The finding supports Yendaw's (2021) study on itinerant immigrants from West Africa whose mode of travel is by land by vehicles, trucks or buses with others trekking by foot.

One of the major challenges of respondents is migrating without documentation. This makes their migration irregular and also exposes them to exploitation and abuse. Though migrants may regularly start their journey because of the ECOWAS free movement protocols, they may end up continuing their journey irregularly or even start irregularly due to a lack of knowledge about legal frameworks (Benettia et al., 2015). This is another respondent's story about her journey through Benin. Before Kiya, a fifty-year-old transnational beggar, decided to end her short temporary visit and return to Ghana from Maradi, she started the journey with some prospective migrant women and their children. Similar to other stories, the women Kiya migrated with had little money to cover the entire cost of the journey. The route they used took them from Maradi to Dosso, from Dosso to Guyia to enter Benin, then to Togo, and finally to Ghana. During the journey, the group spent seven days in Cotonou begging before going to Lomé, where they continued via unofficial routes to get to Ghana.

Conversations with Kiya showed how determined, willing, and highly motivated she and the group of women were to get to Ghana. They made one of the major bus terminals in Cotonou their sleeping place during the transit period. Begging along the way was also a result of the

children they had with them. The fact that they had kids with them contributed to the begging they encountered along the road. Kiya reported that she migrated with three children, and the three women she came with had two children each. This made the cost of their transportation too much for them to bear, so they decided to migrate in the way they did. Boyd and Nowak (2012) assert that adequate financial support for migrants is vital for migration success. Therefore, begging along the way was necessary because, without financial resources, the migration decision of any prospective migrant cannot be possible. Kiya also indicated that they were able to make the journey within a week because they were fortunate to get help at the Aflao border from other migrants who happened to come from the same village and were also coming to Ghana. Kiya and her friend received financial support from their community networks, which was vital for their migration process. In the absence of such support on the route, Kiya would have spent days at Aflao begging before continuing to Accra, Ghana (Field notes, September 2022).

Though the minimum number of days to move from Niger to Ghana is maximum between two to three days. The study found that migrants spent a minimum of three days and a maximum of thirty-one days on the road to get to their destination and financial challenges were shown to be the major cause to prolong these journeys. It was found that both new and transnational migrants spend more than usual days on the road for the same reason. Due to inadequate financial resources to migrate some respondents had to make a journey that takes a maximum of three days in weeks. Awumbila et al. (2015) noted that financial support from migrant networks is one of the most important favours past migrants can offer potential migrants. Funding migration typically involves the costs associated with moving from one country or location to another. Migrants in their journey spent their money mainly on transportation and food. The financially poor state of the respondent is a reflection of what the majority of the people in Niger are facing. Niger is one of the world's poorest countries

(Cantrell et al., 2021). According to the World Bank, the poverty rate in Niger was estimated to be around 41.4% in 2019. This means that almost half of the country's population lives below the poverty line.

The study found that migrants' peculiar characteristics and the needs of prospective migrants determine the nature of their journeys. A small group of respondents (new migrants) who reported getting to the destination within a maximum of three days were found to have engaged the services of a community member who acted as an escort and brought them as far as the Togo side of Aflao, then returned to Niger. The group had enough money to pay for this service and also travelled directly to Ghana without going through transit. Transactions of this nature require a person who knows the intricacies of such journeys to be able to escort new migrants to their destination without drawing unnecessary attention. Adejokun (2015) asserts that, due to the current enforcement of the anti-begging and anti-trafficking policy in Nigeria, migrants who enter Nigeria are thoroughly questioned to ascertain the destination of travellers at the borders.

One of the migrants who came in the company of a group led by an escort shared her experiences. Madam Ula, a forty-year-old new migrant, who migrated with her two children from Maradi, narrated that there are people in their community who are always ready to help potential migrants who are ready to migrate but have nobody to take them through the journey. Salt and Stein (1979) refer to any individual who encourages and helps migrants get from point A to point B as an “intermediary agent.” In Ula’s case, she and a group of women, children, and elderly men contacted one such person in the village to bring them because they were all new migrants with no border-crossing experience. They started the journey with a lorry from their village to Maradi town, where they took another lorry to Katsina (Nigeria). At a point in their journey to Katsina, they had to continue on foot because the lorry broke down. From Katsina, the group took a bus to Lomé-Aflao.

Because Ula and the others agreed from the onset for the man to return when they got to Lomé, he organized motor riders and tricycles to take them through an unofficial route to the Ghana side of Aflao. According to Ula, the motor riders were instructed to assist the respondents in boarding any vehicle heading to Accra. When they got to Accra, they contacted their networks in Ghana, and they came for them (Field Notes, September 2022). The use of mobile technology became relevant in Ula's journey, which supports Godin and Dona's (2021) assertion that digital technologies play a major role in migrants' journeys.

This study has shown that having a means of communicating on migrants' journeys has been proven to be important in this technological age. Though the research showed that 65% had mobile phones at the destination while 35% did not, the qualitative interview found that none of the new migrants had mobile phones before embarking on their journeys. However, the majority of the beggars who have migration experience had mobile phones and used them on their journey. The use of mobile phones on migrants' journeys was shown to be very crucial in the migration of migrant beggars from Niger to Ghana. Most new migrants who dared to migrate alone with the help of personal networks at the destination, relied on mobile phone communication with their networks though they did not have their personal handsets. They depended on others to reach their destination successfully. These respondents had only the contact numbers of their networks without a mobile phone.

### **6.3 Social Network and Migrant Trajectories**

As part of the researcher's effort to explore the nuances in the process of migration for begging about migrants' journeys and pathways, the study presents two complex journey experiences to help understand the trajectories involved in the migration for begging among Nigeriens in Ghana. In the view of Schapendonk et al. (2020), migration trajectories can be best understood as open spatiotemporal processes with a strong transformative dimension

consisting of multiple journeys going in various directions. The cases represent the migration trajectories of two categories of migrants. The first group (Team Naru) was made up of a group of women and children who migrated in the company of their network member and the second group was made up of a new migrant who migrated with her children without a social network. The study found that most of the respondents who took longer days to get to Ghana were mainly because of financial reasons. Respondents with financial challenges mostly began the journey from their villages to the capital Niamey or the capital cities of their region for some days to gather enough resources to continue their journey to Ghana. Some migrant beggars explained that because they had no one to loan them money or even if they did, the money may be too small to take them to Ghana hence the need for them to transit through several towns along the route begging for transport fare to get to Ghana. The cases exemplify, Erdal et al.'s (2021) concept of "complex migration trajectories" which explains how precarious and complex migration processes can be. Case 1 represents the first group and Case 2 represents the second group.

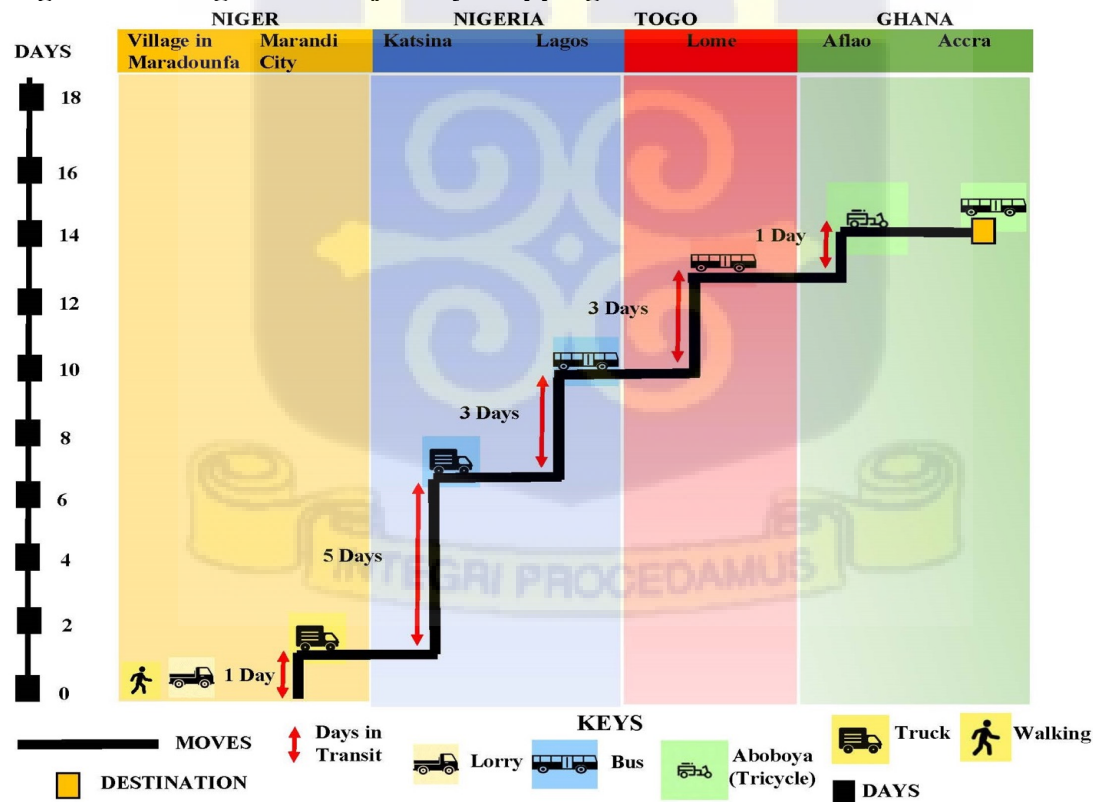
To create a visual impression of migrants' trajectories, the study adopted and modified Mazzucato et al.'s (2022) Mobility Trajectory Mapping (MTM) technique to map Nigerien transnational beggars' migration trajectories. The original application of this methodological and analytical concept was used to research the migration trajectories of young people's educational mobility (Mazzucato et al., 2022). The concept is adopted to map the migration trajectories of Nigerien transnational beggars. The study constructed migration trajectory mapping to visually represent the narratives of participants. The purpose of adopting this approach was to use visual impressions to better explain and enhance the understanding of what migrant beggars' trajectories look like. Additionally, the MTM approach provides a pictorial insight for readers to appreciate migrant beggars' journey experiences in a way that unfolds from the origin, through the places they transit, the number of days they spend at each location, what they do en-route, the challenges they encounter during the journeys, and

how they finally reach their destination.

### 6.3.1 Case 1: Migration Trajectory of Team Naru from Niger to Ghana

Madam Naru, a sixty-three-year-old woman from Maradi shared her journey experience from Niger to Ghana by land. She came to Ghana with three children, and this was her second time of coming. She came to Ghana because she had lost hope in Niger and found better living conditions in Ghana. She left in early 2021 and came back in December 2021. On this second visit, Naru offered to come along with three new migrants from the same community with each having two children. The migration group (Team Naru) was made up of four women and nine children led by Madam Naru, an old migrant with international experience on the route. Figure 6.3 below is the migration trajectory of Team Naru from their village in Madarounfa to Accra. The trajectory mapping shows the team's transit locations, the days spent in transit and their mode of transportation in the journey.

**Figure 6. 3: Migration Trajectory Mapping of Team Naru**



Author's own design (2022)

Conducting a migrant journey experience interview with Madam Naru, it was clear that Naru spent more than usual days on the route before reaching her destination as a result of low financial capital to support the migration of four women and nine children to Ghana. The group (Team Naru) spent close to two weeks (thirteen days) in various towns and cities both internally and internationally on a journey that could have been done in a maximum of three days. It was thus important to trace the migration trajectory of Team Naru to understand how they manoeuvred an international migration with limited resources and the role itinerant begging played in their migration success.

Team Naru started their journey from a village in Madarounfa in the Maradi Region. They walked from their village to Madarounfa where they boarded a lorry to Maradi city and spent a day at the bus terminal. On the next day, Team Naru continued their journey via a free ride on a truck via an unapproved route to enter Katsina (Nigeria). However, at Katsina, they spent five days at one of the major car parks to beg for alms for them to continue their journey. The group needed to beg for money for their transport fare. From Katsina, they took a bus to Lagos where they spent three days and managed to beg for more money to continue their journey to another bus Lome. Naru emphasized that the journey involved a lot of walking in car parks, markets and streets begging for alms. They had to beg because they needed the money to get to Ghana. Having gone through this same path with her personal network when she was a new migrant three years ago, Naru explained that, with or without money this mode of migration is the only path she has come to adapt when coming to Ghana. She knew which begging locations to target for a quicker result. According to her as a beggar, she must be always prepared to work wherever she finds herself. Migrant beggars do not have to bother themselves with money if they desire to migrate. "I couldn't have moved with three women and nine children if I did not have route experience". After spending three days in Lagos the team took a bus to Lome, where they spent another three days in transit begging in markets

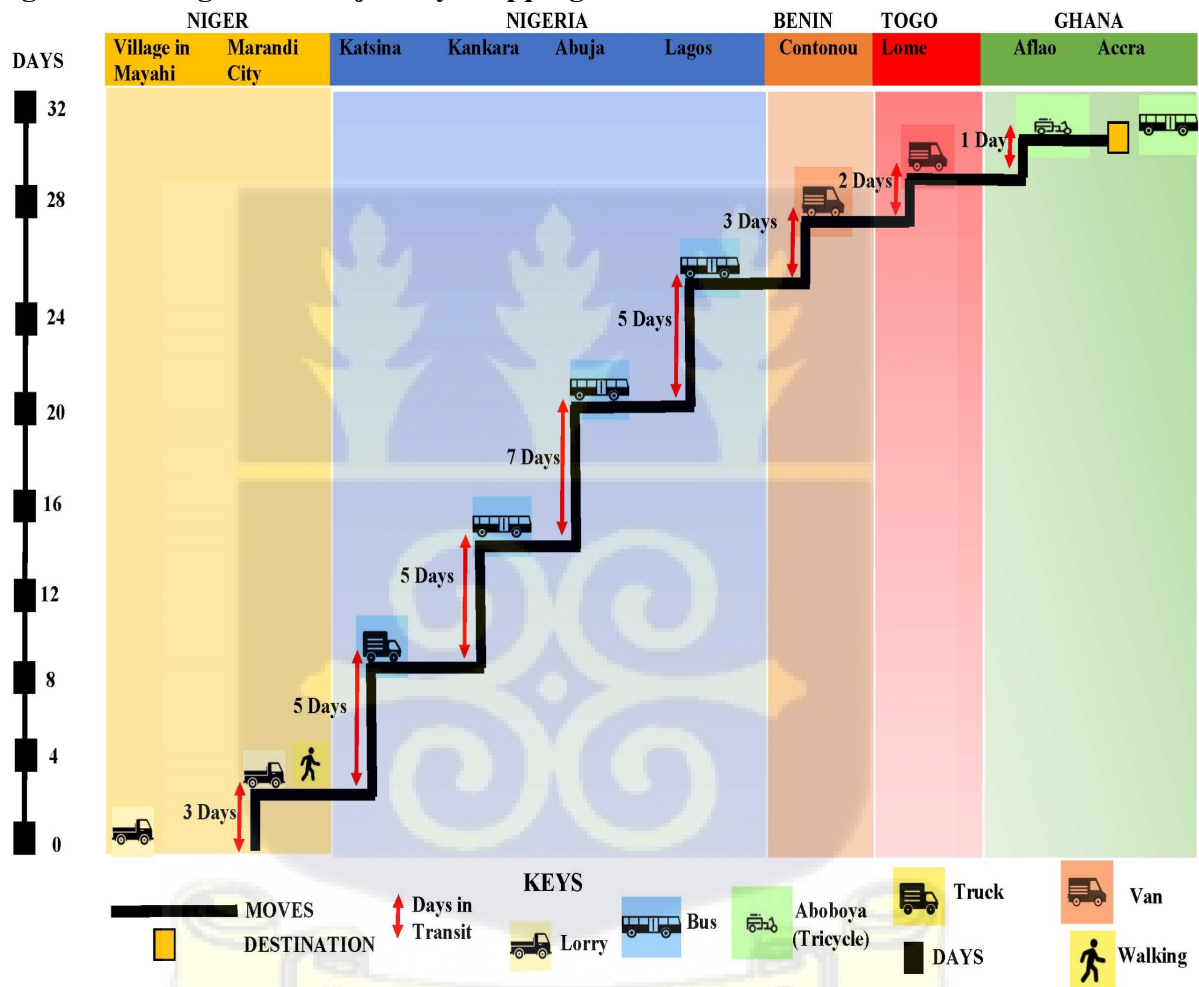
and lorry parks. After saving enough to take them to their next destination they left Lome. At the Lome side of the border, they took an ‘aboboya’ (tricycle) to enter the Ghana side of the border to Aflao where they spent a day at the station and continued via minibus to their final destination in Accra. At the Aflao station in Accra, they walked to Sabon Zongo in Ablekuma Central Municipal (Field Notes, 2022). This mode of stepwise migration is evident in other West African migrant populations such as male labour migrants, itinerant traders and itinerant begging (Yendaw, 2021; Yeboah et al., 2022; Ajedokun, 2015; Clarkson, 1956). Though dominant studies in migration literature have documented this stepwise and circular form of migration among West African migrants, what is missing in the literature is the total number of days begging migrants use to make these journeys and the involvement of social networks in their migration from Niger to Ghana. They were able to manage this stepwise migration because the leader (Naru) knew the route and had mastered the ways to get to Ghana. Though they started their journey with limited financial capital at their disposal, they knew they could rely on the goodwill of “strangers” en-route to get them to their destination. This finding brings another dimension to the concept of the financial capital of migrants within the broader livelihood strategy framework, where migrants are supposed to have their physical cash or convert their personal or family assets into cash to enable them to migrate (Carney 1998: de Haan, 2012). With this begging en-route approach, migrants were able to migrate for begging with or without financial support. The group’s willingness, capabilities and strong motivation can make migration possible for even those without financial assets from the onset of their journey (field notes, 2022).

### **6.3.2 Case 2: Migration Trajectory of Team Abi from Niger to Ghana**

Unlike Madam Naru who had migration experience on the route and migrated as a group with other women, Madam Abi migrated alone with her children and with no migration experience. However, she utilized her network information about the expectations on the

route and followed the directives of her social networks to make it to Ghana. Madam Abi, who looked like a middle-aged woman (age unknown) came to Ghana with three children. She was invited by a friend who is a transnational beggar. In her case, her network did not have enough money to loan her, let alone pay for an escort to bring them to Ghana. Therefore, Abi received the directions and route relating to her journey on her mobile phone at the origin and decided to start her journey to the south alone with the children. Figure 6.4 below shows the migration trajectory mapping for Abi and members of her team.

**Figure 6. 4: Migration Trajectory Mapping of Team Abi**



Author's own design (2022)

On the journey of Team Abi, the leader (Abi) had the MTN mobile number of her friend to rely on in case of any emergency on the journey. Though migrants in the study made the journey between 3-9 days in most cases., Abi and the children spent thirty-one days on the

road down to Ghana. She was given a mobile phone contact of her friend to call for assistance on her journey. Without the help of an experienced person who knows the route, Abi relied on this mobile number to get to the destination. With very limited financial resources, and a high willingness and motivation to leave her village in Maradi for Accra, Ghana, her friend advised her to move from one town to another until they reached their destination. As a new migrant, one might have expected that she would have a handset to aid her communication, but instead, she only had the contact information of her network. Their journey involved a lot of walking, boarding mini-buses and lorries, begging along the way for money, and going long hours without food. She was advised to seek help from strangers on the route if she needed to contact the destination for any information or assistance during the journey.

The journey took Team Abi through Maradi city, Katsina, Kankara, Abuja, Lagos, Cotonou, Lome, Aflao and finally to Accra. Team Abi started their journey in a lorry from a village in Mayahi Department in the Region of Maradi, to Maradi city, where they were told to spend three days begging for alms to gather enough money to continue. Though the ECOWAS free movement protocol of 1979 entreats community citizens to possess valid travel documents and international health certificates (Article 3(1) to warrant entry, Abi did not have any travel documents. With the hope of a better future for herself and her family, she was not discouraged by the unforeseen but obvious challenges she might go through on the way. Abi and the children were able to work hard to raise money, though insufficient, they had to continue the journey after spending two days in the city of Maradi. According to Abi, they were fortunate to get a free ride on a truck that was heading towards Katsina after walking for hours towards an unmarked border to enter Nigeria. After spending hours in a fully loaded truck, they reached Katsina late in the night and had to sleep at a bus terminal. Though Abi had plans to spend more days in Katsina Nigeria, they spent five days because they were advised by some strangers to move to Kankara which is one of the towns along the route

within Nigeria if they wanted to earn more money. They boarded a lorry which was often lower in cost compared to buses and arrived in the even in Kankara after a long ride. When in Kankara, Abi decided to call her friend through the assistance of someone she perceived to be a Hausa man. The conversation with her friend determined their next location. Abi acknowledged the fact that they had enough money begging in Kankara for another five days, however, her friend suggested they move to Abuja the capital because that is where the big money is. Because the intention was to get to Ghana, they left for Abuja on a bus where they spent a week begging from one busy street to the other. Having gathered enough money to purchase a ticket and also buy food on the way, they again headed down south to Lagos. Abi and the three children spent only five days in Lagos because according to her she heard a lot of negative stories about life in Lagos and she was not ready to risk all that she had worked for through robbery. As Abi was instructed to call when they got to Lagos, she decided to contact Ghana via a mobile phone vendor. She tried for hours without success to reach her network in Ghana, but she eventually reached her network in Ghana. Team Abi needed information about their next location before they moved because she did not want to fall into the hands of swindlers. Her contact in Ghana pleaded with the mobile service vendor to direct them to the place where they could board a vehicle to Cotonou. In Cotonou, they spent three days and then headed to Lome on another bus where they spent another two days. It was in Lome that the Team met some men from Niger who were also coming to Ghana and helped them to cross to Ghana in “Aboboya” (tricycle). At Aflao, they spent a day at the bus station and took a bus to Accra. They were instructed to ask for directions to come to the Central Mosque and they did (Field Notes, 2022).

These complex trajectories highlighted the fact that there are embedded risks in the migration for begging involving children, women and men from Niger to Ghana. Though Team Naru and Team Abi had similar characteristics in terms of their financial position before migration

leading both Teams to spend thirteen and thirty days respectively on the route to get to the destination, Team Naru however transited in fewer locations (five) compared to Team Abi's (eight) locations. The study attributed the difference in the route experience to the close involvement of a social network member in Team Naru. The fact that Madam Naru was an old migrant with experience on the route and was also close to the new migrants gave Team Naru an advantage over Team Abi in terms of the complexity of their trajectory. Team Abi had to rely on the remote social network influence on their journey which led them to transit in many locations along the route while Team Naru relied on a close social network influence. The study therefore argues that the trajectories involved in migration for begging and its associated complexities are determined by the physical proximity to Social Networks in the journey. The "Network Proximity" is explained in terms of the closeness or remoteness of social network influence on migrants' journeys. The majority of migrants' trajectories especially those with serious financial constraints, were those that can be described as non-linear movements as opined by Schapendonk et al.'s (2020) study on West African itinerant miners. Migrants deliberately make a transit re-organize themselves financially through begging and then continue. This finding is in line with Awumbila et al. (2019) who argue that migrant trajectories involve re-tooling and re-organizing. On the other hand, migrants who go through the Burkina Faso-Bawku route begin their journey from point A to Point B in a linear direction. They move directly from Niger to Ghana, without transiting. This exemplifies the typical migration framework of departure-movement-arrival-integration (Hagan and Ebaugh, 2003).

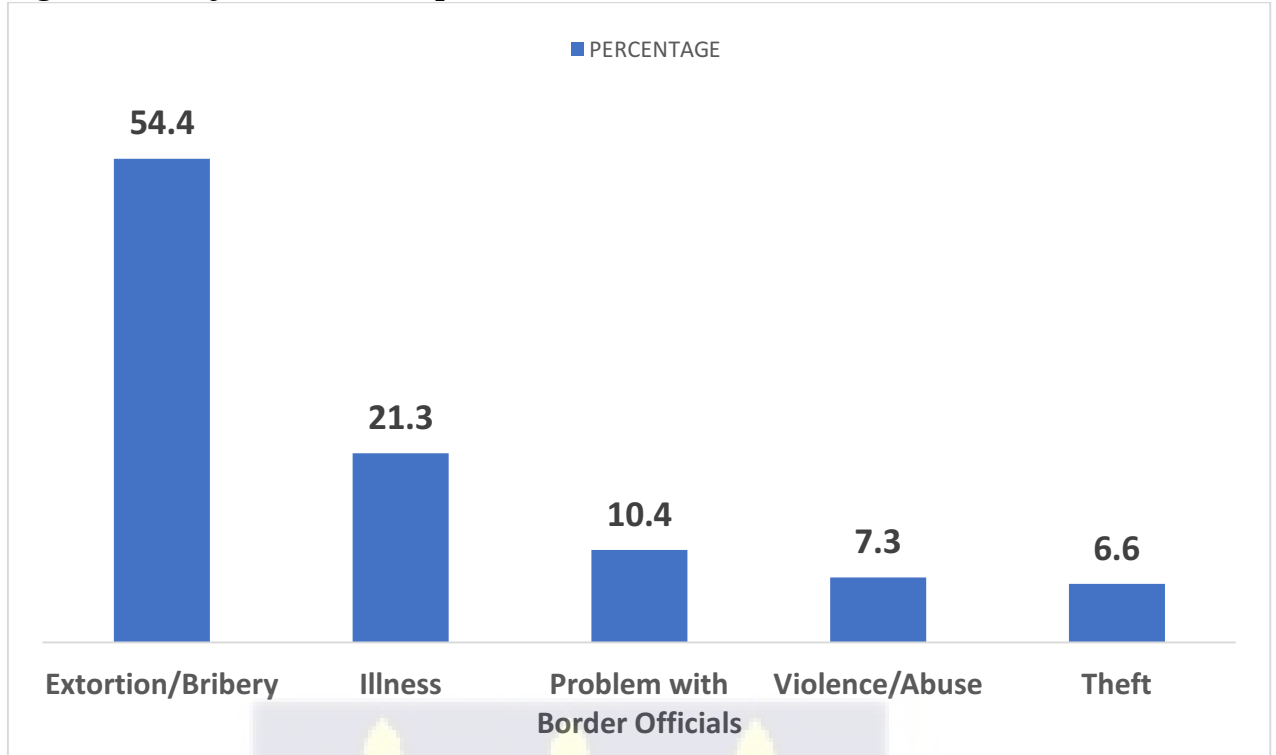
The Niger-Aflao route was by far the most popular route among migrants in the study. The possible explanation for this choice was given by one of the key informants from the Area. As mentioned earlier the study population originates from villages in Maradi and Zinder regions of Niger. The key informant explained that these regions share a border with Nigeria

and Benin to the south making it easier for those who want to head towards the south to enter through either Benin or Nigeria (Field note, (November 2022)). As identified in the study, the reason for using Aflao is not only about migrants' location in Niger but also an avenue to earn money en-route. It has so far been observed that the attractiveness of this route as shown by the study is also to be able to earn some money along the way down south as exemplified by Teams Naru and Abi and a host of other narratives in the study. Migrants explained that starting a journey with little financial support with the intention of begging for alms to gather money to continue a journey requires the use of a route that has the characteristics of satisfying such needs. This makes a route through Nigeria stand out compared to Benin and Burkina Faso in terms of the wealth of the people, the population and the numerous begging spots available in a country. For example, transit begging spots reported by transnational beggars included lorry parks, market centres, mosques and busy streets. Using the Niger-Aflao route is mostly preferred because those who migrate with limited resources can raise some money by begging to continue their journey, while the Niger-Bawku route is a straight journey route.

Migrants who undertake land migration often go through a wide range of challenges and problems (Yeboah et al., 2020).



**Figure 6.5: Major Problems Experienced on the Route**



Source: Field data, 2022

As indicated in Figure 6.5, the study found that more than half of the respondents (54%) reported extortion and bribery as the major challenge they experience on their way from Niger to Ghana, while (21%) said falling ill en-route was the major challenge that befell them when coming to Ghana. Again, a little over 10% of the respondents had problems with border officials while (7.3%) experienced violence on the way. According to the literature on West African migration, irregular border crossing movements is a major contributing factor in most land migration issues (Bruni et al., 2017). The qualitative day showed that bribing border officials is common among respondents. Migrants reported paying bribes at some borders while others especially the elderly and disabled were exempted from such payments at the border. Some migrants fell ill along the way as a result of long hours of walking leading to tiredness. Both men and women who were elderly and frail migrant beggars also experienced body pain and weakness en-route These experiences can vary depending on their specific circumstances, the policies in place and their implementation and the regions they are

travelling through, migrants reported they managed to avoid some of these extortions at the borders when they move by lorries and trucks. Those who migrated with buses reported paying bribes throughout the journey on most occasions. In the case of movements within the ECOWAS sub-region. This finding is evident in previous studies (Garba & Yeboah, 2022; Yeboah et al., 2021; Teye et al., 2019).

This finding is in line with Bruni et al (2017) assertion that irregular migration within West Africa exposes migrants to challenges such as exploitation and abuse. The study identified that the irregular nature of transnational beggars' migration contributes to the challenges they encounter on their journey. The major factor is migrating without travel documents. The IOM defines irregular migration as the "movement of persons that take place outside the laws, regulations, or international agreements governing the entry into or exit from the State of origin, transit or destination (IOM (2019). Due to the irregular nature of their migration, the crossing of country borders by most respondents involved the assistance of border crossing agents who offer them services such as organising vehicles, motor or tricycles, facilitating the transportation of migrants through unapproved routes and bribing officials on their behalf. This fact is well documented by previous studies (Weihe et al., 2021; Yeboah et al., 2020). The finding is associated with what Yendaw (2021) found about itinerant retailers from Burkina Faso, Niger, Togo and Nigeria who were more likely to migrate via unapproved entry points. The institutional theory approach posits that migration officials assist in the facilitation of migrants through various means of migration (Massey et al., 1989). It is through the means of irregular migration that migrants are smuggled, and bribing border officials is one of the possible means to get undocumented migrants across borders (Yendaw, 2021). In responding to migrant's experiences at the borders along the Niger-Aflao route, Mr Danla, a sixty-year-old man who migrated with his youngest son from Zinder shared his experience:

*I came alone with my son to help me in the begging because I could not see very well. I did not have any paper or card, but they allowed us, the driver took money from us to pay the officials along the way. We were told that is what must be done if we want to get to Ghana (Danla, 60 years old, September 2022)*

The above response by Danla indicates extortion and bribery of border officials along the route. In his case, the bus driver was the person fronting for the official to get the bribe from undocumented travellers before reaching the barriers. The money was not paid directly by the passengers. This finding implies that bus drivers may use this avenue of paying bribes to officials to exploit unsuspecting migrants because they would never know how much was given.

Again, 20% of the migrants who reported they fell ill en-route were mostly 65 years and above. Given the high infirmity rate among this age group, embarking on such a long irregular journey from Niger to Ghana can make one very weak and sick. Those who also fell ill along the route were the migrant children. The qualitative interviews revealed that migrants may walk and travel long hours on the route without food or water due to limited financial resources. Dehydration was identified as one of the challenges migrant children experience on the journey. This was a result of low or no water intake during long periods of walking and traveling under the hot tropical sun while begging along the way. These long walks and travel on trucks and lorries proved to be harmful to migrants' health, especially children. There were instances when new arrivals in the community, including children, had to be given immediate medical attention, food, and water due to severe dehydration and hunger (Field notes, September 2022). When asked about her challenges on the journey to Ghana, Rafia, an eleven-year-old girl who came to Ghana with her mother, aunt, elder sister, two other sisters and two little brothers and begged around 37 military hospitals and Shiashie, narrated her experience:

*“The journey was a very long one. We did not use a single bus to Accra. We took different vehicles along the way and also walked a lot to get to catch another vehicle. The problem was the hunger and thirst we experienced when coming. The hunger made us very weak, and my little brothers fell ill and couldn’t walk, so we had to carry them (Rafia, 11 years old, October 2022)”*

#### **6.4 Summary of the Chapter**

In conclusion, the mode of migration among Nigerien begging migrants in the study area was identified to be collective, voluntary, international, stepwise, circular and chain migration. The study had demonstrated that migration for begging among Nigeriens about, migrant trajectories, routes and journeys from Niger to Ghana are complex and not straight forward as it may seem. The migrants of the study originated from villages around Maradi and Zinder Regions of Niger Republic and all of them were located in the Ablekuma Central Municipal. The complexities and experiences of land migration differ based on the level of financial resources available to migrants, the possession of travel documentation, migration status (new or experienced migrant), whether they migrated in a group or alone, the type of social network support, and the choice of route. The mobility of migrant beggars from Niger occurred on two major routes to Ghana: those who used the Niger-Aflao route and those who used the Niger-Bawku route. Migrants who took the Niger-Aflao route had two options: either enter Benin or Nigeria. While migrants using the Niger-Aflao route mostly travelled by bus, with some combining both lorries and buses, those using the Niger-Bawku route mainly travelled by truck from origin to destination.

