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NEGOTIATING RETURN: EXPERIENCES OF GHANAIAN 'TRAPPED' MIGRANTS IN LIBYA, QATAR AND SAUDI ARABIA

BY

ALICE GYASI - MENSAH

1D: 10183327

CENTRE FOR MIGRATION STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON

A Thesis Submitted to the University of Ghana in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy in Migration Studies

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DECLARATION

I, Alice Gyasi Mensah, hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own research work carried out in the Center for Migration Studies, University of Ghana, under the supervision of Professor Mariama Awumbila, Professor Joseph Teye, and Professor Akosua Darkwah. All references cited in this work have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that this thesis has not been presented, either in whole or in part, for any other degree in this university or elsewhere.

ALICE GYASI MENSAH

(Student ID: ...10183325...) Date...20/11/2020.....

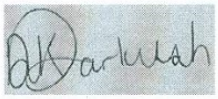
This thesis has been submitted for examination with approval as supervisors:

..... Date .....20/11/2020...

PROF. MARIAMA AWUMBILA

..... Date .....20/11/2020....

PROF. JOSEPH TEYE



Date .....20/11/2020.....

PROF. AKOSUA DARKWAH

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to the Almighty God, to my dear mum, late father, my husband, children and all my loved ones.

I would also like to dedicate this thesis to the many 'trapped migrants' whose stories motivated me in the quest for knowledge and who have touched me in ways that words cannot describe.

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This dissertation was made possible with the help of Almighty God, he made a way when giving up seemed to be the only solution.

To the late Brother Kwabena, the returnee from Libya who devoted his time and effort to see me through fieldwork but died before the work was completed and to the respondents whose life stories and experiences helped to make this work possible.

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ABSTRACT

There is widespread concern about the number of Ghanaians who risk their lives by embarking on migration processes with the intention to enhance their economic outlook. Many of these migrants are often met with difficulties of return due to prevailing conditions at the place of location. Studies in the migration discipline have examined several aspects of the process of return migration. However, many of these studies have overlooked the aspect of migrants who are unable to return because they are heavily 'trapped'. This study attempts to bridge this gap in literature through a qualitative study of 'trapped migrants' of Ghanaian origin. This study sought to examine the phenomenon of 'trapped migration' from Ghana to Libya, Qatar and Saudi Arabia to bring out the nuances of the experiences of 'trapped migrants' and their struggle to return. The study employed a purely qualitative methodology obtaining samples of migrants to the said areas who were 'trapped' by using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. A total sample of 30 'trapped migrants' and information from GIS, IOM, as well as related studies were utilized constructively and interpretively in a thematic analysis. The study found that, data supports the existence of 'trapped migration' distinguished by the fact that 'trapped migrants' face extreme difficulties that thwart their every little effort to return. The characteristics of 'trapped migrants' showed that these were youthful individuals who were bidding their time for improved economic circumstances. The information they received about the prospects of the migration laid traps for their credulity because what they experienced when they migrated was not as palatable as the foreknowledge they received. They met episodes of undignified, dehumanizing, and abusive treatment, treatment essentially flouting fundamental human rights – just for wanting to work and make money as immigrant workers. The journey by road from Ghana to Libya is clearly too risky for the kind of prospects that awaits successful travellers – if they succeed. But at the crucial point where they wish to return, the conditions – financial incapability, arrest and detention, seizure of travel documents, and so on – would simply not let them. At the time of this study there were 9 out of the 30 'trapped migrants' who were still 'trapped'. Institutional effort to facilitate the return of the 'trapped migrant' was extremely limited. The study recommends the need for government to beware of the potential threat that 'trapped migration' presents to Ghanaians and demonstrate concern to address it. Ghanaian citizens abroad should be accorded the dignity, protection, and safety they deserve as citizens. Also, the government of Ghana should take steps towards bilateral and inter-regional agreements to protect Ghanaian migrants. Future studies should give objective and generalized accounts of the experiences of Ghanaians who are 'trapped' in migration using a more quantitative approach to find out the proportion of migrants who were assisted to return by other institutional efforts compared to those who returned by their own effort.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

COP	Commissioner of Police
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union

FM	Frequency Modulation
GCIM	Global Commission on International Migration
GIMPA	Ghana Institute of Public Administration
GIS	Ghana Immigration Service
IFRC	International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent
ILO	International Labour Organization
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
MFA	Migrant Forum in Asia
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
RCS	Rich Communication Services
UN	United Nations
UNDESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes
USA	United States of America
WDR	World Development Report

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

The continuing trend of economic migration has resulted in complex patterns and diversification of migration (Black and Collyer, 2014; Carling, 2013; de Haas, 2010; King, 2010; Dowd, 2008). There have been widespread calls to integrate migration into national development and poverty reduction strategies (UNDESA 2019; World Migration, 2005; GCIM, 2005). This is evidenced by the incorporation of migration in the Strategic Development Goals, 2030 agenda by the United Nations (UN, 2019; UNDESA, 2019; IOM, 2015). In view of this recognition of the essence of migration in the global development agenda (UN, 2019), it is hoped that migration flows especially relating to economic migration can be carried out with ease of immigration, emigration and more importantly eventual return of migrants to their origins when they aspire to (Dowd, 2014; King, 2010). Whilst return has been possible for some migrants, return migration has also not been possible for many. In this domain of difficulties of return is the emerging phenomenon of 'trapped migration'.

Globalization, conflicts and security concerns as well as economic disparities and opportunity differentials have sparked discussions on migration management (deHaas, 2010; Quartey 2009, Martin & Zurcher, 2008). Over the last half of the century, migrants have travelled to destinations farther away from home, sometimes, under perilous conditions amidst security concerns (UNDESA, 2018;

Bob-Milliar & Bob-Milliar, 2013; Arango, 2000). This has resulted in many migrants transiting or visiting one or more countries before finally arriving at their places of destination. Today, advances in information and communication technology, and modes of transportation (such as by land, sea/river and air) are making international migration easier for people to contemplate than it was before (Czaika & de Haas, 2014; de Haas, 2009). So, migrants are often seeking places, particularly, in opportunity-rich locations, notably, Europe and North America, and in recent times the Gulf States (Awumbila, et. al 2017).

Return migration is known to be a complex subject owing to the many reasons for return, but it has also been possible to conceptualize the subject under voluntary and involuntary return (Cassarino, 2014). Graziano (2018) has categorized return using the outcomes of the migration at the point of return. This categorization includes voluntary return at end of migration achievement, completion of contract, or due to some setback. Further, there is 'return of crisis' or forced return which triggers involuntary return. Several theories of return have been postulated (Cassarino, 2004), conspicuously missing are theories relating to non-return or difficulties of return. Studies show that many migrants are often stuck in transit or in destination countries with difficulties of return (Dowd, 2014; Collyer & de Haas, 2012). Carling (2015) noted the realization that many migrants are unable to return to their origins amidst a variety of situations, describing it as the myth of return. But among these migrants are those who earnestly desire voluntary return but are simply unable to do so. For these migrants, the condition present in their migration may be a setback, crisis situation, or a certain blockage. Owing to lagging research,

there is not yet a universal definitive description of migrants who desire to return but are unable to do so.

Recent trends in migration and mobility suggest contemporary classifications different from broader classifications of economic migrant, refugee and asylum seeker". This brings to the fore increasing migrant vulnerabilities in recent years (Migrant Forum in Asia MFA, 2014, p.1). Such migrants include the 'trapped migrant'; the 'trapped' migrant as captured for the purpose of this research may possess characteristics embedded in the core migration patterns, more importantly they possess unique attributes (see figure 2.1), often overlooked but warrant research and policy attention.

In the context of this study, a definition is proposed for 'trapped migrant' as "any migrant who moves from a place of origin to either a transit point or destination and who, owing to certain difficult conditions prevailing at the present location, is unable to return to his or her origin". Hence, the term 'trapped migration' is also used in the study to refer to "the process of migration that eventually plants migrants into difficulties that limits their capabilities of return".

'Trapped' migrants can be found within several facets of the migration process, they can be found within the fields of voluntary migration, regular or irregular migration, involuntary or forced migration (Black & Collyer, 2014; de Haas, 2010), transition migration (Dowd, 2014; Collyer & de Haas, 2012), internally displaced persons (Black & Collyer, 2014), migration associated with natural/environmental causes (Foresight, 2011) and so on.

This research seeks to contribute to the budding literature on 'trapped' migrants and the broader literature on return migration. The proposition of this research is that within the very core of migration patterns is embedded a category of migrants, referred to as 'trapped' migrants, who have been under researched and whose voices/stories are often lost because they are categorized only within the dominant or more popular migration forms/patterns such as labour migration, stranded migrants, return migrants and so on.

This study attempts to bring the meaning of the concept of the 'trapped' migrant into a coherent whole. The study adopts real life accounts of 'trapped' migrants of Ghanaian origin some of which have returned, to shed more light on critical issues in need of research attention. Two geographical hot spots (of migration) for Ghanaian emigrants where the incidence of 'trapped' migration easily occurs, the Middle East (specifically Saudi Arabia and Qatar) and North Africa (specifically Libya) provided the study participants for the study. The next section highlights the problem statement to the research.

1.2 Problem Statement

Contemporary migration has been researched from several perspectives with its antecedent findings receiving attention by governance institutions, who in many ways have sought to provide solutions in various ways (UN, 2019; IOM, 2015, Black and Collyer, 2014 etc.). Irrespective of these great strides and milestones, limited studies have been conducted on the 'trapped' migrants, categorized in this study as "migrants who intend or aspires to return to their origin but who due to

conditions prevailing at their present place of location are unable to do so". Experiences of returnees who were once trapped migrants has also not been captured to shed more light on this phenomenon through research.

Currently, there is the absence of a holistic definition as well as a working framework on such migrants; hence researching this group of migrants is often done with great difficulty. This gap in literature limits the ability of policy makers, governance institutions, nation states and civil society in addressing the concerns, challenges and needs of such migrants.

Many scholars have examined several aspects of global migration, however, of interest to this study is the aspect relating to the 'trapped' migrant who has received limited qualitative inquiry as well as empirical research attention. Closely related to the discourse on the 'trapped' migrant are issues of return migration, which has also had its fair share of research especially, its effect on societies at the destination point (de Haas, 2015; World Bank, 2014; Cassarino, 2007) and also at the origin (Wong, 2013). Graziano (2018) on the importance of return migration also highlighted the difficulties of return for many migrants. Carling (2015) alluded to this fact when a study he conducted found that the majority of migrants from Europe to the Americas have not been able to complete their return mission. Irrespective of these and many more findings, limited data exist on migrants who wish or aspire to return but are faced with difficulties of return hence cannot do so as may be intended. These migrants termed 'trapped' migrants are often integrated into broader and dominant categories of migration studies hence their stories are lost and their concerns are mostly left unaddressed. Also, in this regard, researching

'trapped' migrants is often associated with conceptual challenges in view of the limited availability of theorised data. It is also worth noting that, even with returned migrants, the difficulty of obtaining data to describe them makes the proportions who have not returned indeterminate (Global Migration Group, 2017). As a result, data on migrants who have been unable to return are lost in oblivion and the reasons for this inability may also be lost with them.

The IFRC (2012) has also highlighted that even though several migrants are 'trapped' and displaced, there is often limited access to international protection for such migrants. Chetail and Braeunlich (2013) explain that many migrants are often subjected to gruesome treatments, or are 'trapped' in the borders within which they find themselves. Dowd (2008) writing about the need for human rights protection for stranded migrants, many of which are actually 'trapped' migrants also elaborates on the need for migration management bodies to encourage more research on such migrants to help to better address their concerns.

Governance bodies such as the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) who has in years past assisted several migrants to return to their countries of origin has also mistakenly categorised the 'trapped' migrant as a stranded migrant. This clearly is captured in a study by Dowd (2008) within which 'trapped' migrants were captured as stranded migrants even though the two are not the same. For the 'trapped' migrant the ultimate goal is eventual return but for the stranded migrant, they may either choose to go on or return home which may not necessarily be the ultimate goal. In view of the failure to distinguish between the two, some migrants end up 'trapped' in detention or migrant processing facilities over long periods

before they are eventually returned. This process captured as "facilitated entrapment" by this research is a major problem in view of current global patterns and associated rising numbers of migrants.

Global economic migration from the developing nations such as Ghana leading to the incidence of 'trapped' migration has thrived in view of opportunities created through globalisation and migration. Relating to this study are avenues of employment in countries in the Middle East such as Qatar, Saudi Arabia and also in Libya, North Africa. There is the presence of large labour camps often inhabited by immigrants who are promised high wages for their services, better working conditions and other attractive packages. However, some of these migrants upon arrival become disappointed as they work and live in poor conditions as 'trapped' migrants. They become 'trapped' in these countries as they are unable to return when they want to do so. Such stories circulated in print and electronic media are yet to receive the rigorous attention of scholarly work because there is a paucity of scientific and in-depth research on 'trapped' migrants.

Ghana as a nation has had its fair share of its nationals becoming 'trapped' in transit and in destination countries. Awumbila, Teye and Yaro (2017) make it evident that Saudi Arabia and Qatar are part of the most popular destinations for Ghanaian labour in the Middle East. IOM (2013) has reported that several Ghanaians were stranded in Libya in distressing conditions. Due to the persistently high unemployment situation in Ghana, many citizens see migration as an option for survival and upward mobility within the social structure (Anarfi et al, 2003). Till date, migrants from Ghana embark on dangerous journeys to North Africa through

the Sahara Desert by road, and to the Middle East, and Europe, often in search of better job opportunities. Whilst a few may be successful, many people lose their lives in the process and others get 'trapped' in life-threatening conditions in transit or at the destination. For those 'trapped', navigating a return to Ghana becomes very difficult and almost impossible. Those who had once been 'trapped' and returned often come home with acquired diseases and accounts of horrific experiences of their journey and lives as 'trapped' migrants (IOM, 2013).

It is worth noting that such migrants are often captured as stranded migrants (example is Dowd, 2008) whilst in essence many of these migrants may be 'trapped' migrants seeking to return to their origin (de Haas, 2010). Stranded migrants are a broader group who may include migrants not necessarily intending to return. For the 'trapped migrant', there is a non-negotiable decision and urge to return, but with that is also the inability to return in view of prevailing conditions. Failure to distinguish the two is a challenge for research and for governance bodies to better address pertinent issues associated with specific categories such as that of the 'trapped' migrant.

The 'trapped' migrant even though mentioned by some scholars has still not received the attention that has been given more dominant forms of migrants. Padgett and Klapp (1960) used the term 'trapped migrants' to refer to a group of migrants along the San Francisco (USA) border, but laid very little focus on the conditions of those migrants. de Haas (2010) also used the term 'trapped migrants' to refer to West Africans who were caught up in the middle of the civil war outbreak in Libya, but left out a rigorous examination of the conditions of those migrants.

Added to several other studies on migration to Libya, de Haas (2010) leads to the inference that Libya has played an important role as a recipient in the migration dynamics of West Africa. These studies, though not focusing on the 'trapped' migrants, have left traces leading to a deeper understanding of 'trapped' migration to Libya. Closely related to the 'trapped' migrants by name but very different in scope and characteristics is the concept of 'trapped' populations. Scholars such as Ayeb-Karlsson et. al, (2018); Nawrotzki, and DeWaard (2018); Black and Collyer (2014) etc. have focused on "trapped populations" within the domain of forced migration and immobility. In the opinion of Black and Collyer (2014) "trapped populations are those migrants who do not only aspire, but also need to move for their own protection and who, nevertheless, lack the ability" (p.297). The focus of their work was not on 'trapped migrants' as it was on humanitarian crisis, immobility and environmental change and thus the framework used cannot be applicable to the 'trapped' migrants in this study. Collyer and de Haas (2012) also referred to migrants who were stuck in transit countries as 'trapped' migrants. Even though this reference was made, the focus was on the transit migrants and not the 'trapped' migrants. This is problematic because, for the transit migrant, the intent is to continue the migration journey to a final place of destination but for the 'trapped' migrant, the desire is an eventual return to the place of origin.

In all these instances cited above, the true nature of 'trapped' migrants which allows for an understanding of their true nature and complexities leading them into the trap has not been addressed. Hence, that lag in research prevents the real issues pertaining to the 'trapped migrants' from being understood. This study, therefore, delves into the arena of the 'trapped' migrant through in-depth qualitative study to

illuminate the nature of 'trapped' migration, highlight the lived experiences of 'trapped' migrants and how those who have been able to return navigated their return. This will inform policy, bridge the knowledge gap on 'trapped migrants' and lead to a possible theorization of the more complex phenomenon of 'trapped migration'.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to enhance understanding of the phenomenon of being a 'trapped' migrant through a qualitative study of 'trapped' migrants of Ghanaian origin. In tandem with this, the specific objectives of the study are to:

1. identify key characteristics of 'trapped migrants' that distinguishes them from other migration types;
2. analyse the circumstances that lead migrants into the 'trapped' conditions;
3. examine the navigation strategies of 'trapped migrants' to return; and
4. analyse the role of institutions within the global governance system in assisting 'trapped migrants' to return.

1.4 Research Questions

Following the objectives of the study, the fundamental questions include:

1. What are the peculiar characteristics of 'trapped migrants'?
2. What are the circumstances that lead migrants into 'trapped migration'?
3. What are the navigation strategies of 'trapped migrants' to return?

4. What roles do institutions within the global governance system play in assisting ‘trapped migrants’ to return?

1.5 Significance of the study

This study provides an important avenue to significantly stir up attention to ‘trapped’ migrants. Without a study of this nature, the silence of ‘trapped migrants’ in literature would deepen and preclude a realistic understanding of the conditions of such migrants to inform strategies towards preventing ‘trapped migration’ and liberating migrants who are already ‘trapped’.

For the reason just stated, this study makes a significant contribution to the body of knowledge on migration. It advances the literature on an important dimension of migration, namely, ‘trapped migration’ that appears to have been side-lined globally, especially, in the case of Ghana. This literature documents the characteristics of ‘trapped migrants’, the circumstances that lead them into ‘trapped migration’, navigation strategies of ‘trapped migrants’, and the role of institutions to facilitate the return of these migrants. This literature, therefore, provides a stepping stone for more researchers to venture into the arena of ‘trapped’ migrants.

Second, this study has an informative value to the extent that the aspects of ‘trapped migration’ that are hidden have been made obvious, and the obvious aspect has been made even more obvious. The motivation for people to embark on ‘trapped migration’ can be so compelling that many of such people fail to disclose the channels they navigate in their bid to achieve the objective of their journey. In doing so, very important information that can help to clamp down ‘trapped migration’ is, unfortunately, hidden. This study investigates and analyses the otherwise hidden

facts pertaining to 'trapped migration'. The information contained in this study avails valuable information that unveils the circumstances which lead migrants into 'trapped' condition. The awareness created by this study will guide the international migrant and the Ghanaian to make proper choices on migration.

Third, this study is significant to procure well-organized information or facts about 'trapped migrants' to enrich migration data for global migration institutions and the Government of Ghana. Concerned international agencies such as the IOM, UNHCR, UNDP, UNDESA, ILO, etc. as well as local migration management agencies such as the Ghana Immigration Service (GIS), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, and Ghana's missions (Ghanaian Embassies) in other countries or regions internationally will greatly benefit from a study of this nature through the data gathered.

Current trends about the migrants who have difficulties in returning to Ghana cannot be described as decreasing. Policies and strategies from the Government of Ghana to stem the phenomenon need to be drawn and activated. A study of this sort is needed to bend the focus of the policy engineers to mitigate the phenomenon of 'trapped migration' to which some Ghanaians unfortunately fall victim.

1.6 Organization of the Study

The study is presented in eight (8) chapters.

Chapter One provides the introduction to the study. It addresses the problem statement, objectives, research questions, and the significance of the study.

Chapter Two deals with literature review to enlighten readers on issues pertaining to return migration and 'trapped' migrants. This chapter tries to explain the condition of being a 'trapped migrant' through related literature and also draws out some gaps associated with previous work in the migration discipline in relation to 'trapped migration'.

Chapter Three covers the theoretical and philosophical basis of this research. It presents a review of related theories and the conceptual framework that guided this thesis.

Chapter Four explains the methodology that was followed to conduct the research. It elaborates on the research design, study population and sample, data collection procedure and data collection instruments employed, data analysis procedure, ethical considerations, limitations of the study, and the socio-demographic information of 'trapped migrants' participating in the study.

Chapter Five presents an analysis of the characteristics of 'trapped migrants' to help identify some distinguishing features of trapped migrants.

Chapter Six examines the perspectives of 'trapped migrants' on the circumstances of 'trapped migration'. This is an analysis of the circumstances that led the migrants to be 'trapped' as well as how they tried to pave their way through those 'trapped' conditions.

Chapter Seven presents an analysis of the navigation strategies and institutional support for the return of 'trapped' migrants. It addresses how trapped migrants'

attempt to return, and the role of institutions (global or country-specific) in ensuring the return of 'trapped' migrants.

Chapter Eight ends the study with a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations. The contribution of the study to knowledge regarding 'trapped migration' is addressed in the conclusions. The recommendations section proffer ways by which 'trapped migration' can be stemmed.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews literature to illuminate the issues pertinent to migrants in 'trapped' conditions. The review commences with globalisation and migration, drivers of migration and migration outcomes. It gives an understanding to 'trapped' migration vis-à-vis other migration types and also in light of issues such as border controls and irregular migration. The review also attempts to give a comprehensive meaning to what being a 'trapped migrant' really entails. The review also identifies gaps in previous research on migration, particularly, to the extent that they have not primarily focused on 'trapped migrants'. This chapter commences with a review on the broad theme of globalisation and migration in view of the avenues within this theme created to enhance migration and the phenomenon of the 'trapped' migrant.

2.2 Globalization and Migration

Globalisation described as an abstract concept (Madar et al, 2020) is an important phenomenon in the understanding of issues relating to economic migration, return migration and more importantly to this research 'trapped' migration. Kriesi et al. (2008) capture migration as one of the new issues of globalisation. van der Brug and van Spanje (2009) have noted that migration highlights the multidimensional nature of globalisation as the cultural dimension, other scholars such as de Vries (2018), Hillen and Steiner (2019) allude to this assertion. This

implies that migration is the cultural dimension of globalisation hence the two are interlinked.

Robertson (1992, p.138) defines globalization as "the understanding of the world and the increased perception of the world as a whole". Whilst to a very large extent this definition holds, there are still issues relating to the reality of the barriers to mobility that defies this perception. Such issues such as increasing restrictions to mobility that makes migrants travel through unauthorised channels, xenophobia against migrant labourers as well as difficulties of return for 'trapped' migrants. Globalization is also defined as the "widening, deepening and speeding up of worldwide interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary social life" (Held *et al.*, 1999, p.2). This definition is a broader scope that best explains why many migrants in recent years travel to more distant places of distant cultures. Larsson (2001, p.9) also adds that globalization "is the process of the shrinking of the world, the shortening of distances, and the closeness of things". According to him, globalization increases interactions and linkages of persons on one part of the world to others found in other parts of the world, for their mutual benefit. Improved communication channels have made this possible, however for a migrant who intends to return home but is unable to due to prevailing difficulties, this shrinking of global interconnectedness needs a rethink.

Today, it is obvious how possible it is to reach very far locations or communicate from very far distances on earth with almost immediate feedback. Several decades ago, this was very difficult to do, if not regarded as impossible due to long distances. Even though this characterization makes today's world fit into all the

definitions of globalization just presented, issues relating to 'the immobility of return migration or 'trapped' migration' defies this logic and needs rigorous interrogation. However, it is worth noting that the frontiers of globalization are being extended with continuous advancement in science and technology, and an increasing human consciousness of how close different parts of the world are to each other. Several migrants identified within this research indicated that globalisation made it possible for them to have access to the destination countries with ease as the advances in communications helped to access information on wage differences with ease.

The International Monetary Fund (2000) identified four basic aspects of globalization: trade and transactions, capital movements and investment, migration and movement of people and the spreading of knowledge. What is apparent from these definitions is the existence of a strong linkage between globalisation and international migration. Globalisation has affected migration in a multiplicity of ways. Czaika and de Haas (2014) have observed that the dimensions, variety, topographical scope, and overall difficulty of international migration have heightened the globalisation process. Interestingly, the authors argue that international migration has not accelerated in relative terms, as the main migratory shifts have been directional and are linked to major geopolitical and economic transformations. Thus, the term 'migration magnets' is used by the authors to denote the pull factors in popular migration destinations such as the United States, European Union, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and so forth. According to them, migration has globalized from a destination country perspective, but hardly from

an origin country perspective, with migrants from an increasingly diverse array of origin countries concentrating on a shrinking pool of prime destination countries.

The global migration map has, thus, become more skewed. Rather than refuting the globalisation of migration hypothesis, it must be said that certain geographical locations are becoming much more popular than others (IMI Working Papers Series 2013, No. 68). Literature is replete with the fact that migrants travel over long distances, and migration has become diversified relative to origins and destinations of migrants (Arango 2000; Roccas & Brewer, 2002; Ramelli et al. 2013). This fact to a very large extent is true for the 'trapped' migrants in this study who stated that access to information about the presence of job opportunities in places where they were located was done with ease through the internet hence travelling to these places of unknown cultures was done without fear. In view of this diversity, Vertovec (2007) uses the term 'super-diversity' to connote the high degree of the diversity of immigrants amongst immigrants. International migration patterns have not only become diversified but have become more complex too (Nolin, 2017; La Barbera, 2015; Czaika & de Haas, 2014; Arango, 2000). This complexity in relation to the 'trapped' migrants can also be explained from a simple question "if globalisation has enhanced transportation networks positively then why is it so difficult for some migrants to return to their points of origin?"

The assumption of increasing volumes, diversity, geographical scope, and complexity of international migration has been most compelling in the contemporary world characterized by advances in transport and communication technology, thereby endorsing the effect of the globalisation process on migration.

Technological revolutions have fundamentally reduced the effort and costs to travel over distances (Castels, 1996). Towards this assertion, Czaika and de Haas (2014) note that globalisation should be considered as a technological and political process. In their opinion, the notion that technological advancement is responsible for the new migration patterns is three-fold. First, technological change has lowered resource and mobility constraints by reducing costs of travel and communication. Second, it has strengthened migrant networks and transnational ties by making it easier to stay in touch with family and friends, facilitated remittance, and simplified travel to and from destination and origin countries (Faist, 2000; Vertovec, 2004). Third, improved access to global information via multimedia or satellite has increased literacy and education. Today more than ever, television, mobile phones, and the internet have increased their relevance to people to help them become aware of opportunities around the globe and, on that basis, act towards realizing their aspirations. Therefore, the combined effect of technological advancement on migration must be the increased capabilities and aspirations of people to migrate (de Haas, 2009).

Interconnections of social, economic and cultural life are apparent indicators of globalisation process that also underpin recent migration patterns. According to Wade (2004), in the globalised world where there are increasing inequalities on both domestic and international fronts, persistent economic forces are influential forces in controlling the movement of high and low-skilled labour.

Globalisation is also characterised by the rapid increase in cross-border flows of all sorts (Castles & Miller, 2009). Increasing trade, investment, communication and

international aid links appear to reinforce migration links, and/or vice versa, at least in the short run (Czaika & Mayer, 2011; Schiff, 1994). Salt (1992) states further that "the globalisation of international labour migration" in which "all countries now engage in migration systems are growing in size and complexity and producing an increasing diversity of flows" (Salt, 1992, p.1080). There has been a "globalisation of migration" (Castles & Miller, 2009, p.10) as large parts of the migration volumes internationally, are driven by migrants traveling from several countries in search of economic opportunities, particularly better employment opportunities (ILO, 2010). In this research, the Ghanaian labour migrants who travel to either Libya or to some of the countries in the Middle East such as Saudi Arabia and Qatar in search of better employment opportunities reinforce what has been stated in the globalisation-induced migration literature reviewed above. However, some of these migrants either get 'trapped' in transit or in the place of destination, or are not able to return home unless with assistance from agencies such as International Organisation for Migration (IOM) or Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO) or their families left behind. Whilst some return, others never make it home and some continue on the Mediterranean and eventually get 'trapped' in detention centres after being rescued.

Whilst the incidence of being a 'trapped migrant' is a crucial feature of recent globalisation and migration trends, there exist very few studies focusing on them, hence creating gaps in the literature. It is also worth noting the various factors that drive migration and how it relates to issues pertaining to trapped migrants. The next section is an analysis in that regard.

2.3 Drivers of Migration

Reasons explaining why people migrate are wide and varied. According to the IOM (2015) approximately 244 million international migrants lived in countries that were not their origin nations. This implies that irrespective of the concerns associated with migration, international migration continues nonetheless. Migration decisions have often been analysed in line with the popular push-pull framework particularly relating to Lee (1966) s' expositions where unfavourable conditions at the place of origin or destination may cause international migration and vice versa. Even though this framework to a very large extent explains migration and return decisions, it may be lacking in explaining the complex phenomenon of the 'trapped' migrant which defies the logic of migrants continuing to be at the location where they have migrated to and are confronted with hazardous conditions often with collateral consequences. Castelli (2018) has also noted complex drivers of migration have been identified and that the reasons for migration can be captured at the macro, meso and micro levels.

In his opinion, the macro level factors may include political or demographic features which account for a greater proportion of forced migration. In the case of 'trapped' migrants identified in this study, these issues such as conflicts affected their stay in the destination point forcing them to migrate onwards which eventually planted them in 'trapped' conditions at detention camps. Their inability to return mainly due to economic factors entrenched their condition of entrapment. The meso level factors as stated by Castelli (2018) can be captured as issues relating to the ICT where social media and other communication channels paves way for

migrants to migrate to distant places in search of better living conditions. Indeed for many of the respondents in this research, social media was quite influential in their decisions to migrate, hence by extension leading them into 'trapped' migration conditions. Castelli (2018) in explaining the micro level factors identified some personal attributes such as the influence of marriage, education, religion etc. in influencing one's decision to migrate. Awumbila (2017) has documented that personal characteristics such as age, sex, education, wealth or marital status may all have an influence on migration decisions. This observation is also important to the 'trapped' migrants in this study as these personal characteristics influenced their migration decisions.

The ILO (2010, p.1) finds the increasing "disparities in income, wealth, human rights and security across countries serve as push factors towards migration". They state that migration in search of work has increasingly become a livelihood strategy for both women and men because of the lack of opportunities for full employment and decent work in many developing countries.

Migratory flows from Ghana have been documented as spreading to more distant destinations in Europe, North America, and North Africa (especially Libya) with the youth consistently in pursuit of greener pastures in those global regions (Schans et al. 2018). Sadly the reasons for migrating by the 'trapped' migrants in this study were flawed by the conditions that were prevailing there, they were met with disappointment and left without hope of return in sight. Many of them indicated that they choose North Africa and the Middle East because that was the area that allowed them access to employment irrespective of their low levels of education

amongst other issues such as the ease in accessing travel documents for countries in the Middle East and the provision of financial support such as plane fares.

In view of the foregoing discussion in this section, it can be concluded that the drivers of international migration for 'trapped' migrants identified in this study were after consideration of a multiplicity of issues that precipitated the move and desire to return but an inability to do so.

The next section discusses migration outcomes, this is particularly important because the condition of being a 'trapped' migrant is an outcome of migration.

2.4 Migration Outcomes

The effects resulting from migration are an important discourse for policymakers who seek to make some dividends out of migration. Whilst these outcomes may be positive, they can also be negative on immigrants associated.

In the case of the 'trapped' migrants for this study, a key theme that comes to the fore is the issue of labour migration. According to the ILO (2018), Labour mobility is a key feature of the global economy hence there is the need for it to be encouraged to benefit both the developed and developing economies as the migration flow is from the developing world to the developed world. The dividends of labour migration such as remittances are worth noting. ILO (2012) stated that remittances transferred to developing nations are in billions, hence if well harnessed; migration can be a way of bridging inequalities.

Irrespective of this fact, many migrants are often met with conditions that do not allow them to reap the benefits of migration. Such migrants include the 'trapped' migrant worker who wishes to return but cannot do so hence remains vulnerable with limited access to international protection and assistance. It is worth noting that, many positive aspects to cross-border migration as well as challenges exist. Through their labour, migrant workers contribute to growth and development in their countries of employment (ILO, 2010). Their countries of origin greatly benefit from these workers' remittances and the skills they acquire during their migration experience. Yet, many migrant workers, especially low-skilled workers, face exploitative working conditions and enjoy only limited human and labour rights. Policies on the return of 'trapped' migrants are limited and nation states and civil society organisations have failed to recognise their existence in spite of their contributions through remittances to the global economy.

With rising barriers to cross-border labour mobility, the growth of irregular migration and the trafficking and smuggling of human beings constitute major challenges, to the protection of human and labour rights (ILO, 2012). Some of these migrant victims are 'trapped' migrants who seek to return but given the condition may not be able to so. For 'trapped' migrants, there are risks of poor working and living conditions, including low wages, unsafe working environments, a virtual absence of social protection, abuse of human rights and freedoms, discrimination and xenophobia.

Migrant integration policies in many destination countries leave much to be desired as some of these do not inure to the interest of the migrant, especially the trapped

migrant. Particularly, is the case study of the 'kafala' system that is present in the Gulf region. The 'kafala' system – as exists, particularly, in the Gulf States – allows labour recruiters to sponsor migrant workers and, therefore, the recruiters are given the power by law to take responsibility for the protection of the migrant workers. The recruiters can go as far as to sponsor migrants from very poor families to obtain visas, air tickets, and work permits. Basically, the 'kafala' system ties migrants to a single 'kafeel', meaning 'sponsor' who is the recruiter. Due to the broad arena in which the recruiter can exercise control over the migrant workers, it leaves the migrant workers with hardly any rights to challenge the working conditions (Fernandez, 2013). The main problem with the 'kafala' system is that it has been responsible for the widespread abuse of human rights and freedoms of migrant workers as the workers are bound to serve, many times, under the whims and caprices of recruiters – it is more like a 'master' and 'slave' relationship (Parrenas & Silvey, 2016). This system has plunged many migrants into the 'trapped' condition and has made the desired return a difficult process. This point was reinforced by responses if trapped migrants from this study who migrated to the middle east. According to Awumbila et al (2019), reforms made to this system have failed to address the problem of the 'kafala' system associated with domestic workers, and so recruiters are still bestowed with extensive powers of control, including not granting release to employees and placing limits on their mobility.

Despite a demonstrated demand for workers, numerous immigration barriers persist in destination countries. As a result, an increasing proportion of migrants are now migrating through irregular channels, which has understandably been a cause of concern for the international community. As large numbers of workers –

particularly young people – migrate to more developed countries where legal avenues for immigration are limited, many fall prey to criminal syndicates of smugglers and traffickers in human beings, leading to gross violations of human rights (Awumbila et al., 2019).

However its worthy of note that a major outcome of migration as espoused in this segment is the incidence of migrants being 'trapped' in migration. The gap identified in literature is the limitedness of research on 'trapped migration' as distinct from other forms of migration which leads to a rather low appreciation of the nuances of the experiences of 'trapped migrants'. This has led to slow development of the issues relating to the social protection of such migrants as well as its governance. This research seeks to fill such gaps.

The next section however delves deeper into the phenomenon of the 'trapped' migrant and what the condition of being a 'trapped' migrant is. It commences with an operational definition and goes on to give an explanation on issues relating to it as well as its distinguishing features vis-à-vis other migration forms.

2.5 Defining 'Trapped Migration'

The term 'trapped migration' does not appear to have gotten much attention in literature. The term 'trapped migration' since the latter part of the twentieth century has entered the migration discourse and literature (Padgett and Klapp, 1960). It was however not until the twenty-first century that scholars such as Black and Collyer (2014), de Haas and Collyer (2012), etc. started mentioning it in their scholarly

presentations. Irrespective of their being mentioned, rigorous qualitative work focusing on 'trapped migrants' is yet to be conducted in academic circles.

More recent researchers like Black and Collyer (2014) in their analysis of trapped populations discussed the different forms of people trapped on the move; some of these people were referred to as 'trapped migrants'. In their opinion, "trapped populations are those migrants who do not only aspire but also need to move for their own protection but who nevertheless lack the ability" (p.297). According to them, instances that lead to 'trapped migrants' include migrants caught up in crisis situations. The focus of their work however, was not the 'trapped migrants' but on humanitarian crisis and environmental change.

In all of these instances cited a definition of who a 'trapped migrant' is, was not attempted. Black and Collyer (2014) further state that a major gap in the study of trapped population studies is the need for qualitative work on 'trapped migrants'. This research seeks to fill this gap. Particularly, these types of migrants captured as 'trapped migrants' presents compelling reasons to researchers in the quest for knowledge because of their unique characteristics. Attempts have been made to describe the circumstances that produce 'trapped migrants', and this introduces 'trapped migration' (Black and Collyer, 2014; Dowd, 2008, Collyer and deHaas). This study makes further attempts toward a definition of 'trapped migration'.

'Trapped migration' in this study is defined as the process whereby migrants who have migrated from a place of origin to a transit or destination point but due to prevailing conditions at the present place of location may be confronted by challenges of return. This study thus defines a 'trapped migrant' as any migrant

who has migrated outside his country of origin to a point of transit or destination and who due to certain prevailing conditions at the present place of location, aspires to return to the place of origin but who nevertheless lacks the ability.

It is, however, worth mentioning that some institutions and scholars use 'trapped migrants' synonymously with stranded migrants. This was clearly the case when the IOM Ghana was contacted (in this research) on work done on 'trapped migrants'; they explained that they captured them as stranded migrants. It is however important to state that there is a distinction between the two concepts. The difference lies in the desire or the aspiration of the migrant to return to the place of origin but the inability to do so at the present time of aspiration either at the destination point or transit point. The stranded migrant on the other hand may not necessarily aspire to return to the place of origin. Even though they may be related, these two may not be the same. Like the 'trapped migrant', limited scholarly work has been done on the 'Stranded migrants' irrespective of its emergence since the 1980s. Thus, they can both be described as an emerging phenomenon (Dowd, 2008). Studies relating to 'trapped migrants' are developing with help from the concept of stranded migrants. North (1981) presented the earliest explanation to stranded migrants in a book review about illegal aliens in the western hemisphere. The review projected a stranded migrant as one who has made it from Mexico to the rural Midwest, but who is isolated there and unable or unwilling to move on within the US or to go back to Mexico. Subsequent works have examined migrants stuck in transit before entering their countries of desired destination (Dowd, 2008). Amnesty International (2006) has, however, urged that this description of stranded migrants must exclude asylum seekers. Obviously, the argument there is asylum

seekers are always on the run from danger or serious threats to their lives and have no intention of returning soon until after conditions at their places of origin sufficiently indicate that those threats have been eliminated. However, the question as to whether or not in the event of seeking asylum, asylum seekers cannot be put in the domain of stranded migrants against their initial intentions is a matter that does not seem to have been completely answered. The concept of the stranded migrant is however not a substitute for the 'trapped migrant' as each phenomenon may present its own characteristics. However as stated above, a major distinction can be made of the fact that for the stranded migrant, a return may not be the ultimate goal, a desire or aspiration as it is for the 'trapped migrant' that longs and aspires for the eventual return to the original place of origin.

It is worthy of note that the 'trapped migrants' presented in this research have very distinctive features even though issues about the 'trapped migrants' are issues that pertain to the stranded migrants as well. Some 'trapped migrants' can be captured under the sub-set of the stranded migrant whilst some fall outside the set of the stranded migrant.

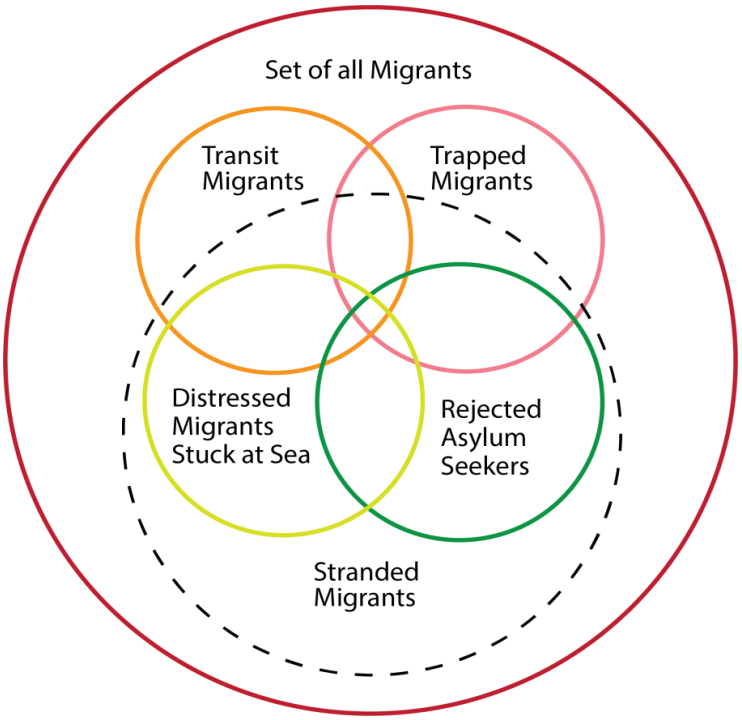
This is illustrated in Figure 2.1 below, which is a broad set of all migrants with various migrant types as sub-sets. It presents an inter-relationship of migrants categorised in the literature under the concept of Stranded Migrants. The set of stranded migrants is presented as a bigger set to the set of 'trapped migrants', transit migrants; distressed migrants stuck at sea and rejected asylum seekers. The nuances presented in the diagram cannot be glossed over and explain clearly the differences between the Stranded and the other types of Migrants such as the Transit,

Distressed, Rejected Asylum Seekers and more importantly the Trapped Migrants who are often mistakenly referred to as Stranded Migrants.

From Figure 2.1 it can seen that some transit migrants can also be stranded migrants, this was captured by Dowd (2008) as transit migrants who cannot move on or return to the origin, hence are stranded and stuck at their present place of location. This research explains that those transit migrants who may aspire to return but cannot do so captured as stranded as mentioned by Dowd (2010) can also be captured as 'trapped migrants' because of the intent to return to the place of origin. This is because there may be stranded migrants (as shown in Figure 2.1) who do not intend/aspire to return to the place of origin, such migrants cannot be said to be trapped migrants. Examples of such types of migrants include the Transit Migrants who just want to continue their journey to the place of destination and do not aspire or wish to return and the Asylum Seeker who would rather remain at the present place of location than return or the Distressed Migrant at Sea who would rather continue his/her journey than return.

However, the interconnecting areas with the 'trapped' migrant set where they may intend/aspire to return but cannot do so clearly show that amongst such migrants are 'trapped migrants' as well. Hence any attempt at a definition of the 'trapped migrants' needs to include certain key variables such as the place of origin, circumstances at the place of present location either in transit or at the destination, their intentions/aspirations, and the ability/inability to return.

Figure 2.1: An Inter-Relationship of Some Contemporary Migrant Types



Source: Authors' Construct

Figure 2.1 is an illustration of the dynamics of the above-mentioned discussion with clear illustrations on the interlinkages with other migrant types.

The next section provides a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon of the 'trapped' migrant.

2.5.1 Who is a Trapped Migrant?

The term 'trapped migrant' has increasingly crept into the vocabulary of academics, international institutions and the media in recent years. What is telling is that it has not yet moved beyond this emerging status: it has no working definition and remains a descriptive term. Scholars who have sought to use this term have either used it in passing or only mentioned them without providing a detailed qualitative

study into their existence. Such scholars include Padgett and Klapp (1960) who referred to stranded migrants along the San Francisco border as 'trapped migrants' but did not focus on them. In de Haas (2010) the term 'trapped migrants' was used to refer to Africans who were caught up in the middle of the civil war outbreak in Libya. In his opinion, the real refugee crisis in Libya has to do with the African migrants 'trapped' in Libya. From his article, it becomes obvious that the attention of the writer was not only on the migrants who were 'trapped' but on the conflict situation itself. However, the mere fact that some migrants were 'trapped' in the process of the conflict and wanted to go back to their home countries raises questions of interest to research. Collyer and de Haas (2012) also referred to migrants who were stuck in transit countries as 'trapped migrants'. They make examples of migrants from West Africa who ended up in North Africa whilst trying to get into Europe. Dowd (2008) refers to migrants 'trapped' in transit as 'stranded migrants' and admits that these migrants need to be given some support so that they can migrate back to their home countries. In examining the concept of the 'stranded' migrant, the UNHCR touch on several issues such as immobility that results from border controls in transit countries, financial difficulties preventing migration to places of destination or return to origin, difficult asylum procedures that keep migrants in detention centres and so on (Dowd, 2008). These instances are also applicable to the 'trapped migrant'.

Today, more than 20 million people are 'trapped' in a state of protracted displacement – living in camps or in unplanned and informal parts of cities, typically unable to work, unable to access even basic social services and often with little access to international protection (IFRC, 2012). In many cases, migrants may

be ‘trapped’ in migration during instances of crisis situations due to ongoing conflict, political upheaval, or natural disasters which in some cases lead to situations of protracted displacement. Chetail and Braeunlich (2013) note that migrants trapped in transit can be found anywhere, unrelated to geography and previous legal status.

Migratory flows mostly dominated by asylum-seekers and labor migrants have, since the early 2000s, become securitized (Leonard, 2010, cited in Bob-Milliar & Bob-Milliar, 2013). Duvell (2012), cited in Bob-Milliar and Bob-Milliar (2013), defined transit migration as the migration of citizens from distant countries who cross several other countries before they arrive at the external borders of and finally in the EU. Similarly, according to Bredeloup (2012), cited in Bob-Milliar and Bob-Milliar (2013), a transit migrant leaves their place of origin to temporarily reach an intermediate space which would necessarily stand as a gateway to durable settlement in a third country, the country of destination.

Highlighting the case of Libya and Syria, Chetail and Braeunlich (2013) note that the development of the past two years revealed there is a high potential for migrants to be trapped in crisis, stuck in their country of destination or transit. The numbers of those trapped in crisis were running into hundreds of thousands. There are key characteristics of migrants ‘trapped’ in transit or destination. First, both numbers and nationality of ‘trapped migrants’ vary widely and are not a decisive factor for identifying persons within the category. Second, migrants may become ‘trapped’ at any point in their migration movement. Third, migrants get trapped because they have been facilitated to fall into the trap, this situation is captured by the researcher

as ‘facilitated entrapment’. For this reason, their immobility is partly linked to the kind of control that their facilitators have over them. Some ‘trapped migrants’ are, characteristically, victims of human trafficking and smuggling. Finally, some individuals appear to be especially vulnerable to becoming ‘trapped’ namely unaccompanied minors, minors in general and women (Chetail & Braeunlich, 2013).

Many conditions have led to the ‘trapping’ of transit migrants. “Bob-Milliar & Bob-Milliar (2013) in their work on Ghanaians in Libya, concluded that the changing fortunes of African immigrants was linked to the re-establishment of diplomatic relations with the West, especially Italy. They cite the case of Ghanaian immigrant workers in Libya for example, who explained that their problems in Libya started when “Gaddafi started talking to Silvio Berlusconi. Libya’s new immigration rules criminalized all migrants, and it did not matter if you had a valid work permit or not” (Bob-Milliar & Bob-Milliar, 2013, p.23).

UNODC (2011), cited in Bob-Milliar and Bob-Milliar (2013), notes that irregular migration became a major concern of Western governments and, as a consequence, the lines between illegal and transit migration became politicized which inadvertently led to the securitization of Sub-Saharan migration to Libya and other Maghrebean countries. The politicization and instrumentalisation of transit migration had several consequences which included arbitrary arrest and detention and possibly deportation to the sending country (Bob-Milliar & Bob-Milliar, 2013). Most often, these transit migrants face several humiliations amidst stringent border and immigration policy reviews. The head of Italy’s secret service told the Italian

parliament that undocumented migrants in Libya are caught like dogs and described the conditions under which they were detained as appalling to the extent that policemen must wear a dusk mask on the mouth because of the nauseating odours (Bob-Milliar & Bob-Milliar, 2013). Although the case of Libya is somewhat peculiar, it provides a vivid illumination of the inhumane treatment meted out to some of these 'trapped' transit migrants.

UNHCR (2010), highlighting the demeaning treatment of this 'trapped' transit migrants, notes that stranded migrants from West Africa en route to Europe form another particular group at risk of human rights violations. Buttressing the issue, Gagnon and Khoudour-Casteras (2012) highlight that in addition to being victims of xenophobia as well as racial and ethnic discrimination, the irregular status of immigrants in transit countries subjects them to a wide range of abuse committed not only by smugglers and human traffickers, but also by border guards, immigration and police officers as well as by regular locals.

As 'trapped migrants' are not a legal category, there are no rights that specifically attach to persons in this predicament. However, it is relevant to examine the legal protection of 'stranded' migrants which has been considered by recent reports and provide comprehensive analysis of the human rights of irregular migrants more generally (Dowd, 2008). From a legal perspective, migrants become stranded because they have no option to regularize their status, they cannot move on lawfully to a third country and their nationality is not effective in enabling them to return home hence ending up as 'trapped' migrants. However, from a practical perspective, the reasons are more wide-ranging. The extent to which a migrant is

'trapped' can be considered along a spectrum, with legally 'trapped' at one end, and those who are subjectively 'trapped' at the other (Dowd, 2008; Collyer, 2007).

Dowd (2008) has argued that one of the main reasons why migrants find themselves stuck in transit countries is tightened border controls in destination countries. Of particular interest here are the policies and controls of the EU, the United States and Yemen. Whilst such measures are designed to deter and prevent irregular migration, they have not always had the desired effect. Hein de Haas in Dowd (2008) notes that in Northern Africa, rather than leading to a decline in migration, EU policies have led to the swift diversion of migration routes, increasing illegality and reliance on smuggling as well as increasing the risks, costs and suffering of the migrants involved. Similarly, reports about Ukraine indicate that the real impact of EU policies is an increase in human rights abuses of irregular migrants (Greenhill, 2016; Lavenex, 2006; Dowd, 2008).

A lack of accepted documentation of immigrants is one of the most commonly cited reasons why migrants become 'trapped' in transit. This is sometimes coupled with a lack of financial resources. Admittedly, migrants` documents may be lost, stolen or destroyed by smugglers or traffickers. Some migrants might even destroy their documents themselves, through fear of deportation. In some situations, migrants who lack documentation are reluctant to make themselves known to the authorities and thus do not attempt to avail themselves of the protection of their state of nationality. Other causes of migrants getting 'trapped' in transit are lack of financial resources, unwillingness to return, rejected asylum seekers, ineffective asylum

procedures, victims of trafficking, an outbreak of hostilities, abandonment by smugglers among others (Collyer, 2010; Duvell, 2012; Dowd, 2008).

Relevant questions have been posed concerning the consequences of being 'trapped' in transit. Dowd (2008) has noted that irregular migrants are particularly vulnerable to human rights violations and abuse. Amnesty International has commented that those who lack official status and the protection of the law are often denied the right to education, health, and housing services and are condemned to live and work in appalling and degrading conditions (Dowd, 2008; Bylander, 2018).

It is reckoned that laws or policies addressing irregular migration in transit countries are either inadequate in sufficiently protecting the human rights of 'trapped migrants' or ineffectively enforced (Dowd, 2008; Panda & Mishra, 2018). The possible reasons for this include the way in which states focus on discouraging illegal migration, succumb to pressure from western neighbors to better police irregular migration, are overwhelmed by the sheer magnitude of irregular migration and the lack of political incentive to address such a controversial phenomenon (Dowd, 2008). As more and more transit migrants are unable to continue their journeys, host countries struggle to provide protection and access to services, without creating incentives that may result in increasing inflows of migrants. As a result of this lack of formalized understanding of transit migration as a manifestation of irregular migratory movements, most national policies dealing with transit migration do so within the framework of laws and regulations targeting irregular migration (Pitea, 2010). Countries have not created specific mechanisms

to deal with transit migration and therefore, policies and instruments traditionally used to counter irregular migration have been adapted to changing circumstances in the region, including the rise in mixed migration flows (Pitea, 2010; Panda & Mishra, 2018).

The next section however also enhances understanding of 'trapped' migration by examining 'trapped' migrants resulting from forced migration as may be the case in some of the study participants of this study.

Many of the research participants in this study become 'trapped' migrants when the conflict outbreak in Libya occurred hence it is appropriate to discuss the 'trapped' migrant in the face of forced migration. The next section thus focuses on these issues.

2.5.2 The Missing Link between Forced Migration and 'Trapped'Migration

Forced migrants are defined as persons who flee or are obliged to leave their homes or places of habitual residence because of events threatening their lives or safety (Martin, 2000). Forced migration has many causes and takes many forms. People leave because of persecution, human rights violations, repressions, conflict and natural and human-made disasters (Faist, 2018; Martin, 2010). Many depart on their own initiative to escape these life-threatening situations although, in a growing number of cases, people are driven from their homes by governments and insurgent groups intent on depopulating or shifting the ethnic, religious or other components of an area. Refugees are a subset of forced migrants who have a special status in international law, coming under the terms of the UN Convention and Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (Martin, 2010).

Martin (2010) has noted that forced migrants have moved beyond the conventional classification of people crossing borders to include those caught up in humanitarian crises as well hence its classification has become more complex than before. Indeed, refugees in the legal sense of the word now constitute little more than half of the people who are protected and assisted by UNHCR (Martin, 2010).

The Organization of African Unity adopted a convention that expanded the definition of a refugee to include not only those fleeing persecution but also those who flee their homelands owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order. Subsequently, other groups in need of assistance and/or protection have come to the attention of the international community, with many terms used to define their specific situations (internally displaced persons, war-affected populations, returnees, temporarily protected persons, stateless people, and development- and development- and environment-induced forced migrants, etc.) (Martin, 2000). In any case, the domain of forced migrants goes beyond just refugees, though, refugees represent a more pronounced form of forced migrants.

The victims of humanitarian emergencies may belong to more than one group, either at the same time or in close sequence (Martin, 2000). For example, war-affected populations often become displaced. Refugees returning from neighboring countries may become internally displaced persons if conflicts continue in their home communities or if they cannot return to their homes for other reasons (Martin, 2000). Beside the issue of conflicts, other natural factors such as environmental damage may also play a role in forcing populations to migrate hence creating

environmental refugees (Martin, 2010). It is worthy of note that many of these forced migrants may actually be 'trapped' migrants who may not only be in need of international protection as refugees but may also be in need of assistance to return. In view of the absence of more research and a theorization of the concept of 'trapped' migration, it has been difficult to specifically address the peculiar challenges of such migrants. According to Martin (2000), there may also be environmentally forced migrants who cannot simply return to their place of origin because of natural disasters even though they desire to return. This category captured as 'trapped' migrants by this study has also been under-researched. According to Black and Collyer (2014), such migrants may also be referred to as 'trapped populations'.

The various segments within the categorization of forced migrants have created a condition where despite the overlaps among statuses and the dynamic elements of forced migration, policy makers within and outside of the United Nations have used a classified system that permits forced migrants to be placed into specific boxes, with the assumption that standards, mandates and programs will follow the designated classifications (Martin, 2010). Thus the classification has succeeded in raising the visibility of groups of forced migrants (which include the 'trapped' migrant) who, heretofore, had been either ignored or fell between the cracks in the international system (Martin, 2000).

Martin (2010) also identified statelessness as a key issue to discuss when looking at the issue of forced migration from a broader perspective. Stateless persons generally enjoy fewer rights than those who are citizens of a sovereign state. Some

stateless persons may also be captured as ‘trapped’ migrants because they may not be able to return to the place of origin as desired or remain at the place of destination in view of their status. Statelessness as a consequence of forced migration occurs when refugees lose their former nationality but do not qualify for a new one (Martin, 2010). This situation leads to a protracted stay at refugee processing camps hence trapping these migrants there against their will, this process also referred to as a case of “facilitated entrapment” by this researcher can easily be avoided if the gap in the literature on forced migrants as pertains to issues relating to ‘trapped’ migrants are addressed.

Embedded in the aspects of forced migrants are ‘trapped’ migrants who may not be wanting to flee to another country but desire to return but who cannot do so in view of the fact that they may not be captured as refugees, those who do not have access to their travel documents in view of the conflict also come to mind. ‘Trapped; migrants resulting from forced migration conditions are overlooked and categorized dominantly as stranded migrants irrespective of what their specific distinguishing needs may be. According to the International Director of the British Red Cross, out of the 72 million forced migrants, 20 million are ‘trapped’ in a state of protracted displacement, and there are more people displaced in their own countries than there are refugees in the world (WDR, 2012). Although not all ‘trapped migrants’ would have been forced migrants, very often than not, forced migrants get ‘trapped’. So, the web of ‘trapped migrants’ constitutes people who have been forced to migrate as well as people who willfully began a voyage to seek better lives elsewhere. This only escalates the numbers of ‘trapped migrants’ when one focuses closely on ‘trapped migration’.

In many instances, migrants may be 'trapped' in conflict situations due to political upheavals and/or natural disasters which in some cases lead to situations of protracted displacement. Chetail and Braeunlich (2013) have noted that there is virtually no geographical boundary to migrants who are trapped as they can be found almost anywhere. The 'trapped migrants' who often represent the end of a continuum of fleeing from poverty and distress are subjected to further brutalities and inhumane treatments which further exacerbate their already vulnerable conditions.

Focusing on those who are 'trapped' throws a challenge to researchers for both theoretical and practical approaches to mobility and crisis. Those who have lost control of the decision to move away from potential danger have inevitably lost a lot more (Black & Collyer, 2014). There are obvious humanitarian reasons to be concerned about, regarding situations in which individuals are unable to move to escape danger. Such immobility magnifies their vulnerability and may inhibit the access of humanitarian actors (Black & Collyer, 2014). Although the problem of 'trapped migrants' presents a huge burden, there seem to be very little inroads towards reducing that burden. Black and Collyer (2014) argue that politically acceptable humanitarian solutions are needed to the tremendous vulnerability faced by 'trapped migrants' in certain contexts, such as Sudanese in the Sinai or Central Americans aspiring to migrate to the US in northern Mexico. Conceding that there are existing points of engagement, the authors bemoan the fact that practical policy responses are not obvious. In their view, as long as limited information on 'trapped migration' is available, the policy goal is to avoid situations in which people are unable to move when they want to, not to promote policy that encourages them to

move when they may not want to, and up-to-date information allowing them to make an informed choice (Black & Collyer, 2014).

Forced migration represents a condition in which people are coerced to move away from their usual place of habitation due to natural and anthropogenic factors that put their livelihood at risk. 'Trapped migration' expounds on a condition within the migration continuum where the migrant is either stranded in transit or at a destination point such that, it is impossible to return to the place of origin even though the migrant is willing to return. It is quite difficult to draw a clear distinction between the two processes. Basically, the same or similar underlying factors of natural and/or anthropogenic threats induce both patterns of migration. Some 'trapped migrants' as is the case of this research were once forced migrants. In a similar vein, many forced migrants have experienced 'trapping' in some ways. Thus, policies driven at making reformations on 'trapped migration' necessarily need to imbue elements of forced migration and how the underlying causal factors can be managed or reduced entirely.

While at the beginning of the migration process, 'trapped migrants' are facilitated based on their consent to migrate, force migration takes place with coercion, removing every option not to migrate in the direction in which the force is being applied. Similarly, the destination of such migration is determined by force. Thus, it removes the element of choice of the migrant. 'Trapped migration' seems to respect migrants' free agency to migrate or not. Once the decision to migrate arrives, the migration process is facilitated to the transit or destination point. The trap begins to work when the facilitators begin to exercise their control at the transit

or destination point. Abuse and undue influence, for example, are used as coercive tools to determine the mobility or otherwise of the migrants. Here again, the element of choice for the migrants at the destination or transit point is extremely suppressed. The missing link between forced migration and 'trapped migration' is, therefore, the suppression of the element of choice of migrants so that they exist in the destination or transit against their volition. This gap identified in the literature has been analysed to shed more light on the broad scope of the 'trapped' migrant and the need for more studies to help put it in a coherent framework that informs policies.

The next section touches on border controls and migration; this is because some migrants end up as 'trapped' migrants resulting from such controls.

2.6 Border Controls and 'Trapped' Migration

Border control has been a topical issue in the migration discourse over a long time. Literature reflects the view that border controls have emanated from nations' security alertness and the need to exercise power over what comes in and goes out of the country. To a large extent, the discourse on border control centers on immigration policies that seek to limit access to countries. Despite these limits, there exist conditionalities which grant some opportunities for immigration as well as immigrants who exploit the gaps in immigration policies execution.

This analysis focusing on issues pertaining to the 'trapped' migrant commences with an analysis of the 'kafala' system in the Gulf States, which is legally established by a set of laws in the Gulf States and enables employers to take full

responsibility for their employees from other countries, and also makes it relatively easier for immigrants to enter the Gulf States (Fernandez, 2013). This system allows for migrants to be ferried to the Gulf States via this corridor with very minimal restrictive border controls. What makes it very appealing for immigrants from poor countries is also the fact that all financial costs are catered for before the journey is made. For 'trapped' migrants, this is actually the trap because when they get to the destination nation and the narrative changes, they are unable to return because of the financial costs incurred by the receiving party. Their passports are often ceased and thus they have to stay until the finances have all been paid. Their human rights are abused and they end up 'trapped' with difficulties of return. Therefore even though the restrictions on travel are minimal, the costs and implications are great.

Trapped migration also arises when there exists greater tightening of policies of entry for potential immigrants amongst nation-states. This practice allows migrants intending to migrate to such places to resort to practices such as irregular migration, transit and step-wise migration. One country that comes to mind in relation to the incidence of trapped migration, irregular, step-wise and transit migration is Libya. According to Spiga (2005) until about a recently, Libya had a healthy economic relationship with many other African countries because they supplied labour to boost the country's industrial, agricultural, and mining industries (Akyeampong, 2000). Hence many migrants migrated to Libya in search of job opportunities with minimal restrictions on movement, however as the narrative changed with increasing economic difficulties, Libya became a popular destination for transit migrants intending to migrate across the Mediterranean ocean to Europe (Bob-

Milliar, 2012). Europe's repulsion to this direction of immigration has increased tensions in Libya compelling them to tighten their border controls towards the south (de Hass, 2008). So, in restrictive border control discussions, the experience of Europe in what is famously termed, 'Fortress Europe', cannot be sidestepped, especially when Libya is used by many irregular migrants from Africa as a transit to Europe.

Particularly essential because it gave rise to teaming pools of 'trapped' migrants in Libya some of which were study participants of this research. Many of the immigrants to Libya are both arrested and kept in detention camps or prisons over prolonged periods waiting to be deported become 'trapped' migrants in these camps. Those transiting through the desert to get to Libya, in view of fortress Europe are also arrested and kept in transit detention centres over prolonged periods awaiting return which takes forever to happen hence rendering them 'trapped' migrants as well.

Hailbronner & Thym, (2016) states that the idea of 'Fortress Europe' derives from the European Union asylum policy which sought to prevent migrants from entering the European Union. It focuses on preventing migrants from entering the EU and is characterized by restrictive entry and border control policies which was to stem the increasing volumes of migration into Europe. Parson & Smeeding, (2006) has noted 'Fortress Europe' described the action taken by the European Union to countermand the volumes of migrant inflow. Eurostat (2016) indicates that there has been increasing attention on the numbers of asylum seeker applicants seeking to enter the European Union; the figures in 2013 were 431,000 asylum seekers,

627,000 in 2014 and ballooned more than double to 1.3 million in 2015. 'Fortress Europe' seeing the concrete measures taken in order to prevent irregular economic migration (Amnesty, 2014, p.6) ends up keeping migrants in these migrant processing facilities as 'trapped' migrants, and these rejected African asylum seekers who are still kept there but who nonetheless are eager to return to their home countries are referred to as such. The process of keeping these specific migrants under such situations is termed "facilitated entrapment" by the researcher. Berhidsky (2016) describes it as a migration crisis, but the researcher sees this act as a case of entrapment.

The international community has criticized and increased pressure on the European Union to deal with immigration issues. A European Commission April 2016 proposal for reform of the EU's common asylum policy is said to be still in limbo due to the complex nature of the immigration problem. The EU was advised to solve this problem by addressing the root causes of migration outside of itself, that is, to deal with the external dimensions of their asylum policy, dialogue, cooperate, and partner with countries of origin and transit countries. So, at the external borders, the EU's policy seeks to provide a rapid response capability in case of a crisis situation, assist member states in returning illegal foreign nationals, and work closely with the border control authorities of non-European Union countries (FRONTEX, 2016).

Another point to be raised in this segment is that border controls have tightened in view of growing security concerns. In recent years, terrorism-related concerns have further fueled this trend and put borders in the spotlight. Controlling immigration

has consequently become an important field of policy in which several evolutions have taken place in recent years. The borders between Western countries and their less-rich neighbors have become fortified, partly through the use of sophisticated methods of control (Pecoud & Guchteneire, 2006). A typical case of reference is that the US governments' border patrol systems and policies; since the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks, have increased in a bid to stop the entry of potential terrorists (Koslowski, 2011). This has given rise to the incidence of several migrants being 'trapped' at border/transit points as "facilitated entrapped 'trapped' migrants".

Transit countries are also asked to better control their borders, and countries such as Mexico or Morocco become buffer zones to contain migration from Latin America or Sub-Saharan Africa (Andreas & Biersteker, 2003 cited in Pecoud & Guchteneire, 2006). In this process, controls are delocalized, taking place far away from the geographical location of borders and keeping several migrants as 'trapped' migrants particularly in view of the limited resources available to these transit countries to facilitate the deportation of the migrants. Once undocumented migrants have been identified, they may be subject to detention and expulsion, and (Schuster, 2004 cited in Pecoud & Guchteneire, 2006) this clearly is where the problem arises.

These 'trapped' migrants who may be desirous of return but are unable to do so need to be researched to enable policymakers to better help address their specific concerns.

The challenges of border controls on migration besides the incidence of 'trapped' migration are enormous. Some of these are analysed below:

Migration controls are expensive. According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) report, the twenty-five richest countries spend 25 billion to 30 billion dollars per year on the enforcement of immigration laws (Martin, 2003 cited Pecoud & Guchteneire, 2006). These costs stem not only from controlling borders, but also from issuing visas and residence permits, prosecuting, detaining and removing undocumented migrants, carrying out labor inspections and implementing sanctions on employers, treating asylum-seeker claims, resettling refugees, and searching for undocumented migrants (Berg, 2015; Pecoud & Guchteneire, 2006).

Migration Controls are difficult to carry out in a globalized world. Migration, a process structurally embedded in the economies and societies of most countries is extremely difficult to stop. This is because nation-states face a dilemma of being business-friendly and open to international trade or tourism (Pecoud & Guchteneire, 2006) in an increasingly globalized and open world.

Migration controls lead to collateral damages. The most tragic and obvious illustration of this cost lies in the number of people who die on their way to receiving countries (Pecoud & Guchteneire, 2006). It is also worth noting that the 'trapped' migrant as a result of these border controls which allows migrants to resort to unauthorized routes of migration, with little or no travel documents faces greater risks of associated vulnerabilities and may also lose of his/her life in the process.

In conclusion to this segment, it is worth noting that this incidence of 'trapped' migration resulting from controlled borders has several challenges to human rights.

First, the measures meant to stop irregular migration have direct consequences on the asylum principle, according to which all human beings are entitled to seek protection from persecution (Pecoud & Guchteneire, 2006). Secondly, the human rights challenge of human trafficking and smuggling comes to the fore. Some 'trapped' migrants in their desperation to return become victims of human trafficking gangs and smuggling gangs (Andreas, 2000). Therefore it is important to state that a causal effect of being a 'trapped' migrant is the issue of irregular migration.

The next section delves into irregular migration (with specific reference to Ghana) which in many cases has led many migrants into becoming 'trapped' migrants.

2.7 Irregular Migration from Ghana: A Recipe for Migrant Trapping

Broadly speaking, the above segment has given several instances where irregular migration can lead to the incidence of 'trapped' migration and associated challenges. This segment focuses on the Irregular migrant of Ghanaian origin. This is because this research focuses on 'trapped' migrants of Ghanaian origin.

Ghanaian emigrants have expanded their geographical view by exploring destinations in Europe, North America, the Middle East and other parts of Africa, with South Africa and North Africa (Libya) as key migration poles in Africa (IOM, 2009). Whilst Ghanaians use regular routes of migration, a significant number also use irregular routes particularly through the desert to North Africa. According to the CIREFI database, 2,541 Ghanaian illegal emigrants were apprehended in Europe in 2007 (IOM, 2009). The issue of irregular migration continues to increase

in the West-African sub-region despite increasing awareness creation on the dangers. In 2011, over 18,000 Ghanaian migrants in Libya, most of them irregular, were assisted to return to Ghana during the Libyan crisis by the government of Ghana in partnership with IOM (eeas.europa.eu). According to IOM (2014) at least 5,017 migrants lost their lives while attempting to cross borders around the world and over 65% of them originated from sub-Saharan Africa. Of the 5,017, over 3,270 are believed to have died trying to cross the Mediterranean. Between January and May 2015, at least 2,369 migrants died including 1,829 in the Mediterranean. These figures question the effectiveness of institutions handling migration issues. It is important to note that Ghana is no stranger to these casualties of irregular migration. Although official statistics does not exist to show the numbers involved, an increasing number of Ghanaians, especially young people, are risking their lives looking for better opportunities. Between January and April 2015, some 471 Ghanaians, including 32 unaccompanied minors, arrived in Italy by boat according to the Italian Ministry of the Interior (eeas.europa.eu). These aforementioned figures highlight the irregular flows of Ghanaians risking their lives to cross the Sahara Desert to seek greener pastures. As mentioned earlier, the likelihood of an irregular migrant to become a 'trapped' migrant is very easy, however, in view of the limited availability of data existing on the subject matter, it is very difficult for migration management institutions to determine the actual numbers of immigrants that were considered 'trapped' migrants globally. Even in instances where migrants were returned to Ghana with assistance; there was no study seeking to inquire the numbers who actually intended to return home from the 'trapped' condition. In an era of globalization and interconnectedness it is imperative for governance bodies

to address this issue of data paucity on trapped migrants. Many 'trapped' migrants mentioned that global migrant networks in the processes involving irregular migration aided their emigration.

It is worth noting that the numbers of irregular Ghanaian migrants fortunate to be assisted to return reflecting the figures captured above may be relatively small compared to those who may be 'trapped' in points of transit and in destination countries. The challenge of return for many irregular migrants especially those who fall within the 'trapped migrant' category is an important issue that can be addressed if more studies are carried out to inform policy. It is very difficult to know the real numbers of Ghanaians that may be captured as irregular migrants, it is however herculean to know the actual numbers of those 'trapped'.

2.8 Summary

The literature review in this chapter has attempted to illuminate the process of migration and the dimension from which 'trapped migration' is emerging. The review was not an attempt to conceptualise trapped migration around any of the issues reviewed but to analyse those issues with specific reference to the 'trapped' migrant to enhance understanding. It also sought to point out the gaps in the literature and to engage critical thinking and reflections on the existence of 'trapped' migrants. The review highlights the growing perception of the world as a global village making migration, even over long distances, relatively easy. This has spawned massive directional migration caused, in a larger part, by economic reasons. The review acknowledged the emerging concept of 'trapped migration' as

an outcome of globalisation, but 'trapped migrants' have been roughly conceived as migrants who have difficulties returning to their place of origin. A clear distinction has been made between the 'trapped' and stranded migrants. What is clear is that the trap renders migrants against their will once they are caught in it, 'trapped migrants' are often in a coercive environment and are incapable of return when they want to return. The missing link between forced migration and 'trapped migration' which is the suppression of the element of choice of migrants so that they exist in their destination or transit against their volition; has clearly been outlined in this segment. Ongoing conflicts within the global system have caused labour migrants who live in conflict zones to become forced and 'trapped' migrants as well. The review also emphasized that 'trapped migrants' are often facilitated into the trap through illegal or irregular migrant smugglers. This irregularity has been a precursor of varying degrees of border controls in Europe as a result of massive movements across the Mediterranean Sea from Africa via Libya and, therefore, causing immobility in Libya. Border controls to places like the US have been tightened. In the Gulf States, to ensure that migrants are well identified and managed, migrant brokers and facilitators are given authority to be completely responsible for immigrants. This has been consequential to the creation of 'trapped migrants'. This chapter also addressed irregular migration in Ghana and the incidence of leading migrants into the trapped condition and associated challenges.

In the next chapter, an attempt is made to present the theoretical underpinnings of 'trapped' migration and to seek a proper definition of the term 'trapped migration' and who 'trapped migrants' might be. Its worthy of note that limited discussion on return migration in this segment is as a result of the fact that the conceptual

framework developed was done around the broader framework of return migration hence a more detailed discussion of return migration has been done in the next segment.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL EXPOSITIONS ON 'TRAPPED' MIGRATION

3.1 Introduction

This chapter commences with a brief background leading to the theoretical understanding of this research. Out of several theoretical perspectives of migration, some theories that are critical to this study and provide better lenses to focus on 'trapped' migration are addressed in the chapter. Return migration and its associated theories have been analysed and the gaps within the literature with specific reference to the 'trapped' migrant have been mentioned, culminating in a conceptual framework for this research. Based on the understanding of migration and nuances from the theoretical perspectives analysed, an attempt has been made to explicate the key terms and terminologies, in the lead to formulating the conceptual framework that guides this research.

3.2 Theory of Migration

Some theoretical underpinnings of migration have been reviewed to bring migration as a process into perspective. This would contribute to conceptualizing the phenomenon of 'trapped' migration. Massey et al. (1993) have stated that a variety of theoretical models have been proposed to explain why international migration occurs. According to them, these theories employ different concepts to explain the issue of international migration. Return is a pivotal issue raised in the process of migration which must be accounted for by any theory of migration. Its

importance to the discourse of 'trapped' migration cannot be overemphasized. Return migration is described as a "situation where the migrants return to their country of origin, by their own will, after a significant period of time abroad" (Dustmann & Weiss, 2007, p.238). From this definition, it is important to state that the return is limited to 'voluntary return' and this is captured in the words "by their own will". However, it is important to state that return under involuntary conditions is also possible hence an attempt at a definition need not be limited to voluntary circumstances alone. A very important point that can be taken from the perspective of voluntary return is the view that the 'intention of the migrant to return' is a key variable to consider.

Cassarino (2004) provides a systematic understanding of the theoretical view of migration. According to him, the theories of migration can be categorised under four key approaches:

i. Economic Approach;
ii. Structural Approach;
iii. Sociological Approach; and
iv. Psychological Approach

The psychological approach focuses more on the individual changes in attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours as well as how migrants respond to acculturation and shock emanating from the migration process (Sussman, 2010). In finding a suitable theory closest to understanding 'trapped' migration, one ought to consider the reasons for migration, means of migration, and circumstances of migrants before return. From the above, none other than the economic approach, structural approach, and

sociological approach have a clear and relevant bearing on the discussion on the migration cycle in which 'trapped' migrants find locus. The discussions in the subsequent sections illuminate the ideals of these approaches and how they help to understand or identify the grey area of 'trapped' migrants.

3.2.1 Economic Approaches

Economic Approach has been divided into two; these are the Neoclassical Economics and New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM)**.** The neo-classical theory views migration as a prerequisite for the achievement of economic growth and, therefore, migration is vital for development. Todaro (1969) and Lewis (1954), the leading proponents, show that migration is central to the economic development process in countries which is based largely on the movement of labour or labour migration. Countries in need of a certain class of labour have the conditions which attract that labour, typically, by increasing wages while the supplying countries' wages remain lower. According to Borjas (1989), the neo-classical perspective sees the migration process as being motivated by wage differentials between origin and destination countries, where migrants mainly move from countries with low wages to those with higher wages. The movement of workers to countries where they would be richer is responsible for diffusing capital from rich countries to poor countries and creating a balancing mechanism (de Haas, 2010). So, migration is caused by wage differentials between the sending and receiving countries. This explanation finds expression in the migration situation in Ghana as more and more youths aspire to enter North America, Europe and some parts of Asia, largely, as a bold step to break away from the perceived economic quagmire in the country.

Dako-Gyeke (2016) has shown that Ghanaians usually migrate in search of higher education and economic improvement. Of course, the receiving country offers a bigger and better opportunity for income and the decision to migrate is made purely at the individual level.

The neo-classical theory, according to de Haas (2010), ignored the view that the benefits of migration could accrue also to non-migrants as to migrants. This was to emphasize that "migration could have a multiplier effect that extends beyond the individual migrant in the form of enhanced livelihoods or otherwise' (Nzima et al., 2017, p.3). In Ghana, families whose relatives have found themselves in developed countries have a certain level of expectation of their migrant relative. The migrant is expected to bring home goodies and improve the economic fortunes of the family. Financial flow in the form of remittances is the avenue by which the benefits of migration reach the relations of migrants. So, migration is seen as an aspiration and object of hope for a large portion of society (Dako-Gyeke, 2016). The New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM) in the stead of neo-classical theory, accounts for the view that poor countries send labour to developed countries through migration, but there is a benefit in the form of capital inflow to the poor country in which remittances play a critical role. Therefore, the argument to the effect that migration produces returns in the form of remittances or capital inflows to poorer countries is properly accounted for by the NELM theory (Nzima et al., 2017).

Cassarino's (2004) analysis points out that the neoclassical economics framework perceives return migration as a failure of the migration experience either through

miscalculation of the costs or failing to keep the benefits of the migration. Thomas (2008) agrees with this view by stating that migrants will only return home if they fail to derive the expected benefit of higher earnings abroad. However, Thomas (2008, p.657) further elaborates that contrary to the neoclassical theory, the New Economics of Labour Migration theory (NELM) considers return migration "as part of a defined plan conceived by migrants before their departure from their countries of origin". It can therefore be argued from this theory that the migrants' eventual migration includes a master plan of return, especially, after the migrant accumulates sufficient resources abroad (Setrana & Tonah, 2014; Ammassari, 2004). This may also be the case for some migrants who may end up being 'trapped' at the destination in view of the fact that they do not possess the required capital for return. However, there must be room to account for migrants who wish to return because they want to abort the purpose of the migration and, therefore, the migration.

Economic perspectives of return migration models are very relevant, applicable to real-life situations and provide valuable insights of return. However, they have been criticised as well. It is worth noting that they fail to take into account other social, political, institutional, psychological and cultural factors that may influence migrants' decisions such as family left behind, place and attachment, socio-cultural conditions such as the need to return and contribute meaningfully to the society left behind as an outcome of return migration, the need to come back home to occupy political office such as a Chieftaincy institution and so on. Critiques of these economical perspectives state that these models provide limited information about the decision-making processes leading to remigration and the interaction between

the migrants and the socio-political environments both in the sending and receiving contexts. The fact that second and subsequent generations are hardly represented in the models is also another shortcoming (Kunuroglu et al. 2015). Another shortcoming is their failure to examine those who may not be able to return by themselves in view of economic problems. Such persons may include the study participants. In view of these shortcomings, the Structural approaches were introduced; these approaches have been analysed below:

3.2.2 Structural Approach

The Structural Approach emphasizes the significance of the financial and economic resources brought back to the country of origin following the return decision and reintegration of the migrants. The structural approach argues that return migration should also be analysed with reference to the social and institutional context in the country of origin (Cassarino, 2004; Cerase 1974; King, 1986). Structural theories on return migration, stresses the importance of the social, economic, and political conditions in the home countries, not only as major factors in the decision to return, but also as components affecting the ability of returning migrants to make use of the skills and resources that they have acquired abroad (Diatta & Mbow 1999).

Cerase (1974) distinguishes between four kinds of return of first-generation immigrants, namely, return because of failure, conservatism, retirement, and innovation. According to him, *return of failure* occurs when the immigrants cannot adapt to the destination countries due to social or political factors. The difficulties in integrating into the immigration context (e.g., discrimination, language issues) motivate them to return. *Return of conservatism* pertains to the migrants with an

initial return intention after saving some money during the migration period. In his opinion, such migrants stay longer in the migration context, transfer remittances, and realize their financial plans like buying properties in the country of origin before the actual return. *Return of retirement* is where returnees aim to spend their old age in their home countries after ending their working life. *Return of innovation* occurs when immigrants are fairly well integrated abroad, having acquired new skills and being involved more in the society of the host country. The returnees perceive themselves as 'agents of the change' and aim to return and change the homeland, bringing new ideas and values as well as using the knowledge and skills acquired in the host country.