Again, the study has also demonstrated that both migrants with limited international travel experience and experienced migrants made the journey for more than the maximum period of days to get to the destination and financial challenges were found to be the major contributing factor. The study again attributed migrants’ journey experiences to the proximity

of their social networks. The major motivation for migrants to leave their origin with or without financial resources is the support they receive from their social networks and the assurance of earning income through begging as they journey down south. The journey of migrant beggars was identified to be largely irregular, and the use of border agents is prominent in their journey. The trajectories of some migrants involve the movements from different towns in different countries with the sole purpose of begging along the route to gather enough financial resources till they get to their destination. The challenges migrants encounter on the route include mainly bribery, extortion and falling ill on their journey.



## CHAPTER SEVEN

### SOCIAL AND TRANSNATIONAL NETWORKS IN MIGRATION FOR BEGGING AMONG NIGERIENS

#### 7.0 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to answering objective three, which seeks to examine the nature of migration intermediaries in the facilitation of transnational beggars from Niger to Ghana. The focus is on identifying who and what roles the social and transnational networks of Nigerien migrant beggars play in the process of moving and staying in Ghana to beg. The study argues that migration for the purpose of begging by Nigeriens in this study is facilitated by social networks rather than criminal networks. Once the decision to migrate is finalized, migrants' kin and non-kin networks, as well as service providers, assist in facilitating the journey. The first section discusses the facilitation of migration by transnational migrant beggars and the involvement of social networks. Subsequent sections discuss the types of intermediaries, their activities, and how migrants use these networks within the three phases of the migration process.

#### 7.1 Who qualifies to Migrate for Begging?

Planning, preparation, gaining access to resources, and the thoughts of migrating for begging were observed to be a complex involvement of migrants and their social networks both at the origin and destination. Qualitatively, it was observed that in cases where migrants plan to migrate for begging to another country, they do so use two approaches. At the destination, 46% of respondents reported that they consulted or approached networks in either the origin or destination, while 54% said they were consulted by their personal networks. The first approach involves potential migrants consulting their personal networks for assistance in the form of advice, financial support, accommodation at the destination, guidance on how to

succeed in the job at the destination, and any other relevant information that may help in the final decision to migrate. The second approach occurs when a migrant's transnational networks such as transnational migrants, returnees, and personal network members with transnational links take the initiative to suggest the idea of migration to the potential migrant. Some respondents, after observing the improved lifestyle and living conditions of returnees and their households over time, often approach them to inquire about their chances of success in Ghana, given their circumstances. This second approach also takes the form of a referral, where a transnational migrant or returnee approaches a potential migrant and proposes the idea of migration.

Others explained that their families and relatives suggested they come to Ghana. Those who consulted their social networks were mostly between the ages of 40-50 years, and the majority were females, while those who were consulted were mainly 65 and above, with some being approached due to their physical condition. The conceptual framework shows that the personal characteristics of migrants may serve as human capital in migration for begging. Dominant migration literature has typically focused on the movement of youth and energetic men within the sub-region and beyond, leaving behind women, the elderly, children, people with financial constraints, and those with legal documentation issues (De Haas, 2010; Afifi, 2011; Angelucci, 2015).

However, in this study, it is the population often labelled as "left behind" who are the ones on the move. While recent research has focused on the migration of women and children (UNICEF, 2018; Teye and Nikoi 2022; Setrana and Kleist, 2022), scholarly attention on the movement of the elderly, infirm, and disabled remains limited. The study demonstrates that not only the able-bodied are migrating, but also the less mobile, who are motivated to do so to support their households' incomes.

It was observed that not everyone willing to migrate can embark on migration for begging. Qualification criteria do not only apply to skilled migrants. Before someone can become a viable candidate to be consulted or approached to migrate for begging, they must meet certain criteria. At the qualification stage, three groups of potential migrants were identified. To qualify for migration for begging: (i) the potential migrant should either be someone with a physical disability or appear frail, (ii) those without physical challenges must have children or a child who can assist in doing the work. In this case, the child or children can either be healthy, sick, or disabled, and (iii) elderly and healthy people who are willing to fake disability for public deception. Other considerations include age (preferably old and frail) and having children or grandchildren to migrate with. These groups were mostly females, though there were males who migrated for begging (Field observation, July 2022-December 2022).

## **7.2 The Networked Character of Nigerien Beggar Migration**

Many would agree with me that the number of transnational child beggars on the streets of Accra has been increasing over time and becoming a worrying sight (Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, 25th June 2022). The study identified that social networks play a major role in why and how migrant beggars migrate to Ghana. Migrants' social as well as transnational networks are important to help in fulfilling migration desires and aspirations especially when it comes to international migration. 58.8% were found to have networks at the destination before migration while 41.2% reported they did not. Among those who had networks, the migration was strongly dependent on their kindship network (31%), while (18%) were friends. Massey (1989) explained that network connections are a form of social capital that people draw upon to gain access to job opportunities outside their home country. The beggars' migration is assumed to be facilitated by intermediary agents with profit making agenda (Gheorghita & Vadastreanu, 2015; UNODC, 2014; Ojedokun, 2015). However, in

this study, migrant personal networks become an important factor in encouraging migration. Dominant literature on beggars (Jones et al., 2007; Makisaka, 2009; UNODC, 2018) have shown that beggar migration is facilitated by criminal networks who operate as either traffickers or smugglers assisting migrants to cross territorial borders for the purpose of begging. The business model of migration identifies a set of institutions, agents and individuals that stand to gain commercially through migration (Salt and Stein, 1997). These intermediaries include legitimate immigration officials and clandestine migration actors such as smugglers who are all in for the money (Herman, 2006). However, in this study, it is the social network rather than criminal networks on the Niger-Ghana routes that facilitate the migration of migrant beggars. The social networks involved in the migration of beggars from Niger to Ghana are rather mainly close family members (31%), friends (18%), and others: neighbours, co-ethnic group members, co-nationals and community members (9%). The majority of respondents who had network support also explained that transnational beggars who visited home and were returning to Ghana brought them. The re-migrating migrants are also well-informed about the happenings along the route and have mastered the art of how to escape the vigilant eyes of border officials.

The intermediaries who help facilitate Nigerian beggar migration include a wide range of social networks. The study included an investigation into the network of social relationships that exist among Nigerian beggar and the facilitation of their migration process from Niger to Ghana. The relationship between migrants Intermediaries who assist in the facilitation of migrants in the study were identified as informal intermediaries made up of kins, non-kins, service providers and strangers/sympathisers. These informal intermediaries were further identified as mainly migrants' personal networks made up of families, friends, relatives, and community members (neighbours, co-nationals, co-ethnic group members) as stated earlier.

Migrants' networks have been predicted to be a facilitator of the migration of new migrants in numerous studies (Awombila et al., 2017; Zack et al., 2019; Zaame, 2020).

### **7.2.1 Typology of the Nigerien Migrants' Social and Transnational Networks**

#### **Facilitation**

Qualitatively, the study finds a wide range of actors involved in the migration facilitation of Nigerien transnational beggars. Harvey et al. (2018) assert that migration facilitation is greatly aided by intermediaries, who are defined by Ambrosini (2017) as “people or institutions who favour the entrance of immigrants, their entry into the labour market, accommodation, response to their social needs, and possibly their regularization” (p. 1814). Migration intermediaries are the actors (formal or informal) who make migration possible for millions of people seeking to improve their living conditions (Adugna et al., 2019; Zack et al., 2019). Boyd and Nowak (2012) assert that labour networks, personal networks, and illegal migration networks are the common actors involved in the migration process. However, this study identified three main types of intermediaries: Personal Networks (Kinship Networks, Non-kinship Networks), Service Provider Networks, and Altruist Networks. These networks are informal individuals operating independently. The study also identified their characteristics and their benefits to migrants' journeys. Formal labour networks and brokers were not involved in facilitating beggar migration from Niger to Ghana. However, Eccles and Nohria's (1992) conceptualization of networks as consisting of multiple social structures and the configuration of linkages helped distinguish and identify their membership. This framework guided the categorization of the social networks in the study. Refer to Appendix G for the table on the findings regarding the types of social networks associated with the migration of Nigerien beggar migrants.

**Personal Networks** (Kinship Networks and Non-Kinship Networks): The kinship network consists of migrant families and relatives (Mother, Sister, Brother, Grandmother, Sister-in-law, Nephew, Aunt) who assist migrants at both the origin and destination, during transit, and at the border. All (100%) of the child respondents reported coming to Ghana with their kinship networks. The majority of the parents also came to Ghana with the support of this type of network. These actors share family and blood ties and are bonded by trust and shared goals (Awumbila et al., 2017). Respondents may have long-term relationships with this group of networks due to their family ties. On the other hand, non-kin networks consist of actors who do not have family or blood ties with the migrant. However, they are part of the migrant's personal networks as well as their hometown networks, which include friends, neighbours, origin and host community members, co-ethnic members, and co-nationals. These individuals are bonded by shared community, friendship, ethnicity, and nationality. Respondents revealed that most of these personal network actors were either transnational beggars, return migrants, or migrants on visits, and were responsible for relaying migration information to potential migrants, among other tasks. This type of network determines who should migrate and who should stay.

**Service Provider Network:** This second group of actors were those that provided services such as transportation, border crossing and basic services at the destination for begging migrants. The group consists of border officials, border crossing agents, bus, lorry, truck drivers, Motor (Okada) and Tricycle (Aboboya) riders. These were migrant networks facilitating the mode of migration from the origin to the destination as well as transit and at the borders (See Chapter Five for detail discussion). Migrant and service providers are bonded by economic ties and may be part of the migrant's transnational network providing services from the origin to the destination. At the destination, respondents receive services mobile services where they help contact the left behind and also help migrants save their

money. Respondents in the community also enjoy the provision of basic services such as water, electricity and sanitation, as well as storage services.

**Altruistic Networks:** On migrants' journeys and also at the destination respondents reported being assisted by this type of network. This group consists of actors consisting of Strangers, Sympathisers, Individual philanthropists, destination community members and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the destination. They are unexpected individuals and groups that migrants encounter on their journey to Ghana. Strangers and sympathisers mostly assist those who migrate and need help at a point in their journey and in transit. Migrant relationship with this type of network is based on humanitarian considerations and the relationship is distant in nature.

These typologies of intermediaries differ in terms of their relationship with the migrant, at what stage in the migration process migrants engage them, their role, and whether their assistance requires the payment of money and their benefits to the migrant. A key distinguishing feature, however, among the intermediaries and their involvement in Nigerien beggar migration, is whether the relationship is for exploitative/profit-making or altruistic/moral reasons. According to Ambrosini (2020), what an intermediary does, is supply a bridge or a link between immigrants and the host country or the informal supply and the facilitation of some of migrants' needs. Also, Massey et al., (1993) definition of migrant networks is associated with the forming of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and non-migrants in origin and destination through bonds of kinship, friendship and shared community origin (p:448). The study noted that although Intermediary is conceptualized in terms of Personal network, Labour or Professional Networks, Recruitment Agents, community leaders, smugglers, Service Providers, and illegal migrant networks, (see Harvey et al., 2018; Boyd and Nowak, 2012; Jones and Sha, 2020; Salt and Stein, 1997; Zack et al., 2019), migration intermediary literature differentiates between migrant social networks

(friends, families, community members and ethnic group members) from companies and individuals who purposefully gain financially helping to facilitate migration (Jones and Sha, 2020) and often silent on those individuals and organizations that accidentally encounter migrants and offer valuable resources to support either their movement or stay. It is certainly not unusual for strangers to offer support to needy people when the need arises. Respondents had strangers helping them with advice, information and money. One of the respondents recounted her experiences with people they considered to be strangers and sympathisers, which necessitated the formation of the third category 'Altruistic Networks'. Chiya a fifty-five-year-old woman who migrated with three children from Niger said her sister's mother-in-law told her to come with the children. Though she migrated with children, two of them were not her biological children. They belonged to her sister's mother-in-law. According to Chiya, though she thought they had enough money when they started their journey they ran out of funds on their way and total strangers and sympathisers came to their aid when they were boarding their next bus from Benin to Togo. Chiya shared her experience:

*"I come from Maradi, I have lived there all my life. This is my first time travelling outside my hometown. I have a sister living in Agadez with her husband. It is her mother-in-law who lives and begs in Ghana who told me to come with her children. She was the one who gave us money to pay for the bus. She calculated everything in CFA and told me it would be enough to bring the four of us. She gave me directions on the phone and told me there was no need to wait if there was nobody to bring us. But unfortunately, we ran out of money because I had to pay for each of the children before allowing us to board, that made us become stranded in Benin and some total strangers added some money to what I had left before we were allowed to board the van (Chiya, 55-year-old November 2022)"*

By the social network approach, the migrant agency is imperative in-migrant journeys. The ability of respondents to draw on both tangible and intangible resources available whether through the people they know or those they do not know makes them dynamic participants in the migration process (Eccles and Nohria, 1992). In this context, it is clear how some respondents exercised their agency by accepting assistance from strangers and sympathizers to accomplish their migration goal.

Qualitatively, the study found that the migration effort was engineered by both the potential migrant beggars and their personal networks and were assisted by other independent actors along the journey to ensure their efforts become successful. These were individual informal actors with various roles, motivations and benefits to migrants. For example, Meadu a 47-year-old woman from Maradi migrated with four children in the company of five women and six other children to Ghana with a transnational beggar who comes from the same village.

This is what Meadu narrated:

*“Our leader was the one who brought us straight to Ghana. Yes, we come from the same village in Maradi. For me, I did not know anywhere. This is my first of coming here. We were 5 women in number including 10 children. Four of the children were mine. He didn’t tell us we were coming to do any job because he himself is a beggar so definitely we knew we were following him to also come and beg (Meadu, September, 2022)”*

Formal intermediary actors mostly operate within regular, skilled and international labour migration though some falsify documents and visas for unqualified prospective migrants to regularise their movement (Gammeltoft-Hansen and Nyberg Sorensen, 2013). Per the ECOWAS free movement protocol in the case of West Africa intra-regional migration, migrants are free to move within the region without a visa but must possess some form of documentation for identification. Also, the need for migrants to possess some form of assets (financial or social) is crucial in all forms of migration.

### **7.3 Three Phases of the Nigerien Beggar Migration and contribution of their network**

This section brings to bear how migrant networks inform the understanding of the Nigerien beggar migration through the phases of migration. Migration typically involves three phases, pre-migration, migration and post-migration. The phases encompass the various stages and activities that migrants go through when moving from one place to another (Bilecen & Lubbers, 2021). The study identified three crucial stages within the three migration phases.

Stage one is “Information and persuasion” which goes on during the pre-migration phase; the second stage “movement” which has to do with the actual journey that migrants embark upon from one point to the other; the third and final stage is “arrival and cluster bonding” at the destination. In the process of migration, the initial decision to migrate might come from respondents’ however families and people in a social network (whether in the sending or receiving country) often enable and determine the details of the journey and how they fare at the destination.

### 7.3.1 Social Network of Facilitation in the Pre-migration Phase

As facilitators of migration, social networks are seen as intermediaries helping make migration possible for potential migrants at various stages in the migration process. Knowing someone at a preferred destination before migration helps relieve migrants from the stress of financing the cost of transportation, searching for accommodation, finding jobs and also accessing social services at the destination (Zack et al., 2019). As a result of this, migrants were asked whether they knew someone in Ghana before leaving their origin. The results will help find out how many of the respondent have managed their migration process with or without network facilitation.

**Table 7. 1: Knowledge of someone in Ghana**

Contact Person at destination	Frequency	Percentages
No one	56	41.2
Some one	80	58.8
• Family member	42	30.9
• Friend	25	18.4
• Other	13	9.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field data, 2022

Table 7.1 shows the social network contacts migrants had before coming to Ghana. The Table comprises the migrants’ personal networks they had in Ghana before migrating. The study found that more than half (58.8%) of the respondents confirmed they had early networks at

the destination before leaving the origin while (41.2%) did not. Among those who said they knew someone at the destination before migrating from the origin, close to a third (30.9%) claimed they knew a family member as against (18.4%) who indicated they had friends in Ghana before leaving the origin. Again, few (9.5%) maintained that they knew people who can best be described as “non-kin” relations at the destination before migrating. One major role of networks is to help new migrants reduce the cost of migration. As already indicated in chapter five, migrants use a variety of sources to fund their migration. Many used their personal resources or even sold household resources, but a majority were funded by their networks through loans (61.7%). Indeed, this finding confirms Awumbila et al.’s (2017) assertion that drawing social capital from kinship networks to aid migration dominates other types of networks. Social Network Theory argues that networks serve as bridgeheads and are instrumental in the international migration of potential migrants (Massey et al., 1993). According to Massey et al. (1989), once the number of network connections at the origin reaches a critical point, the expansion of networks reduces the costs and risks causing the likelihood of migration to increase and migration becomes self-perpetuating, because it creates the social environment to sustain the process (Massey, et al., 1998: 1993). For these beggar migrants, knowing someone at the destination for support or not, did not deter them from migrating. Those who had personal networks drew on their social capital. Though some respondents did not have any connection before coming to Ghana, they had enough information from the community members at the origin which they depended on to embark on the journey. Madam Ula, a 40-year-old female, migrated with two of her children from Maradi and now lives in the Ablekuma Central Municipal said she came to Ghana in 2021 and has been here for nine months. She is married with eight children, six of them are back home and two are here with her. Her eldest daughter fifteen years old is married and living with her husband. Her husband had migrated to Nigeria to work so she was living together with her children until she decided to come to Ghana and left them in the care of their grandmother. Ula shared her experience:

*“I decided to come to Ghana because my husband left for Nigeria about five years ago. That was where he told me he was going to work. Initially, he was sending us money to take care of the family, but he stopped contacting us, we had no food and even no money to buy anything for ourselves. I was suffering with the children without food or money, so I decided to follow him to wherever he was. I knew nobody here before coming, what I knew and heard was that in Ghana begging for alms fetches a lot of money, so I did some enquiries, had enough information and finally decided to come because the hardship on the family was becoming unbearable. We had no farmland or animals to even sell to pay for the journey, so I took a loan from someone and went to the city to work for some time, had some little money and I came with two children to help me work. It was when I got here that I saw some people I knew from the village” (Ula, 40 years, female, September 2022).*

Though the respondents who reported they ‘did not know anybody at the destination before migration’ had no social capital at the destination to draw on, their networks at the origin provided them with the needed information and directions to make informed decisions. By taking the initiative to migrate without contacts at the destination Madam Ula invariably becomes a pioneer migrant and subsequently a bridgehead for her family with the probability of causing a chain migration in future as theorised by proponents of the network theory (Massey, 1993). During the in-depth interviews, respondents gladly expressed the support they had from their contacts and networks at the origin before embarking on the journey. Some of these supports were in the form of persuasion and encouragement to leave the village to seek a better life for their families.

Before migration, migrants need to make decisions, plan, prepare and gather information and resources. This means that the mere act of conceiving an idea to migrate or whether the migration idea was mooted by someone else in the context of “migration for begging” does not necessarily mean the migrant can just leave her/his hometown in Niger and start heading

towards the Gulf of Guinea. During the pre-migration phase, migrants' information for decision making, planning, preparation, information about the host country, financial support, connections, contacts en-route if needed, type of transportation, and how to manage with children on the journey among other things are relevant information that migrants need to gather from their personal networks before migration. In this study, these intermediaries include families, relatives, friends, neighbours and community members with or without migration experience as already discussed. This finding is in line with Ambrosini's (2017) discussion that "connection" is one of the major roles many intermediaries play in migrants. Migrants use these networks in diverse ways. For instance, in this study, personal networks were mainly used to shape and influence decision-making at the pre-migration phase. This is evident in the quantitative data where more than half (56%) of the respondents reported making their migration decision with their husbands, parents, elder children and siblings as against migrants making the decision alone (44%) (see chapter five). This usually comes in the form of information from both transnationals and non-migrants, the changes prospective migrants see in migrant households and the display of wealth and lifestyle change in transnational migrants. Kofman (2018) argued that family members would often encourage the migration of kin members considering their economic needs.

One major reason for involving personal networks in beggar migration is information about funding migration. Given the fact that migrants cannot just live without properly informed decisions, planning and preparation, there is the need to involve close family members for support in terms of financial resource mobilization for the journey. In this context, the family may decide to sell any household assets such as farmland and animals to finance the migration. They can again assist in acquiring loans if the family does not have any sellable properties and use the network of their family members to acquire these loans. When respondents were asked about their main source of funding for migration (61.7%) said they

took loans and about 13% said they used household resources and other family support (See Chapter Five for details). Migrants do not only need personal networks for financial support, they also need them in terms of emotional encouragement to be able to mentally prepare for the journey ahead and whether or not they are going to be successful. In the context of this study, almost all the participants had children. Those who still had their husbands back home left their children for their fathers. On the other hand, those whose husbands were deceased or divorced had to negotiate with family members (grandmothers, sisters, brothers, aunts, neighbours) to take care of the stayers especially when they were young.

Further, at the pre-migration stage, families, relatives, friends and community members with international migration experience especially (return migrants, transnational and current migrants) are carriers of destination information relating to work and accommodation. At the origin, return and transnational migrants help facilitate and mediate the migration of beggars by providing them with all the juicy information about Ghana, assuring them of success at the destination, accommodation, and job opportunities (begging spots). They also persuade potential migrants to leave the village and come to Ghana, giving information about the route and what they should expect. The following story illustrates Tiya's pre-migration experience and how her transmigrant sister persuaded her to come to Ghana.

Madam Tiya, aged 40, from Maradi, came to Ghana during the Ramadan period in 2020. She is a widow and has ten (10) children, two of them including her husband are deceased. She lost her spouse who was a farmer in 2018. She narrated that it was difficult to make ends meet to cater for herself and her children after the death of her husband. She added that even before his death, there were periods when they had no food and other household essentials. It was after her husband passed that her sister discussed with her to follow her to Ghana. Tiya has a disabled sister who comes to Ghana often with her children to beg. When things became too difficult and nearly faced starvation with her children because they had no food, her sister

advised her to come to Ghana with her children to look for money. Tiya was informed everything was going to be okay for the family once they came to Ghana because there was plenty of food and she was going to get a lot of money if she was ready to work hard with the children. In terms of accommodation, she was assured that if she is prepared to sleep outside or by the roadside or in a container or even under a tree then she had no problem because nobody harasses people who sleep on the street. In fact, according to her, after assessing the situation she was in at the village, the migration discussion she had with her sister dawned on her like a spell when she heard she was going to get money when she came to Ghana. After everything, the sister loaned her money to come with two of her younger children which she is still saving to pay her back. When Tiya was coming to Ghana, she left her teenage boys in the care of their grand aunt. Despite all the happiness, food and money she is currently enjoying, her biggest worry has been her left-behind children and how they are managing in terms of feeding (Field notes, Tiya, 46, Female, September 2022). Tiya is not the only one with such network influence before migration.

According to another respondent, Madam Naru, aged 63, married, from Maradi, this is the third time of coming to Ghana. She spent eight months in Ghana on her first visit and had spent a year and four months on her second arrival. She knew someone the first time she came. She came to Ghana with three children. She and her children conduct their begging activity around Achimota Old Station, ABC and St. John Area and they currently stay in Ablekuma Central Municipal (ACM). Before she migrated, she was a housewife but her husband and children were farmers however, they had a shortage of food in their village caused by drought that made it difficult for her to feed her family. Naru has twelve children and her last child is twenty-one years. The children she came with were her grand-children. According to her, it was one blind transnational male beggar who visited their village and gave them (she and other women) all they needed to know about begging in Ghana. Naru

recounted that the transnational migrant beggar asked them why they were wasting their abilities and time in the village and also letting the energies of her grandchildren go to waste while they could make money through begging in Ghana. They were told the children could help them make a lot of money and they could make it financially in no time depending on the number of children they were able to bring. This is what Naru narrated:

*There is a blind man who frequently visits Ghana who convinced us to come here and beg. He came and told me and other women in the village that begging in Ghana fetches a lot so if we would love to come he could bring us along when he is returning and we did. Because we did not have money, my children and I had to borrow from a money lender in the community for me to come with the children with the assurance that we come and work and pay back by sending the money to him in bites (Naru, 63 years old, female, September 2022).*

Such respondents counted themselves blessed to have such vital information and support from their networks. At least, they were assured of a livelihood to help meet the basic needs and improve the well-being of their families when they leave Niger. The dream of becoming a transnational migrant with a lifestyle change was finally becoming a reality for them and the excitement was unimaginable for some migrants. As far back in 1964, MacDonald and MacDonald introduced the concept of chain migration and defined it as “that movement through which prospective migrants learn of opportunities, are provided with transportation, and have initial accommodation and employment arrangement using primary social relationships with previous migrants” (p.82, cited in Bilecen & Lubbers, 2021). This empirical study supports these expectations in that, personal networks support their family members and relatives to migrate and at the pre-migration phase, they receive assurance from their personal networks about lucrative jobs, and initial accommodation among others.

It is important to note that, in some cases, the person carrying the information or any form of assistance need not to be physically present at the origin to lay bare such information. By the transnational approach, it is understandable and expected that current migrant networks at

the destination that are living a transnational life style, can easily contact potential migrants via telephone and discuss situations on the ground and how best they can help to bring their families, relatives and friends to the destination. Another respondent, Madam Abi (age unknown), also from Maradi, married, came to Ghana with three children, one biological, one grandchild and a friend's child. She and the children currently beg along the Kaneshie-Kasoa highway. Abi had her pre-migration information and plans through her friend currently working as a beggar in Ghana. Madam Abi shared her experience:

*“My husband and I were farmers before I came, we cultivated groundnuts, beans, millet among other crops. Initially I wanted to go to Algeria or even to Agadez to work, Ghana was not even part of the plan, until a friend who is a cripple and works as a beggar in Ghana called and informed us to come. It was this woman who convinced me to come to Ghana. She left her children with me in Niger and came to Ghana but when she got here and realized how things where she called that I should come with the children because there is money here. After the woman gave me the information I discussed with my elder children and my husband gave me money but it wasn't enough so the woman loaned me some so I can come with my children including her own (Abi, age unknown, October, 2022).*

Abi's narration shows that a disabled transnational beggar at the destination gave her all the needed information for her to make an informed migration decision and also encouraged her to come to Ghana. This is in line with Palloni et al. (2001) assertion that migration increases when prospective migrants have friendship and community ties with someone with migration experience or when there is a migrant in the household. In responding to the influx of beggars on the street of Accra, one of the key informants narrated that, the numbers of beggars have been increasing because, when those here go back to their respective villages and talk to their friends and relatives about how they have benefited from coming to Ghana, they also follow them the next time they are coming. So, you will see that when the trans migrant is returning to Ghana, she will not bring one or two, she will bring several newcomers (Key informant, Community member, November, 2022).

The narration by Abi and the confirmation by the key informant, show the involvement of individual intermediaries rather than a group of smuggling actors recruiting village folks from the origin. This is evident in the quantitative findings where close to (18%) reported they came here because they had friends in Ghana while close to (31%) reported they came because they have families here. On the other hand, the study found very few (1.5%) evidence of coming to Ghana through the help of an agent. The positive information about the destination and the lucrative nature of begging in Ghana is the number one reason most respondents came here per migrants' submissions.

Among other things, the study found that poverty and lack of financial resources are the two most important reasons migrants involve personal networks in the facilitation process. Most of the migrants had limited access to financial resources in terms of savings and family assets and had to rely on social networks for loans. It was identified that more than half 61.7% of respondent confirmed taking loans from their personal networks prior to migration. Studies have shown that most migrants who make it to their destination are those with social network connections (Boyd and Nowak, 2012). The most pressing issue of every respondent was about finding funding for the journey to Ghana as the majority wanted to leave Niger so desperately because of the harsh economic conditions, famine and drought they experienced. The ability of migrants to be able to negotiate this hurdle was to draw upon their social capital to fund their migration (Lubbers et al., 2018). A few of the respondents who did not have loans from personal networks, approached their Service Provider Network (onion truck drivers) to transport them on credit for them to pay when they came to Ghana and work. This mode of solving transportation problems was also identified among Roma beggars in Oslo where minibus service providers also function as suppliers of credit (Djuve et al., 2015). For example, another respondent, Madam Buya, this is her third time coming to Ghana and has already spent eight months, aged 50, she lost her husband eight years ago. She came to Ghana

with two children. She was working as a farmer but became sick and couldn't work again so she stopped farming. She had no formal education. Because the economic situation at the origin was not favourable for Buya and her family, life was difficult which was the reason why they came to Ghana. She considered herself to be poor because after the death of her husband, she had to care for her children and provide for their needs but she could not discharge her parental obligation back home; as such, she came the first time. Before she decided to come, she had a brother also a beggar, who told her to come else she would die if she continued to stay there. It was her brother who introduced her to a returnee who was coming back to come with her. Though she wanted to come, she had no money. Buya was fortunate because another sister of hers who also works as a beggar loaned her the money to come and pay later. With three times experience on the route, Buya offered to support and bring along two women and their children from the same village on her third working trip to Ghana. This is what Buya narrated:

*My brother also begs here, so I knew him before coming, he even advised me to come. He introduced me to the other women who were returning to Ghana to bring me along. Yes, so, I had some money and took a loan from my sister to be able to come with them (Buya, 50-year-old, female, September, 2022).*

The respondent's statement exemplifies the challenges that come with international migration and the inevitable necessity of networks in migration. Family and community or hometown networks are intermediaries acting individually and independently to provide needed support to poor migrants. In this study, the place of brokers and syndicated agents were identified to play a minor role in the migration of beggars as stated earlier. The multiple sources of network connections before Buya's initial migration support Zack et al. (2019) suggestion that multiple sources of mediation are key in most migration. This explains the effort social networks make to help new migrants. The earlier concept of 'chain migration'

by Price (1994) is exhibited in Buya's case, where she had two siblings at the destination who helped her as a new migrant and she as a trans migrant facilitated the migration of others.

Finally, the study identified that 41.2% of the respondents knew no one at the destination before migrating. The in-depth interviews revealed that not all potential migrants had access to networks willing to facilitate their migration. The support they had come from their networks at the origin and through their efforts to get to Ghana. Although the role of friends and family members is to encourage and facilitate the migration process (Haug, 2008), access to these networks is not always automatic. One of the respondents elaborated that, although she had friends and family in Ghana, she did not receive support from them. She had to take out a loan from a moneylender to enable her to travel. Even though she told her friend, who was also her neighbour, about her intentions to migrate to Ghana and asked for assistance, she received no help. This finding supports Ryan et al.'s (2018) argument that there is often an assumption that access to kinship networks and friendships is readily available to facilitate migrants; however, these relationships are built on bonds of trust and reciprocity. It was unclear whether those who had networks at the destination did not get support due to issues of trust and reciprocity.

### **7.3.2 Social Network of Facilitation in the Migration Phase**

After decision making, planning and preparation in the pre-migration phase comes the migration proper. This is the phase where migrants set off and head towards Ghana. Migration therefore refers to the movement of people, goods and services from one place to the other (King, 2012). The type of migration identified in the study is border crossing and a form of international migration internal to West Africa. In the case of respondents of the study close to 100% (91.9%) migrated without travel documents, making migrants resort to irregular migration by considering the mode and channels that would make them reach the

destination by all means. This finding is in line with IOM's (2015) observation that, though West African migration is characterized by the free movement of people, a large number of border movements are undertaken irregularly. The group of migrant social networks that are very instrumental during the migration phase regarding respondents' transportation and border crossing facilitation is the 'service provider network'. Transport operators in the bus and cargo truck business offer courier services by transporting goods and facilitating the movement of people within the ECOWAS sub-region. Several key mediating roles in migrant transportation channels were identified by the study as one of the enablers of Niger –Ghana beggar migration.