The structural approach attempts to show that return can no longer be seen as a phenomenon detached from the contextual factors both in the sending and receiving countries. Critics of the theory have suggested that, 'by mainly focusing on the influence of return migration on the countries of origin, the structural approach leaves many unanswered questions about the internal dynamics of return migration' (Cassarino, 2004). Moreover, the framework pays almost no attention to later generations thus focusing on first-generation migrants (King & Christou, 2008). Structuralist could also have examined aspects of international return migration that focuses on how return can be aided in times of conflicts or crises by available structures such as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) as has been the case in the experience of some of the study participants for this research or how structures such as borders and improper documentation can also affect migrants and hence prevent return. The point here is that there are very important and relevant issues relating to 'trapped migrants' which scholars, even advocates such as the

structuralists have failed to address. The following discussion, thus, gives way for the analysis of the sociological perspectives presented in the next section.

3.2.3 Sociological Approach

The Sociological Approach focuses on the sociological, political and economic effects on migrants. Transnationalism is one of the focuses of the sociological approach. Transnationalism has been used in a broader sense to refer to multiple ties and interactions that connect people or institutions across the borders of nation-states, linked to globalization and not necessarily linked to migration (Vertovec, 1999). That notwithstanding, transnationalism from the start of the 21st Century has had a major impact on the discourse of return migration. According to Cassarino (2004), the term transnationalism was conceptualized by a group of social scientists in the early 1990s, derived from the common pattern of experiences of migrants who keep their multi-stranded social relations that link them to their countries of origin (e.g., Kearney, 1995; Schiller, Basch, & Blanc-Szanton, 1992). Such migrants referred to as trans-migrants developed and maintained multiple ties, such as familial, institutional, religious, economic, and political, both with their country of origin and settlement (Schiller et al., 1992).

Sommerville (2008) stated that the transnational approach does not perceive migration or return necessarily as an endpoint in its conceptualisation. Rather, it describes how migrants develop multi-layered identities not only through the social and economic links sustained within the heritage and host countries, but also through various ways in which the migrants are attached to one another by their ethnic origins, kinship, and in-group solidarity. Recent developments in modern

telecommunication and media tools, transportation, cheap international phone calls, international airfare, and the Internet, ties and relationships facilitate the process of transnationalism (Cassarino, 2004). Research in this tradition locates migrants within transnational social fields, rather than their host countries, and empirically examines the nature and strength of their transnational ties (Levitt, 2005).

Transnational studies help to understand the multifocal and interdisciplinary nature of mobility from the perspectives of both the sending and the recipient societies (Quayson & Daswani, 2013). Even though the transnationalism approach contributes to understanding relevant concepts and processes specific to return migration, its limitations should also be acknowledged. Portes (1999) has stated that it is a rather fragmented field that needs a better-defined framework as well as analytical rigor. Somerville (2008) has also stated that the research should focus more on the processes of identity formation rather than identity outcomes. He adds that "the static identity markers cannot capture the emotional attachments and the agency in formulating and expressing emotional attachments" (p.31). Finally, available literature says very little about the return of the subsequent generations (King & Christou, 2008). To add to these, the researcher would state that transnational models have failed to examine migrants 'trapped' in destination countries that would like to return to the place of origin but are unable to hence resort to the use of social media and telecommunications networks to make their stay in the destination bearable. It is thus worth knowing what scholars have said about 'trapped' migration hence the next section discusses the perspectives of 'trapped' migration from scholars and practitioners.

3.3 Perspectives on 'Trapped' Migration from Scholars and Practitioners

The closest perspectives presented in the literature pertaining to 'trapped migrants' are those presented from the lenses of the stranded migrants. Some of these are herein analysed.

Grant (2007) was one of the first few scholars who focused on stranded migrants. She observed that, in practice, migrants become legally stranded, where they are caught between removals from the state in which they are physically present, and the inability to return to their state of nationality or former residence, and refusal by any other state to grant entry. Stranded migrants who were unable to return or continue can also be captured as 'trapped migrants' as explained earlier. They may also be stranded where there are practical or humanitarian reasons which prevent them from returning home. According to Grant, rejected asylum seekers, migrant workers or economic migrants, who might have entered a country illegally assisted by smugglers or traffickers, could fit her definition (Grant, 2007). Grant presented the group of stranded migrants as largely comparable to stateless persons, as often the stranded situation would also be related to an inability to return to the country of origin, based on the situation there or the respective government's refusal to accept them. However, her concept is open to other groups, previously only identified by UNHCR, for example, rejected asylum-seekers or victims of human trafficking. Also, Grant traced a link between being stranded migrants and legal status, seeing 'illegal entry' as a major characteristic of the group. Her definition however has several shortcomings. As has been seen, stranded individuals do often have a country of origin to which to return. Her strong link to an inability to return

because of the situation in the home country leading the migrant to become de facto stateless is only one possibility, and relatively small and less common in recent examples.

One should further add that the very notion of de facto statelessness is controversial in itself and legally disputable. It is not helpful for the purpose of defining stranded migrants as it substitutes a vague term for another one. Further, Grant (2007) identified the refusal of third countries to accept the stranded persons as a major reason for their situation, again a less widespread factor. Also, many stranded migrants do not face removal and are therefore not 'caught' between removal and an inability to return. Lastly, she appears to neglect some major reasons for becoming stranded: subjective individual reasons and the possibility of becoming stranded in third countries. Her definition thereby can be seen as relatively inclusive, open to migration and refugee movements, but failing to identify all underlying reasons for the existence of this group, linking it too strong to a critical de facto statelessness angle.

A 2010 publication on migration across the Sahara approached the stranded. migrant typology by breaking it up into several groups: first, those domestic workers who have fled abusive employers; second, those who qualify for protection under the 1951 Convention or the 1969 AU Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa (1969 AU Convention) supplementary definition, assuming that a significant number of stranded migrants would be eligible for refugee status under a strict application of these two conventions; third, those who have already been recognized as refugees, usually by UNHCR in a

country of first asylum; and fourth those whose 'humanitarian situation is extremely urgent and who cannot turn to their states of citizenship for assistance, but are unlikely to qualify for refugee status (Lalani, 2011; Lucas, 2013).

Somewhere in these categorisations are the 'trapped' migrants who have been captured under these broad dynamics and who have been refused legal protection. This study presents compelling examples; such was the case of abused domestic workers in Saudi Arabia who wanted to return to Ghana, their country of origin but who were imprisoned when they sort the assistance of law enforcement authorities.

Thus far, in attempting to resolve the issue of 'trapped migration', many scholarly works have tried to define it in the context of stranded migrants. This 'trapped migration' though important has been loosely used, evidenced from the fact that scholarly works have not yet made significant inroads in its study which can lead to the resolve to reduce the consequences of this kind of migration. Hence, the question of "why is it that migrants who wish/aspire to return to their place of origin cannot do so?" is still left unanswered. This gap in the literature is why this research proposes the 'trapped migration' framework for analysis below. The next segment highlights some of the bottlenecks of research on 'trapped' migrants.

3.4 'Trapped' Migration: The Bottleneck for Migrants desirous of Return

While all the theoretical approaches reviewed in this study possess peculiar strengths in explaining migration, only a few have had something on the difficulties of return, 'trapped' migration. Still, there is no mention of the concept of 'trapped'

migration. It has been only the economic theories that offered some insight on migrants who want to return to their place of origin but cannot do so. In recent years, the conception of 'trapped migrants' has drawn the attention of international bodies and sovereign states. Several names have been associated with such migrants; those who find themselves stuck in migrant boats on the seas are sometimes called distress/stranded migrants; those who find themselves stuck in asylum seeking camps over a prolonged period (some of whom are rejected) have also been referred to as 'asylum seekers'; those without documents are referred to as 'irregular migrants' and those who find themselves in the hands of criminals and bandits who trade them on the black markets are referred to as 'modern day slaves'. The point here is that, these migrants can be in any of the names mentioned, but more importantly, there are some 'trapped migrants', unable to return due to certain constraints, among these migrants.

Existing migration literature highlights and theorizes several forms or types of migrants within the discipline of migration studies (Massey et al, 2003). Some of the forms of migration include: (a) Irregular Migration patterns, where the migrants associated are referred to as irregular migrants, (b) Forced/Involuntary Migration, where the migrants are referred to as forced migrants, as well as (c) Voluntary Migration, where the migrants are considered as regular or voluntary migrants (Massey et al 2003). Contemporary migration patterns point out a category of migrants who become 'trapped' in the migration process and may want to return to their places of origin but cannot do so. This research proposes a conceptual model for 'trapped migration'.

3.4.1 Conceptual Model for 'Trapped' Migration

What is conceived in this study as the conceptual model for 'trapped migration' is addressed here. The conceptual framework for analysis addresses the gap or deficit in knowledge about the conditions of 'trapped migrants'. The model is informed by the theories on return migration such as the New Economics of Labour Migration (de Haas, 2015; Dustmann, 2007; Cassarino, 2004), and Neoclassical Economics (Massey et al, 2003) which, on the one hand, discuss return as a failure in achieving the object of migration and, on the other hand, as a component of the migration process. However, migrants who are 'trapped' and cannot return when they want to do so present a complex phenomenon which greys some aspects of return migration. The 'trapped' migrant is subject to the same situations which other migrants may go through in migrating to their destination point but gradually takes on a distinct identity as 'trapped migrant' when the question of return surfaces.

The critical dimensions of 'trapped' migration covered in the conceptual framework which guides this study include the following:

a) Intention/aspiration to migrate
b) Travel route
c) Migrant in transit
d) Migrant in destination
e) Trapped migrants
f) Strategy for return/role of institutions for return migrants

a) Intention/Aspiration to Migrate/Return

To understand the 'trapped migration' framework of this study, it is necessary to examine the intentions/aspirations of migrants and their abilities or capabilities to return to their place of origin. It is worth noting that the 'intentions/aspirations' variable provides a reference point to analyse the intentions or desires of migrants who have been 'trapped' to migrate or return. Carling (2001) refers to this view in his aspiration/ability model in a bid to explain the direction of migration flows, and the characteristics of migrants compared to the characteristics of those who stay behind. It is worthy of note that the framework proposed by Carling (2001) called the aspiration and capabilities theoretical framework, within which these variables (intention/aspiration) relevant to the conceptualisation of the 'trapped' migrant was adapted, though important cannot explain the phenomenon of the 'trapped' migrant holistically. Carling (2001) was seeking to investigate migration intentions vis-à-vis the capabilities of the migrants hence the presentation is in totally different contexts but its' relevance to this research cannot be downplayed. The analysis he presents has to do with intentions to migrate but limitations imposed by structural factors. In its application to a working framework on 'trapped' migration play key roles at multiple levels.

It is very important to the discourse of 'trapped' migration because these variables decide the route of migration itself and also serve as a distinguishing feature between the trapped and stranded migrants. As mentioned already in chapter two stranded migrants do not intend or aspire to return to the origin country but the trapped migrant does. Hence it can be stated that these variables can be considered

at the pre-migration stage and at the transit/destination of migration stage.

The transit/destination migration stage is where the migrant is confronted by difficulties and may intend to return but because of these difficulties may not possess the capability to do so or to return as planned. It is however at this stage that they become trapped migrants.

At the pre-migration stage, immigrants may have intentions to migrate but limitations on the movements such as border control measures such as access to requisite travel documentation, financial constraints, etc. may determine if they should go through regular or irregular channels. The intentions/aspirations for migration can be explained in terms of: (1) voluntary migration; (2) involuntary migration; and (3) irregular migration. For instance, in the case of Ghana, the intention for many people to migrate is economic. They feel there are better opportunities to make a better living in certain countries, especially, the developed ones. Heavy migration flows from Ghana are, therefore, directed towards regions such as Europe and North America.

Both Faist (1997) and Massey et al. (1998) did not lose sight of the notion that the quest to migrate can be affected by obstructive or facilitating mechanisms. Carling (2001) suggests that this amounts to the ability to migrate. This suggests that the facilitating and obstructive mechanisms lead to determine the ability of people to migrate, and if so, what mode of migration they might adopt. In this study, the question of how migrants are able to navigate their way out of the borders of their original home and end up getting ‘trapped’ is posed to enhance the explanation of the phenomenon of ‘trapped migration’.

The ability to commence migration paves the way to interrogate the travel route used by migrants and, at the instance of this research, the route used by 'trapped migrants'. Where a migrant did not succeed with his or her ability to migrate, he or she can be treated as a potential migrant to which given another chance can have the intention for migration.

b) Travel Route

There are different categories of migrants in terms of the routes of migration they take. It can be argued that some migrants increase their risk of vulnerability as a result of their ability to make certain choices of routes and not others. For instance, following the intention to migrate, one's ability to migrate could lead him or her to travel by land or sea and make several transits (or not at all) to the destination. Another could also travel by air directly to the destination. According to Carling (2001, p.29) "in contemporary international migration, ability is most significantly affected by restrictive migration policies". The difference in their exposures is a result of differences in their abilities to migrate. Migrants, as a way to actualize their intentions, use whatever means they are capable of to migrate to their purported destinations. For instance, they travel by air, sea or land. They can switch between the three whenever it serves the purpose so to do. The travel route is an important variable in the development of a working conceptual framework because majority of the 'trapped' migrants identified in this study migrated through irregular channels. A future comparative study on the numbers of migrants who ended up trapped because they travelled through irregular forms of migration as against those travelling through regular migration will lead to some very interesting

findings. It is also worthy of note that in this study there were some migrants who travelled through voluntary migration channels (example the domestic workers trapped in Saudi Arabia and Qatar) but still became 'trapped' migrants hence it is important to state that this variable alone does not explain the conditions that lead to being 'trapped'.

c) Migrant in Transit

There are some migrants who would make a transit – sometimes several transits – to be able to reach their purported destinations. Migrants in transit refer to the migrants who pass through a location, sometimes staying there for a time, in order to reach an intended destination. While in transit, migrants may go through a succession of vicissitudes which shape their life conditions. Although some migrants are able to proceed on their journey, there are some others who have varied challenges for which reason they are unable to proceed on their journey, at least for the time being. Among such migrants is the 'trapped migrant', and this research is to investigate the circumstances leading such migrants into the 'trapped' condition as well as to understand what it is like to be in that 'trapped' condition. This variable is also very critical to this conceptual model because of the incidence of facilitated entrapment as explained in chapter two and how it affected some of the study respondents. Also, many of the study participants mentioned that they initially intended to travel to Libya as a transit point to Europe.

d) Migrant in Destination

By migrant in destination, this research refers to the individual who has completed his or her migration process and is at the intended destination. At this point, the

migrant desires to act in fulfilment of his or her intentions for migrating. Here too, migrants encounter different circumstances or conditions which are responsible for altered livelihoods and desires of the migrants. As is of interest to this research, some migrants who desire to flee the circumstances or conditions in their current location to their country of origin, for whatever reasons, are just unable to do so, and they languish in foreign lands. These types of migrants with difficulties of return are the 'trapped migrants' referred to in this research. These types of migrants, if they got to a destination and are attempting to return, resort to various navigation strategies which when gleaned may lead to interesting research findings. This variable is very important to the conceptualisation process because it presents an insight into the trapped condition at the destination country and this can inform and improve the policies of those states.

e) 'Trapped' Migrant

The crux of this study is this: desirous of return, migrants are rendered powerless and incapable of return. They are buffeted here and there by the circumstances they encounter until they are just unable to make their way out of the circumstances in which they find themselves back to their origins. This immobility can happen anywhere in the course of the travel, which is in transit or at the destination. It is worth noting that the 'trapped migration' concept articulated in this research has a very distinctive feature. Even though it is similar to stranded migrants, 'trapped migrants' are just unable to return to their origins because they are entangled in a trap. Unlike stranded migrants they have not been well categorized in migration management, as a result, there is no legislation, law or system under which

'trapped' migrants may be easily identified and managed. Analysis of the 'trapped' migrant; its characteristics is central to the development of any working framework that seeks to inform knowledge and policy.

f) Strategy for return/Role of Institutions for Return Migrants

The final aspect of the conceptual discussion is the strategies available to return migrants to facilitate their return and the role of institutions within the migration governance system in assisting 'trapped migrants' to free themselves of their entrapment. These institutions are important because, desirous of return, 'trapped migrants' may be facilitated by some external forces when required to aid their return to their country of origin.

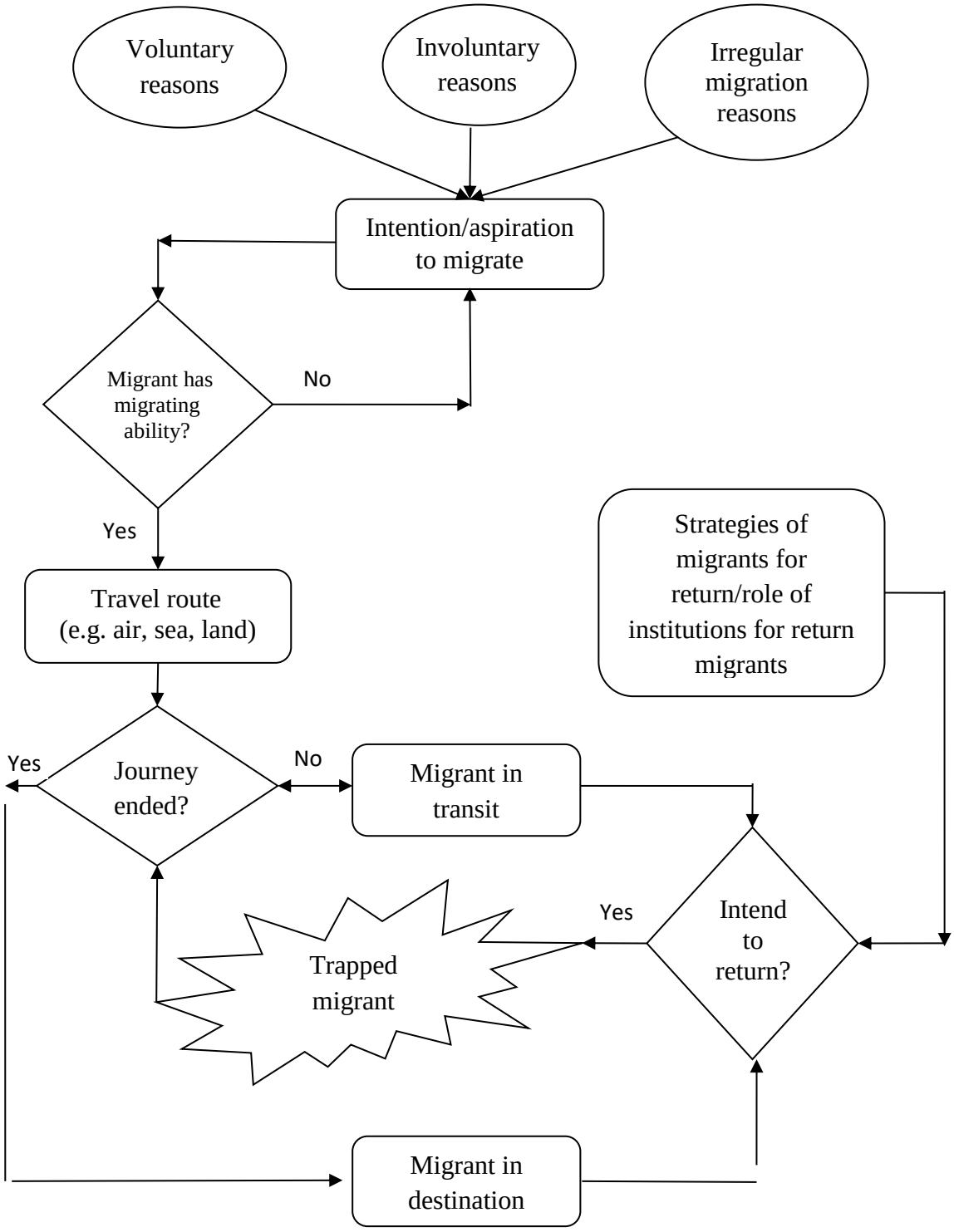


Figure 3.1: Conceptual Framework for Trapped Migration

Source: Author's construct to explain the phenomenon of 'trapped migration'.

From Figure 3.1 one can see that some transit migrants can also be 'trapped' migrants. This appears to rehash Dowd's (2008) view that some transit migrants cannot move on or return to their origins, hence are stranded at their present place of location. Still, among these migrants are those who are trapped, immobile, and have not been well captured under any migrant category, yet suffer in silence. There are also migrants who have reached their destination point, but are unable to return to their origin when they desire to return. Again, this is because they are 'trapped', immobile, and are virtually underrepresented. This research attempts to explain the circumstances of migrants who are 'trapped' in their migration and desire to return to their origin but cannot do so. Therefore, a distinctive feature between the 'trapped migrant' and stranded migrant is that, the former, at every material time, wants to return to the origin. Also, unlike stranded migrants, 'trapped migrants' are in a domain of migration that is not well classified and so is underrepresented. Whereas for 'trapped migrants', there is always the intent to return, which is a necessary condition, stranded migrants do not necessarily have the intent to return. Examples of stranded migrants are the transit migrants who just want to continue their journey to the place of destination without any wish to return, and the asylum seeker who would rather remain at the present location than to return. There is also the distressed migrant at sea who would rather continue his/her journey than to return.

In view of that, the operational definition of a 'trapped migrant' in this research, is: 'a migrant who has migrated from a place of origin either to a place of transit or place of destination and who owing to certain difficult conditions prevailing at the

present place of location, intends/aspires to return but is limited in his or her ability/capability to return to his/her origin ’.

The reasons for this proposed working definition are because of the following. First any attempt at studying ‘trapped’ migrants within the parameters of this study must have a place of origin and a transit or a destination point because of the fact that the study involves international migrants. Secondly, the prevailing conditions at the present place of origin and the intention of the migrant as analysed above are also important variables that determine and distinguish them from other migration forms. Thirdly the variable of the inability to return has to be determined to understand the real situation within which the trapped migrant may find himself. Even though this definition may be limited by empirical verification and justifications in view of the limitedness of research focusing on trapped migrants, its strengths cannot be downplayed. The strength of this conceptual definition is that it takes note of peculiar characteristics of the trapped migrant and presents a broader scope of analysis where several sub-sections under the concept as presented in fig.2.1 can be analysed. It is however recommended that further studies are conducted on the appropriateness of the definition towards the adoption of a singular working definition of the trapped migrant.

3.5 Summary

This chapter discussed the forms of migration important to the discourse on ‘trapped migration’ and pointed out the various gaps in the literature that fails to account for issues pertaining to ‘trapped’ migrants. In view of the fact that this

concept was developed around the broader framework on return migration; theories of return migration have also been analysed and the gaps as pertains to the conceptualisation of issues focusing on 'trapped' migrants have also been pointed out. Based on the review, it was observed that the literature on return migration could not adequately explain the condition of being a 'trapped' migrant therefore a conceptual framework was developed to serve as a guide for this study. This section further explains the various variables utilised in the framework and their significance to the study. A conceptual definition for trapped migrants proposed for this study was also interrogated highlighting its limitation and strength.

In the next chapter, the methodology is presented detailing the thinking and activities involved in carrying out this research.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was employed in conducting this research. It includes discussions on the methodological choices and strategies employed in this research whiles highlighting the challenges encountered and negotiated throughout the fieldwork.

4.2 Research Philosophy

Guba and Lincoln (1994) have noted that four main philosophies guide the work of social researchers. These are the Positivist and Post-Positivist (for quantitative paradigm), Critical Theory and Constructivism (for qualitative paradigm). Bringing into perspective the question of how 'trapped migration' may be constituted pursuant to the objectives of this study, one is invited to cogitate what it is like to be a 'trapped' migrant. To the extent that one is not trapped in migration, or at least, that one cannot cut open the brain of the trapped migrant to be accustomed to the details of the experience of a trapped migrant, this enterprise of trapped migration seems intractable. However, reductionists' philosophical position proves that complex phenomena can be explained in terms of their minute details and descriptions (Dupre, 2017; Gillett, 2016). A swift reaction from constructivists' stance in light of this understanding is the philosophy that knowledge of reality can be determined from the experiences of the experiencer (Clark, 2018; Peck &

Mummery, 2018). Constructivism suggests that individuals make and socially construct their own meaning of phenomena (Savin Baden & Major, 2013). Akin to the above is the phenomenology philosophy of experience referred to by researchers as the study of human experience and of the way things present themselves through such experience (Gallagher, 2012). Van Manen (2017) emphasizes that it gets its meaning from reflection, analysis and insights emerging out of lived experiences. This research defers its philosophical approach to the constructivism philosophy, as it engages fully with migrants who, despite their predilection for return migration, have faced difficulties in returning. Having said that, the study also lends itself to the constructivists' approach as it has been meant to draw knowledge or reality from one with first-hand experience.

Critical theory was used to the extent that the perspective of trapped migration was developed from gaps presented in foundational theories of migration and more specifically return migration. From these perspectives analysis were conducted on the experiences of once 'trapped' and still 'trapped' migrants. The research further critique the existing migrant categorisation by governance bodies whilst providing aid to migrants through the identification of the unique characteristics that 'trapped' migrants presented.

4.3 Research Design

The complexity of contemporary migration patterns and their associated sensitivity demands the adoption of a research design that is sensitive to the circumstances surrounding the question 'trapped migrants' in this study (Wong, 2009). More so, the dichotomy between the two research paradigms, that is, the quantitative paradigm undergirded by positivists and post-positivists philosophies. The qualitative paradigm supported by critical social theory, pragmatism, phenomenology, post-critical/post-structural, constructionism and constructivism philosophies, presents two choices for every researcher in the migration discipline.

This study adopted a phenomenology approach in line with the constructivists' research philosophy. This is because trapped migration is an emerging subject, the understanding of which can be derived from no one else but individuals who have experienced what it means to be trapped in migration. The study seeks to understand the concept from the real experiences of such migrants. As pointed out by Guba and Lincoln (1994) as well as Savin-Baden and Major (2013), the constructionists or constructivists philosophy gives rise to qualitative research in which the subjective experiences of individuals of interest in research. The subjective experiences of migrants who must have necessarily experienced the inability to return are the exact focus of this study.

The qualitative method was used for data collection as well as the interpretation of the migration experiences of migrants who have been unable to return. The meaning that these migrants ascribe to their experiences offered the ingredients on which this study fed towards the comprehension of the phenomenon of trapped

migration. According to Hopkins, Regehr and Pratt (2017), qualitative approaches are informed by humanist and phenomenological philosophies which hold the belief that knowledge is constructed from the subjectivities and meanings of individual actions. Emery and Anderman (2020) also suggest that these approaches employ intensive methods to interpret migration experiences and their embedded subjective meanings. These considerations underpinned the choice of the qualitative approach adopted in this study, rendering in the process a more appropriate means for interpretative analysis.

Quantitative data sets are often derived from analysis of empirical data (for example, large-scale surveys) or archival quantitative datasets (for example, United Nations sources, World Bank, immigration institutions and national census bureaus, and so forth). The absence of these data sets or large-scale respondents needed for the survey makes migration research very difficult, particularly, from the quantitative standpoint (White and Jackson, 1995). This could even lead to the abandonment of researchable areas in migration studies because quantitative data is simply unavailable. Such data is, for instance, very far from the reach of this study on 'trapped migrants' from Ghana, only if it is available.

Another shortcoming for quantitative data use is the tendency of researchers to miss out on the true meaning of the migration experience from the perspective of migrants since true subjective meanings of events cannot be reduced to empirical values. From the perspective of this research on 'trapped migrants', using this research method may be limited by two major issues. The first is the limited availability of data on 'trapped migrants' necessary for quantitative studies and the

second is the fact that it is an uncharted area; hence, large-scale surveys of primary data collection may be difficult to realise.

It is worth noting that qualitative philosophies are interconnected and, thus, two or more of such philosophies can be used in a single research (Savin-Baden & Major, 2013). This has been the case for this research as the methodology imbibed tenets of phenomenology and constructivism. Phenomenology – because the research was seeking to understand the lived experiences of 'trapped migrants'. Constructivism has also been because knowledge is, first of all, subjective, and is made more accessible through interpretive approaches. To obtain knowledge about 'trapped migration', therefore, a qualitative method through the use of in-depth interviews was applied.

Irrespective of these pluses, the qualitative approach has also had its share of criticisms. For some scholars, the lack of statistical representation, limits objective understanding of phenomena and generalizations. Others perceive that the reliance of qualitative analysis on the subjectivity and judgment of the researcher to be erroneous (Wong, 2009). The introduction of methodological triangulation, which is the combination of both methods in a single research, gained prominence among migration scholars. According to Graham (1999) triangulation is useful when the most appropriate methods to study different facets of a phenomenon are combined. Qualitative methods are employed as an accessory or explanatory component of a multi-method approach rather than integrating them as methods with their own analytical merit.

The design and approach to this research were influenced by the rationale to investigate the experiences of 'trapped migrants'. This led to the identification of participants in the study whose views were pertinent to the research and construction of knowledge about the social reality and experiences of the 'trapped migrant'. The intention for this research was not to enumerate the numbers of 'trapped' persons or render their properties in a statistical form, but to investigate their subjective experiences through the phenomenon that has been termed 'trapped migration'. This way, it was anticipated that real-life accounts of 'trapped migrants' would be produced. The paucity of research on the area of 'trapped migrants' in the studies on migration was a big reason leading this study to seek to capture, understand and articulate the lived experiences of 'trapped migrants' from their own perspectives. The use of qualitative methods also stems from a predilection that the numbers of migrants from Ghana who are in the domain of 'trapped migration' is small, at least, far lower than the population of migrants. Hence, the qualitative method, which is most appropriate for small samples, was the best method to use as it matters not the size of the population.

Table 4.1 presents a tabulated view of how the research philosophy and the research design have been combined in this study. The philosophy which brought forth what can be known about trapped migration – the epistemological stance of work – was constructionism. Phenomenology formed the design of the research, giving birth to the methodology. A purely qualitative method is giving rise to in-depth interviews, narrative work and interpretative analysis right through this research.

Table 4.1: Epistemological Positions

Research Philosophy	Research Design	Methodology
Constructionism	• Constructive • Phenomenological	• Phenomenological research • Qualitative method: - In-depth interview - Observation • Interpretive method • Narrative method

Source: Adapted from Crotty 1998, p.5

4.4 Methods of Data Collection

Qualitative research affords different ways for uncovering and understanding the phenomenon of the 'trapped migrant'. They also present the opportunity to collect extensive and rich data that provide invaluable insights. Thus, this research is situated within the broad qualitative research method. Both in-depth interviews and observation formed the backbone of the methods of data collection in this study.

4.4.1 In-Depth Interview

Savin-Baden and Major (2013, p.357) state that interviews are the mainstay of qualitative inquiry. Interviews were used as the main form of data collection in this research. Rapley (2004) indicated that researchers may select from a variety of interview types in connection with the research approach. Savin-Baden and Major (2013) add that the primary types of qualitative interviews are informal, structured, semi-structured and unstructured.

For the purpose of this research, face-to-face in-depth interviews and/or phone call interviews was the data collection method adopted. The instruments of data collection were a voice recorder and an interview guide. The interview guide

contained fundamental questions based on the objectives of the research to guide the questions posed to the interviewees and moderate the direction of questions so that there was little room for digression. The voice recorder was used to record all the proceedings of the interview.

The face-to-face in-depth interview and phone call interview were not mutually exclusive, as some interviewees involved in face-to-face interview were also called on the phone for some details of the interview either before or after the face-to-face interview.

4.4.2 Observation

Adler and Adler (1994) stated that 'observation' is the fundamental base of all research methods. Silverman (2001) adds that observation is a form of data collection that is fundamental to understanding culture. Marshall and Rossman (1995, p.79) explain that it involves "the systematic description of events, behaviours, and artefacts in the social setting chosen for the study". Mulhall (2002, p.308) captures observation as "a recording of the whole social system or the context within which people function". Savin-Badin and Major (2013) add that it is a method for understanding how people construct their realities. The observation method was used as a tool for data collection. According to DeWalt and DeWalt (2002), it can be used to answer a descriptive question, build theory or generate a hypothesis.

For the purpose of this research, the observation method was to observe the conditions – housing/accommodation, occupation/job, and the manifestation of health – of the respondents within their natural settings.

4.5 Study Population

Scouting for 'trapped migrants' was an extremely challenging task which required leads from varied sources for any success. The qualitative nature of the study also required subjects whose experiences are pertinent to the issues raised in this study. For this reason, the study population comprised migrants from Ghana to the Middle East and/or North Africa. The choice of these two major geological areas was determined after the pre-test of the interview guide. Many of the 'trapped' migrants had their experience from these two geological migration hotspots and this was also confirmed by the literature as captured in chapter two. Also, the population comprised news agencies (example, television, radio, online, print sources, and so on) and some of the organizations involved in the management of migration issues such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, GIS, IOM and UNHCR. Admittedly, the population was diverse, but this was to provide all the pertinent sources of data for this study.

4.6 Sampling Procedure and Nature of the Study Sample

The sample for this research was obtained from two sources; first, from migrants who have been 'trapped', constituting primary data sources. The non-probability sampling procedure was employed in the research to obtain the study sample. Under this procedure, two sampling techniques, namely, purposive and snowball sampling were used to identify participants or respondents for the study. According to Fisher (2004, p.10), purposive sampling is normally used to determine whom to interview in a qualitative research. Fisher (2010) explains that purposive sampling

involves identifying the people who have answers to the question that the researcher is asking. According to Patton (2002, p.46) "purposive sampling is a criterion-based selection in which particular settings, persons, or events and area are selected deliberately in order to provide important information for the researcher". Apart from the respondents who were identified with this technique, secondary sources of data were purposively used after their value for this research had been evaluated to be useful to understand the 'trapped migration' phenomenon.

Fisher (2010) noted that snowballing is often used to identify whom to interview. Challenges in accessing study participants led to the adoption of this form of data collection tool which proved to be very useful to this study. In view of the limited availability of study participants, there was the need to utilise this form of data collection strategy. Initial respondents were asked to introduce others whom they knew within similar situations hence the use of the snowballing technique. This assisted the researcher to locate and interview more respondents until the saturation point was attained. The sample size obtained after following the sampling procedure was 30 'trapped migrants' of Ghanaian origin.

There was also at least one official participating in the study from each of the purposively selected organizations involved in managing migration issues, namely, the GIS, and IOM. The choice of these institutions was because they are institutions in Ghana that handle migrants' issues and had personnel who could highlight how some structural/institutional forces have contributed to reducing the plight of 'trapped migrants' or otherwise. In effect, the respondents in this study summed up to 32.

4.7 Selection of Study Participants

Extensive fieldwork was undertaken over a period of six months beginning in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, Accra, albeit multiple places were visited. Contacts with media persons and GIS officials proved to be useful in locating subjects relevant to the research. There was a particular challenge in obtaining 'trapped migrants' to participate in the study which was where to find the 'trapped migrants'. Careful planning and preparation went into the fieldwork and a practical approach was consistently followed in tune with Savin-Baden and Major's (2013) advice that the fieldwork process involves "reading situations, making sound but unusual decisions, following gut instincts and sometimes taking risks" (p.338). The participants in the study were sparsely distributed and it became obvious that they were located in three regions, namely, Ashanti Region, Brong-Ahafo Region, and Greater Accra Region, but also included a few still 'trapped' in Middle East and North Africa after data collection was completed.

In the fieldwork, the initial approach was to establish contact with the relevant persons from the Ministry of Foreign and Regional Integration, GIS, Peace FM and Joy FM media houses because of their demonstrated coverage of issues regarding Ghanaian migrants. The move towards the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration and GIS opened a plethora of opportunities to get closer to the persons who fall in the domain of 'trapped migrants'. Information about persons who may still be 'trapped' or who were once 'trapped' but have returned, particularly, from the Middle East or North Africa, and particularly, Libya, was provided. The leads obtained from these local agencies resulted in the discovery of

the first respondent, a woman now living in Accra who was once 'trapped' in Libya but had returned home with the aid of the IOM. This respondent provided leads to a man who was also once 'trapped' in Libya, but is back home. Through contacts at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration and GIS, the researcher followed up on a number of leads similar to the discovery of the first respondents. For instance, through purposive sampling beginning with a contact in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration and afterwards, snowball sampling, leads were obtained which took the fieldwork to Kintampo in the newly created Bono Region of Ghana, formerly Brong Ahafo Region, to enlist respondents.

Six (6) persons who had returned from Libya were enlisted from Kintampo in the Bono Region. Other participants in the study were contacted in Kumasi, Ashanti Region, and then in the Greater Accra Region, as well as from the Middle East and North Africa as long as they were considered to be still in 'trapped' conditions. Altogether, 30 participants were interviewed. There were participants who were returnees from Qatar in the Middle East. There were also participants in the study who were still 'trapped' in Saudi Arabia.

4.8 Data Collection Procedure

Data was collected over a span of six (6) months. Stemming from the conception of this study as a qualitative study, purely qualitative methods of data collection were employed. In-depth interview and observation were the principal methods of primary data collection in this research. Although obtaining the participants for the study was a challenging task, once participants were identified, the researcher

created a good rapport with them which translated into ease and comfort with the participants to engage with through varied channels to offer responses to the inquiries that were directed to them. A number of in-depth interviews were granted by some participants via mobile telephone communication; conducted mainly in the local Twi Ghanaian Language. The majority of the in-depth interviews were completed through face-to-face interviews. These took place at the participants' favourite hangouts, homes and workplaces.

The face-to-face in-depth interviews carried out in the course of the fieldwork were conducted in Accra, Kintampo and Kumasi meeting the interviewees predominantly in their favourite hangouts, homes and workplaces. The phone calls were scheduled and organised only at the convenience of the study participant. The interview by phone call played a critical role in interviewing the participants of the study who were migrants in the Middle East and North Africa. The researcher bore the cost of the interviews via telephone with particular attention to ensuring that the data collection exercise does not burden any of the interviewees, especially, those in other countries.

There was flexibility in language use because interviewees were communicated to only in languages that they were comfortable to use. Therefore, Twi, a widely spoken local language was preferred by a number of the interviewees, and the same was applied in their interview. Effectively, both English and Twi were the communication languages used in the interviews. The normal interview (both on phone and face-to-face) spanned an average time of 30 minutes which was good for the important issues to be ironed out satisfactorily by the interviewees.

The observation in the data collection procedure was limited to those who were once 'trapped' but had returned to Ghana. The observation ran concurrently with the in-depth interviews and garnered data on the reactions, gestures, emotional effects, facial expressions and demeanour of the interviewees during the face-to-face interviews. This helped in the assessment of the implications or seriousness of the views that were expressed by the interviewees, and to catch a glimpse more closely to the experiences as they have been lived by the interviewees in their course of migration. This also helped to gauge the questions to ask the interviewees to get more insight from relevant issues.

This data collection strategy worked during the fieldwork, including interviews and visits to the migrants (returnees) in their natural environments. From the field, it was observed that some of the migrants had made investments in small start-up businesses such as a 'cold store' business, housing projects at varying stages of completion, mini shops, and charcoal selling.

Table 4.2 outlines the actual interviewees, place of interview, the channel of data collection, migration status, and the technique which the interviewees were identified (selection technique). The interviewees have been identified by pseudo names for the purpose of this study.

Table 4.2: Profile of the Interviewees

Pseudonym/ place of interview	**Sex**	**Age**	**Mode of migration & country**	**Migration Status**	**Channel of data collection**
Nana Yaw, Accra	M	54	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview,

Addo, Kintampo	M	42	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Kwateng, Kintampo	M	30	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Shelter, Kintampo	M	42	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Bright, Kintampo	M	38	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Collins, Kintampo	M	36	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview,
Kwadwo, Kintampo	M	30	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
David, Kintampo	M	40	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Wallace, Kintampo	M, July	34	Irregular (Desert) Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview,
Felicity, Kumasi	F	45	Regular (By Air to Egypt) continued by road to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview
Yaa, Kumasi	F	52	Irregular (Desert) to Libya & Morocco	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Vera, Kumasi	F	48	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview
Doris, Accra	F	58	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Felix, Accra	M	27	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Prince, Kumasi	M	29	Irregular (Desert) to Libya	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call
Kudolo, Kumasi	M	32	Regular (Air) to Qatar	Returned	Face-to-face interview, Phone call

Appiah	M	30	Regular (Air) to Qatar	Returned	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Francis	M	37	Regular (Air) to Qatar	Returned	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Nelson	M	32	Irregular to (Libya)	Still Trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Rita	F	27	Regular to Saudi Arabia	Still Trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Adarkwa	M	34	Irregular to Libya	Still trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
John	M	30	Irregular to Libya	Still trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Osei	M	31	Irregular to Libya	Still trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Godwin	M	28	Irregular to Libya	Still trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Joana	F	24	Regular, Saudi Arabia	Still trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Asibi	F	32	Regular, Saudi Arabia	Still trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Jessica	F	33	Regular, Saudi Arabia	Still trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Moses	M	30	Regular, Qatar	Returned	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Patrick	M	29	Regular, Qatar	Returned	Recorded Telephone Conversation
Sophia	F	28	Irregular to Libya	Still trapped	Recorded Telephone Conversation

Source: Field Work, 2017/2018

Officials from the International Organisation for Migration, Accra- Ghana and the Ghana Immigration Service were also interviewed in Accra in 2017/2018.

4.9 Pre-testing

Burke and Miller (2001) argue that, basically, this pre-testing is about preparing ahead of conducting the actual data collection. In their opinion, planning, pre-testing, and organizational skills are used in this stage of conducting a study. The primary purpose of pre-testing is to ensure that the instrument and methods planned for use in the data collection process are fit for purpose.

The instruments for the data collection exercise were assembled and tested in the order in which they were planned to be used during the actual data collection exercise. First, the interview guide and the voice recorder were tested in a preliminary face-to-face interview with 5 interviewees in Accra who had been identified and selected for participation in the study. Both instruments were found to be largely fit for purpose. The interviewees generally understood the questions. The questions that could not elicit the intended responses from more than 2 of the 5 interviewees were readdressed and used as inputs to improve upon the interview guide. Three (3) other interviewees in Kintampo were engaged in a preliminary interview to get a feel of the process of data collection via phone call. The recorder and phone call also proved fit for purpose. Finally, before actual interviews via phone call with interviewees in far-away Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Libya were held, a series of conversations on the 'trapped migration' phenomenon were made with the interviewees to gauge what to expect during the actual data collection. In effect,

the interviewees resonated with the line of questioning and the equipment to aid in data collection was just right for the task.

4.10 Data Analysis Procedure

Being purely qualitative, this research employed the qualitative approach to data analysis. First and foremost, the data obtained through voice recorded interviews were translated and transcribed into textual data linking each set of data to the respective interviewee who provided them. Thematic analysis approach was employed throughout the analysis. The analytic approach to the data gathered through the interviews was guided by the argument that, thematic analysis gives the most standard method of analyzing qualitative textual data (Greg, MacQueen & Namey, 2012). In this approach, the views, thoughts, opinions, experiences of the focal persons, and many others, of interest to the objectives of the study, were carefully evaluated. This led to the regrouping of responses and views that reflected similar themes. This provided emerging themes that facilitated the analysis.

Relying on the technique of thematic analysis, the results of regrouping the responses and views (the emerging themes) were examined in light of the fundamental research questions posed in the study. The fundamental questions include:

1. What are the peculiar characteristics of ‘trapped migrants’?
2. What are the circumstances that lead migrants into ‘trapped migration’?
3. What are the navigation strategies of ‘trapped migrants’?

4. What roles do institutions within the global governance system play in assisting ‘trapped migrants’ to return?

From these fundamental questions, four codes were developed to represent four major themes which have been shown as follows:

1. Characteristics of ‘trapped migrants’;
2. Circumstances leading migrants into ‘trapped’ conditions;
3. Navigation strategies for ‘trapped migrants’; and
4. Institutional role in facilitating the return of ‘trapped migrants’.

The responses from the interviewees under the emerging themes were analysed deductively and inferentially, as well as contextually, to determine their relevance to the description or explanation of the circumstances of the ‘trapped migrants’ in light of the thematic areas or fundamental questions that are posed in this study. With this in mind, the study examined the essential characteristics of ‘trapped migrants’, including the essential ingredients that help to explicate the ‘trapped migration’ phenomenon. Exemplary quotes drawn from the interviews were used throughout the presentation of results. The responses that, by nature, express a critical viewpoint in their very clear unambiguous sense are often quoted verbatim so that the reasoning as intended by the respondents or interviewees is not lost.

4.11 Ethical Considerations

The extent of fieldwork assumed in this study required that various stakeholders be involved in the study. To that extent, the research needed to make the various

participants feel part of the research. With the permission of the Centre for Migration Studies to undertake this research, institutions like the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, GIS, IOM, as well as media houses such as Peace FM, and Joy FM were contacted to introduce the research and the purpose for it. In working with some of these institutions, clearance was sought from the University of Ghana to provide some authentic support to the engagement with these stakeholders.

This research, if not handled with keen skills and professionalism, could be invasive to the privacy of different groups of people. Therefore, care was taken to prevent this at all times. This was done be making sure that every participant in this research was well informed about the purpose of the study and the fact that there are no ill implications associated with contributing information to facilitate the study. As much as possible, participants of the study were made familiar not only with the research, but also with the researcher in order to increase the assurance that the research is not to defame participants, peddle bad information about participants, denigrate participants, or implicate participants in some wrongdoing. Instead, the reason for the study was projected to be, just as it is, informative, educative, an eye-opener to the possibility that some quests to migrate actually lead some migrants into something they may not have wished.

In order to ensure confidentiality and not compromise on the sanctity of the participation of the people in the study, all the interviewees who have appeared in this study have been identified by pseudo names (see Table 4.2 preceding this).

4.12 Limitations of the Study

The fact that the methods used in the study were purely qualitative had some implications on the findings. Much as the findings of the study illuminated the phenomenon of 'trapped migration', there is the peculiar limitation to the generalizability of the findings. At best, the findings are the result of specific subjective cases which would help individuals to understand the trend that some migration efforts can take. Any attempt to generalize the findings of this study would, therefore, have to be done very cautiously, or at best be avoided.

The sparsely distributed locations of the participants of this study posed a major challenge as the researcher had to improvise ways to reach relevant people against whatever impediments that there was in getting to communicate with those relevant people. Due to this challenge, an attempt to include quantitative methods in the research proved impossible, and the few individuals whose migration experiences were pertinent to the subject matter of the study were, therefore, adopted in the most efficient and effective manner.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE CHARACTERISTICS OF 'TRAPPED' MIGRANTS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the characteristics of 'trapped migrants'. It needs to be mentioned that prior to commencement of migration, migrants are distributed according to certain characteristics. This chapter explores the socio-demographic and other descriptions that may, therefore, hold the keys to identifying the characteristics of 'trapped migrants'.

Interviews with the 30 'trapped migrants' sampled in this study provided the primary data from which the characteristics of 'trapped migrants' have been gleaned out in this chapter. Exemplary quotes from the interviews have been used to draw attention to important themes concerning the characteristics of 'trapped migrants'. This chapter, in effect, addresses the first research objective, that is, to identify key characteristics of 'trapped migrants'.

5.2 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the 'trapped migrants'

The total number of interviewees in the research was 30. These people have experienced what has been termed in this study as 'trapped migration', and provided just the data needed to analyse the phenomenon of 'trapped migration'. The distributions of the interviewees by gender, age, religion, education, marriage, number of children, and region of origin in Ghana are presented in this section to illustrate the demography of the 'trapped migrants'. Although the sample is small

for any serious statistics to be extracted, describing such distributions with the available data as shown in Table 4.3, helped to put the 'trapped migrants' into perspective and contributed to interrogating the real issues concerning the 'trapped migrants'.

Table 5.1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of the 'trapped migrants'

Socio-Demography	Frequency	Percent
Total	**30**	**100.0**
Gender		
Male	21	70.0
Female	9	30.0
Age (years)		
20-29	12	40.0
30-39	11	36.7
40-49	3	10.0
50-59	4	13.3
Religious Affiliation		
Christians	28	93.3
Muslims	2	6.7
Educational Level		
No education	5	16.6
Primary education	6	20.0
JHS/JSS	14	46.7
SHS/SSS	5	16.7
Marital Status		
Single	15	50.0
Married	12	40.1
Divorced	1	3.3
Widowed	1	3.3
Separated	1	3.3
Number of Children		
No Child	17	56.7
1 Child	8	26.7

2 or more children	5	16.6
Region of Origin		
Ashanti	7	23.3
Brong Ahafo	17	56.7
Volta	4	13.4
Northern	1	3.3
Upper West	1	3.3

Source: Field Work, 2017 and 2018

5.2.1 Gender

The majority (more than half of the study population) of the interviewees in this study comprise males. This fact emphasizes the idea that males more probably fall into the 'trapped migration' web than their female counterparts. In literature, the question as to which gender risks being trapped in migration is a grey area. However, the emerging consensus is that youths irregularly migrating from South to the North of Africa and the Middle East portend a high risk of ills to human wellbeing, especially, for females given their relative vulnerability (Deshingkar et al., 2019; Mbiyozo, 2018; Schans et al., 2018). Females had often fallen prey to exploitative work and forced labour as they accept offers from migrant brokers. The lesson that is being conveyed by a research of this kind may be making in-roads in creating awareness among women and forcing down the numbers of women that could have landed in 'trapped' migration. In this specific study, for every three females among the interviewees who were 'trapped', there were seven males who were 'trapped' to match irrespective of where the trap took place.

Apart from the above, the gender disparity may have been influenced slightly by the fact that males were readier to share their experience or accept to be perceived

as ‘trapped migrants’ largely because, as Cebotari et al. (2017) found, being a victim of stigmatization is a ‘dehumanizing’ experience. A number of women who fell in the category of ‘trapped migrants’ and were contacted in Kintampo declined to participate in the study for the main reason of fear of social stigma. One of the male participants from Kintampo reasoned in line with the fears of women, especially, from Kintampo associated with ‘trapped migration’ saying as follows:

> …women from the area [Kintampo] who migrated and were once ‘trapped’ had a lesser chance of getting a life partner from the area so they often try to hide that aspect of their life (David, June 2017, Kintampo).

Keeping the ‘trapped migration’ experiences in secrecy seems to be a convenient approach employed by many women who have ever been ‘trapped’ in migration to avoid negative social ramifications of their voyage on their lives. The tendency to keep that experience to themselves can be so strong that women who dared to vent it would do so under very serious anonymity considerations. For example, in this study, some of the women who agreed to be interviewed preferred to share their stories over a phone call instead of a face-to-face interview. Embarrassment, especially, due to the stigmatization of such women is the leading reason why secrecy and privacy are keenly guarded by the women. It stands to reason that gender plays a critical role in what may be known about ‘trapped migration’, particularly, if the experiences of women are underrepresented. During the migration through the desert, for instance, women experienced levels of vulnerabilities and associated risks that were different from men. In this study, an

attempt has been made to capture crucial views of females in 'trapped migration', albeit in the minority group compared to males.

5.2.2 Age Distribution

The age distribution gives an idea of how old the study participants are. The facts from the interviewees in this study are that for every five of the interviewees, there were two (40%) whose ages were in the 20-29 years category. Very close to that category were 36.7 percent of the interviewees in the 30-39 years age category. Most of the migrants aged between 20 and 39 years.

Although the study was qualitative and based on a small sample size of 30, the findings with respect to results from age distribution corroborated studies presented from Elbadawy (2010), which found that migration aspirations decrease as age increased. This result lends itself to consolidating the fact that the youth, in trying to break the glass ceiling to better their economic fortunes, are daring to migrate abroad (Dako-Gyeke, 2016). This finding is consolidated in this study, recording further a decreasing percentage of migrants with increments in age, indicating that the migrants consisted of younger than older individuals.

5.2.3 Religious Affiliation

The migrants were distributed on the lines of Christianity and Islam. The majority (93.3%) of the migrants were Christians. This is not to imply that only Christians and Muslims are involved in 'trapped migration'. However, among the interviewees in this study, Muslims were in the minority. Ironically, the countries into which the interviewees had migrated are populated, predominantly, by

Muslims. This would imply that Muslims should be enticed to migrate to these countries due to the religious familiarity which promises to make interaction navigation relatively easier for Muslims. This should have cascaded into dominance of Muslims in this study, but the results here reflect the contrary. It shows that the attraction of people from other religious groups, especially Christians, to migrate to Libya and the Middle East, cannot be downplayed.

But this study was not so much motivated by the existence of Muslim 'trapped migrants' as it was to finding people with real experiences in the domain of 'trapped migration' for analysis and discussion. This de-emphasizes the idea that the phenomenon of 'trapped migration' is restricted to any set of religious people.

Religion was however an important characteristic because, from the interactions with the interviewees, it brought out some cultural and religious differences in the country of origin and destination. The extremity of these differences is where it gives a high sense of nostalgia for the origin. This had increased the yearning to return home. According to Jessica, a 33-year-old female domestic worker in Saudi Arabia, Religion is a major factor driving her aspiration to return, she explained that:

> … as a Christian, I longed to go to church to worship my maker but I had no means of doing so. In Saudi Arabia migrant women were not allowed to walk freely by themselves except with their employees, I knew nowhere and did not even consider the thought of going in search for a place to worship… all these factors increased my resolve to return home" {Jessica, July 2017, Saudi Arabia}.

Patrick a 29 year old respondent who was once a 'trapped' migrant in Qatar but had returned had this to share:

> … religious differences were also a factor that made our stay unbearable, there was the Sharia law from the Muslim religion which was applied there hence it was almost impossible to communicate even with a woman for fear of being arrested {Patrick, June 2017, Kumasi}.

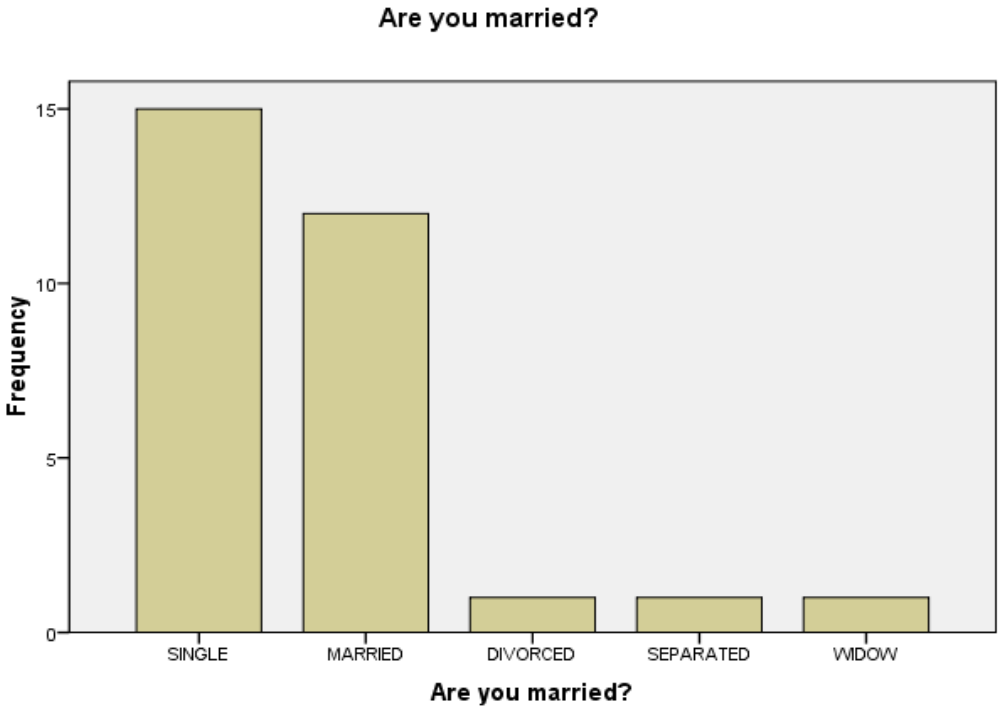
5.2.4 Educational Level

The distribution of interviewees according to education level revealed that most (46.7%) of the interviewees had, up to the highest, a Junior High School level of education, 20% of the interviewees had their highest level of education at the primary level. This brings to more than three in every five (66.7%) of the interviewees having very low levels of education – Primary and Junior High School education. It appears that a low level of education is responsible for the choices made by the majority of these interviewees leading to 'trapped migration'. This shows that Peil's (1995) observation that education is responsible for Ghanaian youths migrating to other countries. Indeed, owing to an inaccessible education system, properly so-called, the youth have resorted to venturing outside (Dako-Gyeke, 2016). There is, however, another occurrence where, due to low or no education, the youth fall gullible to migrant brokers who promise domestic or construction work abroad as a superior economic empowerment, but this group of migrants eventually run into return migration difficulties. In this study, only 16.7 percent (hardly one out of every five) of the interviewees had completed the Senior High School level of education.

5.2.5 Marital Status

Results on the marital status of the interviewees show that half (50%) of them were single. Out of every five of the interviewees, two (40%) were married. There was one person divorced, one person widowed, and one person separated each representing 3.3 percent of the interviewees. This is illustrated below:

Figure 5.1: Distribution of the Interviewees by Marital Status



These results suggest that the larger proportion of the 'trapped migrants' studied constituted people who have either had problems in marital relationships or were not married at all. Arguably, responsibility for family stands to be a constraint to married people. Haug (2008) points out that migration takes place when a comparison of the outcomes of either staying in the country of origin or in the

receiving country indicates that the latter option is more rewarding. While without marital family responsibility, the youths are predisposed to migrate into a trap.

5.2.6 Distribution of the 'Trapped' Migrants according to Number of Children

Akin to marital status was the responsibility for children. The results show that more than half (56.7%) of the interviewees had no children. A little more than a quarter (26.7%) of the interviewees had one child. The rest of the interviewees, constituting 16.6% had given birth to two or more children. This result suggests that, whiles without a child, most of the interviewees had a leeway to embark on such migrations that ended them in 'trapped migration'.

5.2.7 Region of Origin of the 'Trapped' Migrants

The data showed that more than half (56.7%) of the interviewees come from the Bono Region (formerly Brong Ahafo Region). Just about one out of every five (23.3%) of the interviewees come from the Ashanti Region. Only 4 (13.4%) come the Volta Region whereas 1 (3.3%) come from the Northern Region and Upper West Region each. Brong Ahafo Region seems to be a spotlight in terms of the incidence of 'trapped migrants' particularly to Libya, Qatar or Saudi Arabia.

5.3 Route of Migration

The route of migration adopted by the majority (66.7%) out of the 30 migrants interviewed was 'road'. This implies that a huge chunk of the interviewees left

Ghana to their destinations crossing borders by road into other countries, possibly, making a series of transits as long as their journey lasted. Only about three out of every ten (33.3%) of the interviewees travelled by air, and this group gives a better assurance that they had a more effortless and comfortable journey to the destination.

It emerged also that the choice of route of migration varied with the location of the destination point. Out of the 30 'trapped migrants', there were 21 (70%) that migrated to Libya. However, 20 (95.2%) out of the 21 indicated that they had travelled by road from Ghana through the desert to Libya. The fact of some migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa journeying by road to Libya in attempts to beat migration controls has been an existential matter with its attendant problems (Brachet, 2016; de Hass, 2008). It is common knowledge that many of such migrants are irregular migrants who normally fall short of the documentation required for them to have full access to countries, not their homeland. In this study, there was only one (Felicity, interviewed July 2017, Kumasi), a female interviewee, who had travelled by air to Egypt, then to Libya from Egypt by road. She said:

> I travelled to Libya to join my husband. I travelled through Egypt by air and from there I journeyed to Bengazi by road (Felicity, July 2017, Kumasi).

The impossibility of travelling directly to Libya by air for this interviewee was due to the fact that Libya had been cut off from entry of international airlines. She continued, "This arrangement was because of sanctions on Libya which prevented us from travelling to Libya by air" (Felicity, July, 2017, Kumasi).

The remaining 9 (30%) out of the 30 ‘trapped migrants’ interviewed travelled to Qatar and Saudi Arabia. This group travelled through regular migration channels with requisite travel documentation because they travelled by air. Indeed, travelling by air was the only way to avoid impediments to reach Qatar or Saudi Arabia which lie farther away from Ghana. Therefore, fewer interviewees had travelled to Qatar or Saudi Arabia whiles the migration flows more than doubled to Libya which is closer in distance to Ghana. So, a huge proportion (95.2%) of the interviewees who travelled to Libya used road, but also had increased risk of migration challenges, such as improper travel documentation and exposure to dangers of land voyage of which the Saharan Desert is a big deal. These risks not only put a spotlight on the group migrating to Libya by road, but also characterised the majority of the ‘trapped migrants’.

Table 5.1 is an illustration of the countries to which the interviewees in this study travelled. It can be found that, a large proportion of the interviewees, characteristically, irregular migrants, headed to Libya than to Qatar or Saudi Arabia.

Table 5.2: Country of Destination of the ‘trapped migrants’

Country of Destination	Frequency	Percentage
Total	**30**	**100.0**
Libya	21	70.0
Qatar	6	20.0
Saudi Arabia	3	10.0

Source: Field Work, 2017 and 2018

A certain characteristic of 'trapped migration' is raised in respect of migration routes employed. The majority (more than 60 percent) of the interviewees migrated out of Ghana by road. There was a high possibility that most of the migrants travelling by road would be irregular migrants because travelling by road exposes them to difficulties of return. Molenaar (2017) has shown that there are human smuggling activities going from Niger to Libya in which smuggling networks illegally aid people from the south to enter Libya. This is confirmed by Phillips (2020) in the assertion that Libya is a significant transit country for irregular migration to Europe. Because of its role in the transition to Europe, Libya has gained notoriety for irregular migration. In this respect, Kleist (2017) and several other researchers have announced that young men from Ghana have been migrating to Libya. They characterize this as irregular migration. Traveling by road to Libya from Ghana implies different borders and different countries would have to be crossed. Some of these countries may have variations in their migration controls and this portends the possible identification and treatment of the migrants as illegal immigrants along the line, especially, when documents required for passage have not been met by migrants. So, migrating by road to Libya holds information about the irregular migration properties of the migrants engaged in this study. Consequentially, being unable to return when these migrants wished to return followed the irregular nature of their migration to Libya.

5.4 Employment Status of the Trapped Migrants

The employment status of the interviewees was assessed both in Ghana and away. Before embarking on the migration, three in every five (60%) of the interviewees were employed. Out of this category of the interviewees, artisans formed the highest percentage at 50 percent, followed by traders (27.8%). Farmers and drivers comprised 11.1 percent of the employed interviewees apiece. The remainder of (40%) represents the interviewees who were unemployed before they embarked on migration.

It must be pointed out that, in Ghana, artisanal work, trading, driving, and farming are predominant occupations in the informal and semi-informal sectors. The informal and semi-informal sector, albeit large, is perceived to the less economically attractive compared to the formal sector (Amoah et al., 2017; Xu et al., 2018). Many Ghanaians engaged in the informal and semi-informal sectors are unable to maintain a consistent appreciable flow of income. As a result, some people employed in this sector feel a bit disadvantaged and become easily susceptible to the idea of living a better life outside Ghana. The limitedness of employment opportunities in the country sways the youth to any income earning opportunity available elsewhere outside Ghana (Poku-Boansi & Afrane, 2016; Tanoh & Osei-Assibey, 2019). The people engaged predominantly in the informal and semi-informal sectors and those that were, obviously, in need of employment characterised the migrants to Libya, Qatar and Saudi Arabia that had difficulties of return migration. The story of Shelter, who migrated to Libya in 1998 exemplifies this reality:

> The economic condition here in Ghana was very harsh. As a farmer, I could not earn enough to support my family so I decided to migrate to Libya to see what life there could offer (Shelter, June 2017, Kintampo).

There were 'trapped migrants' who were literally unemployed, but among the unemployed were those who had just lost their employment before the decision to migrate. Nana Yaw, who first moved from Accra in 1991 to Libya, had this story to tell:

> In the 1980s, I worked with the nursery department of International Tobacco until the company folded up as a result of government action. I was unemployed with a wife and three children to care for; therefore, in 1991, I travelled through the desert to Libya in search of greener pastures (Nana Yaw, July 2017, Accra).

When the migrants had reached their destinations (or transit points), their unemployment level, which was 40 percent in Ghana before migration, reduced to 3.3 percent. This implies a high percentage (96.3%) of the interviewees got employed in varied forms of work once they were out of the borders of Ghana. More than half (55.2%) of these migrants were employed as masons. A little less than a quarter (24.2%) of these migrants were employed as domestic workers. Security officers constituted 17.2 percent whiles there was one trader constituting 3.4 percent. For instance, Prince, a 29-year old migrant to Libya, upon reaching there got a plastering job. He said, "I was introduced to the plastering job and was my brother's assistant until I learnt the job and the local language" (Prince, July 2017, Kumasi). Another migrant to Libya said, "This [plastering] became my

profession (Felix, July 2017, Accra). Shelter, having migrated to Libya, also said, "I had to spend some days working in their farms (I was carrying watermelons) to raise money". He had to work on the farm temporarily to raise money to continue his journey from Balaghati to Sarbah. He continued:

> Whilst in Sarbah, I stayed in a ghetto, and each morning, I had to stand by the street waiting to be picked up by somebody who needed a domestic worker (basically cleaning), mason, or a labourer. This act of standing by the road in search of job is referred to as 'carry foe' which I did for a living before eventually raising some money to continue to Obari, another town. In Obari, I got a job through the ghetto boss who was a block-maker who recruited and trained me into his block-making company. Hence, I became a block-maker, this was called 'Bomshine' (Shelter, June 2017, Kintampo).

Some of the female migrants also resorted to doing the kinds of business they were comfortable with and found economically rewarding. One of such women was Doris, a 58-year-old who in Libya took to food vending business. She said:

> I was a great cook and I knew that with the growing Ghanaian population, I could make something meaningful out of my life if I choose that profession…I started the trade; this earned me a lot of money because many Ghanaians and Nigerians present in Libya far and near came to have a taste of home through the food that I was selling to them. So, I sold local Ghanaian dishes such as Banku, Waakye, and Fufu, and this earned me a great popularity. Soon, I was able to rent a bigger place and new immigrants coming into Libya were brought to my place which later became a popular Ghanaian Ghetto. The agents would normally bring to my place Ghanaians who have been unable to pay for their fares so that I can pay them whilst the people stayed with me to work and defray the debt with an interest. In some cases, I assist them to get a job so that they can pay me back later. This also fuelled my business as they became constant

> source of market for my food. In fact, I became like an embassy and was always helping people (Doris, August 2017, Accra).

Felicity was another woman who worked in Libya as a domestic worker basically doing a cleaning job. She said:

> The cleaning job was a very difficult one. This is because the building in which I worked had 3 bungalows with approximately 12 rooms, with 2 large halls, and three bathrooms (Felicity, July 2017, Kumasi).

The employment status of the interviewees was also assessed from a post-migration standpoint. Results came from those who had returned to Ghana. It has already been shown that 20, representing 66.7 percent of the interviewees had returned after being 'trapped'. The rest were still 'trapped' in migration (see Table 4.2). Therefore, being a 'trapped migrant' is not a permanent condition. The results show that some of the interviewees who were able to return are currently employed, but with different challenges. Some of them noted that they returned to their previous vocations. A middle-aged woman, 48 years, provided a vivid picture of what this experience has been like. She said:

> I am a hairdresser. I had a small shop where I worked prior to my journey to Libya. I heard that my vocation was seriously demanded over there. But things did not go as planned and, finally, I had to return. In order to survive back home, I am reworking the same shop to continue my work as hairdresser (Vera, July 2017, Kumasi).

Another female returnee said:

> Upon my return home, things have been very difficult. In view of this difficulty, I have had to relocate from my hometown, Nkoranza to Sampah where I survive as a second-hand clothes dealer. Now, I do not intend to migrate to any country anymore. I will stay here no matter how difficult that may be. Being trapped in migration is not easy at all even those who are able to return do so without their belongings and things for which they had worked so hard (Doris, August 2017, Accra).

Some of the interviewees had invested in trading activities, which have had varied levels of success. For example, a male interviewee aged 30, who has returned after being 'trapped' in Qatar, shared his experience with employment back home saying:

> …Life after return is still as it was before migration to Qatar. The only employment I consider myself to be engaged in is the cold store in which I have made an investment. I sell frozen fish, chicken and meat. This business, unfortunately, dipped in terms of revenue, significantly due to the power crises we witnessed during the past years. About one year down the lane, my business has still not been able to recover fully because of debt distress (Appiah, July 2017, Kumasi).

Prince, who returned from Libya, also said:

> Life after return has been very difficult. When you render a service even payment becomes a problem. Because the economy is bad, few people patronize the construction wares and I must say we live from hand to mouth. It is our prayer that government is able to create more jobs in the country so that there will be no need to migrate (Prince, July 2017, Kumasi).

Some interviewees also indicated that they have started a new vocation with the skills they have acquired from the destination or transit. This is exemplified in the response of a 37-year-old returnee from Qatar. He said:

> I was a driver in Ghana before migrating to Qatar. I was trained by the company in which I was employed in Qatar as a crane operator. When I returned, finally, I survive as a crane operator in Ghana because of the skills I acquired from my migration experience (Francis, July 2017, Accra).

A crucial aspect of the return migration is where returnees are unable to get a foothold on any livelihood. There were several instances of this among the 'trapped migrants' who have been able to return. Vera, a 48-year-old female migrant to Libya who only managed to do braiding of people's hair for three years upon return faced difficulty because she could not get a job back home and had earned very little for her upkeep. In the absence of any employment, she reasoned:

> I will like to migrate again but to a better country and not the Arab world which is no place for a woman to go. However, should I get a good job; I will not migrate anywhere else. I would stay at home, work and take care of my child (Vera, July 2017, Kumasi).

Another returnee, utterly disappointed with the condition thrown at him back home because he lost his savings to the DKM microfinance crisis, had this to say:

> I came back home only to realize that all the money I worked so hard for was deposited in DKM microfinance account. The money amounting to GHC 4,500 was lost because the microfinance was fraudulent. I am, therefore, appealing to government to assist in this regard (Wallace, July 2018, Kintampo).

5.5 Purpose of Migration

It has been established that most of the migration through the Niger, Algeria and the desert places to Libya have underpinning economic reasons for such migration. It is trite learning that in some cases, migrants hope to get to Europe. Meanwhile, in this study, responses on why the migrants undertook their journey offered other reasons which are relevant for the discussion on the characteristics of the 'trapped migrants'.

The interesting part of the reasons remains economic in nature. Many migrants, including 'trapped migrants', prior to their migration had, a predilection for the economic fortunes at the destination (Tanoh & Osei-Assibey, 2019). It is clear from the responses in this study that jobs or employment was a major consideration of the migrants for which they decided to migrate.

It emerged that male respondents worked within jobs which were more associated with males, such as construction, masonry or security. Women were basically involved in pink-coloured jobs such as domestic work, hair dressing, selling food and petty trading. This finding reinforces the aspect of the migration and gender literature that indicates that migrant labour has gendered consequences (Pearson and Sweetman, 2019), Pessar and Mahler, 2003).

In support of the economic bearings of the migration, a man, aged 54, who was a driver by profession before he travelled to Libya, stated, "When I first travelled there, I was the cleaner in the company as there were no women present" (Nana Yaw, July 2017, Accra). He was alluding to the fact that he had migrated to Libya

in search of a better job. His economic reason for migrating becomes even more projected when he agreed to be a cleaner as a substitute for a female worker. This man like many others, demonstrates the fact that migrants would do even the menial work in the foreign land knowing that the returns for such jobs offer better wages (Dako-Gyeke, 2016).

The economic purpose driving the 'trapped migrants' is enhanced by reason of the migrants' fear, that if they returned with nothing of economic value to show out of their migration, then they would be maligned and chastised. This is a creation of the fact that a big part of the Ghanaian society has long formed its aspirations of a worthy life and hope of a better day based on the prospects of migration, especially, to North America and Europe. For instance, in a study by Coe (2020), it became obvious that migrants exercise their preference to experience a low-class status in the countries to which they migrate so that they can take solace in the high-class they would experience in their home country. Ghanaian migrants' social class debasement in the United States is considerably mitigated by the high status they hold in their home country due to remittances. Therefore, they can gladly return home to gain their social status after humiliation in the foreign land. Adiku and Anamzoya (2018) have also found that some Ghanaian husbands abroad send remittances to their wives because they see it as their patriarchal duty to cater to the needs of these ones. A financial expectation by non-migrants has ascribed a responsibility to husbands or, by extension, father-figures which many migrant men have to meet. This found expression in the submission of Nana Yaw who continued by saying that:

> …Upon my very last return home, things became very bad as I couldn't make ends meet hence my role as a man was under threat. My wife whom I set up a charcoal business for no longer respected me as she became the breadwinner for the family. She now insults me and speaks to me in any manner (Nana Yaw, July 2017, Accra).

In order to avoid such an embarrassment as submitted above, migrants who end up 'trapped migrants' exhibit a real need to do any work at their destination country. Additionally, benefits that accrue to countries of origin are touted as a vindication of the role of migration in national development. This is, nonetheless, borne out of fear of failure to come back home with a significantly improved economic outlook. 'Trapped migrants', therefore, exhibit their desperation for jobs or employment and would apply every means available to them to resolve their desperation (Kandilige & Adiku, 2019).

As per the conceptual framework, migrants who end up in circumstances that trap them until they are incapable of return have mainly economic reasons causing them to migrate voluntarily or involuntarily. When this happens, whatever means it would take to migrate is adopted including irregular migration. In this study, irregular migration was prominent, taking the form of travelling by road to Libya, except in the case of migration to places where traveling by air is the only surest and cheapest way of maximizing the chances of migrating. It was more like using the most affordable means of migration to achieve the object of migration.

5.5 Gendered characteristics of 'trapped' migrants

Scholars such as Pearson and Sweetman (2019), Pessar and Mahler (2003) amongst many others have established the strong link between migration and gender. Gender plays role in the experiences of migrants before, during and after migration and on return. Apart from the larger proportion of the 'trapped migrants' in this study being males, as reported in the demography of the interviewees in the previous chapter, gender tended to play a remarkable role in some experiences which may characterise 'trapped migrants'.

A typical example of these experiences comes from a female interviewee who was 'trapped' in transit through the desert on her way to Europe through Niger, Algeria and Libya. She referred to her journey in these terms:

> That life is hell! I do not wish it for anyone. As a woman, whenever I menstruated, I just walked around with the blood flowing down my legs until it was over. I did not have access to a bath or even any menstrual towel. The stench that emanated from my body was very bad as a result (Yaa, July 2017, Kumasi).

The comment above illustrates the ordeal that women can be subjected to on the journey by road to Libya. So, women are characterised by higher levels of vulnerability. From the interviewee's account, it can be gleaned out that she risked getting an infection and experienced embarrassment that could negatively alter her psyche. This can be responsible for some psychological problems such as trauma, distress, and withdrawal from social environment.

Another level of vulnerability that the women faced differently from the men was the risk of sexual exploitation. One apparently distraught young man who witnessed some of the ill-treatments that women were subjected to on the journey said:

> Whilst women risked being raped during the migration journey, men did not face such risks. This could either be from male counterparts embarking on the same journey or bandits who attack immigrants on their way through the desert or even from security forces that arrest them in the course of the journey (Kwateng, July 2017, Kintampo).

One lady who was 'trapped' in Saudi Arabia explained that, she had a friend who was severely beaten and brutally raped because "…she had refused the love proposal of her recruitment agent in Saudi Arabia" (Doris, June 2017, Accra). Another female respondent who migrated to Libya for family reunification had this to say:

> I was the only woman amongst the travellers and I carried along with me a card bearing my husbands' address. …When I finally arrived in Libya, I was confronted with the reality that I could not be at the same place where my husband was because women were not allowed to the labour camp where only men lived (Felicity, July 2017, Kumasi).

From these submissions, it can be seen that females have a very limited chance of steering clear of catastrophe in this journey that ends up with difficulty to return. On the way to and in Qatar, Libya, or Saudi Arabia, there is segregation of females with very limited opportunity for them to speak up against ill-treatment to them. An exemplary response given by a once-trapped 32-year-old man from Kumasi reads:

> …We were not allowed to converse with women, even those whom we knew from Ghana…Women were not allowed to stay in the Labour camps, they lived separately from us…throughout my time as a security guard in Qatar, I came across only 5 women as guards but we were not allowed to interact with them (Kudolo, June 2018, Kumasi).

Whilst men are free to move in such countries, females cannot move around unaccompanied. This was clearly stated by Rita, a 27-year-old who works as a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia, she stated

> … my role as a woman prohibits me from moving freely without an escort. I also do not possess my passport as it was given to my employer; this also prohibits me from moving freely beyond the walls of my employers' home. There are shops directly in front of my house but I am not able to venture there even to purchase something because I am a woman and a foreigner without travel documentation in my possession. Life for a female domestic worker here in Saudi is full of uncertainty. Until I go back home, I do not know of what awaits me. I hear all sorts of stories about female domestic workers here and these scares me. Many women here are subjected to all sorts of abuse including rape, murder, denial of justice etc. I am only thankful to God that I have not met such conditions yet. Even though I consider myself as a 'trapped migrant', I know that when the two-year bond is up, I can return home peacefully in the name of God (Rita, June 2018, Saudi Arabia).

There are several studies that show how migration can be detrimental to women. In a recent study, Apatinga et al. (2020) found that while female migration is associated with certain benefits, it has short- and long-term consequences, including reverse remittances, marital instability and effects on children's individual wellbeing. While showing that women and girls from the poorer north and Volta regions participate in employment-promising migration endeavours

which exposes them to risks of abuse, non-payment and sexual exploitation, Awumbila et al. (2019) actually captured the core difficulties faced by female migrants as have emerged from the participants of this study. Despite whatever benefits that are associated with this kind of migration for females, the difficulties go to contest the capacity of females to migrate.

To a large extent, this kind of picture informs the view which many people in Ghana have of women who embark on this process of migration, especially, to North Africa and the Middle East. It seems the migration process is a 'die hard' matter in which one only has to survive through very harmful physical and mental conditions. This migration is more a masculine rather than a feminine enterprise, and females have had to be compelled to be masculine in their femininess to survive through it. To leverage their capacity to migrate, Awumbila et al. (2019) observe that migrant brokers are actively involved in the process to recruit females making them dare the opportunity costs and setting them on an upward path. The fear evoked by the enormous difficulties also acts as a filter which curtails the aspirations of some women and girls to migrate or, perhaps, delay it. This, perhaps, strengthens the argument that if females found themselves in this migration, then they must be fewer than males owing to the exposure to many trepidations and vulnerabilities.

5.6 Summary

Chapter five of this research has explored some fundamental characteristics of the 'trapped migrants' in this study. Irregular migration is a crucial characteristic shared by most of the 'trapped migrants'. The fact that migrating from Ghana to the destination countries by road, to a large extent, led to the migrants being

'trapped' was prominent. It emerged that people travelled to Libya by road not only considering its relative closeness to Ghana, but also as a way to beat stringent migration controls and protocols. All this culminated into irregular migration which largely characterised the 'trapped migrants'.

The need to travel to improve economic outlook characterised the 'trapped migrants' and informed their decision to migrate. Some of them entertained hopes of getting to Europe in satisfying this quest. This came at the background where, prior to the migration, the migrants were barely making ends meet and many were not gainfully employed. Thus, economic reasons played a very crucial role in the choices made by the 'trapped migrants' to migrate in the first place.

Although 'trapped migration' came with great risks for most of the partakers, females tended to have a higher risk and a bigger ordeal which their femininess would require some additional force to contain.

Experiences on the journey and jobs offered at the destination had exposed more of the vulnerabilities of females compared to males. Sexual exploitation is another risk which females were plunged into by this kind of migration. So, females, characteristically, appear to be more susceptible to the devastating aftermath of 'trapped migration' than do males. In the next chapter, much progress has been made to analyse the circumstances which triggers and enables 'trapped migration.'