The research identified lorry, bus, truck, taxi drivers, motor (Okada) riders and tricycle (Aboboya) riders as intermediaries (Service Provider Networks) that facilitate the migration of transnational beggars from Niger to Ghana. Another group of Service Provider Networks include border officials and border crossing agents facilitating border crossing of begging migrants. The common mode of transport of the study population involves (100%) by land, while close to 100% (91.9%) moved without documentation as already discussed in Chapter Five. The qualitative data shows that the majority used buses and very few came with cargo trucks. For example, one of the child participants by the name Rusina shared her experience. Rusina is a ten-year-old girl from Maradi, whose father is deceased. She arrived in Ghana after the Christmas holidays in 2021 with her grandmother and another female cousin of the same age. They came in a bus (Rambo) with many people including other women and their children from Niger. Rusina and her grandmother's journey partially ended at Togo where they had to board a tricycle (Aboboya) to cross the border via unapproved routes to Ghana and then continue their journey in a minivan from Aflao to Accra. This is what Rusina narrated:

*"I didn't know we were coming to Ghana, my grandmother just told me to prepare to travel with her, we came in the company of a woman who has*

*been here before. We took a long bus (Rambo) from Niger to Lome (Togo) and at the border, we took “aboboya” to another place and continued in a small minivan to circle” (Rusina, 1 year old, female, October 2022).*

An Immigration official explained that the use of taxis, motorbikes and tricycles to commute from the Togo part of the border to the Ghana side is the popular means of getting from Togo to Ghana. The Aflao border is the only officially recognized entry point between Togo and Ghana. There are laid down protocols at the border for everybody who wants to enter or exit Ghana to follow. Normally migrants traveling with approved documents (regular migrants) upon reaching the border have to visit the customs and migration offices for the inspection of identity cards and stamping of passports as well as checking of luggage for any contraband goods and illegal substances. On the other hand, those without travel documents (irregular migrants) have to use unapproved routes to enter Ghana. Though these routes are illegal to ply, the crossing is often facilitated by “goro boys” or “connection men” at the border through smuggling. Thus, migrants engage the services of smugglers as a means of entering Ghana at the border. The officer communicated that these migrants are mainly women, men, children, unaccompanied children, refugees and others who have no regular means of migration. They are the people who fall into the hands of smugglers because of their vulnerability (Key informant, November 2022). While the account of the Immigration Official pointed at border crossing agents as instrumental in facilitating the border crossing of immigrants including those coming from Niger, some participants also accused border officials of taking bribes to allow them to cross the border. For instance, Aria a 23-year-old woman from Zinder, came to Ghana during the period of COVID-19 with her sick child narrated that, she paid money to the border officials at the border before she entered Ghana. Though she came during the period when the borders were supposed to be closed due to COVID-19, she and others were allowed entry by paying. In Aria’s case, it was the bus driver

who went from seat to seat to collect 5000 CFA each to be given to the people at the post before they could cross. This is what she recounted:

*From our village, we came to pick up a lorry at the town, where we paid about 27,000.00 CFA from there straight to Ghana but at the time we came the border was closed so the driver collected 5,000.00 CFA from each person to be given to officials at the Aflao border before we were allowed in. Yes, we paid 5000 CFA. (Aria, 23 years, September, 2022).*

Further conversations with the respondent revealed that she did not possess any travel documents when coming. Even within the ECOWAS free movement framework, migrants within the region are required to show their country of origin by possessing a travelling passport, an ECOWAS card or any acceptable travel document that identifies the migrant and their nationality (Teye et al., 2019). Allowing migrants to cross borders without documentation is a sign of aiding and facilitating migration especially during a period when the borders were supposed to be officially closed. This finding is in line with Yeboah et al.'s (2021) assertion that migrants who cross land borders are subject to exploitation by border officials.

Again, the issue of leniency and sympathetic attitude by border officials towards poor migrants on their way to Ghana also came up strongly in the qualitative interviews. Due to the ECOWAS free movement policy and its aim to promote economic integration, regional cooperation, and free movement of people within the ECOWAS region, some respondents see border officials as being sympathetic towards their course. Danla, male, aged 60 from Zinder expressed the fact that border officials are already aware of the harsh economic and environmental conditions in Niger. Danla's response is evident in the Livelihood Approach, where macro level factors such as economic and environmental conditions contribute to the decision to migrate. (Scoones, 1998; Tanle, 2015). According to Danla, the officials already know they are poor people running away from poverty and starvation. Above all, they know we are sick people and these women with children are no threat to anybody, we are just poor

farmers going to other countries to find money. Danla came with two other women and their children from the same village. Studies have shown that migrants from Niger migrate due to food scarcity and other environmentally related challenges in the country (Afiifi, 2011; Adepoju, 2010). Though there were checkpoints along the way, no official asked them any questions, the only thing they checked was their tickets. It was at the Aflao border that they paid motorbike riders to help them cross the border. He also acknowledged sitting in a bus with other migrant women and children from Niger some time ago and border officials have interrogated the women concerning the children and where they were taking them. (Field notes, September 2022). In the study, the intermediary role of border officials was identified to be their ability to connect and grant access to entry into countries without critical consideration of the law and this was exemplified in Danla's account. These Service Provider Networks have the power to either facilitate or hinder migration. A key informant interview also corroborated Danla's account where he emphasized that border officials know these poor migrants are not criminals. This is what he said:

*Every border that they get to right from Niger, the people at the border know that they are not bad people but rather people who need help so they just allow them to pass through the borders and go and that's what they do until they get to Aflao (Key informant, October 2022).*

Respondents' shared experiences and accounts are evident that border officials, border crossing agents or "connection men", tricycle and motor riders, are part of the "service provider networks or actors who facilitate the migration of trans migrant beggars on their way to Ghana. The narration by the respondents showed that border crossing agents are those who smuggled them through unapproved routes to enter Ghana. As shown by the Livelihood Framework, institutional processes and the implementation of regulations may facilitate or hinder migration (Tanle, 2015). These intermediaries are the migration industry actors profiting from migration. The networks are individual operators that assist those who want to cross the border illegally. Their responsibility is to smuggle migrants across the border,

especially at the Aflao border. The study did not identify whether the service providers belonged to any formal organized criminal group.

Additionally, it must be emphasized that respondents' financial position and the involvement of personal networks in the migration processes or the lack of it may determine the mode of transportation. Just as migrants use border agents as a means to get to their destination, few respondents also patronized onion trucks as a means to get to Ghana. The attraction of trucks as an alternative means of transportation for some respondents stems from the fact that truck drivers often travel to and from Niger daily. To them, the trucks provide a cheaper means of getting to Ghana compared to a straight bus from Niger to Aflao. Those who also use this network try to avoid going through the struggle of step-wise migration and making transits in different towns before getting to Ghana. Those who patronized Onion Trucks used this means because their networks directed them to use this channel. The intermediation role of both truck and bus drivers is their ability to make access or entry possible for potential migrants who do not have the means to do so. According to respondents, some of the drivers are from the same community and may offer credit to migrants they know. The drivers do not only provide access or cheaper fares, but they also provide rides on credit to those who do not have money to pay later. The drivers often hold migrants' belongings as collateral redeemable upon payment. This happens to those who have no social connection with the drivers. Madam Auda, a new migrant from Maradi, aged 50 and married came to Ghana with two children and shared her experience. Before migrating from Niger to Ghana she was a firewood seller, she goes around farms and harvest wood to sell as firewood. She was using the earnings to feed her family. Her husband is a farm labourer, and she has to work to support what he brings.

Auda, had no travel experience until she came to Ghana. The reason she decided to migrate was when her daughter became sick and died after the family sold their farmland to pay for

her medical bills. Because she had no money to fund her migration and wanted to leave the village by all means, she had to travel from one place to the other begging for alms to gather resources to get to her destination. Madam Auda started her journey from her village to Maradi town, and then to Niamey. Because she did not have enough money, she decided to go to the onion truck station in Niamey because she heard the onion trucks bound for Ghana often help people who want to travel to Ghana. She decided to come with an onion truck because she was told those drivers do not charge as high as the bus, so when it was time for them to start the journey one of the driver's assistants came to collect money from them. At that particular time, she had some money from the begging so she gave it all to the man leaving just a small amount for food and water on the way. According to her, they were hidden in between the sacks of onion. They were many and the truck was even full, the women were more than the men and all the women had children she said. Before they started the journey the driver told them he was not going to stop anywhere, he was coming straight to Ghana. As if he was joking, on the way one of the children wanted to visit the washroom but when the driver was informed, he became very furious because that was not the place he wanted to stop. They suffered because there was no food and water, the water they carried along got finished early because of the severe heat, but eventually, they had food from the driver later in the journey. Though the driver of the truck was stopping and talking to people along the way, nobody saw them or came near the truck. Auda and the children got to Ghana very tired but she was happy they made it.

From Auda's account, it is clear that truck drivers mediate the entry of transnational beggars to Ghana. With regards to the current study, a few respondents (4 out of 27 parents) reported coming to Ghana hidden in an onion truck. The finding is in line with Zack et al (2019) assertion that long distance truck drivers participate in facilitating migrant journeys. The drivers often have their way by bribing border officials to facilitate the entry of

undocumented migrants (Zack et al., 2019). Due to financial difficulties and vulnerability, potential migrants are exposed to trafficking and smuggling. The situation they found themselves in and how desperate they wanted to leave the origin served as a fertile ground for falling into the hands of traffickers. Service provider networks especially those with profit motives may take advantage of the precarious situations to exploit unsuspecting migrants (Cherneva, 2011; Salt and Stein, 1997). The possibility of prospective migrants falling into the hands of traffickers is evident in the literature on migration for begging in some Europe, Central Asia and West African countries that linked the activities of intermediaries such as traffickers and smugglers to begging (UNODC, 2014; Serrano, 2020). Evidence from other parts of the world including Nigeria and Senegal shows the involvement of traffickers and smugglers in the migration of both internal beggars (Cherneva, 2011) and transnational child beggars from Niger to other West African countries (Odjedokun, 2015; Serrano 2020; Diallo, 2021).

A conversation with one key informant and a native of Niger corroborated the respondent's story. This is what the key informant narrated about onion truck drivers who ply Niger-Ghana.

*Yes, these onion trucks go to villages to buy onions and other foodstuff. And through conversations with some community members at the origin, they tell them how hospitable, sympathetic and compassionate Ghanaians are towards blind people, old women and even children, who you can ask for money and they will give you. So, at first, they knew that the onion trucks come straight to Accra so it is true they pick some of the women and the children into the onion cars and bring them to Agbogbloshie here in Accra but for some time now because the onion traders at the Agbogbloshie market have been relocated, the people don't know where to go and pick the car to this place so they don't take those cars any more (Key Informant, co-ethnic group member, November, 2022).*

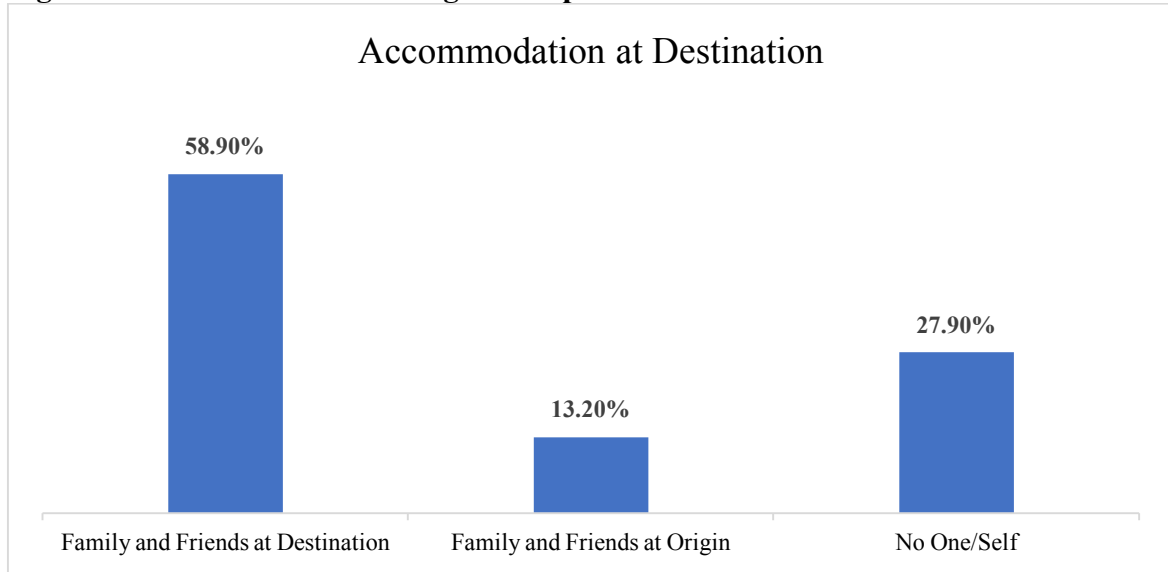
Service provider networks such as truck drivers do not only provide transport and entry services, they also provide information for those who are willing and desire to better their fortunes in Ghana. Some respondents were of the view that, truck drivers do not overly charge

them for their services, they do not consider profit as their major motive, what really motivates drivers to carry them in their trucks is the pity they have for villagers because of the high level of poverty, starvation and lack of alternative livelihood in the villages they visit.

### **7.3.3 Social Network of Facilitation in the Post-Migratory Phase**

Social network facilitators are essential in assisting migrants in integrating into their new communities and societies during the post-migratory phase. These facilitators can be individuals, groups, or organizations that help immigrants with their inception and integration into their new environment by offering resources, support, and direction (Herman, 2006). This support helps new migrants to integrate both socially and economically. Studies have shown that in the initial arrival stage, migrants rely heavily on one or a few of their networks in their new country to make things possible for them (Ambrosini, 2017). These ties provide new migrants with various types of support. The study shows the list of migrants' personal networks throughout the entire migration process of Nigerien migrant beggars, and among these, some play a crucial role in the post-migration phase. These include Personal and Altruistic Networks at the destination. Personal networks are a major source of migrant support in coping with everyday challenges and adjusting to their new community. In this study, personal networks supported and facilitated new migrants' inception and accommodation, job training (how and what to do when begging), finding begging spots, and taking new migrants through a transnational lifestyle. As part of the social support personal networks provide, accommodation and linking migrants to job opportunities are considered very important for new migrants (Ambrosini, 2017; Ajodekun, 2015). As a result, migrants were asked to provide information on who helps them find a place to live in Ghana.

**Figure 7.1: Those who found migrants a place to live at the destination**



Source: Field data, 2022

In the study, personal networks were identified to be one of the providers of new migrants' accommodation in Ghana. From Figure 7.1, the majority (72.1%) of respondents who migrated from Niger to Ghana had their accommodation provided for them by their personal networks while less than a third (27.9%) reported they looked for their accommodation when they came to Ghana. Among those who had their personal networks helping them, close to a third (58.9%) had their accommodation through family and friends at the destination members, while approximately (13.2) had accommodation arranged by family and friends at the origin. According to the migrant beggars most of them had benefited from families, friends, and hometown community members right from the beginning of their journey and even at the destination. Most first-time migrants were accommodated by family members and friends who were themselves beggars. The finding supports Ojedokun and Aderinto's (2015), study on transnational beggars in Nigeria (50%) reported living with family and (23%) said had accommodation through a friend. According to the old migrants, they always come along with new migrants any time they visit home and are coming back to Ghana. These new migrants may not know their way in the community so it is their responsibility to give them a place to keep their things, sleep and also show them how to do the begging. Some

of the respondents said they had their current sleeping space because they came with people who had already secured places and were ready to share their spaces with them. The study also found that even those who did not have early networks at the destination or any arrangement made for them by people at the origin, still had their first accommodation provided for them by their co-ethnic group members in the community.

It is important to reiterate that the majority (86.03%) of migrant beggars in the research community were squatters. The basic accommodation for respondents includes the frontage of shops in and along roads in the community, in front of mosques, under trees and pavements, few are however in rented accommodations. Though there seem to be a lot of spaces available for squatting in the community such spaces have owners. Aside from migrants' personal networks providing initial accommodation for new migrants, the qualitative interview revealed that migrants who migrated alone without any network assistance from the destination usually find their first accommodation at "Nguan makafe", translated literally as the area for blind people or a community where blind people stay. For example, Pati, a 26-year-old woman from Maradi, married, came to Ghana in December 2021 with her eight-year-old daughter. Her husband was a driver in a construction firm in Maradi. Before she came to Ghana she was not working because she had an accident with her husband. She was crippled by the accident and her husband nearly lost his life. She is here to beg to help take care of her husband back home. Before she came, she knew now no one at the destination; however, some return migrants in her village gave her all the directions to Ghana. Pati was told she should onboard a vehicle to Sabon Zongo when she gets to Accra and tell the driver she was going to "Nguan makafe". To her that's what most migrants from Niger do when they come, they take a car and say they are going to Sabon Zongo and when they get to Ghana, they ask for Nguan makafe then they come. She was told that was where

most Muslim migrants find accommodation in their early days here in the community. This is what she narrated:

*When we got to Accra, we alighted and at the lorry park we approached a certain man wearing this long Muslim dress for the direction to 'Nguan makafe', then from there we took a car to 'Nguan makafe' (blind people's place), where we lodged for 5 days before moving to the roadside here in Sabon-Zongo (Pati, 26 years, September 2022).*

Finding the first accommodation can be challenging, especially without support from networks who already have accommodation at the destination. The assurance of having free accommodation at the “blind people’s place” upon arrival helps to relieve new migrants of the burden of thinking about a place to live before finding their accommodation. It is clear that Nigerien migrant beggars mostly get the assurance from home (origin) that accommodation in the host community is always guaranteed. This ready acceptance of newcomers in the community is not strange, given the long migration link between the Hausa ethnic group and the Sabon Zongo community (Pellow, 2001). This implies that migrant beggars need not have kinship or friendship ties at the destination to be accommodated, the presence of a strong religious, co-ethnic and co-national tie in the community is always enough for new migrants to benefit from.

Another post-migration responsibility towards migrant beggars through their personal networks was to assist them in finding jobs (begging spots/begging locations) upon arrival. Given these respondents were asked who found them jobs when they arrived in Ghana. The distribution of who got them involved in their current economic activity at the destination is displayed in Table 7.2:

**Table 7. 2: To find a job at the destination, who helped the most?**

<b>Finding Job</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Families and relatives	61	44.8%
No one/ Self	46	33.8%
Neighbours, friends, community member	29	21.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field data, 2022

The table revealed that close to half of the respondents (44.8%), their families and relatives at the destination helped them find jobs (begging spots and locations) and also engage in alms solicitation and about two-thirds of respondents (33.8%) confirmed it was through their effort that they secured a begging spot or had a place to beg while, (21.4%) reported that neighbours, friends and community members helped them most to secure a job. Regarding the involvement of brokers in migration in Africa, Litchfield et al. (2015) found that the use of agents was not identified in their sample, despite recent literature on the role of recruitment agents in regional migration. The findings indicate that trans migrant beggars' intermediaries are made up of informal individual networks rather than a formal organised recruiter network in the facilitation. The finding is in line with Kleist and Bjarnesen's explanation that West African migration is not mediated through institutionalized and formal brokerage, such as recruiting agencies, but rather self-organized and stepwise, and draws on social networks through kinfolks or peers viz; friends, co-workers, or "strangers" met en route (Kleist and Bjarnesen, 2019). The implication here is that migrants' networks are fundamental in facilitating jobs for new migrants. Mr Hadala, Sixty-four years old from Zinder, migrated to Ghana in 2021 for the fourth time with his son. Before he came to Ghana for the first time about six years ago, Mr Hadala was encouraged to move here by a friend from the same community who was also a co-beggar here. Mr Hadala shared his experience:

*I came here alone. I was given the direction by a friend who also begs here and told me about begging fetches in Ghana. It wasn't difficult because I had little money from the work I did back home. It hadn't been easy for us, no food and the rains were not regular so we could not farm. You can see I have some a challenge with my mobility, so I had to come with my son to assist me in the work (begging). When I came, everybody was friendly to me and that made me very happy. I started work the next day by going to sit at "Nguan makafe" (blind people's area) in the morning together with the one who told me to come, and later in the day we went to sit at the big mosque by the roadside. It was my friend who taught me what to do and how to go about the work (Hadala, 64 years, male, from Zinder).*

From Mr Hadala's narrative, it was clear that he was encouraged by a friend who was also a co-beggar living in Ghana. His decision to come and engage in begging here in Ghana is because of the assurance he had that the job was lucrative. His submission also reveals that disabled migrant beggars rely on social networks to be able to secure begging spots to be successful in the begging. It is also clear that there were numerous begging spots in the community where trans migrant beggars could go and beg for alms, which included sitting around mosques but one cannot have a place without recommendation or having connections via social networks. Being identified as a perfect candidate for the job reflects the level of vulnerability among people with multiple life challenges such as being poor and physically challenged (Salifu and Abdul-Karim, 2023). They hit the streets, street corners, markets and religious places of worship to take advantage of their life challenges to get what they need. Also, among the disabled people in the study, begging is often the first point of call given their circumstances. The intermediary in this instance is an informal individual network member who offered to assist migrant's facilitation at the destination.

Another female respondent Auda, a fifty-year-old from Maradi shared her experience. She came to Ghana without knowing anybody here. However, she had tremendous assistance from her co-ethnic group members and co-beggars with regard to finding a begging place and also going around the city to beg. They use their networks to secure begging spots and familiarize themselves in Accra. This is what she had to say:

*As I said earlier I had my first accommodation at “Guan Makafie”, so in the morning, I saw our people going towards that side (pointing towards the street) and I asked them where they were going and they told me they were going to Circle and I followed them. No, I didn’t know them, I came alone with the children, but because of the language, I realized that we are all from Niger. I told my children to follow the other children and do whatever they do to beg. (Auda, female, 50-year-old, from Maradi).*

The readiness for network members to assist new migrants to be successful in their migration agenda is clear in Auda’s case where co-beggars from the same ethnic background assisted her in locating begging sites and spots in her current begging place at Kwame Nkrumah Circle. In situations where new migrants migrated alone co-ethnic members and co-nationals are prepared to help them become familiar with their new environment and also help them to locate a begging site. This can be explained by the social ties new migrant beggars have with the intermediaries. The finding supports Adugna, (2019)’s view that migrants’ work at destination countries can vary widely depending on a variety of factors, such as their social networks (Adugna, 2019). It is also at the destination that migrants are trained on the begging job by experienced migrants. For example, Eriya, a female child beggar, age fifteen, came to Ghana with her elder sister and her two children in early 2022. She begs at the Dansoman Junction traffic light and also sells cotton swaps and facemasks. She said the people from their village who came to meet them at the destination taught them how to beg and what to say when they approach a vehicle or a person (Field notes, September 2022). With the help of personal networks, migrants can secure a place for their begging activity in the city.

Though a number of migrant networks assist respondents at the destination, the qualitative interview showed that community members in the host country mediate in several ways to make the stay of migrant beggars easy, and comfortable and also make them feel at home. The services identified to be provided by community members include accommodation spaces, money transfers, means of contacting the left behind, provision of basic services (electricity, water and sanitation) and storage facilities for migrant beggars. For migrants to be able to stay comfortably at their destination, having accommodation and a thriving

economic activity may not be enough. The need to be able to communicate effectively to stayers back home, to be able to send remittances, the need to access basic services and also the need for respondents to have safe and secured places to keep their properties is equally pertinent to ensure a positive migration outcome. These services were observed to be provided by host community members with the help of co-ethnic networks. These services allow migrant beggars to adapt to a transnational lifestyle which is necessary in meeting the migration obligations towards the left behind. Some respondents recounted that they pay two Cedis (GHC 2) a day per person for keeping their items in storage. The storage places are often functioning metal containers and wooding kiosks. They do this because they need places to keep the goods they buy and those they receive freely from the public so they can send them home anytime they get the opportunity. This observation was confirmed by one of the key informants in the community. This is what she noted:

*There are people in the community who give the migrants places to keep their things and even give them places to squat and take money from them. They often pay GHC5 for storage service. Such squatting places are not by the roadside; they are places within the community. When they buy new things community people provide them with spaces to keep such things. People also give them a lot of things, like used clothes and dresses. When these people started coming in their numbers, people having containers along the road started renting them out as a storage place for them. Some take GHC2 and others GHC5 per day. These containers were formerly used by their owners but are no longer in use, so they decided to rent them out to the migrants. some even rent the containers out and take GHC40 or GHC50 per month. In some cases, the owner may charge per person, for example, if several people ask to sleep or use the container as a storage place they will take GHC2 from each person per day. So, they benefit from them. A lot of the community people hid some of them when the Niger government wanted to send them back. They are now coming out because they know the operation is over (Key Informant, community member, October 2022).*

The key informant's account revealed that host community members provide diverse services for transmigrant beggars living in the community. Her account shows the service provider networks at the destination provide several services, including rented accommodation, storage areas, provision of basic services and hiding beggars to prevent their deportation. The narrations further indicate that host community members do not provide these services for

free, migrants have to pay various amounts to enjoy the services. Not all the beggars live on the streets, some have rented accommodation in the community. The services are provided by profit-minded individuals who have identified the needs of migrants and have taken the initiative to satisfy those needs.

It was also observed that host community members supported and also connived with migrant beggars to escape the deportation exercise in June 2022 which was organised by the Niger embassy in collaboration with the Ghana government to prolong transnational beggars' stay in Ghana. Some respondents during the period explained they were not ready to go back because they had yet to accomplish their migration goal. Some new arrivals were also adamant about leaving because they just arrived and had loans to pay and families to provide for at the origin hence their unwillingness to forcefully leave. The support given by the service provider networks at the destination show how accommodating the host community network is towards the beggar community in the municipality. It must also be noted that Nigerien migrant beggars find the community attractive because they blend in easily due to their shared religious culture. Some key informants in the community are of the view that this overwhelming support and welcoming of Nigeriens dates back over a hundred years when their forefathers came to settle in the area called Sabon Zongo (Field notes, 2022).

With regards to the supply of basic services for migrant beggars in the community, respondents acknowledged that those who have mobile phones pay one cedi (GH¢ 1) to charge their phones and sometimes charge it for free by giving it to people they know in the community to charge for them. Some also pay to use public toilets and bathrooms just like any other person because these services are operated by private individuals in the community. Contrary to the information given by respondents, some community members are of the view that migrants do not pay for the basic services they enjoy which serves as a huge challenge to the community. They recounted that the majority of those who sleep in front of shops along the street do not pay for electricity, water and disposal of refuse. They use free water to wash

their clothes and bath and free electricity to charge their mobile phones. The finding also points out that migrants and child beggars are the guiltiest of littering the surroundings where they live and contribute significantly to the poor sanitation in the area. This behaviour according to some community members is a worry to those concerned. This may be explained by Owusu's (2010), assertion that Sabon Zongo (one of the communities in the study area) is an over-crowded community which has inadequate sanitary facilities and is one of the poorest managed communities in the Metropolis in terms of sanitation and waste management. Migrants' poor attitude towards their immediate environment is a contributing factor to the poor sanitation challenge in the community.

Again, at the destination, Altruistic Networks such as NGOs and benevolent individuals come to the aid of migrants by providing health screening and also supplying them with food and clothes on humanitarian grounds. Altruistic Networks in the study function similarly to Xiang and Lindquist's (2014) concept of Humanitarian Infrastructure, which emphasises the role of NGOs and other international organizations to help shape migration. The charitable gesture by these NGOs existed even before the COVID-19 pandemic and it intensified during the pandemic. During the height of the pandemic, some community members were of the view that the migrant beggars were better cared for compared to the citizens. All forms of donations were made to them, including raw foodstuff (rice, oil, tin fish, tin tomatoes and others) and cooked food as well. This type of intermediation is what Ambrosini (2019) terms 'help'. This is where intermediaries provide concrete and first-hand support in meeting actual needs. Philanthropists also come to the community to provide various sums of money to support these migrant beggars as a form of religious almsgiving. Some respondents narrated that they always go to the mosque every Friday to partake in the generous giving of one famous philanthropist who usually comes there to give alms to the beggars in the community. The degree of the beggar's disability determines how much she or he receives. For this reason, the blind beggars are those whose donations topped the chart. A beggar even receives

more when the person has multiple challenges such as being blind, old and frail. The finding supports Al-Dulaimi, (2019) assertion that religious begging is often tolerated by most Muslim societies and also supported on religious grounds, from an Islamic point of view and alms giving narrows the gap between the rich and the poor (Al-Dulaimi, 2019).

#### **7.4 Transnational Networks and Activities of Migrants**

Transnational social networks are migrant connections and interactions that transcend national borders. These actors involve individuals or groups that collaborate or communicate across international boundaries for a wide range of purposes (Lubbers et al., 2020). Migrants' transnational networks identified in the study included all migrant social networks that helped migrants in their journey. As stated earlier, the benefits migrants derive from social networks and especially their transnational networks are information, financial support, accommodation and finding jobs for new migrants. Transnational networks of migrants include Nigerien migrants in both origin and destination and other social networks they encountered en route. The study identified that friends of families, friends, co-ethnic members and co-nationals in different countries supported migrants in diverse ways along their journey. These networks helped by contacting migrants' family or friends at the destination and also helping financially through the recommendation of the migrant's network at the destination. The finding is in line with Herz and Oliver's (2012) assertion that transnational social networks are mediated through communication technologies, transportation, migration and mobility which can either be formal or informal (Herz & Oliver, 2012. p.115). In the case of Nigerien migrants their transnational networks were informal individuals. In the context of migration studies transnationalism refers to a concept that highlights the complex and multifaceted nature of contemporary migration processes (Anthias, 2012). It describes how migrants and their communities maintain and develop connections, interactions, and identities across national borders. Transnationalism challenges the traditional understanding of migration as a one-way movement from a sending country

to a destination country, emphasizing the frequent and changing relationships migrants maintain with both their origin and their destination countries (Schiller et al, 1992). This section presents and discusses the transnational activities of respondents in the study.

In most cases, the general aim of migration is to have economic independence leading to better living conditions for both migrants and their families. Therefore, all over the world sending remittances contributes to improving the living conditions of families back home and also helps build familial and friendship ties (Yeboah et al., 2021; Snel et al., 2021). In the study, it was clear that remittances sent were in various forms. That is both cash and in kind.

**Table 7. 3: Remittance Sent**

<b>Remittance</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Yes	109	79.56
No	25	18.25
Don't know	1	0.73
Total	135	100%

Source: Field data, 2022

Concerning migrants' remittances, Table 7.3 shows that close to 80% of respondents send remittances home, while less than 20% said they were yet to send any remittances. In terms of the age distribution and the age group that sends money home, all the age categories of respondents reported sending remittances including the age dependency group [65+]. It was revealed that close to a quarter of the population (22%) of respondents aged 65 and above remit part of their income to those left behind. Though the finding is consistent with other studies in terms of the fact that most migrants remit money and other items home to support the livelihood of the left behind (Makina, 2013; Teye et al., 2019; Awumbila et al., 2014), it was identified that not only the young or the active class (15-64) age group that remits. The qualitative analysis showed that the aged were very consistent in remitting.

The GLSS (2017) report indicates that people aged 65 and above are supposed to be dependent on the active age group [15-64]. Madam Suha a seventy-year-old from Maradi, reported sending money home often to her family. She has her children and grandchildren

she supports back home. She does not only send cash but also clothes, mats and kitchen utensils (Field Notes, October 2022). Though they may be handicapped in some aspects of their social life, in this instance, the aged are as active as the working class who work and also contribute to their family income back home. Again, close to 24% of the 45-54 year groups and a little over 16% of the 35-44 age group also do the same. The age group that remits less among respondents in the study are the 15-24 and 25-34 age groups which statistics show that they remit (7.33%) and (9.2%) respectively.