CHAPTER SIX

TRIGGERS AND ENABLERS" OF 'TRAPPED' MIGRATION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides analyses of the antecedents and circumstances which entailed the entrapment of the migrants in this study. Per the conceptual framework of the study, 'trapped migrants' aspire to migrate as a result of economic reasons and, possibly, others. In addition to the aspirations, there are experiences in the 'trapped migration' to which only the 'trapped migrants' can draw one's attention. This chapter, thus, paves the way to understand these experiences from the perspective of the 'trapped migrants'. The ensuing analyses provide the answers to the fundamental research questions "What are the circumstances that lead migrants into 'trapped migration'?" and "What are the navigation strategies of 'trapped migrants'?" The results are discussed in view of pertinent evidence from other sources to corroborate the findings. First, the analysis beams the searchlight on the circumstances that lead migrants into 'trapped migration'.

6.2 The Enablers of 'Trapped' Migration

A broad theme which was synthesized from the interviews of the 'trapped migrants' is the enablers of 'trapped migration'. The analysis here considered the possible systemic arrangement and establishment by which the decision of the 'trapped migrants' interviewed in the study to migrate to Libya or the Middle East was reached. By such analysis, the understanding of how the 'trapped migrants' undertook the journey becomes clearer leading to an appreciation of the enablers of 'trapped migration'.

There is no gainsaying that information and communication technologies, globally, have led to improved cross-border engagements of various forms. International labour migration, foreign remittances and transnational activities have found a place among humanity chiefly by the influence of information and communication technologies. To be factually correct, there is a lot of communication going on between people with very little geographical limitation. Studies like Czaika and de Haas (2014) and de Haas (2009) have argued copiously that international migration is becoming relatively easier with unlimited possibilities to access geographical areas in space and time. They add that advances in information technology, communication and enhanced modes of transportation by land, sea, and air have facilitated access to geographical areas. Hence, different places and people have been drawn closer by virtue of information sharing, increased knowledge of peoples and cultures. Transportation and communication networks or channels to any place around the globe have been established and improved more or less.

Already, it seems many people have become relatively familiar with various locations on the earth's surface, aided by satellite imaging and internet connectivity. For instance, although prior to the migration, the 'trapped migrants' had never been to their respective destinations, they demonstrated such a level of awareness of the locations they were heading to, at least, with their contacts at their disposal in the receiving location. If people can read or see geographical places on maps and in pictures, then in part, they can also have a realistic view of the places before visiting them physically.

A section of the 'trapped migrants' in this study suggested that the route to North Africa or Middle East has never been accessible before as it is in contemporary times. The route of migration from southern to northern Africa years ago had left a historical trajectory based on which contemporary routes have been developed. With available knowledge on how to travel to North Africa in place, it takes an individual's decision backed by will for migration to take place. What is more; there is evidence of many others migrating through the same route which, therefore, consolidates awareness of that migration route. So, the decision and will to migrate by some 'trapped migrants' followed their awareness of that migration route. For instance, one interviewee who migrated to Libya said:

> Although many people think travelling such a long distance [to Libya] is risky, I thought as far as there were other human beings travelling along the distance, it was manageable. And true to my understanding, I headed for the journey. I noticed people are traveling along the route far more today than it had been before. There are new people settling along the distance, and cities marking transit points have become increasingly aware of the route of migrants with some amount of room to accommodate

> them. So, I dared to get to Libya all the same (Addo, June, 2018, Kumasi).

Another interviewee said:

> I chose to migrate to Libya by road. This was because of the ease and company I felt there would be in travelling by road. We had the benefit of communicating and engaging with our parties on the road to Libya about what to expect so that we prepared adequately (Kwateng, June 2018, Kintampo).

Another interviewee, Nana Yaw, mentions the transits which were milestones involved in his journey from Ghana to Libya. Some sort of familiarity he had with transit points, added to his courage in the migration, aroused by his companions, thrilled by his migration bid. He said:

> …I, therefore, set-off with three other young men from Nkoranza to Libya. It was not a straight route, as we had to first go to Bawku, then continue to Burkina Faso, to Niger (its border town called Agadez) to Algeria where we spent three nights before we arranged for a car finally to Libya (Nana Yaw, July 2017, Accra).

Yet, another interviewee who travelled to Libya by road painted his understanding of the journey before undertaking the journey in these vivid terms:

> When the thought came for me to migrate to Libya, the route that was communicated to me was from Ghana to Burkina Faso, and then from there to Niger, and from Niger straight into Libya. I could almost trace the journey along a map, and so the journey looked pretty straightforward (Collins, June 2018, Kintampo).

So, it seemed pretty easy to board a vehicle from Ghana with the intention to reach Libya. All the respondents who travelled by road through the desert confirmed that the transportation networks provided avenues for them to travel from Ghana towards Libya. The detour through other countries like neighbours Burkina-Faso, carried a sense of reassurance of thoroughfare to many of the interviewees because, at the least, names like that sound familiar to many Ghanaians. With Nigerians on the route as well, the journey could not have been too lonely for the migrants. For example, in telling his story, Kwadwo, a 30-year old migrant once 'trapped' in Libya, remembered that somewhere on their journey, they were "about 11 in number, comprising mainly Nigerians and Ghanaians" (Kwadwo, June 2018, Kintampo). This journey was nearly always a group affair in which the migrants identified each other in a community, although consequences may be borne individually. This sense of community, perhaps, keeps these migrants on the go to Libya.

In emphasizing the seeming ease with which migrants embark on migration to Libya in recent times, an elderly male interviewee who was 'trapped' in Libya but returned after several years said:

> When I first journeyed to Libya in the 1990s the route was longer and we had to make several stops before we could reach Libya. But, on my return through the same route in 2006, as part of returnees assisted by IOM, I realized that the distance we covered back to Ghana through the desert was shorter than I experienced on the first journey to Libya (Nana Yaw, July 2017, Accra).

This interviewee's response gives a tacit meaning that migration by road along the Ghana-Libya route has seen some changes between 1996 and 2006 – in the space of a decade. Although several reasons may be adduced to explain the shortness of the distance per the second experience, it could not have been the distance that has shortened. It would be the case that the transportation system, road network, and navigation strategy have been enhanced to reduce stress, time and general discomfort that characterized earlier journeys. Such enhancements may have happened on some sections of the Ghana-Libya route, if not on the whole stretch as is possibly the case. For instance, the little technological awareness of Africa and relative growth in technology usage foretells some newness in their modes of transportation. Newer, more effective vehicles may be used to adapt to the conditions of roads and so on. The extrapolation from all this is that, knowledge and practices on the Ghana-Libya migration route have become more developed than before, and would continue to do so far into the future. So, it seems the Ghana-Libya migration is contemporarily easier than the times long before now.

The fact is full-blown that many people who travelled to Libya by road from Ghana passed through Burkina Faso and went to Niger, and then to Libya. Even so, there are many details which are often overlooked in this course, although such details are pertinent to fully grasp the experiences of migrants on that course. There are transits to make, negotiations to reach, and financial issues to resolve on the way. In that course of migration, contacts are established with various parties who facilitate the migration process. Engagements with these parties before the journey commences are very critical.

People are still finding their way into countries not their origins, and Ghanaians migrating to Libya, Qatar and Saudi Arabia present a special case in point. The Ghana-Libya, Ghana-Qatar, Ghana-Saudi Arabia migrations are a special case because they have produced 'trapped migrants' which has attracted attention.

In this study, whilst the 'trapped migrants' associated with Libya used the road, the migrants 'trapped' in Qatar and Saudi Arabia migrated by air. Whichever way, communication was replete in the formation of the migration process. This is exemplified in the responses of many interviewees in this study as is Appiah, aged 30, who migrated to Qatar. He said:

> My uncle's friend told me he can help me to travel to Qatar…Two other friends of mine and I were introduced to a Nigerian 'connection man' who arranged for us to be picked up at the airport when we reach Qatar (Appiah, July 2018, Qatar).

This kind of communication does not only introduce the migrants to the practicability of the migration, but it also brings into the picture the role of facilitators of the migration. The fact of 'connection man' existing in the migration of the 'trapped migrants' to Qatar was commonplace for all the interviewees. The term 'connection man' refers to certain key people or individuals who assist migrants to enable them to move upstream to their destination. In some responses, they have been referred to as agents. The implication here is that the 'trapped migrants' were connected with persons in various locations at one point or the other to help them find their bearings to their destination among other things. Here is also an excerpt of a 24-year-old interviewee who migrated to Saudi Arabia with the assistance of her contact in that country, and is still 'trapped' in that country:

> …my mum returned from the market and informed me of the possibility for me to migrate to Saudi with the help of a travel agent she had met whilst in the market. According to her, the income was good and I will have a lot of money upon my return. The good thing about the arrangement was that we did not have to pay anything as the expenses for the trip were covered by another agent in Saudi Arabia. Before the trip, I underwent some formality such as the signing of a two-year contract with the agent in Saudi Arabia (Rita, June 2018, Saudi Arabia).

All the interviewees who got 'trapped' in Libya also had their share of what it means to have 'connection men' to enable them to migrate. Regarding this, Prince, 29 years, said:

> A friend of mine who was already based in Libya informed me that once I am able to get to Libya, it will be easier for me to get to Italy through the Mediterranean Sea (Prince, July 2017, Kumasi).

Because of the seeming engagement of the 'trapped migrants' with so-called 'connection men' in the migration process, they become overexposed to information that projected a high success rate for them and in the process obscuring the possible risks to which they are exposed. Prior to the journey and entrapment, the migrants are unable to revert their minds to the dangers that so often characterise the migration at the very beginning. This poses a fundamental question of what the migrants are made to be aware of in the migration process. This is subsequently addressed in this study.

6.3 Knowledge involved in the Trapped Migration Conundrum

This section delves into the issues of knowledge of the 'trapped migrants' in the migration to North Africa or the Middle East. Generally, the migration that takes place from Ghana to Libya is by road and said to be risky, largely, because some of the people who embarked on that migration went through disheartening and dehumanizing experiences. Despite this concern, many Ghanaians are migrating in perilous journeys to Libya. Besides that, migrants to Qatar and Saudi Arabia also risk migrating into unsafe conditions due to the poor status of immigrants there. These positions are evidenced by the incidence of 'trapped' Ghanaian migrants in those countries. Knowing what these 'trapped migrants' know about their migration would help to explain the circumstances leading to 'trapped migration'. As a step towards understanding the phenomenon of 'trapped migration', probing questions were asked of the 'trapped migrants' in the study to elicit what they knew that led them to embark on their migration. This is to contribute to answering the puzzle concerning the circumstances leading to 'trapped migration'.

First, the role of social networks which implies relatives, confidants, recruitment agencies – people who, regardless of the names they are identified with, connote facilitators of the plan to migrate – featured strongly as sources of information or knowledge for the plan to migrate. The story of one interviewee is informative in bringing out this viewpoint:

> Life in Ghana was tough for my family. I thought of travelling in search of employment, but I did not know where or how. My uncle introduced the idea of traveling through Libya to Europe as an end to our financial problems. He connected me with his confidant, a 54-year-old man, who briefed me on all that we

> needed to put in place. The plan was to transit in Libya and then move into Europe when the opportunity avails itself. From the onset, I think the confidant meant well but things turned out rather harder as I advanced in the migration to Libya. Through the man, I met other people who shared the same ambition of travelling to Libya and that is how we prepared to face our journey (Brenda, July 2018, Kumasi).

Another interviewee, a female who is still 'trapped' in Saudi Arabia, said:

> I decided to migrate out of Ghana. As a petty trader, I could not make ends meet with the little income that I gained from the sale of ear rings and other jewellery. I tried to search for employment elsewhere but this also proved to be very difficult. My friend informed me that there was a recruitment agency which was sending females to Saudi Arabia to be employed as domestic workers. She informed me that the pay was very good and, also, they were going to take care of my travel expenses and accommodation. I informed my family about my plans, but my family was not so happy about it and my brother initially disagreed with my decision but I was able to convince them that it was the best option for the family since we all did not have enough to support the household expenses. They became convinced and finally gave me their blessings. I therefore left my child with my mother to care for whilst I was away (Joana, June 2018, Saudi Arabia).

Yet, another interviewee, also still 'trapped' in Qatar said:

> My migration intention started when my landlord informed me that he could assist me to travel to Qatar if I paid an amount of GHC 2,000 to him. I was a great footballer thus he informed me that if I am able to go there, I will get a good team to play as I was struggling for a team here in Ghana. The news made me very glad and I managed to raise the money for him through the help of family and friends who encouraged me to go. I am from a very poor family so, collectively, they decided that if they could assist me to migrate, I would bring honour to the family

> and also assist others in the family to also migrate outside the country. My landlord introduced me and two other friends to a Nigerian connection man who arranged for us to be picked up at the airport (Francis, June 2018, Qatar).

So, quite apart from personal inclinations to travel, there were some persons who were instrumental in providing information leading to the agreement to migrate to Libya, Qatar or Saudi Arabia. The data obtained from the interviewees point to a chain of people from whom the migrants learned about the migration process. This chain of people consists of the close relations of the migrants and other third parties. Close relations of the 'trapped migrants' in this study happened to be parents, siblings, or extended family members. Friends of the migrants are also in the category of close relations. As has been seen, much of the information or knowledge about migrating to Libya, Qatar or Saudi Arabia was communicated by these close relations of the migrants.

There is another layer of people in the chain who constitute the core facilitators of the migration process because these people, most often, have critical information that could make or unmake the migration process. For instance, in the case of Francis reported above, there was a Nigerian 'connection man' who, obviously, offered information about the migration process. 'Connection man', in Ghanaian local parlance, is synonymous with an aide, facilitator, or even a contact. Back to the narrative from Francis, the Nigerian connection man, in turn, liaised with another connection man in faraway Qatar, so that when the migrant landed in Qatar then he could be aided through the remaining processes. This level of facilitators of the 'trapped migration' happens to be the focal point from which major problems

associated with the migration can be understood. The facilitators may be given different names by different people as they are identified, but their fundamental role as facilitators of migration would not be lost. For example, Awumbila, Deshingkar and Teye (2019) identify and refer to the facilitators as brokers and highlight the view that migrants use brokerage to exercise agency by taking advantage of irregular migration routes and informal employment.

Awumbila et al. (2019) argue that strict immigration and employment regimes in migrant-receiving countries made regular migration an enemy??? to many people who did not have the wherewithal which regular migration requires. Instead, irregular migration becomes the norm for many migrants, especially, from poor countries including Ghana, and this lets clandestine broker networks flourish. They are responsible for the creation of the hidden nature of recruitment, travel, and positioning, especially, in the labour market. The authors describe the ways in which these things are done as "below the official radar" (p.99). This emphasizes the irregularity characterising many of the migration avenues created by the brokers. Unfortunately, the authors found that the brokers are not the only people in that domain of migration; state actors are involved and migrants are also complicit. They note, for example, that the breakdown of the government in Libya and agreements with Europe to arrest and deport people trying to use North Africa to enter Europe through irregular routes have made migrants more vulnerable to exploitation and forced labour.

Aside from that, Kleist (2017) holds the view that, among other things, there are actors who generate, distribute and broker collective visions of migration as the

source of a good and meaningful life. This implies that some people see these actors as the brokers of the opportunities that would usher them into the good and meaningful life for which they may be having hope.

To add to Awumbila et al's. (2017) perspective that people who do not have the wherewithal which regular migration requires resort to irregular migration, Awumbila, et al. (2017), demonstrated that poor migrants are more likely to depend on social capital for livelihoods in host communities.

In saying so, an implication can be drawn that poor migrants employ irregular avenues of migration but depend on social networks which is drawn from social capital. The migrants' ability to utilise social networks is largely influenced by the 'connection men' or facilitators they have. There is demand and supply of facilitators which, therefore, leads to what Awumbila et al (2017) describe as the creation of opportunities by clandestine broker networks for the exploitation of vulnerable migrants.

The sheer fact that money can exchange hands in the relationship between the broker (connection man) and the migrant sometimes provides evidence of the exploitation that is being mentioned. In many situations, the 'connection men' have vested interests in the migration processes of the migrants. Francis mentioned that:

> My migration intention started when my landlord informed me that he can assist me to travel to Qatar if I paid an amount of GHC2000 to him (Francis, June 2018, Qatar).

Joana stated that her friend recommended a recruitment agency to her in these words: "…My friend later informed me that there was a recruitment agency which

was sending females to Saudi Arabia to be employed as domestic workers…" (Joana, July 2018, Saudi Arabia), both her friend and the recruitment agency became part of her social network and facilitators of the migration because they aided her to travel to Saudi Arabia.

Like the landlord who took an amount of money from the prospective migrant to provide leads and services, the recruitment agency, possibly, would have some 'administrative charges' for rendering services to the prospective migrant. These facilitators on their own terms demonstrate their interest in the migration process. Friends or family members have interests which surpass that of other facilitators. It may be extremely difficult to quantify the interests of family and friends. Other facilitators could sell their services at a definite price, but this cannot cover all the interests that family and friends may have in the migration process. Family and friends could be interested in the migration as a means for them to also migrate or to benefit from foreign remittances or both. It could also be a means to enhance their social repute once they are aligned with an economic migrant whose action conforms to the social idea of a good and meaningful life. Their actual interests show in the kind of information and leads they provide to the migrant – their relative/friend.

From the kind of arrangements involving the 'trapped migrants' and their facilitators – as described in the preceding paragraphs – at least, it appears the migrants were informed and equipped to commence the migration. The arrangements present a kind of structure which would facilitate information flow to and from the migrants in order for their navigation to be good. Much of the

knowledge and confidence which the migrants reposed in the migration process was aroused by the facilitators who provided positive information about the migration process.

But it was this sort of network just discussed that landed the migrants in this study in 'trapped migration'. The fact that this sort of structure was an antecedent to the 'trapped migration' immediately throws a challenge to the appropriateness of that network. This sort of network is, more or less, informal and is based on social relationships and interests. Subjective feelings are very much projected within this network, as people entertain high hopes that everything will materialize as envisaged, and where there are anomalies, there would be a way to bring everything back on track. So, even when the termination of the grand migration plan is glaring and imminent, it is often overlooked or ignored to make way for what those subjective feelings project. This sort of network through which the 'trapped migrants' obtained information about their migration process had produced the vehicle by which the migrants ended up 'trapped' in migration. Also, there seems to be a lot more information or knowledge on migration to Libya, Qatar or Saudi Arabia which the 'trapped migrants' either did not have enough opportunity to interrogate or simply ignored.

6.3.1 Migration from West Africa to Libya, Qatar and Saudi Arabia

From the previous section, knowledge that informed the migration decisions of many of the 'trapped migrants' in this study was found to be inadequate; thus, having been led by that migration information, the migrants in this study ended up 'trapped' in migration. There is, therefore, some other part of the information or

knowledge that was needed to understand how the migration takes place and how some end up 'trapped' in migration. To contribute to knowledge on how 'trapped migration' emerges, this subsection further interrogates migration experiences in which one can learn about the nature of the 'trapped migration' to Libya, Qatar or Saudi Arabia from Ghana.

To understand why the information or knowledge about migration adopted by the 'trapped migrants' in this study did not convey pertinent things for consideration by the migrants to avoid getting 'trapped', one can learn from migration reports on Libya, Qatar or Saudi Arabia. The information drawn from these reports clarifies how the migration takes place, the facilitators involved among other things.

First, the information on migration to Libya relative to Ghana was interrogated. There is evidence that many Ghanaians migrate to Libya in search of greener pastures. This finds expression in the fact that the overall number of migrants in Libya grew 70 percent in 2017 from August to September alone – in just about a month (United States Department of State, 2018). In a December 12, 2017 report on myjoyonline.com, some 127 Ghanaian nationals were repatriated from Libya to seek safety back home, away from what has been known to be modern-day slavery which many black African nationals have been subjected to in Libya. The report described this slavery situation as traumatic and called for intensified government action to, not only bring back Ghanaian nationals in such enslavement, but also resolve the impact of the enslavement on the returnees (Myjoyonline.com, 2017).

Peace and security disturbance in Libya reached an alarming proportion since the exit of Gadhafi in the 2011 revolution. The instability in the country and lack of

government oversight made human trafficking profitable. The forces of demand and supply for immigrants automatically took over, the evidence of which is seen in the sporadic exit of Ghanaians to Libya in search of better economic opportunities. The journey is done through irregular routes, and due to a lack of state control of the southern borders, a large number of irregular migrants entered the country. This is because the Government of National Accord (GNA), headed by Prime Minister Fayez al-Sarraj, had limited effective control over security forces occasioned by division between political and security apparatuses in the east and west (United States Department of State, 2018).

The security vacuum which this division created at the borders festered active groups involved in human smuggling activities, and provided the main portal through which scores of West Africans are ferried across the Sahara Desert to Libya (United States Department of State, 2018). Persistent insurgence of various armed groups such as ISIS, al-Qaeda, al-Samoud militias, Salafist armed groups, and the Libyan National Army (LNA) diffused government control of the security environment and created a largely non-functioning judiciary. This provided fertile grounds for human rights abuses with impunity. Several reports point out that immigrants are subjected to various degrees of abuse, arbitrary and inhuman detention, forced labour, torture, sexual exploitation among others, faulting various provisions of international law (United States Department of State, 2018: Aghazarm, Quesada & Tishler, 2012).

An IOM report on several Ghanaians stranded in Libya showed that, to the migrants, the experiences were regretful and the entire migration to Libya was

nothing good to write home about but full of misery. In some instances, fatalities are reported (IOM Ghana, 2013). So, migration to Libya has often been in Ghana's news for bad reasons as far as Ghanaian migrants are concerned.

Libya temporarily aside, Saudi Arabia and Qatar are part of the most popular destinations for Ghanaian labour in the Middle East (Awumbila et al., 2017). The outcomes from this direction of migration have also often been hard on the Ghanaian migrants. There is a preponderance of youthful female and male migrants who are lured by private recruitment agencies and connection men to migrate to Saudi Arabia and Qatar for employment. The migration often results in stints of hard labour and inhumane treatment to Ghanaian migrants and females, especially, are regularly not spared of exploitation (Awumbila, et al., 2017). They are often unable to realise their original dreams for migrating. In effect, the experiences and outcomes of the migration often make nonsense of the time expended to embark on it.

Despite these accounts, large numbers of Ghanaians still risk their lives by embarking on migration to Libya. There have been reports that some Ghanaian youths remain defiant by their resolve to travel to Libya en route to Europe regardless of the recent exposé on slavery and the murder of black youths from other parts of Africa in Libya (Daily Guide, 2017). Suffice to say that there is a disparity between the desires of some individuals and the lesson taught by the dreadful experiences of migrants to Libya. Ghanaians migrating to Libya, as has been stated elsewhere in this study, often do so as a step towards the improved

standard of living and economic freedom (Daily Guide, 2017). The same is true for many who migrate to Arab countries.

6.3.1.1 The Migration Experience from Ghana to Libya

Over three decades ago, the migration flow from Sub-Saharan Africa to Libya was, to a great extent, motivated by oil exploration and production coupled with mining and farming booms (Spiga, 2005; Akyeampong, 2000). So, Libya had been a hub for labour migrants from Sub-Saharan Africa. The narrative today has changed to one in which the migrants to Libya move on their own in search of other opportunities (Bob-Milliar, 2012), a significant part of which is to seek avenues to move further into Europe (de Hass, 2008). Consistent with this view, the overarching motive of the 'trapped migrants' in this study to migrate to Libya was either to seek better employment or advance their quest to enter Europe or both. Prince, aged 29, succinctly puts it: "I travelled to Libya in search of greener pastures" (Prince, July 2017, Kumasi). Although there were many others like Prince, their attempt to get to Europe once in Libya was not farfetched. They purported to work in Libya for a while to raise money and proceed to Europe from there. Shelter, aged 42, one of many examples said, "After working there [Obari, Libya] for some time, I decided to travel to Europe through the Lampendusa route" (Shelter, June 2017, Accra). There were, however, a couple of interviewees who prior to the 'trapped migration' were motivated to migrate to Libya just so that they

could advance their migration to Europe. Their driving force then was to get into Europe and nothing short of that.

Ghanaian migrants found their way to Libya until the outbreak of civil war in 2011 which stifled Qadhafi's active promotion of Sub-Saharan migration into Libya (Bredeloup & Pliez, 2011). Since then, Libya does not countenance Sub-Saharan immigrants entering their borders in the manner in which it was done before. But the "old caravan routes", as described by Kleist and Bjarnesen (2019, p.12), have left behind trajectories which are embedded in the contemporary modes of migration to Libya. Ghanaian migrants are able to move with minimal hindrance through the ECOWAS zone by virtue of free movement of West Africans with the ECOWAS zone, up until they reach the Niger-Libya border. On the Niger-Libya stretch, however, it becomes increasingly important for migrants to engage with their connection men and intermediaries. Many times, these connection men or their intermediaries are themselves experienced migrants who know how to deal with several situations on the way (Kleist & Bjarnesen, 2019). This engagement is crucial on the Niger-Libya route and, especially, north of the Saharan transport hub called Agadez where, in practice, harassment and extortion by corrupt authorities and criminal gangs get vicious (Kleist & Bjarnesen, 2019).

This was clearly the case for Yaa, the 52-year old and her two brothers, whose sister arranged several connection men at multiple locations to assist them to travel to Europe through that stretch. According to her:

> My sister wanted us to cross the Mediterranean after getting to Libya through Algeria with the help of some connection men … We stayed at a Nigerian ghetto, whilst there my sister

> arranged for another connection man who was paid to arrange a fake visa to Spain for us. He took us to Morocco where we were for 2 weeks until we were arrested and detained. Another connection man got us a lawyer and we were deported to Niger border. Yet again another connection man was to take us back to Libya so we can get to Europe through another connection man, at that point I was tired and wanted to return so didn't continue but one of my brothers through that connection man made it to Europe. (Yaa, July 2017, Kumasi).

All along the migration route, there were predetermined contact persons who would facilitate the journey, and information flow was the life-blood of the migrants' engagement with these contact persons. Ineke (2007) elaborately reports how several migrants to Libya had engaged with some facilitators or parties (contact persons) at different stages in their migration process. The migration would begin with the decision to use the road as a sure way to reach Libya and avoid cumbersome bureaucratic procedures and migrant controls that often took someone nowhere. The journey is taken through Burkina-Faso to Niger, and then to Agadez before getting into the borders of Libya.

Consistent with the above, recently in a report on migration to Libya from some identified African countries including Ghana, the IOM (2019), mentions that the main migration route for 77 percent of migrants departing Ghana to Libya was through Burkina-Faso and Niger. There was a small percentage (8%) that travelled through Nigeria and Niger to reach Libya. Then 5 percent apiece left through Togo, Benin and Niger to Libya and then Burkina-Faso, Mali, and Algeria before reaching Libya. This left another 5 percent who disclosed they used other routes. Incisively, there is a preponderance of facts to show that travelling by land or road from Ghana to Libya has been commonplace. In Nigeria, for instance, 99 percent of migrants

depart by travelling on land or road through Niger to Libya, therefore, increasing the volumes of migration by road or land from the western part of Africa to Libya (IOM, 2019).

The accounts of the success of migrants through this migration path has, thus far, shown that there is more to risk than gain. News from media circles indicates that the journey is gruesome and deadly. Many of the migrants die of hunger, thirst, exhaustion, and so forth, especially in the desert, before they ever step foot on Libyan land (Ineke, 2017). Therefore, Kleist and Bjarnasen (2019) write:

> …migrant journeys are either self-organised or led by a Ghanaian connection man, often and experienced fellow migrant, who deals with various intermediaries on the way. From Agadez and onwards, the mobility of Ghanaian migrants is mediated and constrained by other actors, such as trans-Saharan transporters and guides, border patrols, criminal gangs, and (sometimes corrupt and violent) authorities. The combination of conflict, lawlessness, EU externalisation of border controls, Libyan immigration legislation and the hazards of crossing the Sahara makes this leg of the journey extremely dangerous. Hazards include kidnapping, extortion, imprisonment and detention, vehicles getting lost or breaking down, and dehydration – all with possible fatal outcomes. Intensified border control and payment of ransom following kidnapping or detention has also heightened the commercial profit made from migration and, in consequence, the price that migrants and their families pay (p.12).

Similarly, Tanle (2012) has noted that irregular migration from Ghana to Libya and beyond is a common phenomenon among the youth, particularly, in Techiman and Nkoranza in the Brong Ahafo Region. The modes of transport were mostly by foot, vehicle or boat through unapproved routes. Walking over long distances for a

number of days was found to be one of the most common means of moving from one town to the other as reported by some respondents. Although walking has been identified as one of the means of physical exercise that promotes good health, continuous walking for a number of days could lead to extreme physical exhaustion, particularly in the desert where temperatures are often extremely high or low depending on the season. Moreover, it has been noted that much physical exhaustion reduces the body's immune system and makes it more susceptible to infections while exposure to excessive heat could lead to heatstroke or blackout (Tanle, 2012). Additionally, long periods of walking without adequate drinking water and food could lead to serious dehydration, anaemia, malnutrition, and death. For example, on the average an adult person needs 3000 millilitres of water in a day, but Tanle (2012) reports that migrants lived on less than 3 millilitres of water a day, which is woefully inadequate and can easily lead to dehydration and other health problems. Narrating from the migrants' viewpoint, some of their colleagues who were not strong enough to walk for such long distances collapsed and were left behind in the desert. The health implications associated with inadequate water and food among irregular migrants from West Africa have already been noted in the literature (Briscoe, 2004; Campbell, 2010).

Thus far, the narratives above, save very few extremes, are not dissimilar to the experiences of many of the trapped migrants in this study as far as Libya is concerned. The risks were obvious just by paying attention to the narrative of Addo, a 42-year-old migrant to Libya:

> We were 45 people on the bus, and after we were made to get off the bus at the base of Mountain Hoggar in Algeria, we had

> to continue the journey over the mountain on foot. We moved together in a group and walked for about three (3) days before we arrived at a border town in Libya called Balaghati popularly referred to as Ghati. The connection men who were people from Niger showed us the route to take to Libya, from the desert they would point to the bright lights coming out of Libya and say "follow the lights that is Libya", hence when we arrived there, we knew that we were already in Libya (Addo, June 2018, Kumasi).

Again, Prince, shared one of the horrifying accounts of the experiences on the desert journey. These accounts are consistent with the reports of deaths on the journey. He said:

> When we arrived in Droku in Niger, we saw the dead bodies of 54 Ghanaians lying there in the desert, it was believed that the car they were travelling with got spoilt, hence, when the driver set out to fix it, he did not return to pick them up, they were abandoned, hence drought and harsh weather conditions on the desert killed them. We saw they were Ghanaians because they had in their possession Ghanaian passports, there were also two women amongst them who had Nigerian passports. Our driver requested that the Muslims amongst us should join him in prayers for the souls of the departed. The Christians were also asked to pray for them. We said solemn prayers for them in a short ceremony. We wanted to take out their passports and phonebooks so that we can reach out to their families back home and inform them of the unfortunate event but this could not be done because the Arabs would not allow us to. They asked us to leave the passports on the bodies and cover the bodies up with sand. This was very sad and we were terrified of what was awaiting us on the journey to Libya (Prince, July 2017, Kumasi).

The Guardian (2015) also presents a vivid picture of the migration pattern which is often the result of information sharing, coordination, and facilitation between migrants and contact persons in order to beat regular migration checkpoints and

migrant controls. The Guardian started its work from Niger to Libya because on this route to the northern part of Niger, where Agadez is located, marks the dead-end for many migrants. Ineke (2007), however, revealed that when many migrants are introduced to this journey, they are oblivious of the realities that lie in Agadez and beyond. But Agadez to the borders of Libya marks the last lap to Libya from Niger.

The Guardian (2015) explains that:

> you can't see the road from Agadez in Niger to Libya. You simply drive to the edge of the local airstrip, turn left, fork right, head past the one building on the horizon – a lonely police checkpoint – and that's it.

Only a select few local drivers know which sandbanks lead across the Sahara and which ones lead to oblivion. In not less than three days of driving, there are, indeed, plenty of wrong turns to make (Ineke, 2007). Many migrants from West Africa eventually die on this stretch before they ever get to Libya (The Guardian, 2015; Ineke, 2007).

The Guardian (2015) referred to the term 'facilitator' or 'connection man', as has been used earlier in this study, as "people-smuggler", and revealed that such smugglers can make the journey once every week with no less than 30 passengers in a pick-up truck. Overloading is commonplace with about 200 passengers on board if the vehicle is a big truck. Each time the route looks different because of regular sandstorms that change the shape of the desert land. When drivers get lost on the desert, the unfortunate thing is that they run out of fuel. Water and food also run out and the travellers inevitably die if there is no remedy in a matter of three

days. Apart from this, there are bandits, rival smugglers, or people looking to steal cars who can attack and cut short the journey leaving people stranded in the desert. Plate 6.1 shows an image of pick-up trucks headed for Libya from Agadez.

Plate 6.1: On the Road in Agadez to Libya

Source: Photo Extract from theguardian.com (The Guardian, 2015)

Plate 6.2 demonstrates the extent to which big trucks are loaded with smuggled people as described by The Guardian (2015).

Plate 6.2: A Truck of Passengers on Road from Agadez to Libya

Source: Photo Extract from theguardian.com (The Guardian, 2015)

The Guardian (2015) recounts that no one can know how many people have died in this way. For every dead body discovered in the Sahara, more than 40 have not been counted. So, the possibility of several deaths in the Sahara is extremely unlimited. Thus, a migrant who dared to go on the journey but returned successfully has confessed that the Sahara Desert is more dangerous than the Mediterranean.

The Guardian (2015) observes that, still, hundreds of thousands of people dare to take the risk, and they head for Agadez to venture onward into the Sahara Desert to Libya. The observation notes that the migrants travel in a bus to Agadez. Once in Agadez, the journey is further arranged through engagement with people smugglers or facilitators. The Guardian (2015) reads:

> The bus travellers totter out, often nauseous after a 20-hour ride along bumpy roads [to Agadez]. Most have specific people to call – smugglers recommended by friends who've successfully made the trip in the past. Others approach the smugglers on arrival.

The journey, although very risky and without relief, is also costly. There is a wide consensus on the fact that the amounts of money that are involved in the journey is higher than the average West African worker can earn over a limited period.

Just as there was payment for the services of a 'connection man' before the journey even began, some of the interviewees had to pay monies that was worth any savings they may have made over a year. In describing the things that facilitated their migration, Francis is already reported to have given GHC 2,000 to his landlord just for him to begin paving the way for the migration process. But the same interviewee also thinks of himself as less economically endowed and he had to comb everywhere for that money. The poor family had to contribute to raise the said amount for the interviewee.

In furtherance of the idea that the migration to Libya is actually costly to the migrants, one interviewee said:

> Before the journey, I saved an amount of GHC1,500 for the journey, but this money was inadequate because we had to pay some monies at each border to border officials. They would collect our passports and demand money from us; they would return the passport and let you pass after you pay what they were demanding. Should you refuse to pay on condition that you do not have the money, they will beat you severely before allowing you to pass through (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

In the narrative above, the interviewee admits that there were a lot of costs to be borne along the journey. This includes bribes to border officials and security guards

at checkpoints because the route of migration is irregular and unapproved. Bribes are paid in order to circumvent the immigration laws of the land.

Despite the challenges on the journey from Ghana to Libya, to some people, the journey has been successful as they were able to reach Libya. In this study, for instance, apart from one migrant who went to Libya through Egypt, all the migrants to Libya used the road. The success of such people can encourage prospective travellers to use a similar route or approach to their journey. The successful people often become the guides for prospective migrants and transmitters of information about agents and contacts for use by similar migrants. But contrary to this view, in this study, none of the migrants wished that any prospective migrant would want to use their approach to migrate to Libya. The reason why this is the case will become evident subsequently.

It is very crucial to bring the experience of travelling by land or road to Libya to the full awareness of travellers. As seen earlier, between the agents or facilitators of the migration and the migrants, the successes of the journey are projected while giving very inadequate information about the risks that lie on the journey. This imbalance is often the handiwork of the agents or facilitators to appeal to prospective migrants to promote their interests. Although, a lot of the times, prospective migrants have heard of these existential risks, it is important to oust any advertent or inadvertent attempt, either on the part of migrants or facilitators, to obscure these risks in order to promote informed decisions about this mode of migration.

6.3.1.2 Migration Experience from Ghana to Qatar or Saudi Arabia

Migrating to Libya has a lot of issues because of the irregular routes from West Africa by which the migration flow occurs. In terms of Qatar and Saudi Arabia, the story is quite different. Many people from Ghana who intend to migrate to Qatar or Saudi Arabia are compelled to use the regular channel of air travel. This channel makes it extremely difficult for irregularities to be perpetrated. So, people who travel to these places do have to ensure that they get the requisite documentation and processing to enable them take the flight and pass immigration checks at the airports. Irregular migration does occur through the airports, although it is rarely unnoticed. The paperwork and important documentations with the respective embassies are, however, a key starting point of the migration process.

Before the migration, again, the migrants engage in information sharing with some facilitators, agents or actors. Most often, neighbours began the engagement activities with the migrants. The necessity of completing the paperwork and documentation for the journey also introduces another important layer of the agents, this time, those who provide key assistance to pass immigration checks. They include travel agents or recruitment agents.

It has emerged from this study that these agents were present in Ghana to engage with the then prospective migrants. Most of the agents either represented an agency in faraway Qatar and Saudi Arabia or were intermediaries between the migrants and the Qatari or Saudi Arabian agencies. Through this arrangement, the purpose or incentive for the migration was communicated to the migrants in a form which often appeared to be formal because it involved signing documents by the migrants

to prove consent before the actual migration. Substantial difficulties surrounded this kind of arrangement as the agents often misrepresent the actual incentives for the migration to the migrants. When the migrants followed through on their decision to migrate based on the misrepresentation, the realities in Qatar and Saudi Arabia battered them and eventually unveiled the true picture to them. In narrating this kind of experience, Patrick, a returnee from Qatar, said:

> When I was informed that one of the boys in our neighbourhood had travelled to Qatar through the help of a connection man, I approached the connection man helped me to acquire a passport and a medical examination report. After paying GHC 2,000 plus GHC 20 for medical examination. I was made to sign a job offer which had a basic of QR 800 and QR 400 overtime. I was later worried because, I had heard of horrific stories of people who had travelled to some Arab countries and got treated badly. To clear my doubts, I called a friend with an initial migration experience with China who encouraged to take up the opportunity to go to Qatar (Patrick, June 2017, Kumasi).

Similarly, another interviewee had travelled to Qatar after being assisted by a 'connection man' with a lot of boost from his family members. The interviewees' story highlights some of the conditions that the migrants (including those from other countries) faced upon reaching their destination. The migrants (as presented in the case below) indicated that they were informed that they had a contractual obligation to return to the country of origin only after a stipulated period. There was no formal document existed as evidence that they signed such a contract, however because of their low level of education they could not determine what they really signed. When the researcher requested for copies of the contract, the researcher was presented with a one paper page paper which had their signatures

accepting to travel to work in those countries over a stipulated period of two years. This was different from the narratives, but the respondents admitted that this was verbally communicated to them before their departure. Advance expenses were incurred, hence, monies had to be refunded before migrants could fulfil their desire to return. The laws in those countries were not explained to them in any way. No dos or don'ts were discussed as well. Here, it is also revealed that the threat of deportation was used by the receiving agent to bring the migrants to succumb to the demands of the 'master' who promises to give them a good job. The migrants have had to endure various forms of ill-treatment in hope that a better job would be handed to them. The interviewee's story is as follows:

> I, along with two others went to Qatar and our passports were collected by the company upon arrival as we were informed that that was the prevailing law there. The company insisted that they should not be questioned under any circumstance unless we wanted to be deported. When we got there, we spent the night in overcrowded rooms; we were 6 persons from different nationalities confined to one room. The people employed by the agency were people from diverse backgrounds and nationalities which included the Philippines, Kenya, Egypt, Tunisia, India, Nigeria etc. The food that was served from the camp was very bad as we were served with rice and some foreign soup which we could not eat. We lived at a place called the labour city where I stayed for approximately 7 months. Before I was sent to the labour city, I lived at a place called Ezdan (a camp that had a composition of workers from several countries in the world and the number of people there could be estimated at approximately 1500 people). Some of the workers were sent out as security workers to domestic homes, shops, hotels and companies as guards. There were not many women in the camp and throughout my stay there I came across only 5 women (out of 1,500) from the Philippines who were also guards. I was positioned at several places in the city and was paid QR1,200 (equivalent as GHC1200) per month even though I was reliably

> informed that Foundation I worked for paid about QR 8,000 to the agency (Moses, July 2018, Kumasi).