Research has shown that remittances provide poor families with additional income, which can be used to cover basic needs such as food, shelter, education, and healthcare. This improves their overall standard of living and helps lift them out of poverty (De Haas, 2005; Ratha, 2013). In addition, cash remittances are the most common form of remittances and involve sending money directly to family members or friends back home. This money is used for various purposes, such as covering basic needs, education, healthcare, and both capital and asset investments (Ahinful et al., 2013). When asked how often migrants send money home, 12% said they send money home every month, close to 41% said they do that regularly between 2-3 months while a little over 2% said they send money home once or two times in a year. Among those who reported sending remittances home, more than half (56.9%) reported remitting less than GHC 500 when it's time for them to do so. However, close to (19%) send less than a GHC 1000 any time they want to remit while 8.8% said they cannot disclose how much they send home. It was evident through the interviews that migrants do not send money every month. Several cases from the qualitative data offer a better understanding of migrants' remittance behaviour. The qualitative response by one of the respondents Madam Tiya a 46-year-old woman, from Maradi revealed that she did not have specific periods for sending money home. She indicated that her ability to remit is dependent on the amount of money she has been able to save from the laundry and begging she does and the demands from those at the origin. She also disclosed that she does not send money

monthly because of the nature of the work. The money comes as and when sympathisers give. She further said, they spend some of the money on her and save the remaining until she gets enough before she sends it home (Tiya, 46 years, female, September 2022). Her submission was corroborated by one of the Key Informants from the community, Mr Fuseni, who disclosed that migrants both parents and children save their money with Susu collectors in the community until they get enough to send home. He disclosed that some save GHC 20 a day others GHC 10 and some do not get anything the whole day for them to be able to save. He further disclosed that getting money depends on how the person looks and mostly those who get money are those who do not have hands and feet, the blind and those who have little children who are twins and the very elderly. For the children, most of them sell polish and cotton swipes including the begging. That is what they do to send money home (Key informant from the community, November 2022). This is what a 63-year-old woman, from Maradi had to say;

*“I have not started sending money yet. This is my second time coming to Ghana, I came a few months ago. I have not started changing the money into CFA, we have an amount that you are supposed to get before changing the money into CFA. I am now saving it (Naru, 63, female, September 2022)”*

Instead of sending money, migrants might send physical goods, gifts or both cash and kind to their families. This could include clothing, electronics, household items of all kinds or even food. While these may not have the same economic impact as cash remittances, they can still provide tangible benefits.

As stated earlier, the purposes for which migrants send money to their home countries are diverse (Teye et al., 2022). Concerning the purpose of remittances by the respondents of the study, the qualitative interviews revealed that respondents send money home for the purpose of buying food, other necessities and expenses, paying for loans, contributions for financing outdoorings, marriage ceremonies, buying medicine, repairing buildings and farming. Among the 27 participants in the qualitative study, 22 of them said they have been remitting while

four said they are yet to do so. Of the twenty-two (22) who remit, three (3) are males and nineteen (19) are females. Concerning the types of remittance they send, all nineteen of the females said they send cash for buying food and basic needs, paying for loans they took for migration, contributing towards the payment of outdooing and marriage ceremonies and buying medicines, while eight admitted combining sending food such as gari, rice, maize, millet, beans, and goods such as used shoes, clothing and kitchen utensils and other household equipment in addition to the cash they send. Some of the women said they occasionally send the money to their husbands to expand their farms and repair their homes. Among the three male participants, all of them said they send cash remittances and 2 said they also send food and other items in addition to the money they sent to their families back home. Explaining why she combined sending both cash and other items to her people back home, Madam Chiya a 55-year-old female from Zinder said this is her third time coming to Ghana so she knows a lot of people who give her money, food, used clothing and shoes and other things. She piles these things and sends them home any time her country women and men are returning. She disclosed that most of the things she usually sends home are used items that people give as gifts. She sometimes sends money to her husband during planting season and mostly sends money for food because food is scarce in her village. (Chiya, 55 years, female, September 2022). She however noted this;

*“I buy new things like wax prints and new fabrics, lace and Jewels when any of my daughters are going to marry or when there is Salah (Islamic festival). I also get a lot of items from people which I send home when the need arises (Chiya, 55 years, female, September 2022).*

This can be explained by the level of social integration among migrants and the host community that allows community members to give free material things to migrants. As stated earlier, migrant beggars have a language advantage in the host community which makes it easy for them to associate with community members by interacting with them. Most people will give material things to those they consider as friends or friends of friends and relatives.

The study also identified the most commonly used channel of remittance to Niger by respondents. It was found that respondents send remittances through money transfer/ mobile transfer (35.8%), Informal individual agents (21.2%), through friends and relatives (16.8%), bus and other transport services (5.84%) while (9.5%) said they do not know how their remittances get to the origin. The high patronage of money/mobile transfer channels may be probably due to the trustworthiness of such channels. The electronic means of transferring money provides convenience and the assurance that the money reaches the intended people (Pal et al., 2021). Respondents who use this channel explained that they this channel mostly because that was what they were introduced to when they came. The people who help them to send the money decide on what means to send, they don't have a say in the type of channel to use. Again, it was identified qualitatively that migrants often consult their social networks to help them send their remittances which they also send through this same mobile channel. Even those who reported using informal individual agents also use the same mobile phone platform. An informal conversation with one of the gentlemen who works where they send the money revealed that they use an application (app) called 'Amana Pay', which works the same way as the mobile money (Momo) that we know in Ghana. Amana Pay is owned and operated by Amana Bank. The app is used to send and receive money from Niger if one has a smartphone and one can only sign up with a Niger number. So, this is the common channel that most migrant beggars use to send money home. A respondent, Ena, a 60-year-old woman from Maradi confirmed sending money home to her children and grandchildren. She however explained that she utilises the services of someone in the community to make that possible

*“Yes I have been sending money home but I don't do that myself, there is an Alhaji here who does that for us. Any time I have money to send I give that and the contacts of my daughter to send it for me. She later calls that she has received it. He is the one who always sends our money for us”.*

Because of the above findings, this section interrogated how frequently migrants send financial remittances home. How frequently migrants send money was important to know

because migrants' responsibility towards stayers requires sending remittances to make their lives better. The preceding section presents the data given by respondents on the frequency of sending money to the origin.

## 7.5 Frequency of Sending Money Home

Since the majority of migrants reported sending remittances home, this section sought to examine the impact of some selected socio-demographic characteristics on how often migrant beggar's remit.

### 7.5.1 Statistical Technique (Ordered Logit Model)

Since the study examines the impact of the age, gender, marital status, networks, funding and length of stay of Nigerien immigrants in Ghana on the degree of remitting money back home (Niger); it is appropriate to employ a regression analysis. Due to the nature of the dependent variable (ordinal scale), the ordinary least squares estimation (OLS) is not appropriate for this analysis (i.e., assumes that the distances between categories of responses are equal). In view of the breach in the OLS assumption, we employed the ordered logit model (OLM). The OLM is a sub-type of logistic regression where the dependent variable is ordered. It assumes that the categories of an ordinal response can be ranked, however the distances between these ordered categories are unknown. Note that the ordered logistic regression model with more the one independent variable can be defined as

$$y^* = \mathbf{X}_i\beta + \varepsilon_i, \quad \varepsilon_i \sim N(0,1) \quad \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Note that the vector of  $\mathbf{X}_i$  variables are the independent variables; they can be a combination of all the four measurement scales (i.e., nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio). In the ordered logistic model observed response categories ( $Y_i$ ) are tied to the latent variable ( $y_i^*$ ) by a measurement model that divides  $y_i^*$  into  $K$  ordinal categories so that  $K - 1$  threshold are estimated. The unobserved thresholds are shown below;

$$Y = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} 0 \text{ if } y^* \leq 0 \\ 1 \text{ if } 0 \leq y^* \leq \alpha_1 \\ 2 \text{ if } \alpha_1 \leq y^* \leq \alpha_2 \\ \vdots \\ K \text{ if } \alpha_{K-1} \leq y \end{array} \right\} \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Given that  $\alpha_1 < \alpha_2 < \dots < \alpha_K$  holds, the relationship between  $y^*$  and  $Y_i$  is dependent on whether it is greater than or less than the given threshold.

The latent variable model with multiple independent variables can be defined:

$$\ln(Y_k) = \ln\left(\frac{\pi_k(x)}{1 - \pi_k(x)}\right) = \alpha_k + (\beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_n X_n) \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

where  $\alpha_k$  and  $\beta_p$  are the parameters to be estimated.

The final OLR model with trust in court is defined as;

$$\ln(Y_k) = \ln\left(\frac{\pi_k(x)}{1 - \pi_k(x)}\right) = \alpha_k + (\beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_7 X_7 + \tau G_{X_8}) \dots\dots\dots (4)$$

where, the coefficients for each variable are as follows:

$\alpha_k$  Threshold (intercept)

$\beta_1$  Age

$\beta_2$  Gender

$\beta_3$  Marital Status

$\beta_4$  Accommodation

$\beta_5$  Travelling Document

$\beta_6$  Funding

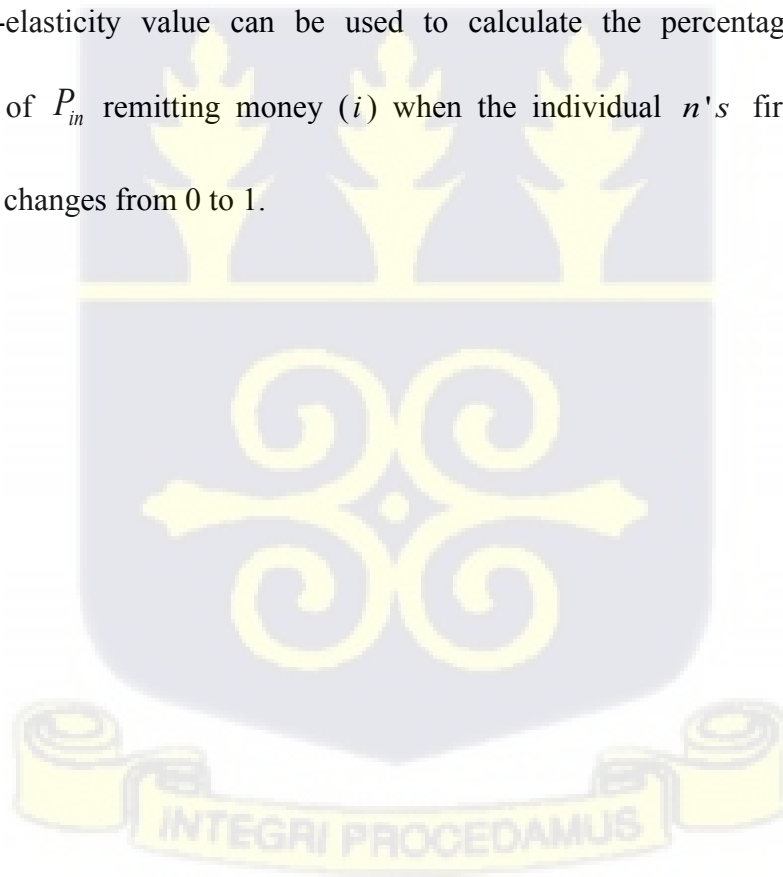
$\beta_7$  Network

if G  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1 \text{ if no monies are remitted at all back home} \\ 2 \text{ if monies are somewhat remitted back home} \\ 3 \text{ if monies are often remitted back home} \\ 4 \text{ if monies are often remitted back home} \end{array} \right\}$

One key flaw of any logistic regression is its inability to interpret quantitatively the effect of the independent variable(s) on the dependent variable. Regarding this study, the impact of statistically significant variables on remitting money back home can be interpreted qualitatively. However, the OLM cannot give quantitative interpretations of how each variable affects the probability of the degree of remitting money back home by the Nigerien immigrants. In view of the aforementioned problem, we employed the concept of elasticity analysis as a marginal effect to measure the impact of independent variable changes on the probability of sending remittances. The pseudo-elasticity  $E_{X_{nk}}^{P_{in}}$  can be defined as;

$$E_{X_{nk}}^{P_{in}} = \frac{P_{in}(\text{given } X_{nk} = 1) - P_{in}(\text{given } X_{nk} = 0)}{P_{in}(\text{given } X_{nk} = 0)}$$

The pseudo-elasticity value can be used to calculate the percentage change in the probability of  $P_{in}$  remitting money ( $i$ ) when the individual  $n$ 's first  $k$  independent variable  $X_{nk}$  changes from 0 to 1.



**Table 7. 4: Ordered Logistic Regression Estimates**

Variables	Estimate	Standard Error	Marginal Effects			
			Not At All	Somewhat Often	Often	Very Often
<b>Age</b>	-0.036*	0.013	-0.099*	0.001*	-0.002*	0.006*
<b>Gender (Baseline= Female)</b>						
Male	-0.997**	0.09	0.142**	-0.009*	-0.107	0.215*
<b>Marital Status (Baseline= Single)</b>						
Divorced	0.860*	0.06	-0.025*	0.009*	0.029*	-0.180*
Married	-0.193*	0.033	-0.076*	-0.002*	-0.017	0.044*
Separated	-0.760**	0.008	-0.008*	-0.007	-0.088	0.171*
Widowed	-0.158	0.225	-0.049	-0.001	-0.006	0.014
<b>Funding (Baseline= Family)</b>						
Loans	0.453*	0.008	0.216*	0	-0.001	0.002
Savings	1.330*	0.085	0.09	0.011	0.045*	-0.238
Others	1.022*	0.276	0.182	0.011	0.007	-0.235*
<b>Networks (Baseline= Family)</b>						
Friend	0.513*	0.673	0.013	0.006	0.034	-0.130*
Others	0.093*	0.454	-0.004	0.001	0.009	0.023*
<b>Length (Baseline= [0-1])</b>						
[2-3]	0.262	0.416	-0.063*	0.023	0.003	0.037
[4-5]	-0.346**	0.020	0.085*	-0.038	-0.004*	-0.044*
[6-7]	0.277	0.722	-0.065	0.021	0.003	0.041
[8+]	-0.019**	0.003	0.005	-0.002	0.013**	-0.003*
<b>Threshold Parameters</b>						
Threshold (1->2)	-1.122**	0.918	----	----	----	----
Threshold (2->3)	0.683*	0.913	----	----	----	----
Threshold (3->4)	0.790*	0.913	----	----	----	----

Significance codes : 0 '\*\*\*' 0.001 '\*\*' 0.01 '\*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1



Table 7.4 provides the estimation results for the ordered logit model estimated on remittances, age, gender, marital status, source of funding for migration, networks at destination (people who facilitated their migration) and length of stay among Nigerien immigrants in Ghana. Column 2 in Table 7.6 presents the logged odds model coefficients. These are expected to be interpreted concerning the expected sign attached. The objective of this section of the study is to assess the impact of age, gender, marital status, source of funding for migration, migrant networks and length of stay on the frequency of remittances amongst Nigerien begging migrants in the study area. Recall that the remittance is an ordinal scale (1 – 4) variable with “not at all” (1) being regarded as not remitting money at all back home (Niger) and “very often” (4) also regarded as very often remitting money back home. The following interpretation will be based on the model coefficients in column two of Table 7.4.

When assessing the effect of age on remittances, it can be seen that the estimate of the variable age is negative and statistically significant at 5%. This indicates that holding other variables constant, as the migrant grows older on Ghanaian soil, it is expected for him/her to reduce the remittance back home in Niger. This was evident in the qualitative interview where Madam Fati, 26 years old, narrated that;

*“Yes, I used to send money home monthly to my husband but I don’t send it often anymore, because I have started saving to rent a shack for myself and my daughter”*

This scenario will eventually reduce the degree of remitting money back home by this young migrant. Studies have found a positive relation between remittance and age, however, in Mikina’s (2013) study, it was found that from the age of 51 and older, non-remitters begin to increase (Makina, 2013). The analysis shows that the older migrants become in Ghana, the less they would send which is in line with Makina’s study and evident in the qualitative interview.

The next variable to consider is gender. Gender is a categorical variable with two categories (male and female), in the analysis we used the female category as the baseline category. It can also be noticed that it recorded a negative estimate and was statistically significant at 1%. Thus, all other things being equal, the study expects the females to send money often back home as compared to their male counterparts. This finding can be explained by Madam Chiya, and others who often send money home to their households to buy food and other essentials because it is their responsibility to take care of those they left behind (Field notes, September, 2022). In other studies, Makina (2013) found males to remit more than females, this finding is consistent with Teye et al. (2022) who found that females remit more than males. Teye et al. (2022), indicated that a relationship between gender and remittance is affected by household context. The analysis of the study also showed that money is sent for specific purposes. The females send remittances mostly for household consumption because of the food situation at home before migration and the males also remit mainly to invest in their farms though they also remit money for food and other essentials.

With regards to the marital status of the immigrants in relation to the degree remitting money back home, all the coefficients of the three categories (from married to widowed) were negative but for those who were divorced. It can also be observed that all the categories were statistically significant except those who were widowed. Regarding this study, we used the population that was never married as the baseline category. Since the sample that was married and separated was negative and statistically significant, it can be said that the respondents who were never married remitted often as compared to respondents who were married and separated. This finding is in line with the study of Makina (2013), who found that the never married remit more often than the married. However, respondents who were divorced remitted often back home as compared to those who were never married. As stated earlier, the estimates recorded for those who were widowed were not statistically significant at 5%.

This implies that holding all other variables constant, migrants who are widowed do not impact the degree of remitting money back home as compared to those who are never married. The thematic analysis indicated that never married respondents often send money to their parents, elder siblings and the biological parents of the children they migrated with. On the other hand, divorcees in the study were found to send money often, which was explained by the fact that, in the absence of a male provider, they owe it a duty to provide for those in their household and also pay for loans. Madam Hatu, a fifty-five-year-old divorcee explained that she sends money home often to pay for a loan because she took money from someone to come here with the children and she also sends some money to her children sometimes. According to Hatu, some women get support from their husbands when coming but she does not (field notes, October, 2022).

Another variable considered for the analysis was the source of funding for migration. This variable was treated as a nominal variable with four categories, using the “family” category as the baseline. Interestingly, all categories were statistically significant at the 5% level. The estimate for respondents funded by loans was positive, indicating that, holding all other variables constant, respondents who were funded by loans remitted more often compared to those funded by family. Conversely, respondents funded by savings or other sources recorded positive estimates as well. These results suggest that individuals funded by savings or other sources are more likely to remit money back home than those funded by family.

The effect of the length of stay of Nigerien migrants on the frequency of remitting money to Niger was also assessed. The length of stay variable is an ordered variable, with the first category being “[0-1]” years (i.e., migrants who have lived in Ghana for one day to a year). Notably, only two categories of the ordered logistic estimates were statistically significant: “[4-5] years” and “[8+] years.” Both categories showed negative estimates, suggesting that, holding all other variables constant, the likelihood of remitting money decreases for Nigerien

migrants who have lived in Ghana for up to 5 years or at least 8 years, compared to those who have lived in Ghana for one year or less. On the other hand, migrants who have lived in Ghana for 3 years and 7 years showed positive estimates, but these were not statistically significant at the 5% level, indicating no significant difference in remittance behaviour between these groups and those who have lived in Ghana for at most one year.

The final independent variable considered in relation to remittance behaviour is the type of networks at the destination—the connections migrants had before migrated. This variable was categorical with three categories: family, friends, and others, with "family" as the baseline. Both the "friends" and "others" categories showed positive and statistically significant estimates at the 5% level, implying that respondents with connections in the destination who were friends or from other categories are more likely to remit money compared to those with family connections.

Next, the interpretation focuses on the model coefficients under the marginal effect column in Table 7.4. The marginal effect provides a more intuitive interpretation than logged odds; it estimates the expected probability of the dependent variable based on a marginal change in the independent variable. Below the marginal effect column in Table 7.4 are the ordered categories for the dependent variable (degree of remitting money back home): "not at all," "somewhat," "often," and "very often."

For the variable age, the expected probability of not remitting money at all back home declines by approximately 0.1% as a respondent grows a year older. Thus, the estimate recorded for age under the "not at all" category was negative and statistically not significant at 5%. In the same vein, the respondents who often remitted money back home recorded a negative significant estimate of -0.002. This indicates that the expected probability of a respondent who often remitted money back home declines by 0.002% as a migrant grows a

year older. Regarding migrants who somewhat remitted money back home, the expected probability of remitting money back home increases by 0.001% when they grow a year older. Furthermore, the expected probability of an immigrant remitting money back home increases by 0.006% when they grow a year older, given that he/she remits money very often.

The gender of immigrants was also statistically significant for all the ordered categories of the dependent variable except those who often remitted money back home. Regarding respondents who do not remit money back home at all, the estimate recorded was positive and statistically significant at 1%. This indicates that the expected probability of not sending money at all back home increases by 0.142% more for males as compared to their female counterparts. Thus, the male respondents do not remit money back home as compared to their female counterparts. Interestingly, the results show that the respondents who remit money very often are males. Notice that the estimate for gender under the “very often” category is positive (0.215). Thus, holding all other variables constant, the expected probability of remitting money back home given that the immigrant very often remits increases by 0.215% more for males as compared to their female counterparts. On the other hand, the expected probability of remitting money is 0.009% less for males as compared to their female counterparts given that they somewhat remit money back home.

Interestingly, there exist statistically significant relationships between respondents who were divorced and the ordered categories of the dependent variable (degree of remitting money back home). Notice that the marginal effect coefficient for respondents who do not remit money at all recorded a negative estimate (-0.025). This indicates that given respondents who do not at all, the expected probability of remitting money is 0.025% less for respondents who are divorced as compared to those who are never married. Also, the expected probability of remitting money decreases by 0.180% for those who are divorced as compared to those who are single given that they remit money very often back home. On the other hand, respondents

who somewhat remit and those who often remit have more expected probabilities of remitting money back home as compared to those who are never married.

Thus, regarding respondents who are divorced, the probability of not remitting money at all back home is less than those who are never married. Thus, the estimate recorded for divorced respondents under the “not at all” category is statistically significant and negative (-0.025). In the same vein, respondents who were divorced and belonged to the “very often” category also recorded a negative significant estimate (-0.180). This indicates that the probability of a divorced immigrant remitting money very often back home is less as compared to a never married immigrant. On the other hand, it can be noticed that divorced respondents under the “somewhat” and the “often” categories recorded positive significant estimates. These results imply that the probabilities of divorced respondents who somewhat or often remit money back home are higher as compared to those who are never married

The issue of networks at the destination was also considered an influential factor in remitting money back home in this study. Recall that this variable was categorised into three, viz; families, friends and others (i.e., people aside families and friends mostly termed connection men). It can be observed that the estimates recorded for “friends” and “others” under these ordered categories (not at all, somewhat and often) of the dependent variable were not statistically significant under 5%. However, the estimates recorded under the “very often” category were statistically significant. Notice that the estimate recorded for friends under the “very often” was negative. This indicates that holding all other variables constant, the probability of respondents who had friends as their networks at the destination is 0.13% less in remitting money very often back home as compared to those whose networks at the destination are family members. Regarding respondents whose networks are “others”, the estimate recorded under “very often” was positively significant. Thus, the probability of respondents who had “others” as their networks at destination are 0.023% more in remitting

money very often back home as compared to those whose networks at destination are family members.

**Table 7. 5: Means of communication with family and friends**

Means of Communication	Frequency	Percentage
Phone Call	132	97.05
Text Message	1	0.74
Video call	1	0.74
Don't know	2	1.47
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Field data, 2022

Communication between migrants and their families or friends at the origin is a regular activity that helps them stay connected and share information. In this study, the telephone was identified as the primary means of communication. The majority of respondents (97.05%) used phone calls, with less than 2% using text or video calls. This finding is not surprising, as mobile communication services are widely available in the community, even for those who do not own mobile phones. This supports Baldassar et al.'s (2018) assertion that mobile phone communication is the most common medium for transnational connections.

Regarding the possession of functioning mobile phones, more than half (65%) of respondents reported having a working phone, while just over a third (35%) did not. The high number of transnational beggars with mobile phones at the destination can be attributed to the increasing importance of telecommunication in the lives of migrants, as noted by Vertovec (2004), as well as the affordability of phones in the market. One migrant shared that she purchased her handset for twenty-five cedis. It was observed that many who had mobile phones acquired them after arriving in Ghana, as they did not own phones when they first migrated. The availability of mobile phones enables migrants to stay in touch with their families and friends in real time, allowing for instant feedback. For migrants who do not own a phone, communication services are still accessible within the community. During in-depth interviews, one respondent, Madam Abi, from Maradi, explained that although she did not have her own mobile phone, she occasionally used her relative's phone to call home. She however noted that:

*I don't have a phone but when my sister's son was here anytime, he called home he informed me and I spoke to my people back home but since he went back I haven't spoken with anyone back home (Abi, age not known 55 years, August, 2022)*

The Network theory encourages solidarity and support among network members. Madam Abi though she has no mobile phone, often uses a mobile belonging to a family member at the destination to contact her family back home. Though (35%) reported having no phones there are mobile phone communication vendors in and around the community that provide mobile services. For example, Uria a 75-year-old, transmigrant beggar from Maradi disclosed that she does not have a mobile phone, but often patronizes mobile communication vendors to communicate with her family back home. Those who do not have phones are planning to get their handsets to make communication with the left behind easy.

With regards to the return intentions of migrant beggars, the majority of new migrants explained having the intention to stay until they achieve their migration aim, while others have cultivated a transnational lifestyle where they return and come back as planned. Migrants return to Niger in the form of short and temporary visits. The in-depth interviews better explained the temporary returns of the migrants in the study. One of the respondents said he visits home at least once every year in June and returns in October or November of the same year. He does this because he always wanted to be around during the farming season to ensure his household has food in the coming year (Field notes, October 2022). This finding was confirmed by one of the key informants in the community, Mr Abass, who was born and bred in the community and has been living there for over fifty years. He said the brief return to the origin has always been the culture of the Nigeriens in the community. Mr Abass said, the men usually go back home during the farming season to help prepare the land and plant. This finding aligns with Painter's (2021) assertion that people from Niger typically leave the country between October and December and return the following year between April and May, in time to prepare their lands for cultivation during the May or June rainy season. However, Mr. Abass disclosed that this pattern is gradually fading, as many migrants now

prefer to send money home for the work to be done, instead of returning themselves. They send funds to hire farm workers to manage the tasks for them (Abass, key informant, October 2022). For others, visiting home offers a chance to maintain physical contact with family and friends, helping to preserve ties with those at the origin. Among the 27 respondents in the qualitative study, eight had visited home since they began migrating to Ghana. Of these eight, three had visited twice, another three had gone back three times, and two had visited four times. Eighteen respondents reported that this was their first time coming to Ghana and had not yet returned home. In terms of gender, it was found that males are more likely to return home, primarily to oversee their farming projects and visit their families. Madam Buya, a 50-year-old widow from Maradi, mentioned that she had been home twice. The first time was when her daughter was about to marry. Though she initially planned not to return, she was compelled to come back to Ghana because her daughter required additional items. Madam Buya explained that she returned to Ghana once more because she lacked the funds to buy the items her daughter needed and came back to work and earn the money. This is what madam Buya noted:

*On my first visit my eldest daughter was old and of age to get married but I didn't have money and that was the reason why I came so the money that I got here during that time was what I used in sponsoring the marriage ceremony. Again, she needed a few items which I didn't have so I came for the second time to come and look for money (Buya, 50-year-old, August, 2022).*

Migrants come to Ghana for a reason and also return for a reason. Though the migrant wished not to come back to Ghana, circumstances in her family and the lack of economic opportunities in the village made her return to Ghana.

Another transnational activity of migrants is their membership in associations such as home town association, work, religious and others.

**Table 7. 6: Membership Association Data of Migrant Beggars**

Association membership	Frequency	Percentage
------------------------	-----------	------------

No	108	79.41
Yes	22	16.06
Don't Know	6	4.38
Total	136	100%

Source: Field data, 2022

Table 7.6 shows that the majority of respondents (79.4%) do not belong to any association, while just over 16% reported being members of an association in Ghana. Those who were affiliated with an association revealed in the in-depth interviews that they were members of informal religious groups. When explaining why she does not belong to any hometown or other association, Yatu, a 53-year-old woman from Maradi, stated that she did not come to Ghana to join associations; she came here to make money and, therefore, does not have time for such activities. She further explained that she is a quiet person and prefers not to mingle in order to avoid any potential problems (Yatu, 53 years old, female, September 2022). She however said:

*“The only group I know of is the group that the Muslim leaders in this community have organised to ensure that we get access to the mosque. We also sometimes have meetings with our chief whenever he wants to pass on any information to us” (Yatu, 53 years, female, September 2022).*

The associations the respondents were referring to were not formal organisations, these were mostly ad hoc meetings that were held by their leaders occasionally to relay information to them. They did not belong to any association that demanded them to pay monthly or yearly dues or contribute to a project in their hometowns. Any gathering they are invited to is ad-hoc and informally organised says one of the respondents.

## 7.6 Chapter Summary

The study observed two approaches migrants take when planning to migrate for begging in another country. The first approach involves consulting their personal networks for assistance, which may include advice, financial support, accommodation at the destination, guidance on how to succeed in the begging profession, and other relevant information to help

in the decision-making process. The second approach occurs when migrants' transnational networks—comprising transnational migrants, returnees, and personal network members—take the initiative to suggest the idea of migration to potential migrants. Three groups of potential migrants were identified: (i) physically challenged individuals, (ii) able-bodied persons who must have children, and (iii) elderly but healthy individuals who are willing to fake disability for the purpose of begging. The study also identified three types of social network facilitation in the migration for begging among Nigeriens: 1) Personal networks, 2) Service provider networks, and 3) Altruistic networks. Social network involvement was found to span all three stages of migration: the Pre-migration phase, migration, and the post-migration phase. Migrants received support from families, friends, co-ethnic members, and co-nationals across different countries, who assisted in various ways along the journey. Regarding transnational activities, the majority of migrants reported sending remittances back home. Most respondents were not members of any association. Furthermore, the majority communicated with their families back home via phone calls. Since remittance sending was prevalent among the migrants, the study explored the impact of certain socio-demographic characteristics (age, sex, marital status, funding, social networks, and length of stay) on the frequency of remittances. The study found that as migrants grew older in Ghana, the frequency of remitting money back home generally decreased. In terms of gender, females were found to remit more often than their male counterparts. Regarding marital status, those who were never married remitted more often than married individuals. Interestingly, divorced migrants also remitted more often than those who were never married, while separated migrants also had a higher frequency of remitting compared to the never married.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### MIGRANT'S SOURCE OF INCOME AND LIVING CONDITIONS AT THE DESTINATION

#### 8.0 Introduction

This chapter provides a detailed discussion on the nature and forms of begging among migrants in the study area, exploring how it is conducted and the characteristics of child begging. It also examines the post-migration experiences of these migrants, focusing on their economic activities, earnings, use of health services, and sleeping arrangements. The primary aim is to investigate the relationship between the migrants' work and their living conditions at the destination. Finally, the chapter explores the outcomes of migration for Nigerien migrants in the context of "migration for begging."

#### 8.1 Begging among Nigeriens in Accra

The phenomenon of begging among locals, trans-locals, and transnational migrants is not new and is not peculiar to developing countries; it is a global issue (Falck, 2021; Friberg, 2020). This section sheds light on the nature, forms, and methods of begging activities conducted by Nigerien begging migrants in the study, an aspect that is missing from the migration-for-begging and transnational beggar literature in Ghana. Although there have been studies on Nigerien transnational beggars in Ghana, these have primarily focused on linguistic abilities (Amuzu et al., 2017), child beggar education (Kyereko, 2018), and migratory patterns and street experiences among the Tuaregs in Accra (Osei, 2021). This section presents and discusses the characteristics of begging among Nigerien Hausa beggars in Accra. The research aligns with Adriaenssens and Hendrickx's (2011, p. 24) definition of begging as "informal work in a public place, consisting of a receiver asking for a non-reciprocated gift." Begging is considered informal work in that it belongs to the category of

economic activities that disregard costs and are not eligible for formal society's privileges, rewards, or rights. It also aligns with Owusu-Sekyere et al.'s (2021) conceptualization of begging as a “business.” The study observed that migrants approach their begging activities with a business mindset, treating it as a serious income-earning activity. For 85% of the respondents, begging was their primary source of income, while 15% combined it with secondary jobs.

Begging, as observed in the study, involves asking for and receiving both cash and non-cash items from willing well-wishers, either in public or private, with no work done to justify the gift. Common methods of begging included exhibiting signs of dependency, displaying disabilities, pleading in the name of God, and deceit. The study's definition of "begging" aligns with other studies (Osei, 2021; Owusu-Sekyere et al., 2021), which describe it as an act involving a giver and a receiver, where the receiver does no work in exchange for the gift. Begging on the streets and in public places has long been a common activity for vulnerable, poor individuals and sometimes pretenders, including locals, trans-locals, and transnationals (Salifu & Abdul-Karim, 2023). However, the study's findings diverge from other studies (Babangida et al., 2021; Salifu & Abdul-Karim, 2023), which define begging as occurring only in public places. The study discovered that Nigerian beggars in Accra also beg in private settings. Some respondents were found to occasionally visit the private homes and workplaces of specific clients (well-wishers) for significant sums of money, either on a weekly or monthly basis. These individual philanthropists tend to give generously to beggars in private but are not as inclined to offer donations in public spaces.