The experience in Saudi Arabia was not very different from that in Qatar. It reflects, again, the ill-treatment and labour abuse that the migrants endured in their migration. An interviewee, a female aged 27, migrated to Saudi Arabia after initial disapproval from her family. She was able to convince her family to understand her desire to go outside the country to work for money. Still unable to return from Saudi Arabia, she narrated her experience in the migration by saying as follows:

> All was set for me to travel after the recruitment agency prepared my travel documents and handed over the plane tickets to me for me to depart. I finally arrived in Saudi Arabia, and was sent to a place called Quayat where the recruitment agency was located. Upon my arrival, I was sent to a labour camp where I shared a room with 2 Sri Lankans, 1 Ghanaian, and 2 others from Kenya. We were all females who travelled there for domestic work. At the camp, we saw that we had been deceived, the promises that were given us before we travelled there were so different from the reality which we faced. The agreed upon salaries were halved and we were also informed that we could not return home because we had to work to repay the cost of the transportation and documentation for our trip to Saudi Arabia. I became very sad and demanded to return home but was informed that I could only leave on the condition that I refunded the monies already spent to get me to Saudi Arabia. Looking back, I knew this was impossible, the great poverty in my family will not allow them to refund the money to the agency because that was money which we didn't have. They collected our passports and so we did not possess our travel documents that will facilitate our movement. The living conditions at the camp were bad and I was there for 3 days before a family came to take me to their home to serve as a house help. Fortunately for me, the family with whom I am living are good people who do not maltreat me. I have heard stories of others who are maltreated badly here in Saudi Arabia. I receive a salary of approximately GHC1000 a month. I send home remittances to my mother when

> I can; part of it is used for the household and the upkeep of my child. My mum also makes some savings for me so that I will have access to some start-up capital when I return home" (Rita, June 2018, Saudi Arabia).

The conditions under which the migrants travelled from Ghana to Qatar or Saudi Arabia were more regular. Aside from that, the journey was facilitated by middlemen for agencies that had purported to employ or recruit migrants for certain jobs in the receiving country. From the reports above, the extent of work of the travel and recruitment agencies cannot be downplayed. They were able to produce immigrants to Qatar from Asia, western, eastern, and, of course, northern Africa. This reflects the idea that there is an effective mechanism linking the sending countries to the receiving country for the purpose of labour migration and exploitation.

Awumbila et al. (2017) have drawn attention to the fact that there are actors involved in this migration enterprise, and the government of both the sending and receiving countries are tacitly or expressly involved in this migration machinery. In 2017, the migration of local labour to the Gulf States was restricted by the Government of Ghana in order to curb the incidence of abuse of Ghanaian immigrants in those countries. This measure rendered the travel and recruitment agencies intermediating for Qatari and Saudi Arabia largely redundant. Critics say the restriction is not an intelligent way of tackling the problem; instead, the government should fix the underlying problem of youth unemployment and poor working conditions in the country. Contrary to solving the problem using restriction, they say, it would further conceal the clandestine manner in which some

of these labour migrations are done. After a couple of years, the Government, through the Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations, has announced that proposals for bilateral agreement for the lifting of the restriction had been forwarded to the Attorney-General's Department for scrutiny before approval (Graphic Online, September 4, 2018). This emphasizes the fact that government has a role to play in stemming and banishing this migration problem. Part of this role would also be ensuring that its citizens have legal protection in the Gulf States, and this inevitably draws the government and legal system in the receiving country into the equation. In the ensuing chapters of the study, there is a discussion on why the governments and legal system would be necessary to stem the challenges of immigrant workers in the Gulf States.

Across board, the migrants did not appear to have the benefit of symmetric information, and so their decision to migrate may have been inadequately informed. In effect, the migrants got 'trapped' in migration. Also, the migrants who thought it wise or best to travel to Libya by road or irregular routes may have done so on the basis of the information they received from their facilitators or networks. The potential risks to which they were exposed by doing so, and their eventual inability to return from Libya, were evidence of the problematic nature of their migration. So, there was more to risk than to gain through the migration.

In the case of the migrants to Qatar or Saudi Arabia, although they were compelled to use a regular route by air, they were compelled to heed to nearly every order from their employers regardless of their predilection or any agreement that was previously made.

6.3.2 Role of Migration Networks in 'Trapped' Migration

Migration networks are an important theme that emerged from the discussions in this study. The migrants in this study were not oblivious to the fact that processes are involved in their migration bid, just as associated risks. This was captured in the words of a migrant to Libya, aged 42 who said:

> When I conceived of the idea to migrate to Libya by road through the desert, I discussed with a friend who had been there before and he coached me on the nature of the journey. Thus, I was fully aware of the associated costs, the dangers and the benefits … I analysed those in relation to my life in Ghana and how difficult it is for someone from my background to gain access to the prospect of good employment and be paid well. After careful consideration it was worth taking the risk, the desert was my only option for migration since I knew that I wouldn't get the necessary visa to travel to any country in Europe or even be able to afford the travel cost involved in air transport (Addo, June 2018, Kumasi).

The response above emphasizes the usefulness of migration networks because, with the migrants' awareness of processes to follow, requirements to meet, associated cost to bear, and decisions to reach which the migrants are often handicapped to singularly address. They need the help of other people and institutions. Migration network consists of people and institutions that make the migration what it is. The input of migration network in migrants' life is exemplified in the following words of one of the interviewees:

> At the time I did not have enough money for the migration journey hence I borrowed GHC 600 from a friend and added to the GHC 200 so that I can join another friend who was embarking on the journey to Libya as well… "With the money we received, we travelled to Tripoli where we had friends who

> assisted us in searching for a means of employment (Kwadwo, June 2018, Kintampo).

Another interviewee who travelled to Libya said:

> When we got there, my brother paid for the money and also assisted me in getting employment as an assistant Mason. I understudied the Master mason for one and a half years. Within one year, I had paid all my debts in full (Wallace, July 2018, Kintampo).

In this study, information received by the migrants within the network of family and friends was an important consideration in the decision to migrate. For this reason, family and friends formed part of the migration network that saw the migrants through their migration. Family, for instance, even influenced the decision of a migrant to remain in his 'trapped' condition and return when he has made economic breakthrough. This situation applies to Wallace, an immigrant in Libya on the basis of the following submission:

> I left with the backing of my entire family, including my wife, to go and work and get some money for the whole family's benefit. The contribution of my family has brought me this far and they would not like me to return home without anything close to our original plan (Wallace, July 2018, Kintampo).

Another example is the case of Vera, a 48-year old woman, whose sister, an immigrant in Germany, provided information to help in her migration process. The interviewee said:

> I was at home one hot afternoon when I received a call from my sister in Germany who informed me that if I could travel through

> the desert and get to Libya, she would arrange for us to travel from there to Germany. We welcomed the idea with great joy because where we resided, we see people travel to Libya all the time (Vera, July 2018, Kumasi).

So, admittedly, there is a reasonable view that the 'trapped migrants' are influenced by their social network (close relations and acquaintances) in taking the decision to migrate. Again, the critical issue here is, if the decisions taken by the migrants were influenced by this network, and the migrants ended up in 'trapped' circumstances, then either the information within the network received by the migrants was inadequate or the network had limitations in its capacity to shield the migrants from such traps. From earlier findings, it seems that the information or knowledge about the migration communicated within the network failed to present very objective facts of the migration process to give the migrants a chance to make well-considered decisions. As was obviously the case, the network employed by the migrants was informal to a larger extent, and in the case of the migration to Libya, it promoted irregular migration.

The migration involved transitioning from one location into another. This implies that the migrants must, every time, understand the system into which they are transitioning to guarantee their success. But the migration network utilized by the migrants could not completely assist the migrants in that regard. Some of the migration decisions taken, such as journey by land across the Sahara Desert and through unapproved routes to Libya, were bad decisions by the migrants to the extent that Libyan immigration legislation restricts that mode of migration. However, the networks, facilitators, and so on, promoted the use of such routes.

Immigrants in Libya who come in through this route do so within a certain system whereby they can be severely constrained in terms of getting a job, movement, and even association due to improper documentation or their appetite for non-existent opportunities. The lack of a well-developed, well-standardized migration network for the safety of immigrants in that country overexposed them to outcomes of irregular migration, particularly, difficulty to return. An interviewee's experience gives an appreciation of how immigrants in Libya within the irregular migration network are compelled to survive. This 'trapped migrant' said:

> When I got there [Libya], I was a shoe shine man, I went around in search of peoples' shoes to mend and clean, after doing this for three days, I met my elder brother who worked with a company there. My brother took me to his camp because in Libya if you worked for a company, you stay with them in their camp. At the camp, my brother made sure that I only come out at night because I was there illegally. However, when the company needed helping hands, my brother informed me and asked me to go and offer my services. I walked into the office and after a short interview I was employed as a cleaner in the company (Nana Yaw, July 2017, Accra).

In another instance, a friend had to provide refuge for the irregular immigrant. This emerged from another interviewee who said:

> When I finally arrived in Libya, I and my three other friends had to journey through the backyard gardens of people's houses until we came across some of the immigrant pick-ups that picked us to Sabha. Operators of these pickups often pack people like corn and provide no comfort for travellers at all. When we got to Sabha, I went to the Ghetto for 2 days. This was because of the robbery attacks during the journey. Since I had no money on me, I called a friend in Tripoli who informed me that he would pay for my journey there if only I get a connection man to assist me. The connection man I encountered asked for 750 Dinar for his

> services which my friend in Tripoli paid for on arrival there. Whilst in Tripoli, I stayed with my friend and studied the language in 6 months (Bright, July 2017, Kintampo).

Although the migration network available to migrants helps to mitigate their sufferings when problems arise, it also poses some peculiar challenges to the migrants. Demands and expectations from family members and associates back home often make remittances from the migrants an exigent matter. If such expectations are made in excess of reasonable financial capacity of the migrant, then in their attempt to meet those expectations, it can cause struggles and frustrations which portend trouble for the migrants. Furthermore, the expectation of home folks that migrants must return with a better economic fortune is a source of struggle and there is also the fear of return when migrants feel that they have not yet met such an expectation. In that situation, many migrants may not be amenable to return at an earlier time, and they continue to struggle into a much worse situation before a call for assistance to return.

Social capital pays an important dividend to the migrants. There were instances where the helpers were not friends or family members in a strict sense, but because they were Ghanaian nationals and, thus, share a common nationality with the migrants. Precisely, in the instance of an interviewee who hails from the Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana, having met a neighbour who is from Dormaa in the same region, it was pretty easy to obtain some help. The interviewee painted this picture vividly saying:

> I got a job through a Ghanaian lady who hailed from Dormaa in the Brong Ahafo region of Ghana. She was a domestic worker

> so she managed to get a job for me from one of the homes where I became a cleaner. The cleaning job was a very difficult one. This is because the building in which I worked had 3 Bungalows with approximately 12 rooms, with 2 large halls, and three bathrooms (Yaa, July 2017, Kumasi).

Like the 'trapped migrants' in Libya, the 'trapped migrants' in Qatar and Saudi Arabia made decisions to migrate backed by ideas from their family and friends. Copious responses to that effect have already been cited in preceding discussions about how the 'trapped migrants' obtained information leading to their migration.

Aside from the evidence of family and friends, the other layer of members of the migration network who played very crucial roles in the migration have been found to be recruitment agencies, connection men, and transporters. Human traffickers, people smugglers and, in extreme cases kidnappers are part of this layer of the migration network. As mentioned elsewhere, a divided political and security control system in Libya has paved the way for this kind of group which facilitates migration to flourish because there is no universal system for ensuring regulation and accountability of immigration. Such people and institutions such as smuggling agencies profit from bringing in people for many purposes including labour. Migrants, therefore, feed into this system by following avenues that lead them to these people smugglers. A noteworthy phenomenon is that, this has created sporadic arrival of irregular immigrants through the southern borders of Libya. This constellation of facts has occasioned the large numbers of immigrants of Ghanaian descent in Libya seeking economic fortunes.

Unfortunately, the conflicts in Libya, especially since 2011, aroused by armed groups contending to take control of the coercive arm of government, weakened the central government's control over the maintenance of law and order. Human rights abuses, labour abuse, arbitrary detention and many other offences were committed with impunity, especially, against immigrants. This was the risk to which the 'trapped migrants' were exposing themselves as a result of their adoption of the migration network just explained.

With respect to Qatar and Saudi Arabia, it is the existence of recruitment or employment agencies that create the pull factors needed to strongly influence the decisions of Ghanaian migrants. According to Awumbila et al's (2019), these agencies broker economic opportunities for immigrants. The migration network from Ghana to these Gulf States consisted of the intermediaries or representatives of recruitment or employment agencies who provided information to the then prospective migrants in order to facilitate their decision to migrate and travel by air to meet demands for labour immigrants. The migrants were, more or less, connected with certain employment or recruitment agencies and the same was often communicated to them before the migration. This occasioned a lot of incidences where, prior to migration, the migrants were promised certain jobs. But the intermediaries who facilitate the migration do so to make a profit from the immigrant workers they provide. In view of this, immigrants are transferrable from one employment agent to another to maximise the profitability of whatever intermediary or agency is concerned. The fate of the immigrant worker, therefore, becomes difficult for them to determine.

The recruitment or employment agencies have a great control over the immigrant workers and can determine their fate as immigrants. This is because the role of the recruiter or employer is pivotal in this migration network. Awumbila et al. (2019) opined that the Gulf States are notorious for the 'kafala' system of labour recruitment. The 'kafala' system, endorsed by the governments of Qatar and Saudi Arabia, consists of laws governing migrant workers. It is a way for the governments to delegate oversight responsibility for migrant workers to private citizens or agencies and, therefore, give them legal abilities to control the migrant workers. The citizens or agencies find ways to sponsor poor migrant workers in terms of travel and work permit. The kafala system also ties migrants to a single employer or sponsor who, collectively, are called 'kafeels' or sponsors of the visas and work permits of the migrants. Since the kafeels bear the costs of migration, the migrant workers are, thereafter, hardly given any rights to challenge working conditions (Fernandez, 2013). This has spawned a phenomenon in the Gulf States which is at par with slavery, and it is responsible for the widespread abuse of immigrant workers, particularly, from West Africa.

Though constant pressure on the governments in the Gulf States has resulted in some reforms to the kafala system in 2016, immigrants doing domestic work were not brought under the reforms. This left loose ends by which many workers are still vulnerable to enslavement as a result of the kafala system (Parrenas & Silvey, 2016). So, employers are given extensive powers to control, including not granting release to an employee and limiting their mobility and intentions to return "trapped migration". Awumbila et al. (2019) describe the kafala system as state-sponsored bonded labour in which migrants from very poor families are facilitated to travel

from their home countries and land into extreme labour exploitation in the Gulf States. This was the same system into which the 'trapped migrants' in this study were enticed to migrate. A network of employment agencies in Ghana and Qatar or Saudi Arabia ensured that they signed the prospecting migrants on the journey. The engagement of this network of employers with the 'trapped migrants' is what has already been learnt from the 'trapped migrants' as connection men who provided information leading to their decision to migrate to Qatar or Saudi Arabia.

6.4 The Circumstances of the Migrants in Transit or Destination

While in transit or at the destination point, there were varied experiences which the migrants went through. This section attempts to investigate the circumstances that confronted the 'trapped migrants' while in their transit points or place of destination. The experiences of the interviewees in Libya, Qatar or Saudi Arabia were instrumental in extrapolating the key issues. The responses given by the interviewees answer a major question seeking to find out the difficulties associated with the migration and factors that contributed to their success (or failures).

6.4.1 The Circumstances of the Migrants relative to Qatar

An important issue that emerged from the interviews was the fact that, once in the destination point or transit, the migrants' major concern is to get down to work. That is, they commence the steps to get a place to reside for the purpose of looking for job openings. Some who had signed a contract with a recruitment agency begin to wait eagerly for the execution of the contract.

A case in point emerged from the experience of Moses, the footballer, who migrated to Qatar and had a standing agreement with a 'connection man' to get him in a good football team to play for money. The connection man was, indeed, connected to a company that received him in Qatar, but the behaviour of the company – seizing of the immigrants' passport, undue influence by the threat of deportation, inhumane accommodation conditions, and blatant disregard for contract terms immediately raises several questions.

The clear departure from the terms in the initial contract with Moses meant he would be unable to play in a football team as he had desired, which was the main reason why he travelled to Qatar. Instead, once in Qatar, he was handed a menial job as a security worker and did many other things which was not the reason why he migrated. Expressing further worry about the condition, the interviewee continued:

> Conditions there were not the best so I requested to return but was informed that I signed a contract for two years maximum hence I could not return until the contract expired. I remember vividly that when I was about to sign the contract before the beginning of my journey, I inquired about that clause but the connection man told me that it meant nothing and I could leave anytime I wanted but when I wanted to return, I was informed that I couldn't do so because of that clause. One guy who defied them and returned home after two weeks of being there was made to pay a penalty fee. I was on the other hand constrained by the poor financial position, family considerations amongst others. We were maltreated; our phones were snatched when we got to the work premises, some of us were arrested for looking at the faces of some people and we were not allowed to converse with women, even those that we knew from Ghana. There were cameras all over, severe climatic conditions sometimes blood came from our nostrils coupled with the abuse of our labour as we were made to work for long hours, limited sleep and small

> salaries. There was so much exploitation and tension in the system. To be honest with you, that is a place that can be likened to hell or even worse. We had no freedom at all and we became like puppets on the strings of the agency. My dreams of becoming a big football star became an illusion, there was basically no time on our hands to do anything much more go to the football pitch to train to be noticed by anybody. The connection men told us lies and I was very disappointed. After my two-year term was over, I requested to return home, the agency begged, but my mind was made up hence I was given a severance pay of GHC 3,000 after which I came back home (Moses, July 2018, Kumasi).

Apart from the clear breach of the agreement that the interviewee signed, there were also human rights violations per the statement of the interviewee. The interviewee and his counterparts in the same conditions were held in camps against their will or any pre-existing agreement – to the knowledge of victims. The use of surveillance cameras and gadgets, the seizure of phones belonging to the migrants, and the subjection of the migrant to harsh weather conditions smacks of abuse of labour and curtailing of the freedoms of workers.

These findings tie in with a recent report that migrant workers building infrastructure for a new city in Qatar which will host the 2022 World Cup matches are still suffering exploitation and severe human rights violations despite promised government reforms (The Guardian, 2018). The report which is based on a highly critical report by Amnesty International mentions that one company left almost 80 workers from Nepal, India, and the Philippines stranded and unpaid for months in Qatar. Amnesty accuses the company of using the kafala system – which it describes as Qatar's disreputable sponsorship system that ties employees to a single employer to serve as a machine to exploit migrants who seek employment there.

The report shows that some 34 people were owed an average of £1,500 by the said company. One worker is reported to have said that the company had finally agreed in 2017 that he could leave to work for another company in Qatar, but that, in return for that permission required under the kafala he had to renounce his claim for unpaid wages (The Guardian, 2018).

In view of concerns like this, the government of Qatar ratified an agreement with the International Labour Commission (ILO) for changes to the kafala as it propagates human rights abuses and abuse of labour (The Guardian, 2018). While some progress has been made in this path, the infractions still persist. For example, Thompsons Reuters Foundation (2018) reports that, despite reforms, Qatar's immigrant workers still fear exploitation. The report states that some immigrants thought that Qatar's labour reforms were meant to protect people like them. Instead, they feel the system still allows employers to get around rules designed to stop them from exploiting them. Therefore, there is a crucial concern that the reforms are not being properly enforced.

According to the BBC (2015), construction workers from Africa working on sites describe the conditions there as "pathetic" and "oppressive". Excerpts of what a Kenyan man is on record to have said are as follows:

> I came to Qatar…to work on the construction sites here. I got the work through an agency. I was paid $350 a month when I got here, which was a lot less than I was promised. I also spent a lot to get here – over $ 1,000…I am sending money back to my family. They are all looking to me. But I can't tell them what it is like here, or they would tell me to come home (BBC, 2015).

Another immigrant worker in Doha who was a truck driver but from Ghana also affirms the hardship of immigrant workers in Qatar saying:

> Honestly speaking, we are suffering badly at the hands of our employers, especially in the summer time, as it is now. It is 40º-50º C here during the day, but there is no air conditioning in our vehicles, and we are breathing sandy air. At times, the dust and sand flows in the air like snow. There is nobody to fight for us. For almost two months now, my company has refused to pay our salaries. Our company is killing us because they don't want to give us the little reward we deserve. My salary of $ 550 a month is very low for a driver like me. We have no days off to rest. This not only applies to me – it is the same with every worker at my company. I start at 05:00 and work till 19:00, with two hours of transportation to the site and back each day (BBC, 2015).

He adds that, "Qatar has a labour office, but if you report your company, they will definitely send you back to your country. So, everyone is too scared to report any problems" (BBC, 2015).

In no small way, all these situations emphasize the ordeal that some of the immigrants have gone through in Qatar. Causing the removal of immigrant workers back to their countries of origin against their will for reporting anomalies concerning their employers' relationship with them or some form of ill-treatment against them is exemplary of undue influence at the workplace. This action is directed towards gagging employees in order to cover infractions and human/labour right abuses against immigrant workers.

Another instance of ill-treatment of immigrant workers from this study emanates from Patrick who was facilitated through connection to an agency for employment

in Qatar. This interviewee's experience started getting bad at the Ghanaian airport as he, in the company of two others, missed their flight and could only after three days, catch a flight that transited at Turkey before getting to Qatar. Sharing his experience, the interviewee said:

> When we arrived at Qatar, we were greeted at the airport with very unfriendly climatic conditions; it was very hot. The agency officials picked us from the airport to where we were to stay. The stench emanating from the place alone was enough to cause one to catch a cold. The structures for residence looked like a very ugly slump, it also looked like a refugee camp, the worst that I have ever seen. They were wooden structures and dilapidated. It had a canteen area, and also enclosed areas where the rooms were, there were also places where there were bathrooms which was shared by about 50 persons, it also had a toilet area where there were approximately 30 toilet pits (KVIP) each separated by wooden walls and doors. There were 4 people and 4 beds in each room. There was also a dining area where we were served with meals. The food that they served initially upon our arrival was breakfast but it tasted very bad. We were served with 'Kobus' bread and egg and black tea – it looks like Lipton, but tastes bad). However, there was the option to buy Chapatti (bread and sauce) but it was expensive and we did not have the resources for that. The labour camp was called Alkorh and it was segmented into Camp 1, 2, and 3, with a population of approximately 1,500 immigrant labour recruits (Patrick, June 2018, Kumasi).

Given the condition of the residence of the interviewee above, a cogent inference to make would be that, the residential facility was not befitting for this worker from whom optimal performance and compliance would be demanded. But, just like some other immigrants experienced, this interviewee had his passport impounded by officials working for the company. There were several other infractions against

the interviewee as he desired to work and make some money. In his attempt to clarify what happened to him he continued, saying:

> Our passports were collected by the officials who picked us up at the airport. We were angry and disappointed… We requested to be sent back to Ghana, but were encouraged to exercise patience. We quarrelled with the officials and requested to be sent to a different camp. The camp boss informed us that they would do so for us the next day. We were given badge numbers, uniforms and a new location. We requested as a security mechanism not to be separated; hence, we stuck together and shared a common room. There was a big hall which accommodated 4 Kenyans and 3 Ghanaians who were joined by 6 Ghanaians. Some slept on our beds while we were at work and who left for work when we were around. We were assigned to various locations as security guards, after serving initially as relievers [when someone did not show up for work, we would be sent there to take over] for about a month. After the one month, period we were assigned permanently and given a gate pass. …We worked in unfavourable weather conditions for about 16 hours each day and sometimes our clothes were drenched with sweat. It was not easy; it was like being in hell... Sometimes they would put so much workload on me by withdrawing the other colleague. It was the most difficult location anyone could encounter.
>
> The supervisor, an Indian man, didn't like me at all; he did all he could to make my life miserable. So, I wanted to return…on three occasions but all efforts didn't yield results. I felt that I was tricked and 'trapped' in that country and prayed for the day that I would see Ghana again" (Patrick, June 2018, Kumasi).

Apart from nostalgic feelings for Ghana because the conditions in faraway Qatar were unfavourable, the interviewee expressed clear signs of frustration. In agreement with other immigrant workers, sometimes, this frustration led to their unwillingness to cooperate with their employers.

> We were so frustrated that we were willing to revolt; we had to contend with very bad food (Kobus for breakfast, half cooked rice and potato soup for lunch and supper); harsh weather conditions – there were times that I suffered from severe headache and bleeding nose (Patrick, June 2018, Kumasi).

There are times that migrants are short changed by middlemen (facilitators, 'connection men') who pose as recruiters for companies in Qatar. In that case, these middlemen misrepresent the true nature of the job or company for which they are recruiting. Migrants who fall victim to this misrepresentation are also asked to pay some sort of fees for the recruitment and/or residence services rendered to them. When they get to Qatar, they feel scandalized upon realizing that the situation is different from what they were told back home.

> The connection man wasn't honest with me from the beginning. He informed me that Qatar was like Europe, and that my life will be completely transformed positively if I travelled there. He also informed me that the salary would be GHC 2,500 but this was not the case when I got there. He deceived us, he informed us (me and others intending to travel) that if we go, we will be sleeping in a very nice place and two people will share a room but when we got there it wasn't so as we were 9 in a room (Francis, July 2018, Kumasi).

Just submitted is the remark of an interviewee who fell victim to the stories of misrepresentation that the 'connection man' or travel agent told. Further treatments received by this interviewee once he got to Qatar were not very different from what others like him had received. He added that:

> They seized our passports, but we complained that that wasn't the law in Qatar. Our accommodation was a collection of make-shift containers in which we slept for 11 months. The food that

> was provided was also very bad (sometimes the food which was rice all the time had gone bad and was contaminated when it was served thus had to be thrown away) and so we, most of the times, had to walk around in hunger. So, we decided to match to the headquarters to register our displeasure – we were about 180 immigrants who walked to the head office. On the way, the police queried us but because of the language barrier, as they spoke Arabic, all 180 of us were arrested and sent to the police station where we were able to explain our conditions to them through a translator. They then invited our boss from the headquarters who assured us that if he visited and it was true, they would take some out of the room so that we can have about 6 people in a room. This was done because he confirmed our story. The next day one of us was arrested so we decided to, again, demonstrate against it; hence, we were all arrested and sent to the police station again (Francis, July 2018, Kumasi).

The ease and haste with which these immigrants in the interviewee's narrative were arrested by the Qatar police is something that is interesting to investigate. Perhaps, it is against the laws of Qatar for immigrants to march in groups, or the immigrants may have been engaging in acts that were disturbing the peace in the community? But, one thing is demonstrated that aligns with the report by the BBC (2015) which showed that immigrant workers feared reporting infractions at their workplaces to authorities because they risked being deported abruptly. In the bid of Francis and his co-workers, in the quote just presented, to defy that, they got arrested. It did not end there, but we are just going to learn that a whole plan was made to deport many of the immigrant workers who were Ghanaians back to Ghana. The interviewee's narration of the circumstances when they were arrested is as follows:

> There at the station, 10 of us were selected and accused of being the ones who instigated the demonstration. I was one of them, after they isolated us, they asked which of the workers were prepared to join us to Ghana and all the workers raised their

> hands, but they informed us that it will be impossible to deport all 180 of us so they selected an additional 10 people making 20 people all of whom they felt should be deported. The other workers protested and 34 people joined us saying that the demonstration was a team effort therefore, they requested to be deported with us; hence, the total numbers were 54 people in all. We were made to spend the whole day in the police station without any food or water, we waited for them to prepare us for home, when it was evening, they came for us and we felt that they were bringing us home, but this was not the case as they rather sent us to another police station where we were incarcerated for 6 more days before we were finally sent back home to Ghana (Francis, July 2018, Kumasi).

The fact of immigrants marching in groups in protest against their employer's treatment to them, especially, without any official permission strongly appears to be an act which can be interpreted as a disturbance of public peace, and law enforcers may hasten to address. The march was, however, meant to make a strong statement of opposition to an apparent abuse of the human rights of the immigrants. Why such abuse happening under the kafala system appeared ignored by relevant state institutions of law enforcement and promotion of justice, and instead, the immigrants' march to protest their human rights swiftly caused their detention is an issue that smacks of poor application of the law. With the kafala system in its current state, citizens of Qatar who engage immigrant labourers will continue to oppress and subdue them without any remedy for the immigrants.

It is the issues of this nature that have attracted the attention of the international community like the IOM and ILO and international human rights advocates to mount pressure on the state to review the kafala system. No immigrant worker in Qatar or protective migrant to Qatar can predict how his or her life would be

protected by the laws in that country if the current system continues, is accepted and sustained by the state. The protest by the immigrants was, therefore, justified and this is what may have yielded some positive outcomes. Otherwise, their detention would be a big travesty of justice.

So, there were some good returns for some immigrants nonetheless. Despite the bad circumstances that many immigrant workers have been through, some immigrant workers have found their economic relief from there by the time they returned home. One of such migrant workers in this study is Brian the 37-year-old Crane Operator who sees the process of entrapment in migration and survival as a test of one's masculinity. Still, this interviewee found that, the salary he received for the time he stayed and worked in Qatar, yielded a lot more returns than he would have made if he did not travel. In his statement, he said:

> The monthly salary which I received was QR700 [its equivalent was GHC 430 which later came to about GHC 680]. Irrespective of the difficulties encountered in Qatar, I would say that the migration has helped me greatly because as a driver, I earned an amount of GHC 150 and it was difficult for me to assist my other family members, but when I migrated, I was able to send remittances to relatives back home. I also assisted two of my nephews to join me in Qatar one of whom is still there. I was the first person to ever migrate in my family but through that two others also have migration experience. When I went to Qatar, I was trained to become a rigger and crane operator and received two certificates before returning home. Now, I am employed as a Rigger and Crane Operator by big companies here in Ghana, and that is now my source of living. Sometimes, a man has to go through such experiences so that he can be toughened; back home, employment is limited with few opportunities for people like me hence migration becomes the only option (Brian, July 2018, Accra).

There were some good times for other interviewees in Qatar too. An interviewee recounted how, in the midst of their agitations as immigrant workers in Qatar, he earned some fortune that caused his transfer from a company and condition he dreaded to another which was a far better one. Having spent the latter part of his days in Qatar Foundation and Aljazeera, the interviewee experienced the part of Qatar's culture that is seldom reported as far as immigrant workers are concerned. This was after working as a security worker and in hazardous environments. The interviewee indicated his transition in these words:

> I was transferred after an oral examination to Qatar Foundation where I began to have some relief. But I still aspired to return. At Qatar Foundation, our first location was Aljazeera. This was where I experienced the real Arabs and their hospitality. They treated us very well, with respect and kindness. This attracted the envy and jealousy of my 3 Nepalese and 2 Filipino colleagues; they ganged up against me and tried to make my life miserable. However, there were some Nigerians who were also present and helped me against them. The Nepalese and Filipinos accused me of being a gossip because I befriended the Arabs. Also, we (the Nigerians and I) asked to be given our food allowance of QR 300 since we were unable to eat the food which was served. The salary here was also better than the previous places; we received between QR 2000-2300 (the agency exploited us because Qatar Foundation actually paid us about QR 8000). I requested again to return to Ghana. …To ensure that I returned, they paid half of the plane ticket and promised to return the other half of the cost to me if I came back to work for them (Patrick, June 2018, Kumasi).

There may be but a few instances of immigrants who have good economic returns from working in Qatar juxtaposed to those who have not. The legal framework defined by the kafala system and the poor working conditions that are so characteristic of it makes it seem very difficult for such gains to happen, looking at

it from a distance. Again, the system in which immigrants work in Qatar seems not to be amenable to universally acceptable practice, and to this extent, there seems to be no hope of a better time for immigrant workers in Qatar.

6.4.2 Circumstances of the Migrants in Saudi Arabia

Just like the interviewees who migrated to Qatar experienced, as discussed in the preceding section, the migrants to Saudi Arabia had some disappointing experiences too. An interviewee who travelled to Saudi Arabia, facilitated by an agent to go and do domestic work, was also assured of her job in Saudi Arabia by the agent. But differently in her case, she needed to carry an ID card that would secure her job and residence when she lands in Saudi Arabia. Failure to obtain the ID card posed serious challenges for the interviewee. She recounted her experience saying:

> We did not have to pay anything, as the expenses for the trip will all be covered by another agent in Saudi Arabia. Before the trip, I underwent some formality such as the signing of a two-year contract with the agent in Saudi Arabia. When I arrived in Saudi, to my dismay, I was supposed to have received an ID Card that would have indicated that I had secured a job and a place of abode before the actual migration. In view of this I was detained for many minutes in the Airport after which the agent who was receiving me appeared and explained things to the officials there before two other ladies and I were let go. Because I didn't have the said ID card, I had nowhere to go to, so the agent took me to his mother in a place called Rapha, some distance away from Rabat. Whilst in Rapha, his mother treated me badly and I was subjected to a lot of hardships. I was often overworked. As if that was not enough both the agent and his brother proposed love to me but because I refused their proposals, the brother of the agent abused me and threw me out of the house by making me sleep in a container on their compound. I got into a fight with the mother who insisted that I

> leave the house because she could not stay with me any longer. I lived there for six months as a caregiver before moving somewhere else; In Saudi, I multitasked as a caregiver (cared for their grandparents and children), a domestic worker (did all the household chores including cleaning, cooking, washing, ironing) and an extra hand for labour intensive jobs. I was paid my wages for the six months period which I sent back home to my mother as remittances. The equivalent of the monthly wage is GHC 900 every month but when the month ends you are not given your money until after 4 months (Joana, July 2018, Saudi Arabia).

Furthermore, the interviewee also suffered manipulation by the agent even as she began making effort to mobilize support to go and do domestic work in Saudi Arabia. It emerged that, the agent who was supposed to facilitate the interviewee's travel ambition was actually ensuring that the interviewee would just be unable to travel as she desired. So, first, the agent made the interviewee move to his mother's home to work there. Next, when it became inevitable to eject the interviewee from his mother's home, quickly, the agent drew up a relatively juicy deal for the interviewee. But overtime, the interviewee became aware that her facilitator or agent had, all the while, been manipulating her and keeping her immobile. All this was expressed by the interviewee in the following words:

> The agent informed me that I was supposed to go live with another family in a place that was further away from the capital, he said that he had sold me [as a slave] to the person and was supposed to be there until the contract period was over. He informed me that he had received an equivalent of GHC 18,000, and that the new owner would take care of my upkeep and monthly wage. I did not hesitate, as I badly wanted to leave the house. I also noticed to my dismay whilst living with the agent and his family how he abused girls who had come. So, I didn't want to continue staying there but wanted to return home. I

> realised that I was 'trapped' at least for the period under the contract. Even though I wanted to return, I was scared about how he would react if I made my intentions clear to him. So, I had to endure because I did not have enough money to refund the expenditure on travelling. There was an incident when one girl who ran away from her place of work was caught and returned to the agent, he beat her and stepped on her lower abdomen until she decided to stay and not leave. There is no justice here as the police do not even listen to the plea of migrants if they decide to report their bosses or owners; they rather compound your problem by returning you to the agent through whom you migrated" (Joana, July 2018, Saudi Arabia).

However, the new domestic work offered to the interviewee mitigated the negative effects which the manipulation by her agent and her inability to return to Ghana would have caused. But the conditions that militated against her bid to return were still at play. She continued:

> Whilst at my new place of abode, I realised that my tasks as a domestic worker had increased and I was supposed to now clean a three-storey house, do more laundry and cleaning, carry heavy objects and attend to the aged and children. However, this place was more bearable than the previous place as no one harassed me with marital proposals. I want to return home badly, I have pleaded with them to keep my salary so they could purchase plane tickets for me to journey back home (Joana, July 2018, Saudi Arabia).

Still locked up in Saudi Arabia, the interviewee recounted what she has been trying to do to get back her mobility and be free. But she feels dejected and forlorn in her struggle to be free from the trap in which she now finds herself. She lamented:

> I do not care about the money; my life is more important. At this rate, I am scared I may lose my life. My mum is very greedy,

> she is not concerned about how I survive here (Joana, July 2018, Saudi Arabia).

So, in the case of the migrants to Saudi Arabia, a difference is manifest in the fact that domestic work was, more or less, the bait by which the migrants found themselves in 'trapped' conditions. Once they agreed to get into those conditions, they were parried so that return was impossible or extremely difficult for them. Also, a common thread that ran through the interviews granted in this study is that, only females fell victims to the conditions. This was, perhaps, because domestic work was the job that was offered and, just as it appeals to females in Ghana, or that females have, for a long time, been associated with domestic work – all those chores that contribute to housekeeping – the same kind of work elsewhere attracted the females from Ghana. In sharp contrast, in the case of the males, one often hears of construction work, security work, and football being the sort of employment in places like Qatar that attract Ghanaian males. All the same, after accepting the offer and moving to work, the facilitators of the move had already facilitated the entrapment of the rather ambitious Ghanaian workers. In all this, the application of the kafala system was the fundamental cause of the problems.

Aside from the negativity surrounding the immigrants' working environment in Saudi Arabia, a couple of positives do occur. There were a number of interviewees in this study whose accounts of the circumstances they faced in Saudi Arabia mimic this possibility. If we consider Rita, a female aged 27, who travelled to Saudi Arabia to do domestic work, it emerged that she was assured by a recruitment agency, which was sending females to Saudi Arabia for the same job, that her domestic

work was secured. Her friend also thought the pay was good. Soon, the agency was done with the necessary documentation for her and off she went to Saudi Arabia. Like other interviewees, her job there turned out to be materially different from what she was informed she would be doing before the migration – she felt she had been deceived. Different emoluments and terms followed to further her surprise with the turn of events. Although the interviewee initially felt 'trapped', she later got a domestic job as a house help. Additionally, the salary offered was appealing to her and she could manage it with the conditions which she was faced with at the time. She said:

> The household provides food and accommodation for me. On a typical day, I sweep, clean, prepare breakfast for the children and wash their clothes. I also have to attend to the children when they return from school. I wish I could return home. The problem is the children. They are very naughty and like to make fun of me whilst I am at work cleaning. They throw dirt behind me whilst I am cleaning the floor; hence, I never get to finish cleaning on time. Religion is another problem as there is no church for me to go to and worship. My role as a woman prohibits me from moving freely without an escort. I also do not possess my passport as it was given to my employer; this also limits mobility. Life for a female domestic worker here in Saudi is full of uncertainty. I hear all sorts of stories about female domestic workers here and these scare me. Many women here are subjected to all sorts of abuse including rape, murder, denial of justice etc. I am only thankful to God that I have not met such conditions yet. Even though I consider myself as a 'trapped migrant', I know that when the two-year bond is up, I can return home peacefully (Rita, June 2018, Saudi Arabia).

So, times for this interviewee, as a domestic worker, were a little manageable. The critical part of the circumstances was that, she has been handed a two-year bond within which she had to work to defray all costs due to the agencies that had

facilitated her migration, albeit costs resulting from deception. This condition keeps her bound to her work, without any ability to return so long as her travel document remains in the custody of the recruiting agency.

6.4.3 Circumstances of the Migrants in Libya

In the case of Libya, a lot has already been learned about how the travel to Libya takes off from Ghana. Particularly, it emerged that every step on the way there are facilitators or a network of people that facilitate the movement of the migrants. Also, the route by means of which the migrants travel has been discussed earlier. The actual experiences in the Libya migration are brought out more clearly here in the work.