Migrants, particularly women and children from Niger, living on the streets of Accra, are primarily involved in begging (Kyereko, 2020; Amuzu et al., 2019). The migrants in the study were identified as belonging to different age groups and genders, indicating that migration for begging is an activity open to all, except for a few, notably young adult males

(see chapter four). This finding aligns with a similar study by Salifu and Abdul-Karim (2021), which highlighted that begging is no longer exclusive to the poor, elderly, or physically challenged individuals.

The study also identified four groups of Nigeriens engaged in begging in the study area: (1) children, (2) able-bodied individuals, (3) the elderly and infirm, and (4) physically challenged persons. Regarding the children who accompany their parents for begging, the main reason for their participation is to assist their parents in begging. One respondent mentioned that well-wishers tend to give more to children than to adults, which is why children are used to beg. Some participants also noted that people tend to give money to children on the streets without being asked. In this arrangement, the children do the begging, while the parents monitor their activities from a distance. Children who do not beg in traffic "danger zones" typically move from shop to shop in areas like Accra Central and vehicle stations with their parents, without staying in one place for long. Respondents emphasized that the use of children in begging is the primary source of income, with many parents believing that children bring in more money. Some parents view their children as key to their financial success in begging. While some parents hope their children will eventually stop begging, they often do not have specific plans for them if they cease begging and remain open to any opportunities that could help them transition out of the begging lifestyle. Children, for their part, give every pesewa they earn to their parents, and if they need anything, they must first ask for permission.

The second group consisted of able-bodied persons who pretended to be disabled in order to solicit money from well-wishers. This category primarily included middle-aged women engaging in deceptive practices. One evening, during a community visit around 5 o'clock, the research team witnessed a shocking incident involving five women. These women, who appeared to be disabled, were in wheelchairs and had just finished their begging activities for

the day. To our surprise, they suddenly started getting out of their wheelchairs one after the other. When we inquired about their actions, one of the community informants explained that the women were feigning illness to garner sympathy. They would not receive money if they begged without the appearance of being disabled, but if they used wheelchairs and approached passersby, people would feel pity and donate. The informant further revealed that these women intentionally made themselves smell unpleasant to provoke donations. They bathed only once a day, and some didn't bathe at all, while others only washed their legs and faces occasionally. This group used deceit to secure financial assistance.

The third group consisted of frail, elderly, and infirm individuals. These were genuinely older and ill individuals, often over the age of 65, who resorted to begging due to their age and physical condition. Some of them used wheelchairs, while others relied on walking sticks, often accompanied by a child. The final group was made up of individuals with physical disabilities. These were individuals with visible disabilities such as blindness, paralysis, and other physical deformities. This group included both middle-aged adults and some children of both genders.

Another key characteristic identified in the study was the different "types of begging" that Nigerian beggars engage in at their destination. This refers to the prevalent forms of begging among Nigerian migrants in the study area. Bukoye (2015) suggests two ways to categorize begging: by the beggar's appearance or by the technique and mode of begging. However, the study identified three broad categories of begging, derived qualitatively: (1) the specific locations where begging occurs, (2) the techniques and modes of begging, and (3) the physical appearance of the beggar.

The study identified several typologies associated with the locations where migrants engage in begging. The findings revealed that Nigerian beggars were found in various locations

beyond the streets, contradicting the common conceptualization of begging as primarily a "street activity" (Bukoeye, 2015). Migrant parents and children did not restrict their begging to the streets; they also frequented other locations, supporting Salifu and Abdul-Karim's (2020) study on beggars in Nima. The study classified five distinct types of begging based on the location: (1) street begging, (2) community begging, (3) market/shop-to-shop begging, (4) religious grounds begging, and (5) street corner begging.

Street begging primarily occurs on streets and at traffic lights, often referred to as "danger," a popular term used by both parents and children. "Danger" describes the traffic lights or junctions where migrants typically beg. Street begging is especially common among children and elderly women within the migrant population. Hardi, an eleven-year-old, confirmed that he engages in begging and selling along the streets of Shiashie and the 37 Military Hospital area. Specific street begging locations identified in the study included Barrier Junction traffic light, Dansoman Junction traffic light, 37 Military Hospital traffic light, Shiashie traffic, Gulf House, Paloma traffic light, and Airport traffic light.

Community begging is another form of begging that takes place primarily within communities inside and outside the study area. In this type of begging, migrants select specific communities as their regular begging spots, going from house to house and vehicle stations to solicit alms. This type of begging is predominantly practiced by respondents who are mobile. For example, Mr. Danla, a sixty-year-old partially blind beggar, solicits alms in the Sukura and Korle-bu communities with the help of his son. Ram, a thirteen-year-old girl, and her grandmother also beg in the Lapaz community at times. Wheelchair-bound respondents typically do not engage in this type of begging. Two groups were observed in this category: (1) disabled men and women who are mobile and (2) able-bodied women who beg with children. They visit houses within their chosen communities daily. Communities where this type of begging occurs include Abossey Okai, Kaneshie, Sabon Zongo, Korle-bu,

Sukura, Lapaz, Achimota, and Dansoman.

The third type of begging is market/shop-to-shop begging. In this type, beggars target markets and shops, going from shop to shop within commercial areas, primarily in the Central Business District (CBD), to ask for alms. Locations such as the shops in Abossey Okai, Kaneshie, and Accra Central were mentioned by respondents as common sites for this type of begging.

The fourth type of begging by location identified in the study was religious grounds begging. This form of begging involves migrants choosing to beg either on or around the premises of churches or mosques. Religious locations serve as significant begging spots for many migrants, with some making mosques their permanent begging locations, while others use such places as a resting spot after their day's work from other locations, rather than as a permanent begging site. A few respondents mentioned combining begging at churches in Abossey Okai and mosques. The study supports Andriotis's (2016) assertion that religious institutions foster the giving of alms, making holy places popular begging locations. Some respondents viewed begging as a legitimate means of income, and mosques were identified as particularly busy locations, especially on Fridays, the peak day for begging among the respondents. This finding aligns with Taiwo's (2018) argument that the high incidence of begging on Fridays is due to beggars taking advantage of the "Jumma" (Friday) prayers to collect "Zakat" (alms) from the Muslim community. Furthermore, the study found that some respondents beg sitting at street corners and pavements to beg. This type is where respondents chose begging locations along pavements but not necessarily a traffic intersection or a major street. They were located within communities and places with heavy human traffic along sidewalks and pavements. Men were observed to practice such begging.

Furthermore, the study identified an interesting changing trend in the begging locations of

Nigerien migrant beggars after the 8th June 2022 forced return exercise in Accra and Kumasi, spearheaded by the Niger embassy in Ghana (Ministry of Gender and Social Protection, 2022). The study's observations and interviews with respondents and key informants from the community provided another location-related type of begging which is yet to capture the attention of researchers and policy implementers. The research revealed what I call "low visibility and high visibility begging". These were begging locations that thrust beggars into the limelight (high visibility begging) and the locations that shield migrants from the public eye (low visibility begging). A key informant from the community narrated: madam, they are being careful now, it is their presence on the streets that is bringing so much public attention to them and particularly the children they use (Key informant, October 2022). Migrants were gradually moving from begging locations with high visibility appeal towards locations with low visibility appeal. Media and public attention on the Nigerien beggars have become topical in recent times as a result of how visible these beggars are particularly on the streets of Accra and other major cities in the country (Ansah, 2022; Abisa, 2022). Studies on Nigerien beggars in Ghana capture similar street location identities among this population (Amuzu et al., 2019; Kyereko, 2020). The issue of visibility has thus become a central issue in discussions on begging, not only in Ghana but globally (Kaushik, 2014; Faller & Vilhelmsson, 2016). As a result, the study compared various begging locations based on their visibility and how they shielded beggars from excessive public attention. The two major locations were street begging locations versus other begging locations. The study observed that Street begging had a high visibility appeal compared to locations such as market/shop-to-shop and community begging that had low visibility appeal. High beggar visibility locations such as the street and traffic intersections were found to be the locations where the public and media identify beggars easily. This is evident in almost all media reports on beggars (Ansah, 2022; Cromwell, 2022; Abisa, 2022). The street/traffic intersections give high visibility because Nigerien migrant beggars find it difficult to blend in when it comes to

such locations as a result of their unique way of appearance. On the other hand, beggars were able to blend in at the market/shop-to-shop locations because of the high number of different looking people in such locations.

Mr. Danla, a sixty-year-old beggar, explained that the social welfare and the Niger Embassy in Ghana had repatriated most of them due to the increasing number of begging migrants on the streets. However, Mr. Danla believed that those who refused to leave and the new arrivals after the forced return have now adapted their approach. According to him, rather than continuing street begging, which attracted unwanted attention, some have chosen to beg in markets and shops, where beggars are less visible and blend in more easily. (Field notes, November 2022).

The second major category of begging found in the study is the types of begging associated with the mode or technique of begging. The following were the four typologies associated with migrants' mode of begging; (1) Active begging, (2) passive/classic begging (3) persuasive begging and (4) Itinerant begging. These types of begging are reported in other studies (Babagida et al., 2022; Owusu-Sekyere, 2020). Respondents were found to be involved in active begging by directly approaching people on the street, communities and shopping centres and directly asking for money. The study found that the majority of the respondents were mostly active in their mode of begging. Others are also observed to be passively engaged in begging by sitting in and around especially mosques in the communities waiting for well-wishers to come and donate without actually asking for it. This is similar to the classic way of begging where beggars sit at a particular place to receive alms (Adriaenssens and Hendrickx, 2011). Again, others were identified to be engaged in "persuasive begging". Most of the respondents were identified to be practising "persuasive begging". Respondents especially the children use prayers, plead, accolades (praise people by calling them Alhaji and Haji), beg in the name of Allah, use their hand to show signs of

hunger or food, and keep stand by the person or shop until something is thrown at them. One of the child beggars Hardi who is a nine-year-old girl narrated that, when she meets people, she tells them to help her not for her sake but for the sake of the Prophet Mohammed (Peace be unto his name). In situations where the person does not understand what she said, Farida would keep standing until she is given money before she goes if not, she stands for a while and moves on to another person. Others were also taught to say “Allah Waye”, literally meaning: “Allah help you sell everything”. This is what Farida and her friends usually say to those they approach whether they have given money or not. They also persuade by pleading with the emotions of givers. These children begin whatever they want to say with “mepa wo kyew” meaning I beg you. The study found that those who beg on the street and those who beg in markets/shops do not use the same persuasive language. “Allah Waye” is particularly used by those who beg in markets and shops. Those on the streets pray for Allah’s blessings and journey mercies for the people they approach. This finding is similar to the medieval age religious beggars who begged with the name of the lord as their livelihood (Luther and Hotten, 1860), while others used their physical characteristics and dependency appeal to persuade passers-by.

The final group identified in the study is Itinerant begging. Some respondents were found to engage in itinerant begging, moving from place to place to solicit alms. These migrants travelled long distances on foot, moving from one community to another. This differs from community begging, which occurs within a specific community, as itinerant begging involves covering broader areas. This type of begging was particularly noted among a few male migrants.

The final discussion in this section is the type of begging by migrants’ physical appearance. The study found that some migrants deliberately appear scruffy to enhance their dependency appeal and also use their appearance to deceive people into giving. The study found and

grouped respondents' type of begging by appearance under two categories: (1) Deceptive begging and (2) Genuine begging. Deceptive begging was a form of begging where able-bodied respondents pretended to be disabled by sitting in wheelchairs to beg at traffic lights and around mosques. These respondents faked their disability status to deceive unsuspecting givers. Genuine begging, on the other hand, is the type of begging where respondents are truly physically challenged and are not faking their disability status to manipulate almsgivers. These individuals genuinely need the support of others due to their disabilities.

The appearance or the looks of migrants in the study is one of their major identity markers, followed by their language. Among the migrants, 100% of the females wore hijab, which contributes to their visible presence on the streets. The wearing of hijab is common among the Muslims in the study community, where migrants reside, making it easier for them to blend in. However, it becomes more difficult for them to blend in when they leave the community. The wearing of hijab is the first symbolic feature that helps identify Nigerian beggars on the street. However, the appearance referred to in this section is not about the wearing of hijab but rather the deliberate changes in migrants' physical outlooks to pretend to be disabled and deceive people for their money.

## **8.2 Characteristics of child begging in the community**

In the study, child begging was conducted by boys and girls mainly below the age of fifteen. According to Kaushik (2014, p. 7), "child begging is a type of begging in which boys and girls under the age of eighteen beg, mostly through psychological and practical coercion". The study identified three groups of people who migrated with children to the destination. Child beggars in the study were mainly brought to Ghana by either (1) their biological parents (2) relatives, such as grandmothers, aunts, elder sisters and (3) "magajia" (bosses). All these

women were referred to by the children as their mothers and the men as their fathers. The behaviour can be explained by the African fosterage system that allows both kin and non-kin members to enter into arrangements that provide care and support to children who cannot live with their biological parents (Ariyo et al., 2019). Out of the 12 children interviewed 3 reported they came with a “magajia” literally meaning (boss). The “magajia” is the person who brought children and their parents and she was the person who thought them how to go about the begging business at the destination.

Again, the children in the study were brought to Ghana for two main purposes: (1) purposely for begging and (2) for the purpose of becoming a beggar’s aid. Though men in the study also migrated with children, the purpose of bringing these children was identified to be different from those of the women. While the purpose of bringing children by women was to use them as “begging tools”, the children men beggars migrated with were brought purposely to assist them in their begging activities because the majority of the men in the study were physically challenged. The research describes the use of children by parents as “tools” because they the begging business possible and the migration for begging worthwhile. The New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) posits that households use migration as a means to diversify income. Therefore, the household decision for children to migrate is a deliberate attempt to use them as “begging tools” to earn the needed income to support the family. The Livelihood Approach explains that migration is an important type of diversification that connects migrants to economic opportunities for the survival of individuals and households (Ellis, 2000). This finding is in line with Kyereko (2020, p.42), who posits that in Ghana, migrant parents use children as “instruments in soliciting for alms,” as givers are more inclined to give to children than to parents. In explaining the reasons for bringing children, a new migrant, Mr. Sofu, a forty-five-year-old from Zinder, said he came to Ghana after a discussion with his elder brother, who lives here. He was advised by his

brother to come to Ghana and beg for alms. Becoming a partially blind beggar meant Sofu would be useful to himself and his family. Because of Sofu's poor eye condition, he could no longer work on his farm or even pay others to work for him. He decided to come to Ghana and beg for money, as suggested by his brother. Sofu brought one of his sons to help him with the begging, as, being blind, he needed assistance wherever he went. Sofu is now an itinerant beggar, moving around various markets and communities with the help of his 13-year-old son (Field notes, October 2022).

Further, the study identified four types of child beggars according to their physical health and what they do. These were: (1) child beggars aged between thirteen and seventeen years in wheel chairs who are assisted by their parents to beg, (2) disabled infants carried around by their parents for alms solicitation, (3) able body children who only beg and (4) able bodied children who combine begging and selling of petty items. Among the able body child beggars, it was observed that there were those who per their age they could not beg alone and therefore needed their parents or elder siblings to beg with them. These were very young children between the ages of 1 to 3 years and were mainly boys. The reason why very young boys were preferred over girls of the same age was that girls needed more attention and care from parents. Having boys at the destination means minimum care work for parents. They brought more boys because respondents are of the view that boys can handle the street work better as they grow older. One key informant explained that they bring along more boys because they want them to stay here and take advantage of the numerous job opportunities available when they grow here. After helping their parents at a young age, they finally join their local networks for bigger opportunities in their teen age (Key Informant 3, November, 2022). Further the study identified that there were other child beggars both boys and girls who also beg alone but were supervised by adults who monitor their street activities. There were also others who sell items such as shoe polish, cotton swaps, brushes and face masks

on the street and also beg at the same time. Among these children were some twelve and fifteen-year-old girls who carried their younger siblings to beg, and they also sell sometimes.

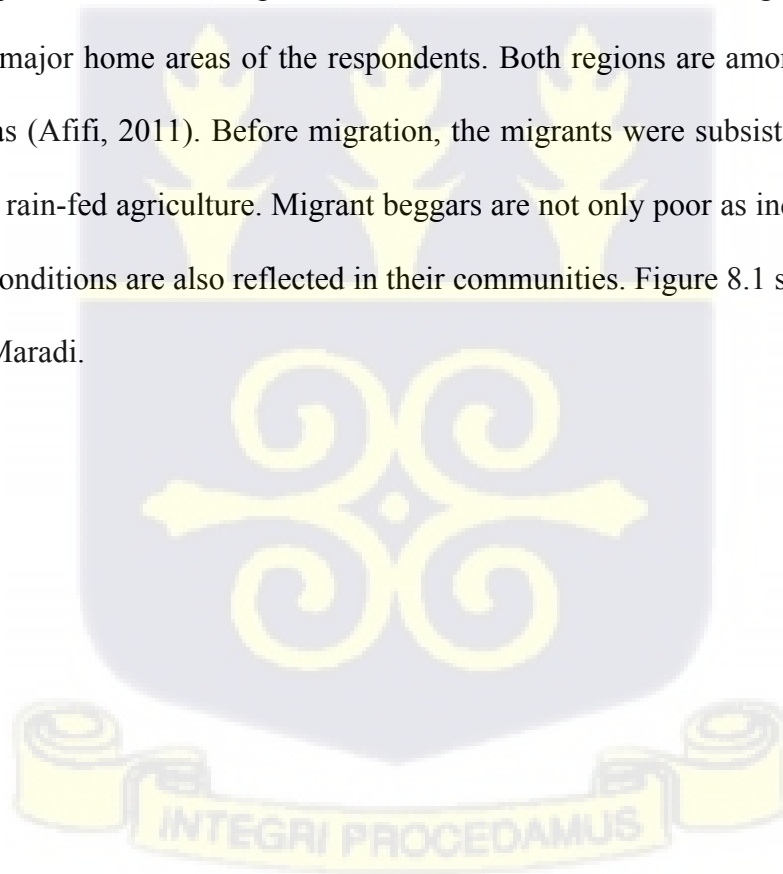
It was further observed that, the child beggars' activities on the street were highly gendered. In most cases, young girls between the ages of 12-15 use their younger male siblings between ages 1-3 as "persuading objects" to beg, while the male counterparts of the same age group assist disabled parent beggars while few of them sell brushes, tissues, shoe clearers, clean windscreens and beg as well. At this same age category, some child beggars switch to active hawking and become passive beggars because they no longer appeal to the giving population. This finding is in line with Oluwole's (2016) assertion that child, disable and the elderly are used most often to beg or enter begging because of their dependency and innocent appeal. In this instance, beggars draw on their human capital such as their begging skills, their persuasive abilities and their appearance of ill-health, to achieve their migration goals.

### **8.3 Migrant Living Conditions**

Migration from Niger Republic to Ghana can hardly be understood without a closer look at the migrants' living conditions and income opportunities in Niger. Studies have shown that the living conditions of migrants differ significantly based on their work, legal status, place of origin, and place of destination (Djuve et al., 2015). This section looks at migrants' living conditions at the origin. As discussed earlier in chapter two, Niger is one of the poorest countries in the world and is also associated with a large extent of instability, chronic violence, humanitarian crises, and large-scale migration (Boas, 2019). Niger being one of the poorest in the world means it has insufficient funds to develop its resource base (Painter, 2021). The Length of the rainy season mostly lasts for only two months in the north, and between four to five months in the south (World Bank group, 2023). With an estimated population of 24,484,587 (2022 estimate), Niger's economy is largely agrarian and

subsistence-based. The country experiences very high temperatures year-round, with a long dry season from October to May and a short, relatively irregular rainy season from June to September. With only a four-month window for farming, the continuous degradation of agricultural and pastoral lands due to drought and desertification has led to a series of bad years, particularly at the agro-pastoral level, resulting in significant socio-economic consequences (Boas, 2019). According to IOM (2021), 85% of the population of Niger depends on the environment for their livelihood. Unfortunately, these environmental and climate shocks impact the livelihoods of communities, causing a growing number of people to leave their homes due to poverty (Cantrell et al., 2012).

Migrants originate from the rural parts of Maradi and Zinder, which are agro-pastoral regions and the two major home areas of the respondents. Both regions are among the most food-insecure areas (Afifi, 2011). Before migration, the migrants were subsistence farmers who depended on rain-fed agriculture. Migrant beggars are not only poor as individuals but their poor living conditions are also reflected in their communities. Figure 8.1 shows an image of a village in Maradi.



**Figure 8. 1: A village in Maradi**



**Source: Wikimedia Commons**

The food situation continued to worsen the more people left the country (Afifi, 2011). Most rural communities in Niger are deprived of basic amenities including villages in Maradi and Zinder. Most of the respondents considered their living conditions at the origin to be poor because the villages they originate from had no potable water, electricity, clinics or formal schools. They however had some privately owned “makaranta” in some of the communities. Medical facilities are located in bigger towns further from their villages. Narrating the living conditions at the origin, one of the respondents explained that the place is not conducive to living which is why they leave to other countries. Their main source of water was wells. They had no radio or television in their household and according to her, they wouldn’t have come to Ghana if they had these electronic gadgets (Field note, September 2022). Their living conditions were the major causes of their migration. In comparing the conditions in Niger and Ghana, the majority saw the living conditions in Ghana to be better than that of Niger, however, some explained it is their country and they cannot speak evil about it.

The research identified that 100% of the respondents are rural dwellers with farming (crop and animal) as their primary occupation at the origin. In exploring migrants' living conditions at both the origin and destination, the qualitative interviews showed that migrant's living conditions at the origin could be described as poor. The research found that basic social services such as hospitals and formal type of schools were lacking in most of the villages the respondents hailed from. Again, basic services such as electricity, toilet facilities and potable drinking water were also non-existence in most communities. Though some respondents reported having electricity in their community, they admitted their household had no access to such services. It was only the rich in the community who had access to lights. Hospital bills were reported to be very high at the origin making the use of alternative medicine very common in households at the origin.

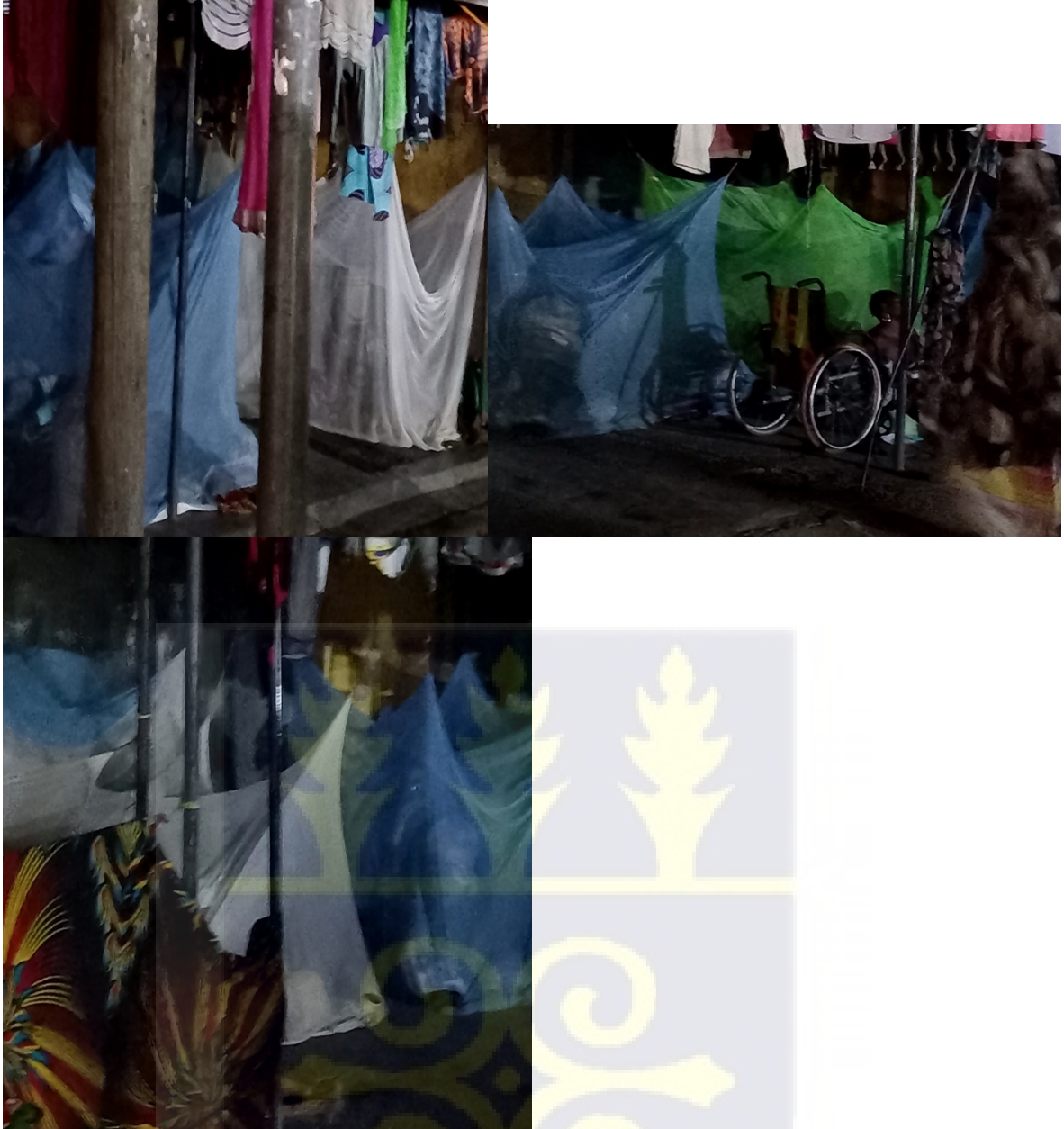
As mentioned earlier, the study adopted four living condition indicators from the Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS-7, 2019). The indicators were: average daily income, sleeping situation/room density, health care and type of housing. The indicator, the daily average wage, was measured by the daily minimum wage in Ghana (i.e., GHC 13.5). If an immigrant earns a daily wage of GHC 13.5 and above, he/she is considered non-poor to someone with less than this amount. The second indicator, overcrowded room, is also measured by the number of migrants who sleep in a single room. If the number of migrants who sleep in a room is more than four, it is considered that the family/individual is experiencing poor living conditions compared to those living in a room with less than four people. Good health has always been considered an indicator for measuring living conditions. The study measured good health by exploring respondents' behaviour towards good practices such as utilization of health services by visiting a health centre at least twice a year.

The last indicator the study considered was the type of housing accommodation. With this indicator, three types of housing systems common to immigrants in Ghana were considered namely; squatting, renting and owning. In this study, squatters are considered migrants who occupy shelters with no legal claim to them. Renters are those who rent rooms and pay rent to house owners and house owning is defined as having a sleeping place with one's privacy without paying rent. These migrants are given this dwelling by members of the community and also by migrants who have returned to their home country. This population is very few.

Figure 8.2 is an open shelter accommodation for squatters and figure 8.3 is rental accommodation in the study area.



**Figure 8. 2: Type of Squatters' Accommodation at the Destination**



**Figure 8. 3: Rental Accommodation for migrant beggars in the community**



**Migrants' accommodation at the destination (Source: Field work images, 2022)**

#### **8.4 Sources of Income generating activities of Nigerien Transnational beggars**

The study identified that respondents in the study area adopt a variety of strategies to earn income at the destination. As a result of this respondents were asked about their major source of income at the time of data collection. The following economic activities were identified: begging, beautician, water vending, assisting food vendors, petty trading and laundry. Though migrants migrated purposely for begging, some migrants had the opportunity to engage in other jobs to supplement what they got from begging. Table 8.1 presents the categories of jobs or income generating activities engaged in by transnational beggars at the destination.

**Table 8. 1: Category of Jobs done by Nigerien Transnational beggars**

<b>Work</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Beautician	3	2.2
Begging (Only)	115	84.6
Water Vending	3	2.2
Helping Food Vendors	3	2.2
Trading	3	2.2
Laundry	9	6.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Field work data, 2022

With regards to migrants' major source of income at the destination, the study found that 100% of migrants engaged in begging; however, the majority (84.6%) reported that begging is their main source of income while (15%) reported their major source of income comes from the menial jobs they do. The high number of those who said begging is their major source of income can be explained by the fact that begging proved to be lucrative among beggars in the study. The livelihood strategy Approach posits that people use migration as a means of livelihood and in this instance migrants who migrate for the purpose of begging use migration as a livelihood strategy. The finding corroborates Djuve et al. (2015) study on transnational beggars in Scandinavian countries that found that migrant beggars combine begging with other jobs such as collecting bottles and selling magazines and other wide range of livelihood strategies.

The majority of migrants (85%) who do only begging was found to cut across all age groups and sex. These include girls, boys, women and men. Choosing to beg alone was identified to be determined mostly by (1) the physical condition of both migrant parent and child (ren), (2) age as well as (3) the sex of the migrant. In terms of age and how it defines migrants' full-time begging activities, elderly migrants (65 years and above) were observed to be engaged in only begging compared to middle-aged and young migrants. With regards to gender, (100%) of the males were found to be engaged in only begging. In terms of physical characteristics, the study identified that parents with disability and parents with disabled children were those who engaged in only begging. To further understand the begging activity of migrants' several cases gathered from the in-depth interviews shared more light to explain this category of work. Focusing on the economic activities of migrants of the study, Madam Suha who is a 70-year-old woman from Maradi came to Ghana with 2 children and is currently engaged in full-time begging as her means of livelihood narrated the following in his interview. Suha does only begging because of her age, she is too old to involve herself in

strenuous economic activities such as doing laundry or fetching water for either domestic or construction workers in the community. Begging is the only thing she does because of her age she said. Although it is exhausting, she and the children she migrated with beg along the Ring Road Central traffic light. What she mostly does is supervise the children while they beg and she also begs when there is heavy traffic. Suha said she takes time to rest whenever she is tired while the children continue begging because they have more energy than she does. As a person who engages in only begging, she does this by combining her part of the work with the supervision of her children because she has to make sure they don't stray or get hit by a vehicle. For this reason, she said there was no way she would consider any additional job for any extra income. Suha's earnings and that of her children put together were enough for them (Fieldwork, July 2022-December 2022). The finding supports Taiwo's (2018) assertion that begging as a livelihood strategy adopted by poor migrants at the destination is a precursor to a more permanent way of earning a living. Migrants will accept any type of work provided it can bring them income to earn a living.

Aggregating all the non-begging economic activities it was found that close to 15% of migrants reported to have alternative jobs in the community. The study revealed that none of the men were engaged in any of the alternative jobs, all 15% of the population were women. A qualitative interview with one of the migrants who works as a laundry or washing woman explained the reasons for the relatively low number of people combining other kinds of work aside from begging. Madam Yatu who is a 53-year-old woman from Maradi who came to Ghana with her eight-year-old granddaughter to engage in begging came to Ghana in 2020. She said she had the opportunity to do laundry for people just about five months ago. She was initially into full-time begging until she had this job. Irrespective of the fact that Yatu has a secondary job she combines the work with begging. She said the washing business is often at its peak on weekends. However, during low peak days and mostly on Fridays she

goes to sit at “Nguan Makafe” (blind people’s mosque) to partake in the receiving of alms from people who come to give to the poor and needy in the community. When Yatu was asked about what her eight-year-old daughter does, she explained that she goes to the street to beg with another child under the supervision of one of the women. She emphasized that even those who trade and help food vendors partake in alms receiving when people come to the community to give. Yatu further explained that getting to wash people’s clothes did not come easy. She spoke with some Ghanaians about her intentions and they found people for me to wash for them. Studies have shown that migrants do not just move to cities in search of jobs, they do so because they have connections (Awumbilla et al (2017)). It was Yatu’s social capital that helped her to find another job aside begging.

*Before I came, I was told those who give arms usually give it to children but they don’t give it to adults so it’s the children we use. Though we also beg I go with my daughter and other women but I sit aside and watch them move around to beg and I must keep an eye on them and collect the money for safekeeping (Yatu, 53 years old, September 2022).*

It was obvious in the study that without children migrant beggars would be out of the begging business. With respect to the economic activities of children of migrants in the study, all twelve (12) child participants in the study were engaged in some form of income generating activity. Of the twelve (12) children engaged in economic activities, eight children were equally combining begging and other street related economic activities, two reported engaging in mainly street related economic activities with a little begging, while the remaining two engaged in begging only. The types of street related work migrants were engaged in included; selling cotton swaps, shoe polish, paint brushes, toffees, bitter cola, face masks and cleaning of wind screens of vehicles in traffic. Concerning age distribution, the age range of the children in the study was between (7 to 15 years old). Among them, the 12-15-year-old girls reported they conduct their begging activities using their little brothers as begging tools or persuasive objects, while those below the age of twelve, some beg in

addition to selling other items and others beg alone. It was observed that fourteen (15) sometimes engage in street hawking. Thus, for a beggar to attract sympathy from the public and potential givers, the age and the physical condition of the children matter when it comes to begging on the streets of Accra. Responding to the interview question on why she does not beg alone but goes begging with her little brother, Rasiya who is a 15-year-old, female, who came to Ghana in the company of her grandmother and two other children explained that, she goes begging with her little brother because people on the street insult her when she begs alone and she ends up coming home with empty pockets. She now goes to beg with her little brother because the people will think he is my child and I am unable to care for him. So, when they give it is because of the child and not me. Rasiya again disclosed that people tell her to go and sell pure water and stop begging, but with the little boy, they don't say anything like that. Another child beggar, Rama, who is thirteen (13) years old girl from Maradi came to Ghana with her mother, grandmother and brothers. She disclosed that every member of her family begs. Back home in Niger she was helping a woman to sell food and also clean dishes. Here in Ghana, Rama is engaged in begging and also sells polish, cotton swap and brush. Her ambition is to work hard and get more money to be able to afford an air freshener to sell. This has been documented by other studies Thus, child beggars are economically active and work hard to support their families in whatever way possible (Hall, 2016). The involvement of Nigerien children in begging and working on the street supports scholarly studies by Ojedukun (2015) that transnational child beggars in West Africa are mainly people from the Sahel region including Niger. With respect to sex distribution, two (2) out of the twelve children were boys who do both begging and other street work including cleaning vehicle windscreens while the remaining team (10) children were all girls engaged in begging and other street activities.

It is important to note that the majority (82%) of the study population were women who migrated to Ghana with either their children, grandchildren, children of other relatives, or a “magajia” (boss) for the purpose of begging. The findings support Hall’s (2016) study, which indicates that among the Nigerian migrants who migrate to beg, most are women with children who engage in begging. Regarding the beggars’ “condition of work,” the study identified the following factors associated with the conditions of begging among Nigerian migrants in the study: (1) the number of beggars in a group and their experience on the street, (2) days of work, (3) hours of work, (4) work orientation, and (5) an assessment of their work so far. With regard to the number of people working with migrant beggars, the study found that the number of individuals in a group depends on how many children the migrants brought. The average number of children brought per parent was two.

However, the qualitative interviews found that parents were able to bring as many as four children at a time. Migrants also begged in the company of other beggars at the same location. At the begging spot, they spread out and started begging. A respondent elaborated that those who have more children on the street get more money because each child is mandated to bring a specific amount home at the end of the day. Putting that together gives them more compared to those with fewer children (Field Notes, 2022). This finding is in line with studies that assert that mothers, parents, or adults use children to gain credibility in the begging business (Kaushik, 2014; Ojedokun, 2015; Kyereko, 2022). Concerning their begging experience on the street, respondents expressed mixed feelings. Some were of the view that Ghanaian people like them, while others said they experienced dislike from passers-by. However, the majority felt that people loved them and gave them money and other things they did not even ask for.

With regards to the number of days migrants beg, the study found that those who beg five days a week (36.8%) were more than the other categories. Next in the ranking were the

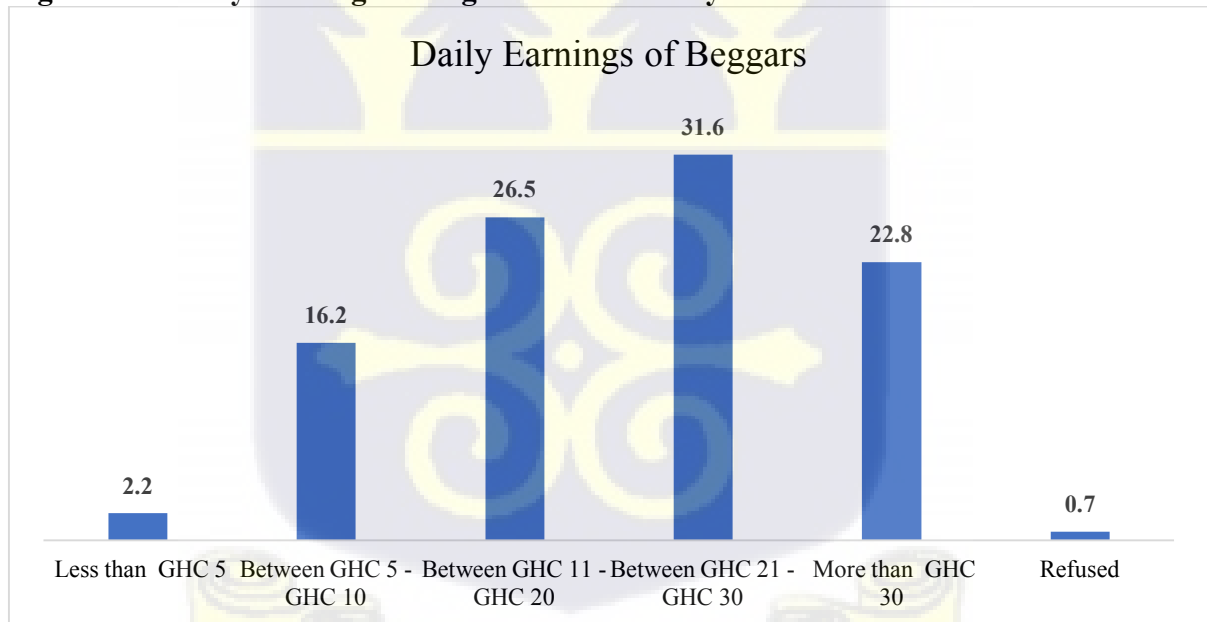
beggars who work six days a week (30.1%), followed by those who work seven days a week (25%), while a few (8.1%) reported working less than five days a week. The children's qualitative interviews show that most of the children beg every day of the week, from Monday to Sunday, leaving at dawn to their begging spots each day. Others beg from Monday to Friday and stay home on weekends. There were yet others who beg every day except Sundays. Regarding the time of work, some start at dawn even on weekends, while others begin in the afternoon during weekends. The children who had braiding skills used the weekends to braid people's hair. Amama, a ten-year-old girl, explained that they beg in the afternoon on weekends because there is usually less traffic at their begging spot in the morning. Migrants who do not beg on weekends use the time to do their laundry.

The third work condition that was explored was the number of hours migrants work in a day. In the study, begging migrants were identified to work for varying hours in a day. Among this population, those who worked for more than eight hours (50.7%) were more than the other groups. Next were those who work between five to eight hours a day (35.2%) while (14.1%) of the respondents reported they work less than five hours a day. Irrespective of how many hours migrants work, most of them start their work very early in the morning and leave in the evening. Though migrants have varying times for starting their daily begging activities most respondents start as early as 6 a.m. and come home between 4:30 -6:00 pm. This is exactly the rush hour period for workers to get to work and also the period for heavy morning traffic. Migrants who had their begging locations as far as Achimota, Kasoa, Dome, and ABC start their journey early because they trek towards the location and beg until they get there. Walking is one of the identity markers among migrants in the study, though they board commuters sometimes they walk more to save money. Madam Meadu a forty-seven-year-old narrated that, she wakes up at dawn bathes her four children and starts her journey towards Achimota between the hours of 4:30 and 5:00 am and usually gets home around 6:00 pm

each day (Field notes, September, 2022). The study also found that the time migrants start work depends also on the type of begging and not only distance and traffic. Those migrants who engage in the market/shop-to-shop start their begging activities at the time that the shop opens. In this case, migrants start their journey around 6 am start begging around 8:00 am and return at 5:00 pm when the shops close.

This section presents the daily and monthly income of respondents and also examines the relationship between migrant's work and their daily income. The exchange rate as of August 2022 was (GHC 8.2 to 1 US dollar). With regards to migrants' daily income, the study shows that the minimum a Nigerien beggar can earn in a day is GHC 5 (\$0.6) and the maximum is more than GHC30 (\$3.5) per day. Figure 8.4 below shows the daily income earnings of migrants in the study.

**Figure 8. 4: Daily Earnings of Migrants in the Study**



Source: Field data, 2022

For the purpose of this study, the daily income of respondents was grouped into five. These were: less than GHC5, between GHC5-10, between GHC11-20 between GHC21-30 and more than GHC30. From the figure presented it was established that more than a quarter of

26.7% of respondents made a daily income of between GHC21-30 (\$2.4 and \$3.5) while close to a quarter of 24.4% realized GHC11-20 daily (\$1.3 and \$2.3). Again, close to a quarter 23% earn more than GHC 30 (\$3.5) while less than 2% earn less than GHC5 (\$0.6) per day. Therefore, the minimum and maximum income of Nigerian beggars per day in Ghana was less than GHC5 and more than GHC 30 (\$3.5) respectively. The research further revealed that respondents' monthly income or earnings range between a minimum of less than GHC 200 to a maximum of GHC400 and above with an average monthly earning of GHC 307. It was identified that about a quarter (35%) of them make between GHC300-GHC 400 (\$37-\$49) per month while close to a quarter (30%) realized between GH200-300GH (\$24-\$37) monthly. Again, (21%) earned more than GHC400 (\$49) while (13%) earned less than GHC 200 (\$24) in a month. The evidence completely suggests that beggars' earnings are in the same range as other informal sector workers. By implication and as suggested by the livelihood theory, migrants assessed and evaluated the outcome of the begging business in terms of the income they would generate to make their choice of livelihood worthwhile. In 2017 the World Bank set the international poverty line which is the global absolute minimum wage to \$1.90 (2011 prices, \$2.47 in 2022 dollars). The study used this rate as an indicator to describe and also compare migrants' income with beggars in other countries. Per migrants' daily income in dollars, the average daily was calculated to be GHC22.55 equivalent to (\$2.75) which is higher than both the minimum in Ghana and the poverty line estimate.

The research agrees with Smith's (2005) assertion that the earnings of beggars differ from country to country and place to place whilst diverse views exist about beggar incomes or earnings. In Ghana, Owusu-Sekyere et al. (2018) found beggars saved an average of GHC400 (GH400 USD 100) per month, which is similar to the finding in this study in Cedi terms. While some studies and media reports assert that beggars receive high money from people (Qureshi et al., 2021; Taiwo, 2018). Other studies have indicated that begging generates either much or less than a minimum wage job (Smith, 2005; Lein et al., 2008). A recent study

on begging migrants' economic earnings revealed that migrants most often earn between \$2-\$16 per hour, \$20-\$60 per day and \$200-500\$ per month in the United States (Reinhard, 2023). The findings support the studies of Owusu-Sekyere et al., (2018) which assert that people actively choose to beg rather than any other livelihood because of the ease in getting money.

Regarding the relationship between migrant work and daily average income, the study found that (69%) of respondents earn more than the minimum wage per day while (31%) earn less than that daily. The results indicate that the majority (80%) of respondents whose major income earner is begging earn more than the minimum wage. The p-value was recorded (0.27) which was greater than 0.05. This means there was no significant relation between the work that fetches migrants the most income and how much they earn daily. This implies that the kind of work a Nigerian migrant does in Ghana does not determine the level of her/his daily income. Table 8.2 presents the relationship between migrants' work and Income.

**Table 8. 2: Relationship between Work and Daily Average Income**

Work	Daily Income				Total
	Less Than GHC 13.5		More Than GHC 13.5		
	Frequency	Conditional Probability	Frequency	Conditional Probability	
Beautician	0	0%	3	3%	3
Begging only	36	89%	79	82%	115
Water Vending	1	2%	2	2%	3
Helping Food Vendors	1	2%	2	2%	3
Trading	0	0%	3	4%	2
Laundry	3	7%	6	7%	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>42</b>		<b>94</b>		<b>136</b>
	<b>Chi-Square Value</b>		<b>P-Value</b>		
	7.67		0.27		

Source: Field data, 2022

Studies on the informal economy suggest that earnings from begging are likely to be rather low, probably below the poverty line (Adriaenssens and Hendrickx, 2011). This assertion

was confirmed by Oluwole’s (2016) study, which found that disabled beggars in Nigeria earn incomes below the poverty line, a finding that contrasts with the results of this study. However, the finding corroborates with other studies that show some beggars’ earnings may be higher than the minimum wage (Owusu-Sekyere et al., 2018; Reinhard, 2023; Smith, 2005). What can be inferred from this finding is that the population of Nigerian beggars in the study area were above the poverty line at the time of data collection in 2022.

**Table 8. 3: Relationship between Work and Utilization of Health Service**

Work	Health Care						
	More than once in a year		None in a year		Once in a year		Total
	Frequency	Conditional Probability	Frequency	Conditional Probability	Frequency	Conditional Probability	
Beautician	0	0%	3	2%	0	0%	3
Begging	2	100%	109	84%	4	80%	115
Fetches Water	0	0%	2	1%	1	20%	3
Helping Food Vendors	0	0%	3	2%	0	0%	3
Trading	0	0%	3	2%	0	0%	2
Washing	0	0%	9	7%	0	0%	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>136</b>
	<b>Chi-Square Value</b>		<b>P-Value</b>		<b>Cramer's Coefficient</b>		
	8.633		0.734		0.00		

Source: Field data, 2022

Table 8.2 gives a vivid presentation of the condition probability of a Nigerian migrant’s job, given the daily wage she/he receives, the chi-square value, the p-value and Cramer’s coefficient. It can be noticed that the probability of a Nigerian migrant beggar in Ghana taking beautician as a job is 2.2%. However, the conditional probability of a Nigerian transnational beggar being a beautician and earning less than the daily minimum wage in Ghana is 0%. On the other hand, the conditional probability of a Nigerian transnational beggar being a beautician and earning more than the daily minimum wage in Ghana is 3%. This indicates that if a transmigrant beggar takes beautician as a profession in Ghana, her living conditions will be good. Just as beggars in Brussels describe their begging activity as work (Adriaenssens

and Hendrickx (2011; Jackman, 2022) so do the Nigerien transnational beggars in Ghana see begging and the menial jobs as work since that is their source of livelihood. Thus, there is a higher probability that a Nigerien migrant in the study area will resort to begging as her/his job/occupation rather than look for an alternative livelihood. It can be seen clearly that approximately 69% of migrants who engaged in begging earn more than the minimum wage in Ghana, whereas 31% of these migrants earn less than the minimum wage. Migrants who earn more than the minimum wage and by implication, a higher income attributed This means that the majority of the Nigerien immigrants who have resorted to begging as a profession/job do earn more than minimum wage. Notice that the p-value of the chi-square analysis recorded more than 0.05, thus, the statistical relationship is not significant. This indicates that there is no relationship between the kind of job a Nigerien transnational beggar does and the wage he/she receives. In brief, the chi-square test performed establishes that the kind of work a Nigerien migrant does in Ghana does not determine the level of his/her wage. This is because informal economy jobs pay similar wages.

Health care is one of the key indicators of living conditions and a measure of poverty (GLSS-7, 2019). The recommended medical routine check-ups are determined by an individual's age, risk factors, and current health status, according to Sullivan (2020). Sullivan indicated that although opinions vary regarding frequency, the author recommended having a check-up once every three years if the individual is under fifty years of age and in good health, and once a year if the individual turns fifty. Furthermore, if the individual has any chronic diseases, they should see a doctor more frequently, regardless of age (Sullivan, 2020). This section explores respondents' health as a living condition indicator, focusing on migrants' behaviour towards best practices in relation to the utilization of health services, types of medical facilities used, medical expenditure, and health insurance (GLSS-7, 2019). The results indicated that 95% of respondents had not visited any health facility in the past year, while 1% reported visiting more than once. Additionally, only 1% of those who solely beg accessed health care more

than once in the year. None of the other work groups did. Also, the p-value greater than 0.05 indicates no significant relationship, which implies that the type of work a migrant does in Ghana does not determine how frequently they utilize health services. Studies have revealed that migrants' continued reliance on begging as a source of income leads to a waste of human resources and has a severe impact on their health (Nweze et al., 2019). Table 8.3 presents the relationship between transnational beggars' work and their utilization of health services.

From the results, above in Table 8.3 which establishes the relationship between a migrant's work and the access to health services in Ghana, it can be noticed that around (95%) of them had not utilized health care services in a year. Again, it can be seen that approximately (5%) of Nigerien transnational beggars in Ghana visited a health centre once a year, whereas only (1%) of the respondents visited a health centre more than once a year. With regards to the kind of work in health care, it can be noticed that apart from (2%) of those who only reported utilizing a health centre more than once in a year, none of the other work groups could visit more than once in a year. Again, (3%) of those who beg alone and (33%) of those who had water vending as a secondary job were able to visit a health centre ones in a year. With regards to the relationship between a migrant's work and the utilization of health services, the chi-square test showed no significant difference since the p-value ( $0.73 > 0.05$ ) was greater than 0.05. This indicates that the frequency at which migrants in the various job categories utilize health services is not different. The qualitative interviews found that though majority (95%) of those who engaged in begging alone reported they had not accessed any health services over the period. In finding out why the low patronage in the utilisation most explained they had not fallen ill that would necessitate them to visit a hospital or go for a checkup. This is what Madam Dama, fifty years old, narrated:

*I have not visited any hospital for years, even when I was in Niger was not going. Even in my village we don't have a clinic so we give birth at home. We have our local medicine that we take any time we feel unwell. Those who have money visit the hospital often. Why should I go to the hospital if I'm fine? Since I came, I have been buy medicine at the store any time I'm sick (Dama, fifty years old,*

However, 70% of the participants reported they patronize drug stores any time they feel body pains, headache or feverish. Though they do not patronise hospitals and clinics in the municipality, they seek medical attention from herbal medicine vendors (15%), pharmacies (15%) and drug stores (70%) in the community. Any time ~~they~~ any child or even the parent feels sick or tired they visit a nearby drug store pay mostly GHC 5 for a mixture of drug. Most of the drugs migrants purchase were painkillers and malaria drugs (Field notes, September, 2022). The study also observed that begging activities brought about health problems such as body pains, headache and fever. One of the respondent sells herbal medicine to her co-beggars. She usually goes to Agbogbloshie to buy her ingredients for the preparation that cures, fever, malaria, body pains and other sicknesses. Her major target market are her colleague co-beggars (Field notes September, 2022). It is evident in the study that, migrants' use of clinics and hospitals for their health care need is low among the population but rather high in patronizing of the counter drugs in drug stores. The Municipality has created 10 CHPS zones to enhance the provision of primary health care in all communities to enhances access to health services throughout the Municipality, reaching out to those that may not have access to health centres or hospitals (Ablekuma Central Municipal Assemble, Draft Document 2020). The finding supports studies that asserts that, migrants shy away from formal institutions and will always resort to other alternatives (Ambrosini, 2017). One of the key informants who is a community member also confirmed that, though there are a number of hospitals in the community, transnational beggars prefer patronizing drug stores for their health care needs and also would opt to be sent back to their home country for health care when the sickness becomes severe. With regards to National health insurance, majority (86%) are not registered on the National Health Insurance scheme, while (13%) are registered and also covered by the scheme. Madam Habi who is a 63-year-old female from Maradi explained how she and her two children accesses health care at the destination. She said she and her children are not registered members of the NHIS and therefore they do not have NHIS card,

she currently patronises drug stores and pharmacy shops whenever any member of the family falls ill (Habi, 63-year-old, female, September 2022).

Due to the lack of affordable housing and the high cost of rented spaces, migrants' accommodation in the city of Accra has become a major issue of concern for city authorities. The Ghana Living Standards Survey (GLSS) identifies renting, ownership of dwelling places, and squatting as the types of migrant housing in Ghana. Regarding room density as an indicator of living conditions, it was found that 90% of respondents sleep in overcrowded spaces, while 10% sleep in less crowded spaces. The study also found that all migrants in the various job categories live in overcrowded rooms. With regards to the relationship between work and room density, the chi-square test indicated that the p-value > 0.05. This implies that, regardless of the type of work a migrant beggar engages in, there is a possibility that the person resides in an overcrowded space. Table 8.4 focuses on presenting the relationship between transnational beggars' work and their room density sleeping situation in the host community.

**Table 8. 4: Relationship between Work and Room density/sleeping situation**

Work	Room density/sleeping situation				Total
	Less Than 4 in a Room		More Than 4 in a Room		
	Frequency	Conditional Probability	Frequency	Conditional Probability	
Beautician	0	0%	3	2%	3
Begging	11	79%	104	84%	115
Fetches Water	0	0%	3	2%	3
Helping Food Vendors	0	0%	3	2%	3
Trading	1	7%	2	2%	2
Washing	2	14%	7	6%	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>136</b>
	<b>Chi-Square Value</b>		<b>P-Value</b>	<b>Cramer's Coefficient</b>	
	4.412		0.621	0.00	

Source: Field data, 2022

Some studies have shown a relationship between the work one does and house overcrowding (Nasreen and Ruming, 2019; Serrano, 2020). All other things being equal, if one has a job that pays well, they can afford better accommodation. From the study population, it can be

seen that about 90% of our respondents sleep in spaces that can be described as single rooms with more than four people, whereas approximately 10% of our respondents sleep in rooms with fewer than four occupants. The type of spaces referred to as single rooms are the frontages of shops and stores, kiosks, and containers that migrants occupy in the community. For example, at night, migrants use large plastic sheets and bedsheets as partitions to create temporary rooms to indicate their personal spaces. It can be observed that about 90% of our respondents sleep in rooms with more than four people, while approximately 10% of respondents sleep in rooms with fewer than four occupants. For instance, the conditional probability of an immigrant beggar dwelling in rooms with more than four occupants is approximately 84%. Thus, there is a very high chance that a Nigerien transnational beggar in Ghana will dwell in a room with more than four occupants. As stated earlier, all other things being equal, the better your job, the better the accommodation you will have, and vice versa. This finding can be explained by the fact that migrants are willing to live in overcrowded rooms with their children and other kin members to save money and achieve their migration goals. It is also due to limited accommodation for migrants in the community, making living in overcrowded rooms inevitable. The research supports Memmott et al.'s (2012) argument that poorly paying jobs constrain people's income, thereby compelling them to dwell in rooms with inadequate space. From the study population, it can be seen that about 90% of our respondents live in single rooms or spaces with more than four people, whereas approximately 10% live in rooms with fewer than four occupants. When comparing the type of job a migrant does to house overcrowding, almost all migrants in the various job categories reside in rooms with more than four occupants. It was observed during data collection that two or more families were identified as occupying the frontage of a shop, which they used as their sleeping place.

The fourth and final indicator to examine is work and type of housing. Due to the lack of affordable housing and the high cost of rented spaces, migrants' accommodation in the cities has become a huge issue of concern for city authorities (Agyei-Mensah and Owusu, 2012). With regards to the relationship between migrant work and type of housing, the research found that (86%) of migrant beggars are squatters and no full-time beggar owns her/his accommodation. The chi-square value 0.034 is less than 0.05 indicating a relationship between work and accommodation type. Meaning the type of housing accommodation differs across the kind of job migrants engage in. Studies have shown that the better one's job the more likelihood it is for them to own a house or live in a decent accommodation. Type of housing has been identified as a measure of living condition among migrants.

**Table 8. 5: Relationship between Work and Type of Housing**

Work	Type of Housing						Total
	Owner		Renting		Squatter		
	Frequency	Conditional Probability	Frequency	Conditional Probability	Frequency	Conditional Probability	
Beautician	0	0%	2	13%	1	1%	3
Begging only	0	0%	6	40%	109	93%	115
Water Vending	1	25%	2	13%	0	0%	3
Helping Food Vendors	0	0%	1	7%	2	2%	3
Trading	1	25%	1	7%	1	1%	2
Laundry	2	50%	3	20%	4	3%	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>136</b>
	<b>Chi-Square Value</b>		<b>P-Value</b>				
	68.44		< 0.05				

Source: Field data, 2022

This finding was explained by one of the respondents by name Meadu, forty-seven years and migrated with four children. She currently combines begging and water vending. This was Meadu's explanation.

*I used to sleep out her with the others when I came, but because of the good relationship between me and those around, someone gave me his shop to sleep in. I only pay GH20 every month. That place is better because at least I have my privacy and my things are secured, but the children*

*sometime follow their friend to sleep out here (Meadu, 47 years, September, 2022)*

Table 8.5 above gives a vivid presentation of the relationship between a migrant's job and the house type (owning, renting or squatting). It can be seen that the majority (86%) of our study sample are squatters. This finding corroborates with studies with similar findings (Adejokun, 2015). Also, it can be seen that approximately 3% of our study sample own where they reside, whereas approximately 11% of our study sample also rent where they reside. Notice also that the condition probability of a migrant working as a full-time beggar given that she/he resides in a rented accommodation is (40%). Also, the conditional probability of a migrant working as a beautician given that she/he lives in a rented accommodation is 13%. Interestingly, the conditional probability of full-time beggars owning an accommodation she/they reside in is 0%. Thus, no migrant was working as a beggar in our study sample who owns an accommodation, she/he resides in. However, the conditional probability of a beggar given that he/she is a squatter is approximately 91%. This implies that there is a 91% chance that a Nigerian squatter in Ghana is a full-time beggar. The p-value recorded in Table 7.5 is less than (0.05). This indicates that there is a relationship between the work of Nigerian migrants and the type of housing. The test was statistically significant. Thus, the type of housing differs across the kind of job a Nigerian immigrant does in Ghana. The Cramer's coefficient recorded (0.46) indicates that a stronger relationship exists between the work of a Nigerian immigrant and the type of housing. The finding is expected because the major aim of transnational migrant beggars is to work, get money and remit their resources for investment and consumption for the left behind. Given the high rent in the cities, the majority of transnational beggars cannot afford to pay rent which is why the majority are squatters. Taking shelter in front of a shop costs nothing which is why migrants prefer such forms of accommodation so they can save towards their migration goals. A respondent associated the overwhelming population of squatters who begin the community with the fact that the host community is predominantly a Muslim community that believes in the giving of alms (Field

note, September 2022). This finding supports Oluwole's assertion that Islam worshippers believe in "zakat" (almsgiving) as something that is sanctioned by Allah himself (Oluwole, 2016). In a community where almsgiving is religiously encouraged, begging can never be disapproved (Jelili, 2013). As earlier indicated, housing is a good indicator for measuring one's living condition. It is a major element of one's material living standard. The kind of work one does may have an impact on his type of housing. In explaining how she came to own her accommodation, Madam Yatu, a fifty-three-year old who begs and does laundry narrated that;

*I live in a kiosk that someone gave me. I know I did not buy it but I do not pay rent either. I don't pay anything. It was given to me for free to sleep in. I own it because the owner gave it to me, that that does not mean I will take it to Niger when am returning. I keep my thing and also allow others to keep their items here.*

Figure 8.3 above is an image of the type of rented accommodation for migrant beggars in the community. Sabon Zongo (new Zongo) is one of the several communities in the Municipality that hosts the majority of the respondents in the study and is identified to be one of the low-class neighbourhoods for migrants (Agyei-Mensah and Owusu, 2010).

### **8.5 Migration Outcomes**

Migration outcomes among most West African migrants have largely been positive within the literature, though some studies point to negative experiences (Adepoju, 2010). Since migration outcomes could either be positive or negative depending on the type of migration (Awumbilla, 2015), the study sought to find out the outcomes of migration for begging in migrant households in Niger. The Livelihood Approach posits that after potential migrants succeed in their migration, this must manifest in their migration outcomes, which can either improve, remain the same, or deteriorate (Tanle, 2015).

### 8.5.1 Multinomial Logistic Regression

The main purpose of this section is to assess the likelihood of socio-demographic factors, macro factors, intermediaries, and livelihood strategies on migration outcomes. To investigate this, a Multinomial Logistic Regression was used. This statistical test was employed because the outcome variable being predicted is ordinal and has more than two categories in the migration outcome response: *better, worse, and the same*.

The “socio-demographic was measured by age and gender variables, whereas “intermediaries” were measured by the personal network variable in the model. Also, the “macro factor” was measured by the economic factor (job opportunity) and sending remittances. Again, “livelihood strategy was measured by full-time or part-time begging and living condition by “housing and wage” indicators. Regarding this analysis, the “better” category of the response variable (migration outcome) was used as the baseline category. The model was assessed using the Odds Ratio Test and was statistically significant at  $\chi^2 = 27.56$ . The McFadden’s  $R^2$  statistic recorded for the model was 0.4782; implying that the predictor variables improve the model fit by approximately 48%.

The multinomial logistic regression was used in this study to examine the effect of socioeconomic factors on migration outcome. This test was used because the response variable has trichotomous response. Recall that our dependent variable (migration outcome) was categorised into three levels, viz; worsen, same and better. In view of the nature of our dependent variable (migration outcome), the ordinary least squares estimation (OLS) will not be the best statistical technique for this analysis (i.e., assumes that the distances between categories of responses are equal). Regarding the breach in the OLS assumption (given our dataset), we employed the multinomial logistic regression (i.e., the nominal categories are more than two). The multinomial is a sub-type of the logistic regression where the dependent variable has more than two categories. There are  $K$  total categories of the outcome, and the number of comparisons is then  $K - 1$ . The equation for the model is written in terms of the

logit of the outcome, which is a comparison of a particular category to the referent category. Note that the multinomial logistic regression model with more the one independent variable can be defined as

$$y^* = \mathbf{X}_i\beta + \varepsilon_i, \quad \varepsilon_i \sim N(0,1) \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Note that the vector of  $\mathbf{X}_i$  variables are the independent variables; they can be a combination of all the four measurement scales (i.e., nominal, ordinal, interval and ratio). In the multinomial logistic model observed response categories ( $y_i$ ) are tied to the latent variable ( $y_i^*$ ) by a measurement model that divides  $y_i^*$  into  $K$  categories so that  $K - 1$  threshold are estimated. Thus,

$$Y = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} 0 \text{ if } y^* = \ln\left(\frac{\pi_0}{\pi_K}\right) \\ 1 \text{ if } y^* = \ln\left(\frac{\pi_1}{\pi_K}\right) \\ 2 \text{ if } y^* = \ln\left(\frac{\pi_2}{\pi_K}\right) \\ \vdots \\ K-1 \text{ if } y^* = \ln\left(\frac{\pi_{K-1}}{\pi_K}\right) \end{array} \right\} \dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Given the categories of the dependent variable (migration outcome) and setting  $K = 3$  as the baseline category,

$$\text{if } K = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1 \text{ if the Migration Outcome is Worsen} \\ 2 \text{ if the Migration Outcome is Same} \\ 3 \text{ if the Migration Outcome is Better} \end{array} \right\}$$

the log of the odds ratio be defined in the following equations (equations 3 and 4):

$$\ln(Y_1) = \ln\left(\frac{\pi_1(x)}{\pi_5(x)}\right) = \alpha_k + (\beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \dots + \beta_nX_n) \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

$$\ln(Y_2) = \ln\left(\frac{\pi_2(x)}{\pi_5(x)}\right) = \alpha_k + (\beta_1X_1 + \beta_2X_2 + \dots + \beta_nX_n) \dots\dots\dots (4)$$

where  $\alpha_k$  and  $\beta_p$  are the parameters to be estimated. Notice that  $\alpha_k$ 's are intercepts and  $\beta$ 's are the coefficients of the independent variables.

The findings garnered from the multinomial logistic regression analysis are presented in Tables 8.6 and 8.7.

**Table 8. 6: Multinomial Logistic Regression Model (Same)**

Variables	Estimate	Odds Ratio	P-Value
Threshold 1	-5.950	0.003	0.020
Age	0.024	1.025	0.018
Gender (Baseline= Male)			
Female	2.163	8.700	0.994
Opportunity (Baseline= No)			
Yes	1.623	5.070	0.007
Housing (Baseline= Squatters)			
Rent	-2.574	0.076	0.995
Owner	-4.367	0.010	0.042
Wage (Baseline= Less than 13)			
More than 13	0.450	1.568	
Source (Baseline= Part time begging)			
Full time begging	0.665	1.945	0.455
Personal Network (Baseline= No)			
Yes	0.102	1.107	0.020
Remittance (Baseline= No)			
Yes	-2.431	0.088	0.004

Source: Field data, 2022

### 8.5.2 Categorical comparison for “better” as against “same” (Table 8.6)

The “age” variable was statistically significant among factors that influenced migration outcomes. Notice that a positive estimate was recorded for the age of respondents; hence, the probability of older immigrants experiencing the same migration outcome instead of a better outcome was 1.2 times more than younger immigrants.