Again, it emerged that all but one of the interviewees who migrated to Libya used an unapproved route; they entered Libya through an unapproved border entry point, and there is the popular route that lead Ghanaian migrants to Libya through that point. The words of one of the interviewees who took that route emphasized, vividly, the nature of the route, "The journey to Libya took 14 days by road. I went through Techiman-Niamey-Agadez" (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

So, there were transits, at least two of them (Niamey and Agadez), before the Libya migrants reached Libya. The circumstances that the interviewees faced were very similar and they painted the same picture – the journey was physically and financially very exhausting, just as it was very risky. The crucial point on the journey was Agadez, and then from there, Libya. The narrative from Nelson exemplifies, more clearly, the circumstances in these locations. He said:

> When we arrived in Agadez we boarded a pick-up truck to Libya. In all, we were 34 persons packed in one pick-up. Several other pick-ups carrying immigrants followed. We arrived finally in Gathrone after spending a night on the desert, thereafter we journeyed to the Ghana Ghetto in Sabha, where we were made to pay an approximated amount of GHC 400 (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

There was a difficulty associated with the mobility of immigrants in Libya. For want of the requisite immigrant documentation law enforcement agents, especially, the police and immigration officers had to be avoided by using routes that are clear of them. Happenings like this posed some amount of difficulty for Nelson and probably had implications for his cost of living in Libya. Friends or social networks played a very critical role in this interviewee's ability to integrate economically into the society in Libya. He said:

> From Sabha, we went to Tripoli. This journey, which would normally take a day or two when one is in possession of the right documents, took about one week because we were using rough routes where we couldn't be spotted by the police or immigration officers because we did not have the required documentation. I had by this time incurred an extra debt of about GHC 1,900. Upon arrival in Tripoli, my dear friend paid for the debt and took me to where he was residing. My friend was into masonry (plastering or *malaga*) like many of the Ghanaians in Libya were engaged in. In view of this, he taught me how it is done. I became his apprentice. My first job was to plaster two flats (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

It seems that, apart from the hope of crossing the Mediterranean Sea to Europe from Libya that motivated Ghanaian migrants to take the risk of travelling to Libya, there were also some good economic fortunes out there. As suggested by Nelson, it is

possible to hold on to a trade and get a good income just by working in Libya. His experience with his trade as a mason gives some insight into this issue. He said:

> I owed GHC 2,400, but because we worked regularly, I paid off my debts in three (3) months after being in Libya. In about a year, I was also a master and also had an apprentice who I trained to learn the trade. I also sent remittances home regularly during the initial stages of my stay in Libya because the job was good (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

However, it seems that the benefits from the trade of Nelson diminished with fluctuations in the economy of Libya. He lamented to this researcher that sending remittances now is difficult because "the currency has devalued so much". This decline changed the fortunes of the interviewee in Libya, and while he wished to return, he was still in Libya 'trapped' and incapable of return. He said:

> The dollar has gone up so you have to change so much of the local currency before you can get $1. I wish that I can return home but the situation with the currency is preventing me from doing so. My savings here means nothing now, the money can do nothing back home therefore I am either stuck in Libya or I continue by crossing the Mediterranean Ocean in search of greener pastures in Europe. The current state of Libya is bad especially for the migrant community (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

Currently, on the international market, 1 Libyan Dinar can be exchanged for 0.71 US Dollar whiles 1 Ghana Cedi can be exchanged for 0.18. All things being equal, a comparison of the exchange rates shows that the Libyan currency is more appreciable than the Ghana Cedi as far as the US Dollar is concerned. This implies that, in strict terms, the Libyan economy is doing well than the Ghanaian economic

even though Libya is now trying to recover from devastating episodes of strife that reached a peak in 2011. Perhaps, the amount of work one ought to do before bagging 1 Libyan Dinar is considerably large for immigrants like Nelson, and accounts for the difficulties he had.

Although having savings hampered due to difficulty in making enough money could have been mentioned by the interviewees as one reason why it was a challenge to return, it seems it is one of the least reasons. The reasons given by Nelson for his inability to return can be seen in his words:

> The sad truth is that getting out of here either by air or road has become very difficult if not almost impossible. Several people have gone to the airport hoping to travel back to their various countries but things have turned very nasty. Aeroplanes are not flying; the few ones that come are not able to meet the demands of the many migrants who have trooped there. For over four weeks, many people are still stuck at the airport. Only yesterday there were reports of three (3) Chinese who died out of hunger at the airport because there is no food or water being served to the migrants at the airport (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

In light of the circumstances, there appears to be pressure on immigrants as the indigenes feel economically insecure with their presence. But the armed conflict situation in Libya as a result of political disagreements has led to instability and tension in the economic environment. Various armed groups arbitrarily use coercion to control selected segments of the Libyan society. Research studies have established that this situation is responsible for defects in the application of law and the powerlessness of the judiciary system in Libya. Hence, arbitrary use of power by sections of the citizenry to subject immigrants to various forms of abuse

including hard labour, bad conditions, detention, and in extreme cases, death has also been reported (Kleist & Bjarnesen, 2019; United States Department of State, 2018; Aghazarm, et al., 2012).

Consistent with the above, the state security apparatus of Libya did not seem to have any remedy for the ordeal that immigrants go through in the trying times. Instead, all sorts of claims are made by the security apparatus, contrary to human rights tenets, to incriminate or impute malevolence to immigrants without any scientific basis. This, obviously, puts the immigrants in serious dehumanizing conditions. Nelson continued by saying:

> There is no security for us, quite frequently, the indigenes attack us and rob us of our little possessions. Because the financial banks are not working, we keep our monies on us and these are stolen quite often when we are attacked. Also, now, when we plaster buildings for the locals, they refuse to pay for our services. We sleep in buildings within which we have been asked to plaster; this also exposes us to several risks in view of the lawlessness in the society…They slaughter migrants anyhow and subject us to inhumane treatment. Besides the attacks from the local people, the security officials also add to our predicament. They arrest us without any reason, when they do, they send us to the laboratory to take blood samples, when there is some slight sickness in your blood, they claim that you have contaminated blood hence they detain you in jail and process you for deportation. However, before they release you from jail, your family and friends would have to pay the money for the plane ticket or else you will remain in jail. This is quite worrying because several Ghanaians, including my brother, are in jail now because their families cannot raise the amount of money which they are requesting. There was a woman who once worked as a nurse in the laboratory. She helped us a lot and used to clear us when they requested for the blood test. But the officials got to know and jailed her for three months after which they deported her. My brother and six (6) others have been arrested because the officials say they didn't pass their blood

> test. They claim that they possess 'dirty blood' hence their families would have to pay the equivalent of GHC 3000 before they can free them or deport them. As it stands now, we do not have the money because we are unable to work in view of the conflict. Hence, they may remain incarcerated for no offence committed. The corpse of a young Ghanaian man who lost his life after a short illness has been detained. The officials would only release the body for burial after we pay some amount of money which we do not have (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

The interviewee expressed his dilemma to return; on the one hand, he wishes to return and, on the other hand, he cannot return empty-handed or stripped of everything he had acquired during his stay in Libya. But there was another option; to go across the Mediterranean Sea to Italy. Taking this option was really difficult. The interviewee expressed this in the words:

> I would have risked going back home to Ghana without anything but that will be difficult, I have a wife and children to care for. If I choose to stay here and continue to be 'trapped' here, things may also go from bad to worse. Because of the currency, I cannot remember the last time I sent home some remittances, but I have to try and get out of the situation. The only option for us is to go across the Mediterranean to Italy, I know that it is risky and that I may lose my life in the process, but now I have to forget my life and risk it. If I do not die, I will be in Europe, where I can find a job to care for my family left behind (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

Subsequent interaction with Nelson after a long period of silence revealed that he finally made the journey across the Mediterranean Ocean and his boat which was in distress at sea was rescued by Italian sea patrols. He was then sent to an asylum-seeking camp in Italy where he currently is now. However, he has indicated that

the conditions prevailing at the camp are more humane than it is in Libya. He had this to say:

> My sister, here in Italy, even though I am in a detention camp I treated with respect than when I was in Libya. My colleagues rescued by Libyan authorities when they tried to venture across the Mediterranean were not so fortunate; they were locked up in prison cells under very bad conditions and were processed for deportation, a process which may take forever if your family is not in any position to pay the required sum for your plane ticket back. Here in Italy, I have currently been offered an opportunity to work and earn some income which is very helpful as I am able to send remittances back home for the upkeep of my family and a to undertake a building project which was started when things were relatively better whilst at home (Nelson, July 2018, Libya).

It is important that, in the future, we seek to understand the extent to which it is possible for Ghanaians who migrate to Libya to work (especially, do a trade) and make good incomes. The situation, as is clear from this submission, does not give a good account of the circumstances of immigrants in Libya lately. There is a high sense of a lot of injustices being perpetrated even by state apparatuses against immigrants. Whatever it may be, immigrants do not appear to have the luxury of living and working in peace in Libya – from the perspective of immigrants.

6.5 Summary

This chapter has analysed the circumstances surrounding ‘trapped migration’ from the perspectives of the ‘trapped migrants’ from Ghana. An elaborate work on the context within which the migration occurred in the case of the interviewees in this study has been done. Globalization has been seen to be the enabler of the increasing

access to various geographical places and peoples. Therefore, it prompted easy access to the various places at which the migrants from Ghana arrived. Despite this ability to access places, the knowledge or information about how to reach Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Libya, as they became available to the migrants, was a bit questionable since such knowledge came mostly from relatives and migration facilitators in a more informal manner and was unobjective. The sort of knowledge about the migration obtained from these circles was chiefly meant to boost migrants' confidence and increase their hopes to migrate in the first place. A great part of this knowledge obtained by the migrants was inadequate or erroneous even though it played very critical roles in the migration bid. The objective stories about the migration provide enough reasons to think much more about the journey before embarking on it than the migrants thought; there were costs to incur, residential decisions to make, and employment opportunities from which they had a choice to make. The 'trapped' immigrants in Qatar were led by recruitment agencies but once they migrated, the conditions appeared different and ever changing without regard to the immigrants. In Saudi Arabia, females were desirous of the domestic work available there, which they were told pre-migration to be paying well. This ended up not to be really the situation – and then the entrapment set in. In Libya also, it promised to be well at the onset, but with political and economic changes, decisions in some quarters of the economy worsened the circumstances of the immigrants there – leaving them in trapped migration and in a dilemma concerning the best way to approach their return.

In the next chapter, the study focuses on the navigating strategies of the 'trapped migrants' to return as well as the role of institutions, global or country-specific, in the return of the 'trapped migrants' in this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

NAVIGATION STRATEGIES AND INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR THE RETURN OF TRAPPED MIGRANTS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of the navigation strategies of 'trapped migrants' in order to return to their origins. In analyzing this, however, we must have cognizance of the fact that, if the migrants are 'trapped' in migration, it suggests that their own resources and capabilities are limited and would, likely, not provide the urge needed for their return to their origins. So, the role of institutions – global or country specific – is critical in the discourse on return of 'trapped migrants' to

their origins. The analysis in the chapter responds to the fundamental research questions; "What are the navigation strategies of 'trapped migrants'?" and "What roles do institutions within the global governance system play in assisting 'trapped migrants' to return?" Speaking of the 'trapped migrants' who participated in this study, some of them have returned to their various homes in Ghana, but there are still some who are wallowing in transit or destination countries. Both provided information on the critical issues in this analysis.

In the previous chapter, the depth of information makes a profound case of the unfortunate experiences that many migrants go through in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Libya. This is a matter of concern in the migration discipline, but also, this is where the navigation strategies of the migrants and role of institutions involved in managing migration issues becomes critical.

7.2 Contemplating Return

This study has already addressed the circumstances which 'trapped migration' presents to migrants. Under those circumstances the migrants, 'trapped' in migration, would take any decision that would lead to the return to their origins. This part of the study attempts to answer the specific question of what the 'trapped migrants' in this study decided to do when they realized that they were 'trapped' in their destination or transit and the point at which return was contemplated by migrants or 'trapped migrants'.

People migrate for varied reasons. But it must be emphasized that, for many migrants, and for the 'trapped migrants' in this study, economic reasons for

migration were in majority. Strengthened hugely by this reason alone, 'trapped migrants' are almost always dead set for the journey. So, one of the noteworthy points from this study was the fact that some 'trapped migrants' acceded to whatever travelling opportunity came their way once it promised good economic returns. In effect, they believed the information from those who assisted them and in their own guts to make the journey fruitful. Most of the migrants failed to think critically through the travelling conditions, residence and work permits in their destinations. Upon realizing that there was a disparity between what they were told and what actually happened, returning was the next available remedy they could seek. This is amply demonstrated in the interviews. For instance, after reaching Saudi Arabia, Rita, a 27-year old young lady, desirous of doing domestic work, upon the conditions she met soon contemplated return. She narrated;

> "Upon my arrival, I was sent to a labour camp where I shared a room with 2 Sri Lankans, 1 Ghanaian, and 2 others from Kenya. We were all females who travelled there for domestic work. At the camp we saw that we had been deceived, the promises that were given us before we travelled there was so different from the reality which we now faced. The agreed upon salaries were halved and we were also informed that we could not return home because we had to work to repay the cost of the transportation and documentation for our trip to Saudi Arabia. I became very sad and demanded to return home but was informed that I could only leave on the condition that I refunded the monies spent already to them. Looking back, I knew this was impossible, the great poverty in my family will not allow them to refund the money to the agency because that was money which we didn't have" (Rita, June 2018, Saudi Arabia).

It turns out that, as at the time of this research, this young lady is still 'trapped' in Saudi Arabia, bidding her opportunity to escape the ill-treatment in which she finds

herself. Like this young lady, all the 'trapped migrants' in this study began to think and behave more rationally only after enduring the circumstances they had not solicited for and not anticipated. Crowning that rational thinking was the desire or aspiration to return but the inability to do so when they wanted to. The trap militantly ensures that irrespective of how hard the migrants attempted to return, they must not be able to do so.

Sometimes, the decision to return comes immediately after arrival at the destination or transit. Some migrants to Qatar realized that they were being shortchanged and had to do something drastic to revert the situation before it got out of hand. One of such migrants was Moses whose passport was seized by officials who picked him up at the airport and, with immediate discontentment, requested to be sent back home, albeit to no avail. He recollected in the words below;

> "Upon arrival, our reality dawned on us with just one glance of where we were to stay. The stench emanating from the place alone was enough to cause one to catch a cold. The wooden, dilapidated residential structures looked like a very ugly slum; it also looked like a refugee camp, the worst that I have ever seen. It comprised a canteen area, enclosed areas where the rooms were, a dining area, a large bathroom area shared by about 50 persons and a toilet area of approximately 30 toilet pits (KVIP), separated each by wooden walls and doors. Each room occupied by 4 people had 4 beds. The food that they served initially upon our arrival was breakfast but it tasted very bad. We were served with 'Kobus' bread and egg and black tea (looks like lipton but tastes bad). Our passports were collected by the officials who picked us up at the airport hence we did not have access to them. We were angry and disappointed at this stage, we requested to be sent back to Ghana but were encouraged to exercise patience and keep our cool by the camp boss, an Indian man". (Moses, July 2018, Kumasi).

Sometimes, the contemplation of return is marked by utter disgust and annoyance exhibited by the migrants against any action to continue the migration plan. This

disgust and annoyance had led some migrant workers to bravely revolt against some decisions and actions of the authorities in Qatar. After a number of immigrant workers, of which Francis was part, were detained for revolting against authorities, many other immigrant workers of Ghanaian origin joined the protest which was to result in the deportation of a number of them back to Ghana. The immigrant workers vehemently opposed the deportation of a select few of their colleagues who revolted, claiming that they were all part of the revolt and should all be deported together with the select few. This emphasized the sheer bravery and determination which some immigrant workers exhibit in oppressive circumstances in Qatar. Under normal circumstances, immigrant workers should fear to be deported knowing what they might lose in the process but as an escape from the condition of being a 'trapped migrant', it is welcoming.

The point here is that, the ill-treatment of the immigrants sparked their decision to be deported rather than stay in their present conditions. So, the contemplation of return by the immigrants had invariably taken place after they found that the circumstances they were in were a far cry from what they expected.

The contemplation of return that we have been exposed to in the foregoing discussions is, discernibly, fundamentally different from the return whereby an immigrant thinks of going back to his or her origins after he or she has accomplished so much in the foreign land. The latter may be construed as one's move to stop work in a foreign land and enjoy the considered compensation from that work when one is back home. But the return that is being mentioned in this

study typifies a perceived loss of opportunity but a move to sustain one's life and prevent it from further unjustifiable harm.

The Ghanaian migrants in this study who contemplated return in this manner had been 'trapped' in such dire circumstance that returning to Ghana is the only practical means to escape. If then the Ghanaian migrants were 'trapped' and they badly needed to escape, they must have returned to Ghana as the practical means to escape or, better still, advanced further to other countries and other regions around the world. But this would not be admissible in the case of the 'trapped migrants' in this study. The road to escape was seldom a straightforward one. We have already discussed the difficulties that the 'trapped migrants' had when they wanted to return. In fact, many interviewees in this study disclosed that their passport and other vital travel documents were seized by their agents in the destination country. Nelson in Libya, Francis, Moses, and Patrick all in Qatar, and Rita, Brenda and Louisa in Saudi Arabia specifically faced this challenge. This made the migrants very immobile, often at the mercy of the agents who had withheld their documents. There were some of the 'trapped migrants' involved in this study who were still 'trapped' in migration (see Table 4.2).

Contemplating return is fraught with dilemmas for the 'trapped migrants'. In the instance of some of the 'trapped migrants' in this study, return is fiercely met with strong opposition from the agents or authorities who facilitated their travel. They are made to sign binding contracts with the travel agents in the other country. Sometimes, they are given a condition to work under the agent to repay funds provided to them to cover the travel cost. The travel agents provide accommodation

for the migrants to enhance their control of the migrants. The works to be performed by the migrants are also determined by the travel agents. Conditions such as these ensure that the immigrant has very little control over his or her mobility in a country that is not his or her own. Any effort by the immigrants to break the boundaries set by the receiving authorities or travel agents are treated with utmost contempt with sanctions and punishments to match; in some cases, the immigrant risks imprisonment, in other cases, the immigrant risks losing everything by forceful deportation without any compensation – the migrant returns to his or her origin with no assets he or she acquired in the foreign land.

So, there is, on one hand, the risk of losing whatever one has acquired as an immigrant in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, or Libya in order to return safely. On the other hand, there is the risk of sacrificing the return to one's origin for safety in order to pursue one's economic interests in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, or Libya, albeit inconducive for their survival. These two paradigms represent the choices that the 'trapped' immigrants involved in this study had. For instance, Nelson had already made the choice to go back to Ghana empty handed to be with his wife and children. This is a clear case of the choices that many immigrants face, especially, in Libya.

In effect, immigrants who are 'trapped' in migration are faced with the dilemma to return or not to return. Where the immigrant chooses to return, then the reasons must have been so compelling that the losses in doing so are far lighter and more beneficial than the gains that are in choosing not to return. So, it can be extrapolated from the interviews, thus far, that the decision of the 'trapped migrants' to return to

Ghana was a strong and obstinate move against any plan to have them stay in the foreign land.

It must, however, be reemphasized that some Ghanaian migrants, irrespective of the fact that they encounter dehumanizing conditions there, would not budge to intimidation by the threat of forceful deportation and detention by officials or their employers. In this case, the immigrants exhibited no fear of deportation or detention in pressing home their grievances. Threat of forceful deportation has been exemplified by experiences of some 'trapped migrants' in Qatar as shown in the narrative of Francis, to wit, "…they selected an additional 10 people making 20 people all of whom they felt should be deported…" (Francis, July 2018, Kumasi). This has happened because the group that Francis belonged to in Qatar tried to assert their rights in protesting the bad treatment issued by agents or employers of the members of the group. In this specific circumstance of Francis in Qatar, before the deportation threat, a bunch of Ghanaians were arrested and detained for what appeared to be a demonstration against employers of immigrant workers for denying immigrant workers good working conditions. The mere act of demonstrating against the employers caused the detention of, at least, the immigrants who fronted the demonstration.

There have been copious views through the analysis giving evidence to how immigrants are rendered immobile at their destination, particularly, by their agents or employers. The fact that many 'trapped' immigrants involved in this study had their passports and other travel documents seized by agents or employers were commonplace. Again, Francis makes that point clear in an excerpt of the narration

of his experience with his employment agent in Qatar. He said, "…They [agent] seized our passports, but we complained that, that wasn't the law in Qatar…" (Francis, July 2018, Kumasi). Rita, Brenda, and Louisa faced similar difficulty of having their passports seized by their agents or employers in Saudi Arabia, so that they could not move, but be available for all sort of purposes as may directed by the agents or employers.

Although seizing immigrants' passports in this manner is apparently against a reasonable law, the clear purpose of doing so was to render the immigrants immobile and incapable of leaving the borders of Qatar. In many cases, a contract had been signed by the immigrants to bind them to a fixed period of work in Qatar and Saudi Arabia. Once this contract was signed, it provided the tools with which the immobility of immigrants was ensured by the employer or agent. Therefore, the employer or agent had the audacity to seize the travel documents of the immigrant worker and compel them to work in fulfillment of the signed contract.

So, the immigrant worker is faced with the dilemma of either repudiating the contract or returning to his or her original country empty handed or succumbing to the contract and not returning till his or her fate is determined by the conditions put in place in the receiving country.

Simply, the trap manifests in this scenario: either the migrants have to deprive themselves of supposed benefits of the migration, lose anything through self-sacrifice in order to return home or succumb to the bad conditions in the receiving country and wait in hopes that their purpose for migrating would be achieved some day. Whichever way one chooses, the obvious consequences are very bitter, hence

the trap. But, upon deeper inspection, the leeway has always been the decision to return. Return to Ghana was such an important desire/aspiration of the 'trapped migrants' involved in this study. Given the many obstacles that the immigrants have to surmount in order to return, the systems and structures by which the immigrants gravitated towards the return migration was also examined. This led to the discussion on the navigation strategies of the 'trapped migrants' involved in the study.

7.3 Navigation Strategies of the 'Trapped' Migrants towards Return

With respect to the major question about the navigation strategies of the 'trapped migrants', has discussed what transpires with the 'trapped migrants' from the beginning to the destinations of the migration process. By navigation strategies, reference is made to the systems and structures by means of which the 'trapped migrants' involved in the study paved their way through the migration process to return. The navigation strategies give cognizance to how the migrants made their journey in the first place, and then how they have gravitated towards return to their origin. But the main emphasis here is how the 'trapped migrants' gravitated towards return to their origins.

In the point that the return of 'trapped migrants' to their origins is an all-important thing for the 'trapped migrants' has been made.re-phrase This claim can be found in the unflinching desires/aspirations of the 'trapped' immigrants involved in this study to return to Ghana, their homeland, after they had witnessed what can be

described as a mismatch between what they thought they would achieve and the fact that the circumstances into which they were put in the migration actually represented oppression and enslavement.

At all material times, this study revealed that although there were obstacles that made the return of the 'trapped' immigrants difficult, the 'trapped migrants' were still desirous of return. Nelson, a 32-year-old male 'trapped' in Libya, like the many other trapped migrants, confirmed this desire by saying that the choice of staying trapped in migration puts his condition (both at home and away) at the risk of getting worse. His family back home risks becoming worse off if he stayed.

The first kind of response by the 'trapped migrants' in this direction was to risk everything they had achieved or dreamt of achieving in the receiving country. This is, nevertheless, a tough decision for many 'trapped migrants' to make due to the intricate nature of the trap in which they find themselves.

A case in point is Joana, a 24-year-old female still 'trapped' in Saudi Arabia. She thought it most compelling to return home and implored her agency to keep her salary in savings for her so she could afford the flight back home. In doing so, she was pouring all her efforts and energies into returning, but this certainly required a lapse of time. It also shows the extreme difficulty of limited resources of trapped migrants to make a return journey back home on their own. Excerpts of her words read, "…I want to return home badly, I have pleaded with them to keep my salary so they could purchase plane tickets for me to journey back home" (Joana, July 2018, Saudi Arabia).

But much as some of the efforts and energies are meant by the trapped migrants to escape the 'trapped' conditions, some are also geared towards advancing the migration into other regions, for example, from North Africa to Europe – and Italy and Germany are among the likeliest points of call for the trapped migrants in this move.

Another kind of responses by the 'trapped migrants' in respect of navigation strategy towards return was where 'trapped migrants' succumb to the demands of the immigrant-receiving agency responsible for them. Often times, the 'trapped migrants' are facilitated by agencies before they are able to migrate, reside or work in the recipient country. The agencies, under terms that have supposedly been agreed with the migrant, demand compliance by the migrant with whatever agreement that was made. Sometimes, the agency's demand is stretched to comprise terms and conditions that are just favourable to the agency and unfair to the immigrant. This sort of structure has been responsible for the entrapment of migrants. For example, some of the 'trapped migrants' involved in this study were made to underwrite a contract with a recruitment agency in their destinations which bound them to work for a compulsory number of years before they become freed according to the terms of the contract. The immigrants, who fall in this trap, realizing their incapacity to do anything else, wait to fulfill the terms of the contract before they return home.

There has also been the tendency of the migrants to fall back on their family or close relations for support. Joana's complaint to her mother about the ill-treatment she was going through in Saudi Arabia was meant to elicit support for her return.

Unfortunately, a lot of family members like her mother anticipate remittances from their own who have travelled abroad to work. Returning is the last thing they would contemplate as did Joana's mother. Joana said:

> I have complained about ill-treatment to her but she doesn't care; she is more interested in the money that I send to her as remittances. She is the one caring for my two children whilst I am away, but my children have a responsible father (Joana, July 2018, Saudi Arabia).

So, the support of family was a big deal to Joana. Unfortunately, as in her case, some family members are oblivious or inconsiderate of the experiences of their relatives who have migrated. Attention of family members is most often fixed on remittances from the migrant. In such situations, a 'trapped migrant' calling on family members for support may not be effective. Notwithstanding this, the tendency for 'trapped migrants' to solicit support of family members is very high, and thus, constitutes a navigation strategy to return migration which some 'trapped migrants' explore.

It is interesting to note, however, that some 'trapped migrants' completely give up the prospect of return. By the time they reached this decision, they had explored all the avenues available to them for escape to no avail. Therefore, overwhelmed by extreme difficulties in navigating their way to return, some 'trapped migrants' simply accept the fact that they are 'trapped' and have only to endure the circumstances that the entrapment entails. For instance, an excerpt of the response to how return is approached as given by Patrick reads, "…I wanted to return…on

three occasions but all efforts didn't yield results" (Patrick, June 2018, Kumasi). So, he was 'trapped' in the migration.

Another instance is the case of Joana. She could simply not return and was scared of making her intentions to return clear to her agent in Saudi Arabia. She lacked the money to fund her travel and there was no justice system in which she could seek remedy.

One thing has always been clear from the navigation strategies of the 'trapped migrants' towards return. It is not easy at all for the individual who is 'trapped' to pave his or her way to return and escape the entrapment. Although some 'trapped migrants' may call on their family for support, from this study, this has not been a very effective strategy. But while some of the navigation strategies adopted by the 'trapped migrants' in this study led to their return, there were still some who had not yet been successful at return migration.

7.4 Institutional Support for Return of 'trapped migrants'

This section explores institutional support for the return of 'trapped migrants'. The essence of this section is to capture the interventions made by the governing structures of migration in return migration of the 'trapped migration' as far as Ghana is concerned as the origin of these migrants. Examples of these migration governing structures include the GIS, IOM, ILO, and UNHCR.

7.4.1 Insights from the Ghana Immigration Services (GIS) on Trapped Migration

Ghana Immigration Service (GIS) is the body in charge of migration issues in Ghana. The role of GIS in providing support for 'trapped' lmigrants is of great essence. GIS as an institution, is aware of migrants getting 'trapped' in transit and in destination countries, as well as some associated challenges. According to the officer interviewed, there have been instances where they had to intervene to bring labour/economic migrants back home. He cited a case involving a domestic worker who reported to her family about the treatment being meted out to her by her employees and how they held her against her will saying:

> She, however, informed her family who reported the matter to the GIS seeking for assistance. The family was prepared to pay for her plane tickets and other costs to facilitate her return. So, she was aided to return home. However, in many instances where the family members are not in the financial position to assist, the GIS has to be informed so that the necessary actions can be taken to rescue the 'trapped migrant' and return them (Key Informant 1, August 2018, Accra).

This shows that the GIS relies heavily on information about 'trapped migrants' to lead the way for them to help victims of 'trapped migration'. The family and friends of such victims are critical sources of information to the GIS. The Ghanaian embassies are aware of the maltreatment of Ghanaians but very little has been done to discourage this occurrence. The Ghanaian Immigrant Associations are also powerless and helpless in addressing this challenge. The Key Informant of the GIS further admitted that many of nations (such as Libya, Saudi Arabia and Qatar) are

not signatory to some of the protocols safeguarding migrants' rights and this is why they get away with their actions that infringes on migrant rights.

According to Key Informant 5, when the GIS have had to assist 'trapped migrants' to return to Ghana, "It usually takes between 3 to 4 weeks to return them home". But there are limitations to the GIS in bringing home 'trapped migrants', key among which is financial. Key Informant 1 further stated:

> Unlike some international agencies such as the IOM and NGOs, migrants assisted to return to Ghana through the Ghana Immigration Services (GIS) are not given any reintegration package. However, the GIS provide counselling services for returnees in view of anticipated difficulties when they return, especially, from suffering the predicament of being 'trapped' in a foreign state. …GIS is confronted with challenges that present them with difficulties when it comes to assisting 'trapped migrants'. Some of these challenges include documentary support, financial support, structured intelligence system, and prevention system (Key Informant 1, August 2017, Accra).

Documentary Support: Issues pertaining to international migration is sometimes difficult to tackle in view of the sovereignty of nations. Each nation has its set of laws and mandate; hence, for the GIS to be fully functional, they require the support of authorities in the destination country or transit point which is sometimes not forthcoming because of several reasons involving diplomacy (example, sovereign nations are bent on protecting the image of their nations). This becomes difficult for countries whose nationals may be 'trapped' in those countries to provide the needed support services such as facilitated return for its nationals as states refuse to disclose the number of migrants 'trapped' in their countries even when they are in the know.

It is also worth noting that in states where the incidence of 'trapped migration' is known (for example, in the Gulf region and North Africa), due to the associated human rights abuses, there is the threat of not being ratified as UN member states; hence, if they would not be ratified, then they would not be among the ratified states, and in registering this position, they do not respect the fundamental human rights as promulgated by the UN, but they employ means to cover up gross acts of human right violations in their country in order to save face. Giving an example of this point the key informant said:

> A case in point is where a domestic servant who was abused and camped in a shelter on her way back home was made to sign a bond to only speak of good things about the nation within which she was abused that rendered her 'trapped' (Key Informant 1, August 2018, Accra).

Financial support: This is a very essential element in the assistance of migrants when it comes to their desire to return home. Sadly, GIS is limited in this regard in view of the limited availability of funds at the disposal of the service. In many instances, the GIS has to fall on the support of the relatives of the victims to pay for the plane tickets so that the migrants can return. However, where the family and friends are unable to meet such expenditure, things become very difficult and the GIS is unable to assist as there is no budget for such expenditures. Also, even in the event where there is money for the tickets, transferring the monies for the purchase of the tickets to such places becomes a challenge since there are no money transfer mechanisms from Ghana to those areas. Sometimes, in a bid to resolve these challenges, the service has to get someone whose relatives live there so that

money is paid to the persons' relative here in Ghana and in return the person purchases the plane ticket for the migrant to return home.

Structured Intelligence System: There is a lack of structured intelligence system that will help bring the perpetrators of crimes involving migrants to book. Most times, the informal recruitment channels where migrants become victims rendering them 'trapped' are associated with sophisticated organised crime networks; hence, without a structured intelligence unit bringing them to book, there is a big a challenge.

Prevention: This is a major challenge because of the difficulty of dissuading people from going to countries where they can easily become victims of organised criminal networks or where they can easily be rendered 'trapped migrants'. There is difficulty for the GIS to convince people on the dangers of irregular migration as most people do not heed advice and often defy the instructions of GIS. Absence of a well-structured system within which the GIS would liaise with officials in countries where people get 'trapped' to facilitate return of 'trapped migrants', as well as the absence of social support systems to address the psychological effects on 'trapped migrants' and reintegration processes is also a major challenge.

Key Informant 1 further stated that:

> Some of the major places where migrants get trapped are Libya, Niger, and Italy. In these places one can talk of facilitated entrapment wherein rescue agencies, ironically, detain people rescued from dangers of the Mediterranean Sea and keep them in shelters where they are rendered immobile, ill-treated or not returned in a timely manner. Greece, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia,

> Bahrain, Qatar, and Iraq are among the stream of countries noted for 'trapped migration' (Key Informant 1, August 2018, Accra).

In an enquiry into the steps that have been taken by the GIS to reduce the incidence of Ghanaian migrants who get 'trapped' or become victims of migration organised crime, it emerged that the GIS is engaged in two fundamental actions namely 'Prevention and Prosecution'. Prevention is with reference to the fact that when officers from the service sense that a migrant may encounter some crisis at the destination area with hindsight to certain details, they prevent the migrant from travelling. The migrant is then educated on the dangers of going to such areas. It is worth noting that, while some migrants may listen, others do not and still travel to such places. The other important action that the GIS engages in, as noted earlier, is prosecution of uncertified migrant-based agencies that send international labour migrants out of Ghana. Also, in the event that it is reported to the GIS that an agency contributed to an unfortunate incident involving a migrant, their licence can be revoked, they could be prosecuted and punitive actions can be taken against them. Key Informant 1 reiterated that:

> When it comes to the attention of the service that a recruitment agency is propagating nefarious activities they are arrested and their licence is revoked according to L.I. 833. The agencies are invited and queried when it comes to the attention of the service that they failed to assist their clients to return home (Key Informant 1, August 2018, Accra).

Despite the above, there are many instances of poorly regulated migrant recruiting agencies who are contributing to sending of certain under privileged individuals

into precarious employments, notably, in the Gulf States. Awumbila et al. (2019) hints of failure in the regulation regime as both government and the migrant brokers seem to be engaging in ways that nourish the brokerage enterprise and create a free-flowing environment for criminals to perpetrate in the brokerage.

Another role that the GIS plays in a bid to prevent migrants from becoming 'trapped' is through its mass campaigns about the dangers of irregular migration, travelling with uncertified recruitment agencies and the incidence of 'trapped/stranded' migrants and so forth. The impact, as claimed by Key Informant 1, has been enormous. The travel safely campaign embarked on by the GIS is a point of reference.

He went on to state that there is no regulatory framework for the activities of trapped or stranded migrants. However, they are aware of the fact that IOM is seeking to provide some form of framework for migrants in crisis situations which, he is sure, may capture the migrants under study. On the part of GIS, they want to provide a National Action Plan on Trafficking and Anti-Crime Capacity Building Project to deal with the issue with funding from the Canadian government.

It is not within the mandate of GIS to invoke any bilateral agreement between Ghana and other states since it borders on diplomacy; hence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration is responsible for work within such agreement. However, "GIS is aware of the springing up of international labour camps in the Gulf region and, in particular, countries such as Libya, Saudi Arabia and Qatar" says Key Informant 1. These nations outsource labour through

recruitment agencies in third world nations such as Ghana. The informant continued:

> They [migrant recruitment agencies] promise relatively higher wages that encourage people from here to migrate to such places to work. Whilst some of the agencies are recognised by law, others are unknown and do not possess the licence that regulates their operations. However, registration and licencing of these agencies is done by the labour department in Ghana. The GIS only comes in when the migrants or their families make a report to the service. Also, when the GIS officials detect discrepancies with the travel details at the airport, the migrant is invited for interrogation and advised accordingly (Key Informant 1, August 2018, Accra).

It emerged that relatives of 'trapped migrants' from the Gulf region often came to complain about their relatives and the conditions that they may be in at the place of destination. This remark betrays the deficiency in the readiness and ability of GIS to deal decisively with migration issues concerning Ghanaians abroad. This is because, from the view above, there is hardly any system by which GIS can independently scan the environment and learn about the experiences of Ghanaian migrants in other countries unless someone contacts the offices of GIS to lodge a complaint. So, where family members or relatives of struggling, stranded or 'trapped' Ghanaian migrants fail to push through closed doors of GIS offices, then the victims are more likely not to receive any assistance whatsoever from the GIS.

Even though the approach of GIS is victim-centred, the limitation on its financial capacity is real and it limits them from assisting as many victims as possible. In 2016, it was communicated to the GIS that the Ghana Mission in Riyadh in Saudi Arabia assisted 800 'trapped migrants' to return to Ghana, according to the key

informant. The fact that the GIS itself did not front this assistance to the 'trapped migrants' and it was the Ghana Mission to Saudi Arabia that undertook this exercise shows the limitedness of the GIS in efforts to rescue 'trapped migrants'. Unfortunately, it shows that Ghanaian migrants face a considerable risk of getting no assistance from the GIS in terms of return to Ghana. If Ghana's Mission where the Ghanaian migrants are located does not act decisively to fill the gap, then the problem of the Ghanaian migrants would be huge indeed. The growing incidence of Ghanaian migrants who are suffering in the Gulf States and Libya may also be attributed to the lack of preparedness of the GIS as a state institution to intervene and bring the migrants back home safely.

7.4.2 Insight into 'trapped Migration' from the Perspective of IOM

It was garnered from the interviews with IOM officials that although IOM has been in Ghana since 1987, it was only in 2002 that IOM was very heavily involved in migrant reintegration programmes in Ghana. To the IOM, stranded migrants and 'trapped migrants' are conceptually synonymous. These migrants do not form part of the legal migration categories where there are some guiding principles, programs and actions guiding their assistance. With regards to refugees and asylum seekers, for example, there are measures in place to aid them where necessary. One of our key informants stated this in the words below:

> Migrants who fall within the category described are very difficult to assist because they cannot be captured as refugees except those who became 'trapped' as a result of conflict or forced migration issues. However, past interventions have had to do with those who were stuck in transit or from the civil unrest in North Africa (Libya). Being able to define and

> categorize these migrants would help migrant governing bodies to protect them well (Key Informant 3, August 2018, Accra).

IOM Ghana has gained much more popularity in Ghana with the role it has played in return and reintegration of Ghanaian migrants. Their role commenced remarkably around 2011, a time when the Libyan crisis soared to extreme anarchy. This occurrence had led to one of the largest migration crises in modern days. The IOM Ghana itself reported that of 796,915 migrants that crossed the border to flee violence, 18,500 were Ghanaians. The IOM stepped in and, from cooperation with the Government of Ghana, 12,034 Ghanaians, majority of whom were irregular migrants, were successfully rescued and provided travel assistance to flee the conflict (IOM, 2013).

When the IOM-assisted migrants had finally come back home, they had no sufficient assets or employment. Many times, not even an accommodation or housing for them. The returnees, therefore, had a big challenge which was the source of desperation and frustration even in their own motherland. It was in this context that Key Informant 3 tried to express how IOM organized support for these people who often displayed signs of psychological stress. He said:

> To meet the needs of these returnees, the Government of Japan generously supported IOM Ghana to implement a livelihood empowerment programme that strengthened the capacities of many returnees through the provision of business development and management training. Kind support was also given them to start-up businesses. This programme also included provision of the National Health Insurance cover for the returnees and their families as well as counselling sessions (Key Informant 3, August 2018, Accra).

The IOM (2013) report confirms the view above showing that hundreds of returnees who were vulnerable in their community because of lack of housing, employment and insurance were put on a project to strengthen their capacity and provided psycho-social counselling. More than two thousand returnees were also provided National Health Insurance.

It emerged that IOM has been involved in several interventions to assist all migrants including the stranded or 'trapped migrants' to return to the place of origin. Some of the interventions made go back many years, for example, the Global Programme out of Europe in the 1950s which involved irregular migrants engaged the IOM in handing out small packages for irregular migrants which included education for migrant children, counselling services for traumatised or affected migrants and so on. IOM also assisted in voluntary repatriation for such irregular migrants who wanted to return voluntarily.

Further, IOM plays major roles through advocacy in ensuring that African migrants 'trapped' in North Africa and the Middle East are assisted to return. However, this has stalled in Libya because of the conflict and unrest there. Before the conflict, programmes with the government led to assisted returns. Stranded/trapped migrants there were assisted to return to their places of origin. Engagement with the government has been difficult to do in the aftermath of the conflict. It is also worthy to note that in places where there is failure of law and order, there is very little that the IOM can do. This has been the case for countries such as Saudi Arabia, Iraq, among others. The IOM initiated dialogues with the leaders of these countries to

protect the rights of immigrants through their Migrants in Countries in Crisis (MICIC) Initiative.