With regards to gender the baseline category for the gender variable was the “male” category. Although the female category recorded a positive estimate, the p-value was not statistically significant at 5%. This implies that migration outcomes for males and females do not significantly differ from each other. Therefore, the probability of a male migrant beggar

experiencing the same condition instead of a better condition is virtually the same for a female immigrant.

Another variable that was considered was “opportunity for better Job”. Likewise, the “age”, and the “opportunity” variables were statistically significant; thus, respondents who migrated to Ghana for job opportunities recorded a p-value of 0.007 (which is less than 0.05). This implies that respondents who migrated to Ghana for job opportunities statistically differ from those who did not in terms of experiencing the same migration outcome instead of a better migration outcome. Thus, the probability of respondents who migrated to Ghana for job opportunities experiencing the same migration outcome instead of a better migration outcome was approximately 5.1 times higher than those who did not migrate to Ghana for better job opportunities.

With regards to the living condition indicator “Housing,” the housing variable had three categories (squatting, renting, and owning), with the “squatting” category as the baseline. It can be seen that the estimate recorded for respondents owning their place of abode was negative and statistically significant. This implies that respondents who own their place of abode statistically differ from those who are squatters in terms of experiencing the same migration outcomes instead of better migration outcomes. Thus, the probability of respondents who own their place of abode experiencing the same migration outcomes instead of better migration outcomes was 0.01 times lower than those who are squatters. However, respondents who rented their residence had the same impact as those who squatted in terms of experiencing the same migration outcomes instead of better migration outcomes (i.e., their estimates were not statistically significant at 5%).

Again, migrants’ “wage/income” was also considered. The “wage” variable had two categories, similar to the “gender” and “opportunity” variables, representing respondents

whose daily wage was either below or above the minimum wage in Ghana (with those who earned below the daily minimum wage as the baseline). Although the estimate recorded for those who earned more than the minimum wage was positive, the p-value was not statistically significant at 5%. This implies that migration outcomes for those who earned more than the minimum wage did not significantly differ from those who earned less than the minimum wage. Therefore, the probability of those who earned more than the minimum wage experiencing the same condition instead of a better condition is the same as for those who earned less than the minimum wage.

Source. The “source” variable indicates the main source of migrants’ income—whether migrants engage in full-time or part-time begging (with part-time begging as the baseline). The results indicated that there is no significant difference in migration outcomes between migrants who engage in full-time and part-time begging. Hence, the probability of those who engage in full-time begging experiencing the same condition instead of a better condition is the same as for those who engage in part-time begging.

With regards to the variable “personal network,” this measured whether migration was facilitated by the social connections of migrants, with those who responded that they did not have support as the baseline category. The estimate for “yes” was positive and statistically significant. Therefore, the probability of those who had social support experiencing the same migration outcome instead of a better migration outcome was 1.1 times higher than those who did not have social connections.

Finally, the “remittance” variable assessed whether or not migrants remit money back home (to Niger), with those who responded that they do not regularly send money home as the baseline category. It can be seen that the estimate for “yes” was negative and statistically significant. Therefore, the probability of those who send monies home experiencing the same condition instead of a better condition was 0.09 times less than those who do not send monies

home.

**Table 8. 7: Multinomial Logistic Regression Model (Worsen)**

Variables	Estimate	Odds Ratio	P-Value
Threshold 2	-2.11	0.12	0.040
Age	-0.26	0.77	0.001
Gender (Baseline= Male)			
Female	-0.40	0.67	0.564
Opportunity (Baseline= No)			
Yes	-0.99	0.37	0.036
Housing (Baseline= Squatters)			
Rent	0.02	1.02	0.450
Owner	1.58	4.87	0.037
Wage (Baseline= Below Minimum)			
Above Minimum Wage	0.45	0.70	0.040
Source (Baseline= Part time begging)			
Full time begging	-1.23	0.29	0.657
Personal Network (Baseline= No)			
Yes	1.76	5.84	0.005
Remittance (Baseline= No)			
Yes	1.10	3.00	0.048

Source: Field data, 2022

### 8.5.3 Categorical comparison for “better” as against “worst” (Table 8.7)

With regards to age in this set of comparisons, the “age” variable was statistically significant among the factors influencing migration outcomes. Notice that a negative estimate was recorded for the age of respondents; hence, the probability of older immigrants experiencing worse conditions instead of better conditions was 0.77 times less than younger immigrants. The reason may be that, the aged benefit more than the young in the field of begging. Again, considering “gender,” the baseline category for the gender variable was the “male” category. Although the female category recorded a negative estimate, the p-value was not statistically significant at 5%. This implies that migration outcomes for males and females do not significantly differ from each other. Therefore, the probability of a male immigrant experiencing the worst condition instead of a better condition is the same as that of a female immigrant.

The third variable considered was the “opportunity for a better job.” The “opportunity” variable was statistically significant; thus, respondents who migrated to Ghana for job opportunities recorded a p-value of 0.036 (which is less than 0.05). This also implies that respondents who migrated to Ghana for job opportunities statistically differ from those who did not, in terms of experiencing a worse migration outcome instead of a better migration outcome. Thus, the probability of respondents who migrated to Ghana for job opportunities experiencing a worse migration outcome instead of a better migration outcome was approximately 3.7 times less than those who did not migrate to Ghana for better job opportunities.

Further, note that the housing variable had three categories (squatting, renting, and owning), with the “squatting” category as the baseline. It can be seen that the estimate recorded for respondents owning their place of abode was positive and statistically significant. This implies that respondents who own their place of abode statistically differ from those who are squatters in terms of experiencing the same migration outcomes instead of better migration outcomes. Thus, the probability of respondents who own their place of abode experiencing the same migration outcomes instead of better migration outcomes was approximately 4.9 times less than those who are squatters. However, respondents who rented their residence had the same impact as those who squatted in terms of experiencing worse migration outcomes instead of better migration outcomes (i.e., their estimates were not statistically significant at 5%).

The “wage” variable also had two categories just as “gender” and “opportunity” variables, considering respondents whose daily wage was either below or above the minimum wage in Ghana (with those who earned below the daily minimum wage as the baseline). The estimate recorded for those who earned more than the minimum wage was positive and statistically significant at 5%. This implies that migration outcomes for those who earned more than the

minimum wage significantly differ from those who earned less than the minimum wage. Therefore, the probability of those who earned more than the minimum wage experiencing the worst condition instead of a better condition is 0.7 times more for those who earned more than the minimum wage as compared to those who earned less than the minimum wage.

Also, the “source” variable indicates the main source of migrants’ income; thus, whether migrants do full-time or part-time begging (with part-time begging as the baseline). The results indicated that there is no significant difference in migrating outcomes between migrants who do full-time and part-time begging. Hence, the probability of those who do full-time experiencing the worst condition instead of a better condition is the same for those who do part-time begging.

The “personal network” variable also measured whether or not migration was facilitated by the social connections of migrants, with those who responded that they did not have support as the baseline category. It can be seen that the estimate for “yes” was positive and statistically significant. Therefore, the probability of those who had personal network support experiencing the worst migration outcome instead of a better outcome was 5.8 times more than those who did not have social connections.

Finally, with respects to remittances, the “remittance” variable also assessed whether or not migrants remit money back to Niger, with those who responded that they do not regularly send money home as the baseline category. It can be seen that the estimate for yes was positive and statistically significant. Therefore, the probability of those who send money home experiencing the worst migration outcome instead of a better migration outcome was 3 times more than those who do not send money home.

In assessing the comparisons between categories in this section, the estimates (odds ratio) garnered for the age, job opportunity, housing, wage, social network and remittance variables

were statistically significant for both comparison 1 (see Table 8.6) and comparison 2 (Table 8.7). Given comparison 1 of this section (taking the better migration outcome as the baseline category), it was revealed that as migrants grow older, they are more likely to experience the same migration outcome. It was also identified that migrants who migrated to Ghana purposely for better job opportunities are more likely to experience the same migration outcome as compared to those who did not come to Ghana for better job opportunities. Moreover, the probability of a migrant owning his/her place of residence to experience the same migration outcome is lesser than those who are squatters. Furthermore, the probability of a migrant earning more than the minimum wage to experience the same migration outcome is higher than those who earn less than the minimum wage. It was revealed that the probability of a migrant with social networks experiencing the same migration outcome is higher than that of those with no social network. It was also established that the probability of a migrant who remits monies home (Niger) to experience the same migration outcome is lesser than those who do not remit.

Considering comparison 2 of this section (taking the better migration outcome as the baseline category), it was found that as migrants grow older, they are less likely to experience worse migration outcomes. It was also established that migrants who migrated to Ghana purposely for better job opportunities are more likely to experience worse migration outcomes as compared to those who did not come to Ghana for better job opportunities. Moreover, the probability of a migrant owning his/her place of residence to experience a worse migration outcome is higher than those who are squatters. Furthermore, the probability of a migrant earning more than the minimum wage to experience a worse migration outcome is higher than those who earn less than the minimum wage. It was also found that the probability of a migrant with social networks experiencing worse migration outcomes is higher than that of those with no social networks. It was also concluded that the probability of a migrant who

remits monies home (Niger) to experience worse migration outcomes is higher than those who do not remit.

In the qualitative data research, these outcomes were manifested in migrant's achievements so far. The research revealed that 77.4% acknowledged that their migration aims were achieved while 32.6% said they are yet to achieve their goals. Most of those who are yet to achieve their goals attributed it to the payment of loans which seem to be slowing down their personal goals. The research identified diverse responses from the qualitative interviews which included; improved income sources, better living conditions, facilitated chain migration, and improved food security in migrant households which were all made possible through migrants' remittances. It also identified one major consequence which has to do with the care and supervision of the left behind. Among the diverse migration outcomes identified, the following; improved income source and getting enough food to eat were the major highlights in most of the migrant narratives. They explained that they now have money to be able to invest in their farms and buy nice things for themselves and their family and also help others. A study Djuve et al, (2015) in the three Nordic cities (Oslo, Stockholm and Copenhagen), identified some beggars who reported paying for their begging spot. The report indicates some men from the same region as the beggars living in these cities approach newly-arrived beggars and extort money from because the spot they use for begging belongs to them (Djuve et al, 2015). The livelihood framework explains that migration outcome can either be *better, same or worse*. Such experiences have a negative influence on migration outcomes by reducing the real income of migrant beggars.

With regards to sending remittances majority close to 80% (79.6%), reported sending remittances while the remaining said they are yet to send (see chapter six for detailed discussion on remittances). Respondents were able to send money home because they get money from the work they do. These remittances help to support those back home as

explained in other parts of this section. The livelihood theory posits that good livelihood strategies yield better outcomes. In this instance, the choice of livelihood strategy (migration for begging) has improved the living conditions of those left behind through migrants' remittances. In this situation, the migrant's livelihood choice at the destination has become worthwhile because they can earn income and send some home.

In exploring migrants' migration for begging outcomes, the study identified that the majority (86%) of migrants' households living conditions at the origin were better while 8.8% reported that their households' living conditions were the same, and few (5.2%) said it was rather worse. The majority of migrants who reported their migration has benefited their households for the better explained by comparing their previous experiences at the origin and the responsibility to ensure that the needs of the left behind were catered for. The majority of migrants' reasons for migration included running away from hunger and starvation and the inability of their families to provide food for their households. Majority of the men admitted that their improved income situation has translated into investments in their farms at the destination while the majority of the women were much more concerned about providing food and better living conditions. The men specifically said it is their responsibility to own farmlands and cultivate them. They also have to take care of their families especially where most of them are from polygamous homes. In a country where 85% of the population depends on the environment for their livelihood (IOM, 2021), these development agendas of migrant beggars will go a long to improve their communities. Some studies assert that unskilled male labour migrants from the Sahel region engage in circular migration by moving to either the major cities internally or to neighbouring countries during the dry season and returning during the rainy season, (Afiifi, 2011; Cantrell et al., 201). Nevertheless, most male begging migrants in the study often send money home to their households between June and September (farming season) to take care of their farms while few of them return during this period to take care of their farms. For the sake of migration, almost all the respondents were

able to remit both cash and other material items to ensure food security in their households.

This is what one of the male respondent's narrated:

*The major reason I came here was to come and beg to get money to buy food for my family and also invest in my farm. I thank God I have been able to do this since I started coming to Ghana about four years ago. I send money often for them to feed so the issue of not being able to buy food is solved (Hadala, sixty-four years old, September, 2022).*

Mr Hadala and many others like him have had positive migration outcomes so far. Most migrants also saw their income situation improve because of migration. They get money from begging and can provide for their families. Similar studies on Nigerien migrants reported similar outcomes (Afifi, 2011). Some explained that aside from the money they get, they also get enough food to eat, they do not have to think about where their next meal will come from. In assessing the comparisons between categories in this section, the estimates (odds ratio) garnered for the age, job opportunity, housing, wage, social network, and remittance variables were statistically significant for both Comparison 1 (see Table 8.6) and Comparison 2 (Table 8.7). Given Comparison 1 of this section (taking the better migration outcome as the baseline category), it was revealed that as migrants grow older, they are more likely to experience the same migration outcome. It was also identified that migrants who migrated to Ghana purposely for better job opportunities are more likely to experience the same migration outcome compared to those who did not come to Ghana for better job opportunities. Moreover, the probability of a migrant owning his/her place of residence experiencing the same migration outcome is lesser than those who are squatters. Furthermore, the probability of a migrant earning more than the minimum wage experiencing the same migration outcome is higher than those who earn less than the minimum wage. It was revealed that the probability of a migrant with social networks experiencing the same migration outcome is higher than that of those with no social network. It was also established that the probability of a migrant who remits money home (to Niger) experiencing the same migration outcome is lesser than

those who do not remit. The study supports studies that aver that positive migration outcome goes a long way to improve the living condition of both migrants and families left behind and also has the tendency to reduce rural poverty (Ellis, 2003; Awumbilla et al., 2014; Awuse, et al., 2020). Though the majority of Nigerien migrant beggars acknowledged the fact that their migration outcome has been positive, few thought their migration has been a mixed bag of both positive and negative consequences on the family left behind. The major issue of concern was the ‘care and supervision’ of those left behind. Madam Arma, a sixty-eight-year-old woman from Zinder, was particularly worried about her grandchildren. Before Arma came to Ghana a few months ago, she was living with her grandchildren, whose parents had migrated to Algeria. The oldest among the grandchildren was a seventeen-year-old boy. Her major concern was how they were managing to feed themselves. According to Arma, she always thinks about them whenever she is about to eat; her worry is the high possibility that they might go to bed on an empty stomach because there is no adult figure in the household to supervise and care for them. Although she has been sending them money through the network she came with, she doesn’t know if they have been receiving the money (Field notes, October 2022). Migrants’ concerns about the care and supervision of children left behind are legitimate because studies show that, in the absence of proper supervision, monitoring, and guidance, children left behind are likely to suffer from depression, health problems, and challenges that affect their personal choices (Botezar & Pfeiffer, 2014; Castelli, 2018).

## **8.6 Summary of Chapter**

The main purpose of this chapter was to assess the nature of migrant work and how it is conducted at the destination and also assess the work they do on the income they earn, utilization of health services, sleeping situation and type of accommodation. This section also assesses migrants’ migration outcomes. There are other economic activities that migrant beggars engage in aside from begging at the destination. Although all migrants in the study

migrated for the purpose of begging, the majority (85%) were found to engage solely in begging as their primary source of income, while a few (15%) combined begging with other jobs such as working as beauticians, assisting food vendors, petty trading, water vending, and laundry work. Four categories of people engage in begging in the study area: children, able-bodied persons, the elderly and infirm, and the physically challenged. Qualitatively, the study identified three ways by which begging can be categorized among Nigerian begging migrants: (1) the specific begging locations where the act is conducted, (2) the technique and mode of begging, and (3) the appearance of the beggar. Concerning the location or begging spot, five types of begging were conceptualized. These were: (1) street begging, (2) community begging, (3) market/shop-to-shop begging, (4) religious grounds begging, and (5) street corner begging. The study found that the type of work Nigerian migrants do in Ghana does not determine the level of their income. This was attributed to the fact that both primary and secondary jobs had a similar income range. Additionally, the majority of migrants were found to earn more than the minimum wage.

With regard to health care, 95% of the migrants had not visited any medical facility in a year for check-ups. However, the majority of migrants patronized drug stores and pharmacies for their healthcare needs within the community. Migrants' work was shown to have no significant relationship with the frequency of their medical visits. In terms of their sleeping situation, the majority slept in overcrowded rooms and spaces. Almost all migrants in the various job categories lived in overcrowded rooms. Irrespective of the kind of job a transnational beggar engages in, the person may reside in an overcrowded room. Furthermore, no beggar owns their accommodation, and the type of housing accommodation differs depending on the kind of job a migrant does. Regarding the migration outcomes of migrants, the majority reported achieving their migration goals. Their primary aim was to earn more money, which they achieved by improving their sources of income, bettering their

living conditions, facilitating chain migration, and ensuring food security in migrant households—all of which were made possible through migrants' remittances.



## CHAPTER NINE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### 9.0 Introduction

Migration to beg among certain groups of migrants is an issue of public and academic concern not only in Ghana but also globally. The dominant narrative regarding migration and begging in several studies worldwide (Puig, 2020; Cherneva, 2011; IOM, 2019) has so far attributed the migration of beggars to the involvement of criminal networks in funding migration and controlling migrants' earnings at the destination. These are profit-oriented groups or individuals who exploit migrant beggars. Few studies, however, have focused on social networks as the major intermediaries in the migration process (Djuve et al., 2015; Tylum & Friberg, 2023). These personal networks are not criminal groups or individuals seeking to exploit migrants but rather willingly support their migration aspirations without any profit motives.

Even though the phenomenon of 'begging' in Ghana has been a subject of discussion within academia and the public over the years, little attention has been given to the phenomenon of 'migration for begging' among Nigeriens. In Ghana, studies on Nigerien beggars (Amuzu et al., 2019; Osei, 2020) have so far focused on Nigerien Tuareg migrant beggars, primarily examining why they migrated and their socio-cultural and sociolinguistic integration in the host community. However, there has been little to no attention given to other Nigerien beggars, such as Hausa migrant beggars, how they migrated, the intermediaries in their migration process, and their economic activities in the host community. This thesis seeks to fill this knowledge gap by investigating the phenomenon of 'migration for begging' among Nigerien Hausa migrant beggars in Accra, Ghana. The study examined four main research objectives: (1) To examine the socio-demographic characteristics of migrants and their reasons for migration; (2) To explore migration trajectories of migrants; (3) To examine the

nature of migration intermediaries in facilitating Nigerian beggar migration; and (4) To investigate the relationship between transnational beggars' livelihoods and living conditions in Accra, Ghana.

Using a mixed-method approach, the study employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods, including a survey questionnaire, in-depth interviews, key informant interviews, and focus group discussions. The study population comprised Nigerian migrants who migrated purposely for begging and accompanied by either a child or children. The sample size for the survey was 136 respondents (112 females and 24 males), while the interviews focused on 27 parents (24 females and 3 males) and 12 child participants (10 girls and 2 boys). Ethical clearance was granted by the Ethics Committee for Humanities, with a confirmed Ethical Clearance reference number, ECH 241/21-22.

### **9.1 Summary of Major Findings**

The findings of the study indicated that Nigerian migrant beggars are predominantly adherents of Islam and are from the Hausa ethnic group in the regions of Maradi and Zinder, with migrants from Maradi being the majority. With respect to the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, the study indicated that the total number of Nigerian beggars in the study was 136 with 112 of them being female and 24 being males. The number of children that participated was 12 with 10 of them being girls and 2 being boys. Also, in terms of age, the average age was found to be 46.5 years. No particular age group was found to dominate the distribution, however, the 45-54 and 65 and above age groups were equally high among the population and the age group 15-24 and 25-35 were the lowest. On marriage, the majority of Nigerian beggars were married followed by the widowed who also had a considerable representation. In terms of formal education, respondents' level was found to be generally low, with a high number of migrants being illiterate. Some of the parents including the children were found to have had some level of Islamic education. The average

number of children per parent at the destination was identified to be two. With respect to the length of stay, respondents have lived in Ghana between 0-8 years and above, with those who have lived in Ghana for not longer than a year being the majority and 2-3 years being fairly represented. Also, concerning migrant's economic activities at the destination, four groups of people among the respondents were engaged in begging at the destination, these included children, elderly and infirm, able bodied and physically challenged persons. The study revealed that the majority of Nigerian migrant beggars engaged in only begging and a few combined both begging and other menial jobs. With regards to the reason for migration, the results of the study revealed that the major reason given by most of the respondents was mainly to seek better job opportunities. Among other reasons were migrant social networks, the safe living conditions in Ghana, and the search for a better income. However, the qualitative elaborations on these reasons revealed that they were running away from food shortage, hunger and conflict. The research also revealed an interesting finding where mothers migrate to gather financial resources to fulfil a cultural obligation toward their female children who are preparing for marriage.

Secondly, the study also examined the migration routes, trajectories and journey experiences of migrants. It was found that the majority of the respondents did not possess travel documents before embarking on their journey. To most of the respondents, having social networks at the destination is a very important determinant in choosing a migration destination. In all, more than half of the respondents had early networks at the destination while close to half had no early networks at the destination before migration. The study identified three options available to Nigerian begging migrants to embark on a successful journey from Niger to Ghana, which include migrating in the company of a personal network with migration experience, migrating alone by relying on network information and directives and migrating in the company of an escort. The study also explored respondents' channels of

migration and found that all of the respondents made the journey by land via, bus, truck/lorry, or mini-van sometimes combined with the use of tricycles or walking. Two major routes were identified that is the Niger-Aflao and the Niger-Bawku route. Migrants were identified to use two entry points to get to Aflao from Niger, entry is via Nigeria, or Benin to Togo) or Bawku (entry is via Burkina Faso) Also, determinants of migrant choice of route were identified to be, social network influence, region of migration, financial resources and the mode of transportation. Among the challenges migrants encounter on the route, exploitation and bribery were the major challenges. The study found that most women who had limited financial resources to migrate and choose to travel by truck from Niger to Ghana often use the Niger-Burkina Faso-Bawku route to Accra. With respect to the days migrants spend en route from Niger to Ghana, it was found that most respondents made the journey between 3-9 days; however, some few were found to have made the journey between 13-30 days. Again, the study argued that migration for begging trajectories and its associated complexities is determined by the proximity to Social Networks in the journey. The length of days spent on the route was shown to be influenced by how close or remote the migrant's social network is during the journey.

Thirdly, the study also examined the types of intermediaries involved in the migration for begging among Nigerien migrants. The study identified three types of social network facilitation in the Migration for Begging among Nigeriens. 1) Personal networks, 2) Service provider networks and 3) Altruistic networks. The personal networks were largely composed of; mother, father, grandmother, sister, brother, sister-in-law, nephew, Aunt, neighbours, and community members. The Service Provider Networks are composed of; bus drivers, border officials, truck drivers, and motor and tricycle riders. The Altruist Networks are composed of; strangers, sympathisers and individual philanthropists, destination community members and community NGOs. The “Altruist Network” is the researcher's construct. The Social

network's involvement in the migration process of beggar migration was identified to occur at all three phases of the migration process: the Pre-migration phase, the migration phase and the Post-migration phase. The study found migration for begging among Nigeriens to reflect a strong dependence on social networks especially Kinship networks (58.8%). It was also found that migration for begging does not only thrive on networks, it was also possible for Nigerien begging migrants without social networks (41.2%) to migrate successfully to the destination. Social Networks played a significant role in finding migrants' giving migrant's loans, places to sleep, begging spots, begging activity orientation and assisting new migrants to settle. The study also revealed that though some migrants did not have early networks before migration, they were able to obtain instant support from their ethnic group members in the begging business upon arrival.

Concerning the transnational activities of respondents, the study found that the majority of migrants send remittances (80%). The majority of those who send remittances often send it regularly between 2-3 months and mostly upon demand. Since the majority of migrants reported sending remittances home, we examined the impact of some selected socio-demographic characteristics (age, sex, marital status, funding, social networks and length of stay) on how often respondents remit. In terms of age, the estimate was negative and statistically significant at 5%. This implies that as the respondents grow older in Ghana, it is expected for them to reduce the frequency of remittance back home. In terms of gender, the study found females remit more often compared to their male counterparts. With regards to marital status, respondents who are never married remit more often compared with the married and those who are separated and again those who are divorced were found to remit more often than the never married migrants. The study also identified that there is a probability that those who were funded through loans were more likely to remit often compared with those funded by the family. Finally, with regards to migrants' length of stay,

the research showed that holding all variables constant, the probability of sending remittances is likely to reduce for Nigerien migrants who have stayed in Ghana for at most 5 years as compared to those who have stayed in Ghana for at most a year.

Fourthly, concerning migrants' work, the study identified a gradual shift from high-visibility locations to low-visibility locations. The study also examined the relationship between migrant's sources of income and their living condition. The study found that migrant beggars engaged in begging and other menial jobs at the destination. The majority were found to be involved in only begging as their major source of income (85%) while others engaged in both begging and other menial jobs such as petty trading, beautician, water vending, helping food vendors and laundry. Based on the qualitative analysis, the study identified three ways by which begging can be categorized among Nigerien begging migrants: (1) the specific begging locations where the act is conducted, (2) the technique and mode of begging and (3) the appearance of the beggar. With regards to migrants' work and the income they earn, the study found that the majority (69%) of respondents earn more than the minimum wage per day while (31%) earn less than that daily. The p-value was recorded (0.27) which was greater than 0.05. This implies that the kind of work a Nigerien migrant does in Ghana does not determine the level of her/his daily income. With respect to health care, the majority of migrants had not visited a health facility in a year (95%). However, the qualitative interviews showed that migrants have visited drug stores and pharmacies for their healthcare needs since they came to Ghana. Though they do not visit bigger medical facilities, they use alternative means to treat their illnesses. Also, the p-value greater than 0.05 indicated a no significant relationship which implies that the kind of work a migrant does in Ghana does not determine how frequently they utilize health services. With regards to migrant work and sleeping situation or room density, the p-value was greater than 0.05, which indicated no significant relationship which implies that the kind of work a migrant does in Ghana does not determine

how frequently they utilize health services. Further, with regards to the relationship between migrants' work and accommodation type, the study found that 86% of migrant beggars are squatters, and there was no migrant whose only source of income comes from begging owns her/his accommodation. The chi-square value 0.034 is less than 0.05 indicating a relationship between work and accommodation type. Meaning the type of housing accommodation differs across the kind of job migrants engage in.

Finally, regarding whether migrants have achieved their migration outcomes, the research revealed that (77.4%) acknowledged that their migration aims were achieved while (32.6%) said they were yet to achieve their goals. From the qualitative interviews, the research identified diverse ways through which responses achieved their aims which included; improved income sources, better living conditions, facilitating chain migration, and food security in migrant households which were all made possible through migrants' remittances. It was also identified that migrants who migrated to Ghana purposely for better job opportunities are more likely to experience same migration outcome as compared to those who did not come to Ghana for better job opportunities. Moreover, the probability of a migrant owning his/her place of residence to experience same migration outcome is lesser than those who are squatters. Also, the probability of a migrant earning more than the minimum wage to experience worse migration outcome is higher than those who earn lesser than the minimum wage.

## 9.2 Conclusion

The study makes the following conclusions based on the broad issues of the study's theoretical perspectives, the key findings, and the study objectives.

First and foremost, migration for begging among Nigeriens cuts across different groups of people in terms of age, sex, marital status, and length of stay. Religion, ethnicity, and a low

level of formal education are common characteristics among them. This is directly linked to objective one. The two major migrant-sending regions are Maradi and Zinder. The main purpose of migration is to beg; therefore, “positive attraction,” such as ill-health, disability, and parents with access to children, plays an important role in deciding who migrates for begging. Several reasons account for migration in West Africa, including economic, political, social, climatic, and environmental factors. However, the study has demonstrated that cultural obligations mandate Nigerien women to migrate to gather resources to support their children’s marriages, which is documented in migration literature as the responsibility of the future wife. Limited economic opportunities, social networks, better income, peace and safety, food shortages, drought, and cultural obligations also dominated migrants’ reasons for migration.

Secondly, as part of the livelihood strategy’s assumptions, human capital is one of the livelihood assets necessary for achieving livelihood outcomes. People and households draw on their human capital, including skills, knowledge, the ability to labour, and good health, to pursue a livelihood strategy and achieve livelihood objectives (Carney, 1998; de Haan, 2012). However, the study has shown that people do not only draw on their skills, knowledge, ability to labour, and good health but also on their appearance of ill-health, such as disability and infirmity. In other words, ill-health also plays a major role in achieving livelihood outcomes, just as good health does.

Thirdly, the migration channel, trajectories, and mode of migration of Nigerien migrant beggars are complex and diverse. This conclusion is linked to objective two. There are two main routes: while some routes lead migrants through Nigeria and Benin to enter Aflao, others go through Burkina Faso to enter Ghana. Migrants are mainly supported by their personal social networks at both the origin and the destination. However, they engage the support of a complex social network during the three phases of their migration process (pre-migration, migration and post-migration stages). The study also mapped migrants’

trajectories by adapting and modifying Mazzocato et al. (2014) mobility mapping technique. The original mapping technique shows migrants' movements and mobility over time. However, the modified mapping technique helps visualize the migrant's journey by identifying where migration started, where it ended, the transit locations, the days spent in specific locations, and the mode of transport used in the journey.

Further, some migrants migrated successfully without having personal network support at the destination. This conclusion is linked to objective three. This finding explains that, although social networks, as argued by Tyldum and Friberg (2023), play a significant role in migration for begging among Romanian beggars, migration for begging among Nigeriens can occur with or without personal social network support. However, during the journey, migrants with close social network proximity managed their journey better compared to those with remote social network influence. Furthermore, the study concludes that the mode of migration for begging among Nigerien migrants was found to be mainly collective, voluntary, international, short and temporary visits, stepwise, and chain migration, rather than individual and forced migration. A group's willingness, capabilities, and strong motivation can make migration for begging possible for some respondents. The findings, however, reject the popular and dominant notion that the migration of beggars on the streets of Accra is mediated by criminal networks. The migration of Nigerien beggars is mainly facilitated by personal social networks and not criminal networks.

Fourthly, there are essentially three ways begging among Nigeriens can be categorized: the begging locations, the technique and mode of begging, and the appearance of the beggar. However, there are typically two types of beggars based on their major source of income: those who rely solely on begging as their major source of income and those who combine begging with other menial jobs. Nigerien migrant beggars engage in begging and also have opportunities to engage in other income-generating activities at the destination. Comparing migrants' living conditions at the origin with those at the destination, migrant beggars seem

more comfortable at the destination. This is evident in the availability of electricity, potable water, and other basic services at the destination and, more importantly, the opportunity to earn income, which was absent at the origin.

The income levels of migrants vary. Some migrants' daily income is above the minimum wage, while others earn below the minimum wage. The type of work a migrant does at the destination does not determine how much they earn. Again, migrants patronize drug stores and pharmacies for their health care needs, while others patronize herbal vendors. Also, with regards to work and health care, the type of work a migrant does not influence how frequently they visit a health facility. Further, objective four explores the relationship between migrant work and living conditions at the destination. Deducing from the findings, it can be concluded that migrants' living conditions in Ghana can be considered better based on qualitative data. Though three of the indicators showed no statistical significance, the majority of migrants were found to earn more than the minimum wage, and most are able to remit to support those left behind.

Again, the study adapted Tanle's (2015) migration and livelihood framework to develop a conceptual framework for migration for begging. The underlying assumption is that multiple factors influence people's choice of livelihood. This includes macro-environment factors, socio-demographic/personal characteristics, institutional processes and procedures, resources, and migration intermediaries. The variables include age, gender, job opportunities, housing, income, source of income, social network, and remitting. For example, in the case of migration for begging as a livelihood strategy, migrants' socio-demographic characteristics were found to be determinants of the level of both financial and social capital required to realize their migration aspirations. Additionally, migration intermediaries such as personal networks, service providers, and altruistic networks were seen to either enhance or hinder migration, with personal networks having a direct influence on the migration

outcomes of beggars. The modified framework captured intermediaries as an important component in the ‘migration for begging’ and made it an integral part of the framework, which is missing in the original framework. The probability of a migrant with personal networks experiencing worse migration outcomes is higher than for those without social networks.

Finally, the study concludes by providing policymakers and implementers with useful information to design targeted interventions aimed at addressing the increasing number of migrant beggars on the streets. It also offers insights into the migration processes of Nigerien beggars, helping to improve the understanding of their unique challenges, the social network nature of Nigerien beggar migration, and the contributions beggars make to their households in Niger.

### **9.3 Recommendation**

Based on the findings, the study offered some recommendations. The recommendations made fall into two categories: recommendation for stakeholders and recommendation for future research.

#### **9.3.1 Recommendation (Policy and Practice)**

First and foremost, it was established in the study that migrants did not possess travel documentation. Objective 4 of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM) entreats all states to ensure that all migrants have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation. At the regional level the ECOWAS free movement protocol grants ECOWAS citizens the right to enter and reside in another ECOWAS country. However, the movement requires ECOWAS citizens to possess travel documentation before embarking on a journey, which Nigerien migrant beggars did not have. The study therefore recommends that border officials must

ensure regular migration along our borders by possibly issuing ECOWAS cards at entry points or at the destination to migrants who do not have documentation but have managed to enter their countries through unapproved routes. It must be noted that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development acknowledges the importance of migration and calls for nation-states to facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration. This safety and security protection will ensure migrants' freedom from violence, trafficking and arbitrary detention and exploitation. This would help in enhancing the dignity of migrants and their rights. On the same issue, migrant beggars are to be educated on the dangers of exploitation and abuse in embarking on unsafe and irregular border crossing.

Again, with respect to the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, the study indicated that the total number of Nigerien beggars in the study were 136 with 112 of them being female and 24 being males and majority migrated for economic reasons though factors such as having social networks at the destination and also climate related issues. And these parents came with not less than two children each to help in the begging business. I recommend that Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection responsible for child protection should ensure that parents of child beggars are educated to consider the future of their children. The Children's Act 1998, Act 560 of Ghana adheres to the right of every child to go to school including migrant children. At the international level, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out to provide the modalities for governments to meet the basic needs of children and help them reach their full potential. One of these rights is the right to education. Moving children from Niger to Ghana has serious implications for their education. In addition, parents and migrant households should fashion out alternative responsibilities that children can take to help the family rather than allowing them to migrate for the purpose of begging. Though it is a fact that these child beggars were not enrolled in formal schools in Niger, there are educational and apprenticeship

opportunities in Ghana that parents and grandparents must encourage their children to take advantage of. I will also recommend that Ghanaian educational institutions should make their facilities accessible for migrant children.

The study also examined the migration routes, trajectories and journey experiences of migrants and found that the majority of the respondents did not possess travel documents before embarking on their journey. This makes some migrants ply unapproved routes on their way down south. Due to the unsafe nature of migration of most migrant beggars, the study, therefore, recommends that border officials such as the immigration service and the police must ensure regular migration along our borders by possibly issuing ECOWAS cards at entry points or at the destination to migrants who do not have any form of identification.

Furthermore, Concerning the transnational activities of respondents, the study found that the majority of migrants send remittances (80%). The majority of those who send remittances often send it regularly between 2-3 months and mostly upon demand. The study recommends that the IOM and other scholars find a way to assess the volume of remittances from begging migrants and their contribution to the development of their communities. Beggars are often perceived as very poor with limited resources, but understanding their financial contributions could help estimate their role in the economy of Niger. In relation to SDG 2, which focuses on Zero Hunger, and the role migration plays in improving food security through remittances sent back to rural communities, knowing the annual figures of remittances from beggars would provide valuable information to policymakers in Niger. This data could be used to regulate the migration of this population, ensuring their safe and regular movement from Niger to Ghana.

Finally, at the local level, the study found that the increasing number of street beggars in the community and their presence along the streets of Accra have become a concern to the Municipal Authorities and the Department of Social Welfare and Community Development in recent times. Though the Social Welfare and the Community Development department is charged with the responsibility to assist street children, the aged and persons with disabilities, their involvement in the welfare of migrants in the study community has however reduced after COVID-19. The study therefore recommends that the Municipal Assembly and the Social Welfare and Community Department should intensify their efforts in supporting migrant beggars to improve their living conditions in the community. Also, the Immigration Service should device a strategy to control particularly the Service Provider networks from bring migrants in cargo tracks for the safety of the migrants.

### **9.3.2 Recommendation for Further Research**

The theoretical perspective and research methodology used during the research have proven very useful for the knowledge gained. However, a few limitations have been identified, necessitating the study to make the following recommendations:

First, it is believed that further research could delve deeper into the migration processes of beggars, focusing on migrants' journeys, routes, and trajectories. Future researchers could visit the migrants' places of origin to experience their living conditions firsthand and explore other routes, migration channels, modes of migration, as well as the intermediaries involved in their migration for begging. The focus of future research could also extend to understanding what happens at the migrants' origin before migration decisions are made, and investigating the challenges and coping strategies of those left behind in migrants' households when they migrate.

Secondly, the study observed that Nigerian migrant beggars are gradually changing their begging location (traffic intersections, street pavements, street corners) from the visible sight of the media and the public to less visible locations such as markets, shop to shops and the community. Further investigation would help throw more light on this qualitative information to help researchers and policy makers to know which places to locate Nigerian beggars for a study or any social intervention. More light can also be shared on the migrant social Network who bring new migrants to investigate their intentions and also investigate whether they are traffickers.

Again, with regard to the methodology used, future studies could expand beyond a single research site to compare different Nigerian beggar locations, either within Accra and the Greater Accra Region or across other regions of Ghana. Similarly, the small sample size used in this study could be increased in future research to enable generalization of the findings to similar beggar populations.

Further, migrant beggars have positive migration outcomes and often send remittances home. It would be interesting to gain more insight into (i) the value of their contributions towards the development of their communities, (ii) circumstances under which migrants consider re-migration upon return (iii) exploring migrants' living conditions, lifestyle and attitude at origin after experiencing transnational lifestyle. For example, has their choice of food, interests, or interaction with household members changed? Additionally, if living with a spouse and older children, have the migrants' views on gender roles shifted in any way? The research recommends that further studies be conducted to explore the phenomenon of migration for begging among Nigerian migrants in Ghana and that such studies also be replicated in other West African countries.

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APPENDICES

**Appendix A: Questionnaire for Parents**

My name is Owusuaa J. Eshia, a PhD student at the Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana, Legon. You are kindly invited to participate in a study that “examines the migration process of Nigerian begging migrants in Accra, Ghana. The research is for academic purpose and it aims to explore the less academic attention on transnational beggars in Ghana. Your views and opinions in this survey will be completely anonymous and will be treated with the highest confidentiality.

**Section A: Parents demographical Information**

1. Age .....

2. Gender:

1. Female [ ]	2. Male [ ]
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3. Year of Migration.....

4. Length of Stay:.....

5. What is your marital status:

1. Single	2. Married	3. Divorce	4. Widowed	5. Separation
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6. How many wives do you have, if female how many rivals do you have?

1. 1 [ ]	2. 2 [ ]	3. 3 [ ]	4. More than 3
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7. Do you leave with your spouse?

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]
------------	-----------

8. Level of Education

1. None/informal [ ]	2. Primary [ ]	3. Secondary [ ]	4. Others .....
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9. What is your Religion?

1. Christianity [ ]	2. Islam [ ]	3. Tradition [ ]	4. Others [ ]
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10. What is the language/dialect you speak most often in Origin?  
.....

11. What is your ethnicity?.....

**Section B: Migrant’s family and decisions to migrate from the Origin**

1. Do you have any children at the destination

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]
------------	-----------

2.. Do you have children Under 18 years?

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]
------------	-----------

3. What do they do?

1. School [ ]	2. Work [ ]	3. Married [ ]	4. Don't know [ ]
---------------	-------------	----------------	-------------------

4. Occupation at the destination

1. Trader [ ]	2. Farmer [ ]	3. Housewife	4. others.....
---------------	---------------	--------------	----------------

5. Occupation of spouse? .....

6. Who is primarily responsible for taking care of the children at the origin?

1. father [ ]	2. mother [ ]	3. grandmother	4. themselves	5. others.....
---------------	---------------	----------------	---------------	----------------

7. Does anyone have a long standing Disability in the household at the origin at least for the past year?

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]	3. Don't know [ ]
------------	-----------	-------------------

8. How would you say your absence has affected those left behind? Would you say their well-being has been better, same or worse?

1. Better [ ]	2. Same [ ]	3. Worse [ ]	4. Don't know
---------------	-------------	--------------	---------------

**Section C: Migrant's family situation in Destination**

1. Which family members currently live with you in the destination? (mark all that apply)

Don't live with any family member	children	spouse	parents	siblings
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2. How many children did you come with?.....

3. What work do they do?.....

**Section D: Migration history, decision-making, intermediaries, documents.**

1. Who took the decision for migration

1. Myself	2. Both husband/wife jointly	3. myself and extended family members	4. others.....
-----------	------------------------------	---------------------------------------	----------------

2. Why did you migrate from Niger to Ghana?

1. job opportunity	2. Had personal networks in Ghana	3. It is safe here	4. Better income	5. others.....
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3. Did you possess travel document when migrating to Ghana?

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]
------------	-----------

4. Before you migrate did you know anyone at the destination?

1. No one [ ]	2. Family member [ ]	3. Friend [ ]	4. Others [ ]
---------------	----------------------	---------------	---------------

5. To find a job at the destination, who helped you the most? (mark all that apply, do not read our options).

1. No one/self [ ]	2. Families and relatives [ ]	3. Neighbours, friends, community members [ ]
--------------------	-------------------------------	---

5. What was your main source of funding for migration?

1. Loan [ ]	2. Personal resources/savings [ ]	3. Household savings/resources [ ]	4. Other Families and relatives in Ghana [ ]	5. Sponsorship [ ]
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6 Who found you a place to leave at the destination?

1. No one/self [ ]	2. Family and friends at the destination [ ]	3. Family and Friends at the destination [ ]
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### Section E: Migration trajectory

1. What region did you migrate from?.....

2. Channel of migration?.....

3. What routes did you use?.....

4. Major problems experienced on the route

1. Extortion/bribery [ ]	2. Illness [ ]	3. Problem with Border Official [ ]	4. Violence/Abuse [ ]	5. Theft [ ]
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### Section F: Work related Questions

1. What is your main source(s) of income?

1. Beautician [ ]	2. Begging [ ]	3. Water vending [ ]	4. Helping food vendors [ ]	5. Trading [ ]	6. Laundry [ ]
-------------------	----------------	----------------------	-----------------------------	----------------	----------------

2. How much do you earn per day?

1. Between 5-10ghs [ ]	2. Between 11-20ghs [ ]	3. Between 21-30ghs [ ]	4. Less than 5 Ghs [ ]	5. More than 30ghs [ ]	6. Refused [ ]
------------------------	-------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------	------------------------	----------------

3. And how many hours per day did you usually work?.....

4. Before you started this begging, did you know how much you would earn per day?

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]	3. Refused [ ]
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5. Was the amount you were paid the same, better or worse than discussed?

1. Same [ ]	2. Better [ ]	3. Worse [ ]	Don't remember [ ]
-------------	---------------	--------------	--------------------

6. Thinking of your average monthly income in destination, what is the range of money you earn per month?

1. Between 200-300ghs [ ]	2. Between 3001-400ghs [ ]	3. More than 400 ghs [ ]	4. Less than 200ghs [ ]	5. Refused [ ]
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7. How often do you utilize health care services?

1. Ones in a year [ ]	2. None in a year	3. More than ones in a year [ ]	4. Don't know [ ]
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8. What is your accommodation type?

1. Renting [ ]	2. Squatting [ ]	3. Owning [ ]	4. Refused [ ]
----------------	------------------	---------------	----------------

9. How many of you sleep in room/space that you have?.....

10. How many hours do you work per day?.....

11. How many days in a week do you work?.....

### Section H: Transnational Lifestyle

1. Possession of functioning mobile phone?

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]
------------	-----------

2. Do you belong to any association?

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]	3. Don't know [ ]
------------	-----------	-------------------

3. Remittances

3.1 Have you sent any money home to your household or family members in origin country in the last 3 months?

1. Yes [ ]	2. No [ ]	3. Don't know [ ]
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3.2 What is the most common way you send money to your household or family members?

3.3 Means of communication with family and friends

1. Phone call [ ]	2. Text message [ ]	3. Video Call [ ]	4. Don't know [ ]
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3.4 How frequently do send money home?

1. Not Often	2. Somewhat often	3. Often	4 Very Often
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3.5 What is the most common way you send money to your household or family members?

1. Electronic transfer/ Mobile transfer [ ]	2. Informal Individual agent [ ]	3. Bus and other transport services [ ]	4. Migrants going back to Niger	5. Don't know [ ]
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4. How often do you communicate with family and friends left behind?

1. Several times in a month [ ]	2. Almost Every day. [ ]	3. Several times per week	4. A few times per year [ ]	5. Never [ ]	6. Don't know [ ]

4. How would you consider your migration outcome? (1. Better 2. Same. 3. Worse)?



## Appendix B: Interview Guide for Migrant Parent

### A. Interviewee's Socio-Demographic Background information

Sex, Age, Place of Origin in Niger (Province/Town/village), Current Place of Residence in Ghana. Educational background, occupation before migration, marital status, number of children?

### B. Household set-up and background

Can you tell me about your household in Ghana?

- Probe for number of people in household and relationship with each of them, economic activities, level of education, age and sex of the household members
- Probe for differences before and after migration household set-up and background
- Tell me about your migration history prior to coming to Ghana (Probe if he/she had moved to another part of Niger or another country before coming to Ghana).
- Generally, what triggered the decision to migrate from Niger.
- Why did you migrate to Ghana rather than other countries? (Probe for economic, social, environmental, recreation etc.). Which was the most important reason?

### 1. Pre-Migration Experience

- Tell me about the living conditions and situation (economic and social) of your family prior to your migration to Ghana (type of housing, rural/urban neighbourhood, probe for level of income, wellbeing of household members, access to services, and healthcare).
- Prior to your migration from Niger what work were you doing? (Probe if salary was high compared with his/her neighbours; Did migrant consider him/herself poor or wealthy before migrating from Niger?)
- Were you given any pre-departure orientation? If yes tell me about the specific issues covered and the person(s) who gave you the orientation (e.g. agent/recruiter, family and friends)

### 2. Migration journey/Process?

- Tell me when you arrived or came to Ghana (probe for the route used, the length of the journey, how many people in the vehicle, the people they came with.)?
- What type of transportation did you come with (Probe for, the reasons for the choice, cost, duration on the road)?
- Tell me if you migrated with anybody who knows the route or if you came alone, how did you make it on the route?

### 3. Migration Experience

#### 3a. Living conditions and work-related experiences

- Can you describe your first arrival experience in Ghana – how did you find accommodation, food, change money and the other basics needed? Prompt him/her to talk about who helped with these – family, friends, community groups, other Nigeriens, other contacts?
- What do you do for a living in Ghana? (probe for economic activities in Ghana)
- How will you describe your living conditions in Ghana compared to when you were in Niger? (Probe for satisfaction of expectations etc.)
- How would you compare the quality of life of your household, before you migrated to Ghana, with that of your neighbours in Niger?

- How are your relations with Ghanaians – as neighbours, employers/employees, friends, family etc. What do you like and what don't you like?
- How would you compare the quality of life of your household with the Ghanaian people in the area where live?
- Describe how a typical working day looks like e.g. working hours, and time spent elsewhere?

### **3b. Social Networks/Intermediaries**

- Do you belong to any association in Ghana and beyond? (Probe for the different associations he/she belongs to in Ghana and outside Ghana and why? Are these associations for only males or only females or mixed?)
- Can you tell me how you contribute to these networks? (probe for specific examples as a female Nigerian migrant for all the networks and associations identified)
- What contribution do these networks and associations also make in your daily life? (probe for any kinds of support as a female e.g. Work related, migration from origin, accommodation, plans of returning, aiding to remit etc.)
- Please tell me the kinds of activities these networks and associations organize?
- Tell me if your network members help solve grievances (probe for the types do these associations tackle if any?)
- Tell me if you belong to any religious groups in Ghana? (probe for what for and for how long?)

### **3c. Remittances and Material Inequalities**

- What communication technology do you use to keep in touch with family and friends in Niger?
- Do you use the same technologies for any friends/family in Ghana?
- How frequent do you communicate through this means?
- Tell me how much you spend on using this means of communication?
- Can you tell me how you send money home to your family or friends? (If yes, how much and how often? what is the relationship with the receiver)
- Tell me how you send the money and who receives the money?
- If you don't send remittances, kindly explain why?
- Do you send non-monetary remittances (e.g. food and other in-kind remittances) to your family or friends at home? List the items and tell us how often you do this?
- Do you receive remittances (both monetary and non-monetary) from any person outside Ghana? (Probe for items or amount, how often? Which county, relationship with sender)

### **3d. Socio-economic experiences at the destination**

#### **i. Livelihood experiences**

- Can you tell me the income generating activity you are engaged in currently aside begging? Or any activity you engage in to earn a living in Ghana (probe for how long they have been doing this work, do you intend to do this for long)? Is this your first work since you came to Ghana?
- Can you tell me the assets or capital you deploy to be successful in this livelihood activity (probe for social, human, natural, financial and physical assets)?

- Tell me how much you earn from begging (probe for money, food or other items)
- Do you get paid in your other jobs? (form of payment, how much).
- Can you tell me if there are challenges in securing a begging spot or any other job?

**ii. Activities of Accompanied children at the destination**

- Tell me what do your children do/what activities does your children engage in?
- Why these types of activities?
- Who introduced them to it?
- Are you happy about what they are doing?
- Who keeps their earnings for them?

**iii. Nature of Intermediaries/agents**

- Tell me if you knew anybody in Ghana before migrating (probe for relationship with the networks).
- Tell me if you had any relative or contacts here before migrating?
- Can you tell me how you got to know your contacts?
- What is the relationship between you and the person or people?
- Tell me in what way did the person help you?
- Did she help financially? (probe for how much, when the offer was given,
  
- Tell me Why and how you came to Ghana?
- Who introduced you to this work?
- Tell me how the person located you?
- Tell me if you work for yourself or you work for someone?
- Could you please describe how these intermediaries/networks work?

**iv. Health services**

- What do you do when you or any of your children are sick?
- Tell me about how you access health care?
- Have you visited any health facility since you came to Ghana?
- What alternative health care do you use?

**v. Community engagement**

- Do you have friends in the community where you live?
- Do you speak any of the Ghanaian languages? Which one?
- Do you partake in any community activity?
- Are the people in your community friendly or hostile? Describe your relationship with the community members.

**4. Migration outcomes**

- Are you able to save some money from the work you do in Ghana? Probe is saving culture in Ghana different from Niger.
- Would you say that compared to the period when you did not move to Ghana, the current financial situation of your family with regards to basic necessities has improved or worsened? Probe for specific examples before and during migration
- Have the lives of your family improved since you migrated to Ghana? If yes, what achievements have you made so far?
- Do you consider your migration experience as successful and/or fulfilling your migration goals? (If yes/no, can you explain in what manner with specific examples?)

- In what ways do you think your migration has been of benefit to the women/men in your family?
- What are the problems you have faced as a migrant since you arrived in Ghana? (Probe for abuse of rights, difficulty finding jobs, language, discrimination etc.)
- What are your plans for the future? Return to Ghana or elsewhere or stay in Ghana? And why?



## Appendix C: Interview Guild for Children

### (Children between the ages of 8 -18 years)

#### a) Demographic profile

- Age, Gender, Level of education, Ethnicity, Language
- Who did you come to Ghana with?
- What is your relationship with the person?
- Occupation of parents? Duration of stay?
- Number of children in the family?

#### b) Child's involvement in begging activities

- Can you tell me who asked you to beg or who introduced you to begging? (Probe; for, money food, other item, tell me about your family?)
- Tell me how much do you earn a day (Probe; Who she gives the money you earn to, Do you give all or keep some for yourself? If you keep some, how much per day?)
- Tell me amount the journey (Probe for: route, how length of the journey, mode of transport)
- Tell me the person or people you live with? (probe? Does the person you live with abuse you in anyway, for instance beating, verbal assault? What happens if you refuse to work? How often do you stay out of work? Elaborate)
- Tell me what other things you do aside begging? (probe: if s/he is happy with what they are doing)
- Tell me if you feel or think you are forced to beg on the street? (Probe: What s/he have preferred to be doing as a child? Elaborate)
- What do you tell people to persuade them to give you money? (probe; Who thought you what to say or how to act when begging? Elaborate)
- Tell me the school you attended? (probe: At where, what class, why s/he stopped)?
- Can you tell me if you go to beg everyday?
- Tell me if anyone take you to the streets each day to beg?
- How long do you spend begging each day?
- Tell me what you do to get money from people?
- How much money did you earn yesterday?
- Tell me what you do with this money?
- Do you give the money to anyone?
- What happens if you don't get enough money?

#### c) Relevance of Parent's migration in the child's perspective

- Tell me if your parent discussed with you when coming to Ghana? (probe for; what exactly s\he was told).
- In your view tell me why you think you and your mother came to Ghana?
- Have you been able to achieve your aims?

**d) Living conditions from the child's perspective**

- Where do you live (describe your dwelling place)?
- Do you have access to basic services? Describe the sanitary conditions (probe for; toilet, bathrooms, electricity, water, waste bins, payment),
- How much do you pay for each of these services?

**Children's perception about their parent's Migration outcomes**

- Tell me if you think your parent is able to save some money from the work you do in Ghana?
- Would you say that compared to the period when you did not move to Ghana, the current financial situation of your family with regards to basic necessities has improved or worsened? Probe for specific examples before and during migration
- Have the lives of your family improved since you migrated to Ghana? If yes, what achievements have you made so far?
- Do you consider your parent's migration experience as successful and/or fulfilling your migration goals? (If yes/no, can you explain in what manner with specific examples?)
- In what ways do you think the migration of your parent has been of benefit to the women/men in your family?

**Appendix D: Interview Guide for Key Informants in the Municipality**

- Kindly tell me your name and your role in the Ablekuma Central Municipality
- How long have you been working in the Ablekuma Central Municipality?
- What have your experiences been with regards to immigrants from Niger who reside in the municipality?
- Tell me about your experiences with immigrant children in the Municipality.
- What are the factors that attract migrants to this community? Why do you think they are here and not leaving?
- Is there any organisation behind their presence here in Ghana? Do you think they work for other people?
- How does the government intend to manage their presence on the street?
- Which Social Protection Strategies exist in Ablekuma Central that you can talk about? (Probe: education, health, living condition in general).
- What strategies have you in place to effectively manage Nigerien children and their parents on the community?
- What about the other NGO's and Private Institution etc.?
- What are your views of these social protection strategies regarding their adequacy?

or the community members?

- What are the challenges in trying to manage the situation?

**Thank you!!!**



**Appendix E Interview Guide for Personnel of the Ghana Immigration Service**

**(Key Informants)**

1. Socio-demographic information

Age, Sex, Occupation/Unit:

2. What can you say about the influx of Nigerian street beggars into Ghana? (Probe for: Entry into Ghana, Border crossing, Residency status, Nationality of transnational beggars in Ghana.

3. How does the Ghanaian government view the influx of transnational street beggars into Ghana? (Probe for: Recognition as a problem, Government's will to control it

4. What implications does the phenomenon of transnational street begging have for Ghana?

(Probe for: Security implication, Social implications, Public safety

5. What specific effort has the government made to address the influx of transnational street beggars into Ghana? Probe for:

a. Existence of law and/or policy banning the influx of transnational beggars

6. What step has this agency taken in the past to tackle the influx of transnational street beggars into Ghana? (Probe for: Modes of operation, Border security, Collaboration with the governments of transnational beggars' countries of origin

7. What are the existing challenges at combating the influx of transnational beggar into Ghana? Probe for: ECOWAS policy and its contribution to this phenomenon, Availability of necessary facilities, any association with human trafficking networks, Migrant smuggling at borders.



**Appendix F: Demographic Tables**

**Age Distribution**

Age Categories (Years)	Frequency	Percentage
15-24	18	13.24
25-34	17	12.5
35-44	22	16.18
45-54	27	19.85
55-64	25	18.38
65+	27	19.85
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Sex Distribution**

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	112	82
Male	24	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Marital Status**

Status	Frequency	Percentage
Single	16	12
Married	77	57
Divorce	8	6
Widowed	27	20
Separation	7	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Educational Status**

Category	Frequency	Percentage
None	125	93
Primary	8	6
Secondary	2	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Appendix G: Overview of Findings regarding Typologies of Social Networks, their Characteristic and Benefits to Migrant**

	<b>Types of Intermediary and Relationship with Migrant.</b>	<b>Characteristics of Networks</b>	<b>Benefits to Migrants</b>
(a) 1.	<p><b>Personal Networks</b></p> <p><b>Kinship Networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mother</li> <li>• Sister</li> <li>• Brother</li> <li>• Grandmother</li> <li>• Sister in Law</li> <li>• Nephew</li> <li>• Aunt</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are migrant families and relative networks that assist migrants at both origin and destination, transit and at the border.</li> <li>• They are either, transnational beggars themselves, return migrants or migrants on visit.</li> <li>• They determine who should migrate and who must stay.</li> <li>• Bonded by trust and shared goals.</li> <li>• Family ties and bonded by blood.</li> <li>• Long term relationship</li> <li>• Transnational networks</li> <li>• Acting for mostly moral reasons though some have profit motives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision making, planning and preparation.</li> <li>• Information about the route and destination.</li> <li>• Kinship networks persuade potential migrants to migrate.</li> <li>• Help by financing migration in the form of loans.</li> <li>• Accommodation for new migrants</li> <li>• Assist in locating Begging spots for new migrants for successful begging activities.</li> <li>• Train new migrants how to beg.</li> <li>• Couch new migrants how to answer suspicious questions from border officials</li> <li>• Connection from Niger to Ghana</li> <li>• Assist in transnational life style of new migrants.</li> </ul>
2	<p><b>Non-Kinship Networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Friends</li> <li>• Neighbours</li> <li>• Sister's mother in law</li> <li>• Origin Community members,</li> <li>• Co-ethnic members</li> <li>• Co-nationals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are also part of migrants' personal networks who help facilitate the migration of beggars and very instrumental at the origin, transit, border and at the destination.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contracted Escorts who offer to assist prospective migrants to get to their destination.</li> <li>• Financial support</li> <li>• Accommodation</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some community members offer to escort first time migrants to the destination.</li> <li>• Bonded or tied by shared community, friendship, language and nationality.</li> <li>• The relationship is often close</li> <li>• Transnational networks including those in transit towns.</li> <li>• Returnees or on visit.</li> <li>• Acting for mostly moral reasons though some have profit motives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At the destination friends and co-ethnic members Provide help such as allowing migrants to use phones to contact their family left behind.</li> <li>• Money transfer services.</li> <li>• Advisory services</li> <li>• Transportation services</li> <li>• Provision of basic services (water, bath and toilet facilities, sanitation, electricity).</li> <li>• Shop owners allowing their frontages to be used for squatting.</li> <li>• Holding migrants' valuables and money for safe keeping.</li> <li>• Provide food and cloths.</li> </ul>
(b)	<p><b>Service Provider Networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Border Officials</li> <li>• Bus drivers</li> <li>• Truck drivers</li> <li>• Motor (Okada) drivers</li> <li>• Tricycle (Aboboya) drivers.</li> <li>• Border crossing Agents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are migrant networks facilitating the mode of migration from the origin to destination as well transit and at the borders.</li> <li>• Bonded by economic ties.</li> <li>• Distant relationship.</li> <li>• Transnational networks</li> <li>• Acting for profit though some have moral motives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some provide help by directing migrants to the appropriate individuals for assistance.</li> <li>• Transporting migrants</li> <li>• Agents are responsible for smuggling irregular migrants across borders.</li> <li>• Migrants contact agents to help the cross border to enter Ghana.</li> <li>• Basic services</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide storage services</li> <li>• Formal channel of Saving</li> </ul>
(c)	<p><b>Altruistic Networks</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strangers</li> <li>• Sympathisers</li> <li>• NGOs</li> <li>• Individual Philanthropist</li> <li>• Host community members</li> <li>• Religious givers</li> <li>• Random Givers</li> <li>• Local Authority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These are unexpected individuals and groups that migrants encounter on their journey.</li> <li>• The connection is unexpected and accidental and can help access resources, services (health) and support from them.</li> <li>• They often come to the aid of migrants at the point of need at the transit, border and destination.</li> <li>• Strangers and sympathisers mostly assists those who migrated alone.</li> <li>• Relationship is based on humanitarian considerations and also distant.</li> <li>• Acting solely for moral reasons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They come in during critical situations to financial support and advice.</li> <li>• Individual philanthropists, NGOs help migrants by giving them cash, food and medical assistance occasionally.</li> </ul>

Source: Field Data, 202



**Appendix H: In-depth Interview of Participants**

The parent participants of the study are presented in the table below.

	<b>Pseudonyms</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>		<b>Migration Status</b>	<b>Region</b>
	<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Sex</b>	<b>Number of children brought</b>		
1	Abi	Don't know	Female	3		Maradi
2	Dama	50	Female	3	Old (2x)	Maradi
3	Latu	40	Female	3	New	Maradi
4	Ena	60	Female	3	New	Maradi
5	Fati	26	Female	1	New	Maradi
6	Naru	63	Female	3	Old (2x)	Maradi
7	Meadu	47	Female	4	New	Maradi
8	Atu	50	Female	1	Old (3x)	Maradi
9	Auda	50	Female	2	New	Zinder
10	Buya	50	Female	2	Old (2x)	Maradi
11	Hatu	55	Female	2	New	Maradi
12	Diya	40	Female	3	New	Maradi
13	Yatu	53	Female	1	New	Maradi
14	Tiya	46	Female	1 boy	New	Maradi
15	Kiya	75	Female	1	Old (3x)	Zinder
16	Aria	23	Female	1	New	Zinder
17	Suha	70	Female	2	New	Maradi
18	Zebu	70	Female	1	New	Zinder
19	Ula	40	Female	2	New	Maradi
20	Habi	65	Female	2	New	Maradi
21	Chiya	55	Female	3	Old (3x)	Zinder
22	Arma	68	Female	1	New	Zinder
23	Tuya	50	Female	4	New	Maradi
24	Yisha	60	Female	3	New	Zinder
25	Danla	60	Male	1	Old migrant (4x)	Zinder
26	Sofo	45	Male	1	New	Zinder
27	Hadala	64	Male	1	Old (4x)	Zinder



### Appendix I: Age, Sex and Economic Activities of Migrants' Children

	Pseudo-names	Age	Gender	Educational status	Type of Street Activity	Migrants' begging spots	People they came with	Year of Arrival	Daily Incon
1	Rasiya	15	Female	Makaranta (No Western Education)	Begs with her little brother	Dansoman junction traffick light	Grandmother	2021	20ghs
2	Sukiya	7	Female	Makaranta	Begs and sells toffee	Mallam market, Kasoa	mother	2022	30ghs
3	Amama	Doesn't know her age (10 yrs)	Female	Makaranta	Sells Cotton swaps and polish	ABC, Achimota station, Achimota overhead, St Johns	mother	2022	20-35
4	Miya	14	Female	Stopped at Primary one/ Makaranta	Begs with her little brother	37 military hospital traffic light	mother	2022	15-20
5	Rusina	10	Female	Was in Primary Five when she came	Begs and sells brush and cotton swaps	Kasoa market	mother	2021	20-30
6	Rafia	11	Female	Makaranta	Begs	Kasoa, Barrier	grandmother	2022	20ghs
7	Hardi	9	Female	No western Education	Begs and sells shoe polish and cotton swaps	The streets of Shiashie, 37 traffick	Mother and elder sister	2020	20-30
8	Amiya	12	Female	Makaranta	Begs, sells polish, brush and ear buds	Paloma, circle, ATTC	mother	2021	30ghs
9	Rama	13	Female	Makaranta	Begs	Mallam market, Barrier, Lapaz, Achimota	Elder sister	2022	10-15
10	Eriya	15	Female	None	Sells ear buds and face mask.	Shiashie, Airport Traffic light	Grandmother	2021	20ghs
11	Tanko	9	Male	Makaranta	Begs, sells shoe polish and clean wind screens	Airport traffic light, 37 hospital traffic	Aunt	2021	20-30
12	Dangote	8	Male	Makaranta	Begs, sells polish and cotton swaps.	Accra, CMB	Mother	2021	15-20