The MICIC Initiative is a secretariat under the IOM which a government-led effort co-chaired by the United States and the Philippines with the aim to improve the protection of migrants when the countries in which they live, work, study, transit, or travel experience a conflict or natural disaster. It launched a broad and inclusive consultative process in 2014 in which guidelines to protect migrants in countries experiencing conflict and natural disaster. The MICIC Initiative released the non-binding and voluntary principles, guidelines, and practices in 2016 and they identify the roles and responsibilities of different stakeholders with regards to migrants in countries in crisis and provide guidance on how to prepare for and respond to crises in ways that protect and empower migrants.

When asked about what the IOM felt were the major reasons leading migrants into situations that entrap them, it emerged that, basically, they were economic reasons. The views of the interviewees representing IOM converged on the point that many of the 'trapped migrants' which they have aided back to Ghana economically 'trapped migrants' who had migrated in search of greener pastures. The IOM has assisted Ghanaians stuck in transit to return from countries such as Libya, Niger, Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Lebanon, who had attempted to transit to places such as Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Germany, and UK.

Reintegration, they noted, is a very important aspect of return migration. Usually, when migrants return, the IOM provides counselling and an amount of money for them to use as transportation to help them get to their homes. They then have to

return so that a package such as training can be prepared for them to enable them survive. However, many of the migrants do not return to the IOM after return and this is a great challenge. Some of them also return to the destination or transit countries again in spite of what has transpired earlier. It is worth stating that another challenge met by the IOM is that the amount of money given as part of the reintegration packages are not enough to help them find their feet or meet their obligations back home and this may be part of the reasons why they still go back. In quite a few instances, however, returned migrants who have appealed for support for the education of their children, amongst other things, have been assisted, but these requests are rare, especially, in Ghana, as many of them never return to the headquarters after they return to Ghana.

The major destinations where Ghanaian migrants get 'trapped', in the opinion of the officers, has to do with countries in North Africa such as Niger, Algeria, Libya as well as the Gulf region where the countries involved are Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, among others. Whilst there is no policy framework that regulates the activities of 'trapped migrants', there have been instances where migrants within that category under consideration have been aided through the Migrants in Crisis Initiative. Through this program many economic migrants rescued from the Mediterranean Ocean have been assisted to return to their places of origin. Sometimes, the IOM also works with national governments to assist migrants to return home hence the commitments of member states are also very important. The level of commitment of member countries in assisting 'trapped migrants' is very high amongst the European countries but very low for the Gulf regional States such as Saudi Arabia. In places such as Libya, the commitment is also very low and there

are no bilateral agreements in place to facilitate the return of the migrants. Bilateral agreements between countries as acclaimed by the key informants, are ways through which return can be negotiated and facilitated. Because of the absence of such agreements in places such as Libya, return of trapped/stranded migrants are negotiated through third party donors such as the UK who intend to tackle the problem before it gets to Europe.

Key Informant 3 also indicated that, those within the migration stratification where human beings likely to be 'trapped' the most are "within the low paid income group". This corroborates the findings from this study as all the respondents interviewed fell within this income group.

It must be stated unequivocally, that some of the study participants who were interviewed admitted that they were aided to return through the help of the IOM.

7.4.3 Role of ILO for Return of 'trapped migrants'

The International Labour Organisation (ILO), as the UN specialised agency on labour issues, has been dealing with labour migration since its foundation in 1919. It is the only UN agency with a constitutional mandate for the "protection of the interests of workers when employed in countries other than their own". Since the 1930s, it has pioneered international conventions to protect migrant workers and guide migration policy. The 1944 Declaration of Philadelphia (incorporated into the ILO Constitution in 1946) confirmed the constitutional mandate of the ILO on labour migration. The 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work reaffirmed the ILO's mandate on labour migration and migrant workers.

International labour migration is a multidisciplinary issue that cuts across all major sectors of the ILO's work: labour standards, employment, social protection and social dialogue. The ILO is unique in being a tripartite organization consisting of the three main partners – governments, employers and workers – with major stakes in employment issues, including labour migration (Dowd, 2008).

It is important to note that, there was no occasion on which the 'trapped migrants' involved in this study sort the assistance of the ILO. The acts that these Ghanaian migrants endured were in violation of the fundamental principles and rights at work underwritten by the ILO and its labour migration regulations. However, the ILO does not seem to have any system in place to address infractions of the ILO principles and regulations in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Libya. Many of the migrant workers in this study did not even know of the existence of such a body where they could seek redress and bring their employers to book.

7.4.4 The Role of the UNHCR for Return of 'trapped migrants'

Like the IOM, UNHCR has looked at stranded/'trapped migrants' through the specific lens of its own mandate. We learn from the Key informant at the IOM that the term 'stranded migrants' was first used by UNCHR in 1984 to refer to assistance given to needy Lebanese stranded in Europe. Several years later, a general definition of the notion was given in a 1994 publication commissioned by the International Labor Organization (ILO) related to an initiative in collaboration with UNHCR on 'International Aid as a Means to reduce the Need for Immigration'. Twelve types of migration, including 'stranded migrants', were provisionally distinguished. Later, 'stranded persons' were defined as those termed "refugees in

orbit" and transit migrants who have been prevented from entering their chosen country of destination and who do not wish to return to their country of origin. Plainly, the group envisioned comprised persons on the move, attempting, unsuccessfully, to reach their country of destination. This definition excluded 'stranded persons' in destination countries. Those stranded/'trapped migrants' in third world countries were also excluded. Lastly, the definition limits the group to those 'who do not wish to return to their country of origin' (subjective), leaving out the group of those who are unable to return out of objective reasons. In sum, this definition provides too narrow an approach, capturing only some part of the whole, related to the organization's mandate (Dowd, 2008). This explains why sufficient audience was not accorded this research upon visit to the UNHCRs premises. The preliminary information obtained was that the UNHCR was solely in charge of issues pertaining to refugees. However, as the United Nations (UN) body in charge of human rights, issues pertaining to trapped migrants should have also been of concern to this body so that one can be positioned for assistance where issues involving human rights breaches of trapped migrants may be concerned.

In 2001, UNHCR used the 'stranded' migrant terminology for the first time to refer to 'stranded asylum-seekers'. It was noted that these asylum-seekers who were at airports refused access to asylum procedures. Some were stranded for months in a situation of limbo. Reportedly, they were made up of women and girls who were victims of trafficking and had been stranded. This gave raise to acute protection needs for them (Dowd,2008). The UNHCR had emerged to facilitate the return of some of the trapped migrants from Ghana where this interviewee was present at that material time. The 'trapped migrant' said:

> The issue was very serious; we were caught in the middle of the conflict and were trying to find our way back home. It was terrible; the airports were filled with masses of people who had been there for weeks because no planes were flying. There was no provision by way of food and water made for the teeming numbers of people who were at the airports. Things had gotten out of hand as there were constant attacks on black Africans either from security forces in Libya or from armed gangs and robbers. A total breakdown of the law and order made us very vulnerable to all manner of things. The UNHCR and other international bodies were silent hence we had to advice ourselves to save our own lives or perish. Our way to escape was only to get to Morocco, so that we can catch a plane back home with the aid of IOM.

These were not asylum seekers or merely stranded migrants but they were more importantly migrants who just wanted to find their way back home i.e. 'trapped migrants'. This clearly demonstrates that there are refugees who can be captured as 'trapped migrants' and whose fundamental human rights need to be respected and protected as well. Hence issues pertaining to the trapped migrants needs to be a concern to the UNHCR as well.

Another 2001 UNHCR publication observed that refugee trafficking and smuggling posed significant hazards and risk for victims to become stranded. This angle of stranded migrants is not entirely different from the phenomenon of 'trapped migration'. But for the UNHCR to pay attention to stranded migrants, it shows that the organization's focus on the issues of stranded/trapped migration related to its mandate.

Yet, in its '10-Point Plan of Action on Refugee Protection and International Migration' of 2006, the UNHCR set out ten key areas in which it has an interest

and a potential role to play. It defined 'stranded migrants' as 'persons who are not in need of international protection and who cannot remain lawfully on the territory of a host State, move lawfully to another country, or return to their country of origin'. The notion that stranded migrants are 'persons who are not in need of international protection' portrayed them as being not vulnerable and protected under some other framework. In effect, the definition appears to ignore that being 'stranded' and left unprotected to human rights violations is a valid case for the need of international protection. Also, the definition is not reflective of perspectives other than UNHCR's mandate, and thus while the definition might serve UNHCR's mandate, it is not contributing to resolving the phenomenon of 'trapped migration' in the field. As in IOM's case, UNHCR has not touched on the full implications of the phenomenon of stranded migration, and has considered them mainly when their situations are related to its mandate. The same applies to the trapped migrants.

The perspective of the UNHCR on the issue of stranded/trapped migration leaves a trail that explains why, in this study, their activity has been, more or less, lost on the 'trapped migrants'. As a matter of fact, the 'trapped migrants' involved in this study have, nowhere, mentioned that the UNHCR played any role in resolving their entrapment. So, the scale of the 'trapped migration' that this study sought to unravel seems to have some characteristics in which the UNHCR would not be interested, at least, for the time being.

7.4.5 Non-Governmental Organizations

In 2006, Amnesty International was the first NGO to address the issue of 'stranded migrants' by name, stating that "many migrants are stranded in countries of transit

or destination; they have been denied the right to enter and remain illegally, but are unable to return to their countries of origin" (Dowd, 2008). Amnesty International elaborated that "some migrants cannot return to their countries of origin due to continuing insecurity, because there is no legal means to get there, or because it is impossible in practice for them to return. Many are not granted any form of legal status, even where return proves impossible". Amnesty International further observed, "many stranded migrants are individuals whose applications for refugee status have been turned down. People whose asylum claims have been rejected under a fair and satisfactory procedure are no longer protected under international refugee law. However, they should continue to enjoy the protection of international human rights law". This latter group usually qualifies for forms of complementary protection as offered by many states today. Often those who cannot be returned to their countries of origin would be held in prolonged and sometimes indefinite detention (Dowd, 2008).

Amnesty International thereby linked the group of stranded persons to both migrant and refugee related movements, although the organization understood the reason for being stranded as mainly an individual inability to return. Further, the analysis seems to be closely linked to undocumented migrants, not referring at all to documented stranded migrants. Also, the NGO does not include persons in humanitarian crisis displaced in third countries, as well as victims of human trafficking, thereby excluding large parts of the group.

Other NGOs referred to the concept of stranded migrants, but did not specifically study or attempt to define them, largely regarding them as migrants or asylum-

seekers stranded at borders or within transit countries, because of their non-admission to the country of destination. Issues pertaining to 'trapped' migrants are very important as the world globalises and many more migrants leave their homes in search of better living conditions in other countries. Over the years, countries such as Indonesia, Bangladesh, India and Philippines amongst others have been major exporters of migrant labour, many of these migrants' ends up as trapped migrants. NGOs based organisation assisting such migrants focusing in these areas have only set-up platforms that seeks to solicit donations on their websites by announcing the conditions of such migrants so they could be assisted to return. Experiences from these countries have failed to attract scholarly attention to the 'trapped' migrant thence there are no lessons available to Ghana and other stakeholders on how to surmount this issue.

Although the Amnesty International's outlook on trapped migration inches closely to identifying and resolving the issues concerning trapped migrants, the specificity it requires to be able to move in and tackle this migration phenomenon, such as Ghanaian migrants to Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Libya trapped in migration, has been lacking. Without such conscious direction, the Amnesty International, just as other related NGOs have, summarily, been unable to feature in resolving the ordeal of the trapped migrants involved in this study.

7.5 Summary

This chapter of the study has provided insight into the navigation strategies of the trapped migrants and the role of institutions towards the return of trapped migrants to Ghana their homeland. The analysis showed that, although the Ghanaian migrants to Libya, Qatar and Saudi Arabia may have been dead set for their work and residence in the foreign lands, contemplation of return to Ghana was triggered immediately after they sensed gross anomalies between their expectations, partially informed by what they heard prior to the journey, and their actual experiences in their migration process. For instance, when one of the trapped migrants witnessed the seizure of his passport and compulsion to work under bizarre conditions different from the standing agreement for the travel, he contemplated return. Under such mismatched expectations, the immigrants felt trapped, utterly immobile, but had an outburst of strong desire to return. So, they navigate their way towards return to Ghana by seeking to be deported by any means or by waiting a while longer in their destination in order to make some money that would just be enough for their travel ticket. Whichever way that return was sought, the immigrants faced fierce opposition from their employers or agents that made them just incapable of doing anything one their own. The immigrants risk losing everything for which they had travelled if they forced their way to return. Otherwise, they succumbed to the treatment and worked in the circumstances in order to meet the cost of travelling back home. Where one was an immigrant worker in Libya, the tendency to escape ill-treatment by crossing the Mediterranean Ocean was real. The Ghanaian immigrants in trapped conditions also made efforts to inform their family or relatives about their experiences and their difficulty to return. The failure of many

Ghanaian immigrants trapped in Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Libya to navigate their way to return is always the bigger concern. Some of them simply wait and hope for the day their return comes. For that reason, external forces and institutions interested in migration have attempted a general definition that captures trapped migration, but there was nothing to show from the trapped migrants involved in the study about the role played by institutions be they country specific or international ones. The GIS did not have enough resources and has not been mandated to enter the jurisdiction of other countries to deal with Ghana immigrant issues. Other agencies like the UNHCR, ILO and NGOs which appear to have interest in migration issues, unfortunately, did not play a significant role in the return of the trapped Ghanaian migrants involved in this study. It appears the impact of these kinds of institutions on the return of these Ghanaian 'trapped migrants' was missing. Thus, some of the migrants were trapped, especially, in Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

The fact that migration volumes are increasing around the world is commonplace. However, the volumes are higher and directional to and from select geographical locations. We have witnessed high migration volumes from Africa to Europe – with United Kingdom, Italy, Germany, and Spain mostly being the receiving countries. Other volumes from Africa are directed towards North America. These directional migration volumes have been found to be largely determined by economic factors. But of greater interest in the study has been the movement of Ghanaians towards North Africa and the Middle East. This interest was aroused by the fact that a considerable part of the migration towards these areas results in the phenomenon which has been termed in this study as 'trapped migration'. The term has been used to denote the occurrence whereby migrants got stuck in the process of migration and could simply not return to their origins or home country. Thus, in this study, the searchlight was put on Ghanaian migrants to Libya in North Africa and Qatar and Saudi Arabia in Middle East who were 'trapped migrants' in the process of the migration. There are untold hardships and inhumane conditions endured from that migration outcome, especially, in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Libya. The existence of such 'trapped migrants' escalates the threat to Ghanaian migrants, which is not only a concern for Ghanaian nationals and their government, but also to human security and dignity.

The main objective of this study is to enhance our understanding of the phenomenon of being a 'trapped' migrant through a qualitative study of 'trapped' migrants of Ghanaian origin. Pursuant to this, the key characteristics of 'trapped migrants' were interrogated. The circumstances that led migrants into 'trapped migration' were also examined. The navigation strategies of 'trapped migrants' and the role of institutions – global or country-specific – were analyzed. Finally, as found just before this chapter ends, the study recommends policies and/or strategy implementation that would mitigate the phenomenon of 'trapped migration' and its effect.

With the keen focus on Ghanaian migrants who were 'trapped' in Libya, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, such 'trapped migrants' were drawn from within the Ghanaian community and elsewhere as 'trapped migrants' from Ghana in those regions were found. The methodology utilized paved the way to obtain samples that were relevant to the objectives of the study. A purely qualitative research method that embraced constructionism and interpretivism was used to enhance the fieldwork in this study. Consequently, the non-probability sampling procedure used; that is, purposive and snowball sampling, paved the way to meet people who performed critical role towards the identification of the relevant samples for this study. The processes led us to obtain 30 'trapped migrants' for in-depth interview, and relevant information from institutions like the GIS, ILO, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration. The data obtained was analyzed with keen attention to emerging themes and their connections with the objective of the study.

8.2 Major Findings

The study found that out of the 30 ‘trapped migrants’ engaged in in-depth interviews, 10 were still ‘trapped’ at the time of the interview with them. Specifically, 6 were still ‘trapped’ in Libya, and 4 were still trapped in Saudi Arabia. But the rest of the 20 were once trapped, and had returned. On the whole, 21 migrated to Libya; Saudi Arabia 6; and Qatar 3. The findings indicate that the underlying characteristics of these ‘trapped migrants’ from Ghana include the fact that males were ardent participants in the migration process that ended in ‘trapped’ conditions in response to the first research objective. This signaled a more daring and economically exploitative attitude of males than females which contributed to the difference in their desires to embark on this migration process. Besides this, women are not so apt to engage anyone with the real experiences they had in this kind of migration because of fear of stigmatization. The study found that youthful populations, more likely with marital status as single, are more apt to embark on the process of migration that leads to trapped migration. This was also indicative of the fact that many young people, with low standards of living and earning meager incomes (if employed), make the effort to enhance their economic outlook by migrating. With this desire at work, many of them ignore the risks, such as entrapment, in the migration on which they embark. Also, low educational levels contribute to the incidence of trapped migration with a little less than half (46.7%) of the ‘trapped migrants’ involved in this study being educated just up to Junior High School level.

Another important issue emerging from the study is the route of emigration of the trapped migrants. Characteristically, 'trapped migrants' are predisposed to unapproved routes. This was demonstrated in the study by the fact that majority (66.7%) of the trapped migrants travelled by road to their destination. Often times, migration by road is coterminous with irregular migration because by that route, migrants get to evade the rigorous checks that immigrants ought to go through before they are allowed access to a country. Specifically, the trapped migrants in this study who migrated to Libya went by road. They evaded the requisite documentation that was required of regular migrants; hence they were irregular migrants. The rest who migrated to Qatar and Saudi Arabia had no easier means of reaching such destinations except by the regular route; that is by flight.

The Brong Ahafo Region of Ghana (currently segmented into three regions) was the spotlight in Ghana as far as trapped migration is concerned. Most of the decisions to embark on irregular migration, using the road to Libya, were hatched by the trapped migrants from that region. The fact that people who migrated through irregular means to Libya began from there has had a cascading effect on the youth in the region. The region, thus, becomes critical in the quest to understand the irregular migration pattern of Ghana's youth. In their transits or destination, many of the trapped migrants involved in this study had to do menial jobs to survive.

Economic purposes underlay the migration process that led the migrant into trapped conditions. From the study, it was made clear that jobs or employment was the major consideration of the migrants in the migration process. Trapped migrants,

therefore, exhibited their desperation for jobs or employment and applied every means available to them to resolve their desperation.

In reaction to the second research objective, the circumstances that led the migrants into trapped migration were brought to bear from the perspectives of the trapped migrants involved in the study. The study found that the exposure of the migrants to information related to migration, coupled with availability of technologies that facilitate knowledge about migration process, contributed to their predilection for migration. People are discovering geographical places and becoming more aware of possible means of reaching those places. Thus, the migrants travelled by land or road from Ghana through Burkina-Faso to Niger and then to Libya. They used this route as a suitable or practical way to reach Libya. With a similar thinking approach, the migrant travelled to Qatar or Saudi Arabia by air.

So, there was access to information by the 'trapped migrants' involved in this study. The study showed that family and friends and/or facilitators, agents, and recruitment agencies constituted a critical source of information to the trapped migrants. The information provided by these sources was always positive and affirmed the position of the migrants to migrate to Libya, Qatar, or Saudi Arabia. In some cases, the predilection of the migrants to travel to these locations was informed, first hand, by family members and friends or the agents, recruitment agencies and facilitators. Although information was extensively provided to the migrants, there was utterly no room for objective evaluation of the information received by the migrants. The fact that the information was always consistent with and enhanced the migrants' quest to travel for better economic outcomes

preoccupied their thinking and time to do any careful evaluation and comparison of information. The outcome was the choices they made which ended in trapped migration. So, the migrants, just before they began their journey, were most expectant of the fortunes that lay in the information they had.

The findings showed, however, that a lot of the information received was dissimilar to the real experiences lived by the migrants through the migration process. Instead, much of the real experiences were confirmed by evidence-based reports of the experiences of other immigrants in the locations travelled to by the migrants involved in this study.

Although the information received by the migrants who travelled by road to Libya had indicated that the journey would take the migrants through Burkina Faso to Niger, and then to Agadez before the detour through the desert to quench the hunger of getting to Libya, there were several details ignored, albeit important to the choices of the migrants and, ultimately, their survival. The study found that, engagements with interested parties, travelers, transport owners, smugglers – important parties in the journey at the right times – was a key consideration for the survival of people who traveled that route. Even this was only a small indicator of a successful journey. All through the journey, one ought to have enough money to pay at multiple points on the journey; border guards, policemen, and others like them have a part to take from the money of the traveler. The smugglers or facilitators and interested parties along the journey, especially, in Niger before one got to Libya, have bargaining to make and negotiations to reach with all the travelers. The cost involved in the journey is a variable that arouses a lot of concern

because although one is sure not to have any fixed amount to pay except after bargaining, it is surely a drain on the resources not only of the migrants, but also the relatives and financiers in Ghana. So, a lot of money is expended in the course of this migration. It can be argued that, the monies that are expended compares with the annual income of a middle-income earning Ghanaians (if not in excess of that). Given the low economic position of the migrants on this journey, this was, surely, a heavy financial burden.

The study found that, prior to the migration, all the migrants have had to pay some facilitators or agent some monies totaling between GHC 1,000 to GHC 3,000. The migrants who were bound for Qatar and Saudi Arabia also had similar responsibilities to their agents. Some of these agents bore the cost of air ticket and travel documents on a loan basis. The migrants, on arrival at their destinations, were going to work to defray those loans. So, the migrants to Libya, Qatar and Saudi Arabia have debts borne by their migration process which, on arrival, they had to work and pay back according to any arrangement they had concerning the debt.

The study found that the devastating circumstances of the migrants through the migration process arouse a high level of concern. To the disappointment and dejection of many migrants, the circumstances they were confronted with were much worse than the information or foreknowledge they were made to have. In effect, there was the feeling that they had been let down by those who facilitated their journey in the first place.

The study found the circumstances of the migrants just before one got to Libya most worthy of attention. Migrants died in the desert and the risk of death was quite

high because the vehicle could be lost; there is no straight identifiable road from Agadez to Libya – the desert stretch. It took days (about four days) to complete the journey in rather cramped conditions. Hunger and thirst were also commonplace on the journey and attack by bandits was never an impossibility due to the lonely nature of the route. The accounts pointed to the idea that there was no limit to the risks to which travelers are exposed; if there was any limit, then that would be death! Once in Libya economic instability and sheer dislike for black pigmented people forced the migrants into conditions for which they never hoped or planned. The ensuing dire financial difficulties, abuses and detentions plunged the migrants into 'trapped' conditions.

The findings further showed that the circumstances for the migrants in Qatar and Saudi Arabia began on their arrival, and they were not good. Of immediate concern was the fact that, for many of these migrants, the arrangement and foreknowledge they had prior to the journey was dishonestly communicated by their facilitators or agents. Someone traveled on an agreement to play in a football team in Qatar; it turned out he had to work as security guard and in many other low wage jobs when they arrived in Qatar. Someone also traveled to do domestic work in Saudi Arabia; it turned out that she had to work in the home of the agent who facilitated the journey - with attendant challenges, such as marriage proposal and no remuneration. It must be mentioned that, somewhere else, there had been allegations of some other female migrants being forced to engage in prostitution or being sexually abused by people who purport to be their masters in some areas like Saudi Arabia. This emphasizes that fact that the experience of the migrants involved in this study, as told by themselves, were, to a large extent, unpalatable.

Added to that, a lot of the migrant workers had their initially communicated salary amounts slashed to considerably low amounts. Additionally, the accommodation facilities, especially in the case of the immigrants to Qatar, were quite poor. The immigrants worked in hazardous and risky environments most of the times. Some, in order to keep them still working, had their travel documents impounded by their employers or agents. The migrants' accounts from the study presented the idea that the essential elements needed to demean a worker, but keep them working if they wanted to survive were very much present. These conditions also made a case for human rights infringements and abuse of labour. Unfortunately, any attempt by the immigrants to report such infractions to authorities in Qatar were easily neutralized, and the immigrants rather had themselves detained for reasons about which they had no idea.

The consequences of these kinds of treatment were that the immigrants were financially incapacitated to move out of their situations even if they decide so to do. They did not have that much money to travel back home to Ghana, let alone travel elsewhere. Many of these migrants had a standing contract with their employers to work for a stipulated number of years during which they could not abandon their jobs. While the working conditions were unfair and merited the rescission of their contract, taking such action only worsened their conditions because they must continue the jobs to make the small income they need to survive. Sometimes, they were just coerced to continue the work in accordance with the contract. The combined effect of all this was that, the Ghanaian immigrant workers were 'trapped' and made very immobile.

The findings from the study showed that not even the migration networks that the immigrants had was up to the task of setting them free in their 'trapped' conditions. Family, friends, travel agents, and recruitment agents had extremely little help to give (if they had any at all). Some family members, when in the position to help financially did so, but this was limited. So, many of the immigrants had to endure till the due time to move out of the 'trapped' conditions.

In spite of the extreme negatives, very limited chance existed for someone in Qatar to move out of the 'trapped' conditions after enduring and agitating feverishly against the unfair manner in which he and other immigrants had been treated. There was only one case where a migrants' transfer to a new working area gave him a little financial boost from which he garnered funds for his timely return. Besides this, he was able to send remittances to Ghana from the income he made. Similar to this case, a domestic worker in Saudi Arabia, after enduring hardships and having been successful with her transfer, made enough money to remit her family in Ghana. Her case was an outlier that seemed possible only after the immigrant gets successfully transferred to a better employment. Otherwise, the 'trapped migration' attracts quick attention because of its prominence in the migration discourse.

The study revealed the unbridled quest of the trapped Ghanaian migrants to return to Ghana, albeit difficult. Given the first opportunity, all the migrants involved in the study would return home. Still, they were not able to do so immediately; there were options to think about. Some of the migrants would risk every financial benefit they may have accrued in order to return to Ghana. Some wished to return, but had to work and save a little money to afford their return, or finish serving their term of

work and have their travel documents released to them in order to return. Under intense entrapment, some of the migrants almost lost the hope of return and succumbed to the 'trapped' conditions; perhaps, the day would come when they would be able to return. So, much of the effort to return was essentially dependent on the navigation strategies of the trapped migrants. It is revealing from the study that 9 out of the 30 'trapped migrants' were still 'trapped' in migration, mostly, in Qatar and Saudi Arabia. This gives the cue that, there are possibly a fair number of Ghanaians who are still 'trapped' in migration in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and Libya.

8.3 Conclusion

This study makes a strong case that there is such phenomenon as 'trapped migration' which enhances the discourse on migration. This study presents the nuances in the experiences of some migrants to mark a fine departure from other well-known migrant forms, such as stranded migrants. In this specific study, the definition of 'trapped migration' as, "the process of migration that eventually plants migrants into difficulties that make them incapable of return" is affirmed by the circumstances in which the migrants engaged in the study found themselves.

This study has shown that the migration flow from Ghana to Libya, especially by road, is a recipe for trapped migration. If migrants do not die in the desert land, they dissipate their financial resources by the time they get to Libya. The economic conditions there are not favourable enough, especially, for black Africans. Without the financial capacity, returning to Ghana is a big challenge. The beginning of

financial incapacity of the migrant marks the initiation of trapped migration. This is so since the migrant has to work and endure hardship to save some money to return. Yet, in this trajectory, the hope of making enough money to afford the return could for a long time remain a hope. Also, there were experiences of migrants in this study who were trapped in Qatar and Saudi Arabia. In this aspect of the migration, the prospects of a good and desirable employment with better pay to enhance the income of the migrants turned out to be the thinking that laid the trap of credulity of the immigrants. The conditions of lack of money, employment in menial jobs, inhumane working environment and debased accommodation facilities were commonplace. Employers or recruitment agencies and the Ghanaian immigrant workers assumed a master-servant relationship thereby infringing on the rights of the immigrants, and above all, keeping them trapped in migration.

The findings from this study highlights the fact that, 'trapped migrants' are distinguished by the extreme difficulty they face which renders them utterly incapacitated to return to their homeland or origin if they so wanted. The circumstances of 'trapped migrants' in their destinations or transit points leave them immobile with a single option, that is, to work according to the orders of the employer for survival. So, in 'trapped migration', the essential elements needed to demean a worker, but keep them working if they wanted to survive are very potent. For instance, employers and recruitment agencies can get as cruel as to seize the passports and travel documents of immigrants. Very often, the remuneration of immigrant workers is just a paltry sum of money that would not afford them optimal accommodation. Hence, immigrants in this process are in financial distress. The immigrants' choice of accommodation is then likely to be determined by the

employer or agent. Trapped immigrant workers often meet the threat of arrest and detention if they do not have the protection of their employers or 'masters'. For these reasons, the phenomenon of 'trapped migration' is concomitant with modern-day slavery.

Above all, this study contrasts with the regular information received about the prospects of migrating to North Africa (Libya) and the Middle East (Qatar and Saudi Arabia) not only for economic enhancement, but sometimes as a stepping stone to other endowed regions in Europe. The study has revealed the subtle difference between the information received and actual experiences from such migration pieces.

8.4 Recommendations

This section proffers policies or strategies to mitigate the phenomenon of trapped migration. The recommendations are informed by the findings of the study.

First, there is the need for government to beware of the potential threat that 'trapped' migration presents to Ghanaians and demonstrate concern to address it. State institutions in charge of migration of Ghanaians need to be conscious of the phenomenon of trapped migration as to guard against it. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, GIS and other state security apparatuses should demonstrate their concern for trapped migrants by working more to put red flags on unsafe migration processes and destinations or transits. The awareness about

trapped migration should lead to the provision of timely assistance to Ghanaians abroad who have found themselves in 'trapped' conditions and wish to return.

Second, it is important, as a matter of policy, for Ghanaian citizens, regardless of where they find themselves, to be accorded the dignity, protection, and safety they deserve as nationals. In accordance with this, Ghana's international mission must reach every location around the globe where Ghanaians can be found. Not only that, but those missions must be the eye of the state ensuring that citizens' right to protection by the state is given the utmost importance it deserves. Trapped migrants in places like Libya, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia ought to be engaged in a dialogue to understand, at important periods, what their experiences are like and the practical ways to assist them.

Third, steps have to be taken and advanced by the government of Ghana towards bilateral and inter-regional agreements that would seek to bind Ghana and other countries based on their migratory relationship with Ghana. The agreements should consider how Ghanaians can work safely with dignity that allows and nurtures a win-win situation for Ghana and other countries. Where there is need for government to enlist the help of other global institutions for smooth arbitration processes, then that should be done.

Fourth, the GIS, as a matter of urgency, needs to be empowered with sustainable financial and technical capabilities to help them to facilitate the return of trapped Ghanaian migrants. Although, their mandate may not necessarily be on migration of Ghanaians, they ought to be concerned with the inability of Ghanaians to return

after migrating. They should be able to obtain information about the experiences of trapped migrants and contribute to the efforts to have them return to Ghana.

Finally, there is the need to embark on sensitization programmes to educate people and discourage them from embarking on irregular migration across the Sahara Desert and across the Mediterranean Ocean. People need not start this migration process in the first place.

8.5 Suggestion of Areas for Further Studies

A number of studies in the area of 'trapped migration' may be needed to consolidate the meaning of this form of migration. This study alone could not have studied every detail of the phenomenon of 'trapped migration'. As this study has provided a thematic understanding of this form of migration in a qualitative way, further studies are recommended to give an objective and generalized account of the experiences of migrants who are 'trapped' in migration. A more quantitative approach may be adopted to this future study which may also find the proportion of migrants who were assisted to return by other institutional efforts compared to those who returned by their own efforts. The research evidence of this nature can provoke more thoughtful discussions on policies that can improve the responsibilities of Ghanaian state institutions for Ghanaian migrants.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR 'TRAPPED' MIGRANTS

KEY QUESTIONS

1. What is the name of your town of residence in Ghana?
2. Were you employed before you left Ghana? If yes, what was the name of your occupation?
3. Was there any point in your migration when you were employed? If yes, what was the name of your occupation?
4. Are you currently employed? And what is the nature of your employment after you returned to Ghana?
5. Why did you migrate from Ghana to North Africa or Middle East (precisely Libya, Qatar or Saudi Arabia, as applies)?
6. What were the things that facilitated your migration to North Africa or Middle East?
7. Did you anticipate, or not, that the journey would be easier than it actually was? Why did you have that anticipation?
8. Why was your actual journey easier/more difficult than you anticipated? How did it happen ?
9. What route of migration did you choose? How did you decide on that route?
10. Would you agree that the distance between Ghana and North Africa or Middle East and the cost involved influenced your decision to migrate to North Africa or Middle East? Why?
11. Against all the difficulties associated with the migration, give the reasons that contributed to any success in your journey?
12. From the time you reached your destination, what were your experiences with residence and work?
13. What would you say was the most critical point of what you experienced at your destination?
14. Given another chance if you were in Ghana, would you embark on this journey again?

15. Do you wish to return to Ghana, and why?
16. What have you done in reaction to the circumstances you faced at your destination?
17. How did you navigate your way through to your current circumstances?
18. Were you assisted by any institution to take any decision to address any difficulty you encountered at your destination?
19. How would you describe the circumstances in which you find yourself currently?
20. Would you say that those institutions have made any impact on you to bring you to your current circumstances?
21. What do you wish should be done to assist migrants like you?

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR GIS OFFICIAL

My name is Alice Gyasi- Mensah, a PhD year four student with the University of Ghana, Legon, Centre for Migration Studies. As part of the requirement for the PhD, I am undertaking a research solely for academic purposes. It is not funded by any organisation.

The Project Title: NEGOTIATING RETURN: THE DILEMMA OF THE 'TRAPPED'MIGRANT.

This interview guide seeks to provide a deeper understanding of 'trapped migration' by engaging stakeholders in the business of migration through interviews. This will help in making analysis and drawing conclusions. Such stakeholders include the migration governance institutions (IOM and GIS) in Ghana as well as the migrants themselves.

Please note that all ethical issues will be addressed. There will be the element of confidentiality and anonymity and cases will be represented with pseudonyms (different names will be given to respondents). It is purely voluntary and so if at any time the respondent wants to stop the interview, he/she is free to do so. Please also note that it is an in-depth interview and the researcher is interested in details.

This interview guide is prepared particularly for the GIS. The researcher seeks to know if the GIS knows about the trapped migrant (ie. migrants 'trapped' in transit and destination countries, specifically economic or labor migrants who are in the Middle East (Qatar, Saudi Arabia) and North Africa (Libya) in search for greener pastures but who for one reason or the other cannot return to their home countries) and also of some interventions so far that has been undertaken to control the problem.

The researcher is particularly interested in the experiences, the challenges, structural influences in enhancing survival of 'trapped migrants' or otherwise.

INSTITUTIONAL DATA

1. Name of Organisation and Representative …….
2. Country……
3. Length of years of operations in Ghana ……....
4. What categories of migrants have you encountered? .....
5. Have you encountered 'trapped migrants'? ……
6. What was your first encounter with 'trapped migrants' …….
7. What are some of the Interventions made...……

KEY QUESTIONS

1. What in your experiential encounter are the major reasons that lead migrants into situations that make them 'trapped'? a. Conflict Situations b. Economic Reasons c. Social Reasons d. Natural disasters/ Humanitarian Reasons d. Other, explain …….
2. Have you ever been involved in the return to Ghana of migrants whose situations can be defined as having been trapped at their point of destination? If yes,
    - Please cite some of the instances in which this was done.
    - How were they reintegrated into their societies after they were aided back home?
    - What were some of the challenges that were encountered and how did GIS overcome some of these challenges?
3. What are the major destinations where Ghanaian migrants get 'trapped' the most?
4. Is there a policy framework that regulates the activities of 'trapped migrants'? If yes,
    - Please indicate the year within which it was effected?
    - How do you assess such regulations?
    - How effective has it been over the years?

If No,

- Why is there no such framework since it is becoming a major issue globally?
- Are there any plans for such a framework?

5. Which areas within the migration stratification are human beings likely to be 'trapped' the most? a. Low paid income group or the working class b. amongst the educated and middle class c. Other, please state...……..
6. Many of the 'trapped migrants' interviewed are irregular migrants; please indicate what GIS is doing to curb the menace of irregular migration?
7. Has Globalisation played a role in contributing to migrants getting 'trapped' in destination or transit countries or has it reduced rates at which this occurrence happens? What of securitisation of Borders?
8. What role is GIS playing in ensuring that Ghanaian migrants 'trapped' in North Africa and the Middle East are assisted to return? Has GIS initiated any dialogues with the leaders of these countries to protect the rights of immigrants?
9. How would you assess the international labour camps springing up in North Africa and the Middle East? How do you hope to help end the human rights abuses that happen in such camps? What role is the GIS playing in assisting international Ghanaian domestic workers who are abused in the homes of their employers in destination countries?
10. Is GIS as an institution aware of Camps dubbed as Labour camps in North Africa and the Middle East?
11. Are there any regulatory mechanisms for recruitment agencies in Ghana that recruit migrants for the labour camps in North African and Middle Eastern countries?
    - What are some of these mechanisms if this is the case?
    - If not, why is there no such regulatory mechanism?
12. Do you have anything else that you may want to add?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR IOM OFFICIAL

My name is Alice Gyasi- Mensah, a PhD year four student with the University of Ghana, Legon, Centre for Migration Studies. As part of the requirement for the PhD, I am undertaking a research solely for academic purposes. It is not funded by any organisation.

The Project Title: NEGOTIATING RETURN: THE DILEMMA OF THE 'TRAPPED' MIGRANT.

This interview guide seeks to provide a deeper understanding of 'trapped migration' by engaging stakeholders in the business of migration through interviews. This will help in making analysis and drawing conclusions. Such stakeholders include the migration governance institutions (IOM and GIS) in Ghana as well as the migrants themselves.

Please note that all ethical issues will be addressed. There will be the element of confidentiality and anonymity and cases will be represented with pseudonyms (different names will be given to respondents). It is purely voluntary and so if at any time the respondent wants to stop the interview, he/she is free to do so. Please also note that it is an in-depth interview and the researcher is interested in details.

This interview guide is prepared particularly for the IOM. The researcher seeks to know if the IOM knows about the trapped migrant (ie. migrants 'trapped' in transit and destination countries, specifically economic or labor migrants who are in the Middle East (Quatar, Saudi Arabia) and North Africa (Libya) in search for greener pastures but who for one reason or the other cannot return to their home countries) and also of some interventions so far that has been undertaken to control the problem.

The researcher is particularly interested in the experiences, the challenges, structural influences in enhancing survival of 'trapped migrants' or otherwise etc.

INSTITUTIONAL DATA

8. Name of Organisation and Representative …….
9. Country……
10. Length of years of operations in Ghana ……....
11. First Encounter with 'trapped migrants' …….
12. What are some of the Interventions made...……

KEY QUESTIONS

13. What in your opinion are the major reasons that lead migrants into situations that makes them trapped? a. Conflict Situations b. Economic Reasons c. Social Reasons d. Natural disasters/ Humanitarian Reasons d. Other, explain …….
14. Have you ever assisted trapped migrants to return to Ghana? If yes,
    - Please cite some of the instances in which this was done.
    - How were they reintegrated into their societies after they were aided back home?
    - What were some of the challenges that was encountered and how did IOM overcome some of these challenges?
15. What are the major destinations where Ghanaian migrants get 'trapped' the most?
16. Is there a policy framework that regulates the activities of trapped migrants? If yes,
    - Please indicate the year within which it was effected?
    - How do you assess such regulations?
    - How effective has it been over the years?

    If No,

    - Why is there no such framework since it is becoming a major issue globally.
    - Are there any plans for such a framework?

17. Which areas within the migration stratification are human beings likely to be trapped the most? a. Low paid income group or the working class b. amongst the educated and middle class c. Other please state..……..
18. What is the level of commitment of member countries in assisting trapped migrants?
19. Has Globalisation played a role in contributing to migrants getting trapped in destination or transit countries or has it reduced rates at which this occurrence happens? What of securitisation of border of countries?
20. What role is IOM playing in ensuring that African migrants trapped in North Africa and the Middle East are assisted to return? Has IOM initiated any dialogues with the leaders of these countries to protect the rights of immigrants?
21. How would you assess the international labour camps springing up in North Africa and the Middle East? How do you hope to help end the human rights abuses that happen in such camps? What role does the IOM play in assisting international domestic workers who are abused in the homes of their employers?
22. Do you have anything else that you may want to add?