

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES



RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY OF SLUM DWELLERS IN
METROPOLITAN ACCRA

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my research work, carried out in the Department of Geography and Resource Development, University of Ghana. All the references cited in this work have been duly acknowledged, and I am solely responsible for all errors found in it.

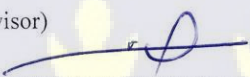
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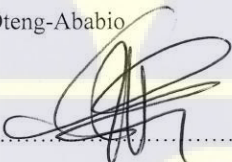
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ABSTRACT

It is trite knowledge that urban dwellers face several residential challenges in African cities including Accra. While on that, how the poor slum dweller navigates through this rough and complex terrain of residential mobility remains very patchy in the context of African literature. This study explored the typology of slums and the factors influencing the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama in the Accra Metropolis. The study relied on the triangulation of the LifeCourse and Neighbourhood Change theories as a theoretical guide to explore the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers. The thesis adopted a qualitative approach which focused on gathering retrospective interviews on residential mobility experiences of slum dwellers, traditional authorities and state and non-state actors. Additionally, observations and digital images were taken to support the data. The study argues for slums to be accepted as a dominant mode of urban production through the slum 'continuum' concept and further proposes 4 new typologies of slums. The study also revealed that slum dwellers' mobility was influenced by biographical, socio-economic (Life-stage), and neighbourhood factors. Gender, household size, and educational levels were found to increase the propensity for residential mobility among slum dwellers. However, as slum dwellers get older, the propensity to make residential moves reduces. Also, life-stage factors, such as childbirth, change in employment, change in marital status, and homeownership caused disequilibrium in the residential needs leading to residential adjustments to meet residential needs. Homeowners were firmly rooted, while renters had a higher propensity to move, but mostly within the same neighborhood. However, most slum dwellers became adjusted stayers rather than relocating to new neighborhoods due to the deep sense of identity and attachment to their communities as a result of the strong social networks, family and friends, religion, and business investments. The study concludes that generally, slum dwellers in both study areas appear to be more rooted and stable in their

residential moving behavior. The study recommends that the government accept slums as a dominant form of neighbourhood production and integrate slum dwellers into the formal system of utility payment. The study also recommends a new focus on private individual affordable housebuilders in the National Urban Housing Policy. Lastly, the government, to achieve an inclusive city, slum upgrading and redevelopment agenda, must develop its plans collaborating with the local alternative government structures in slums.



DEDICATION

To the memory of my late father, Mr. Thomas Nelson Koku Odikro. Continue to rest peacefully with your Maker.

&

My beloved mother, Mary Yaa Odikro, thank you for your encouragement and prayers throughout the completion of this work.



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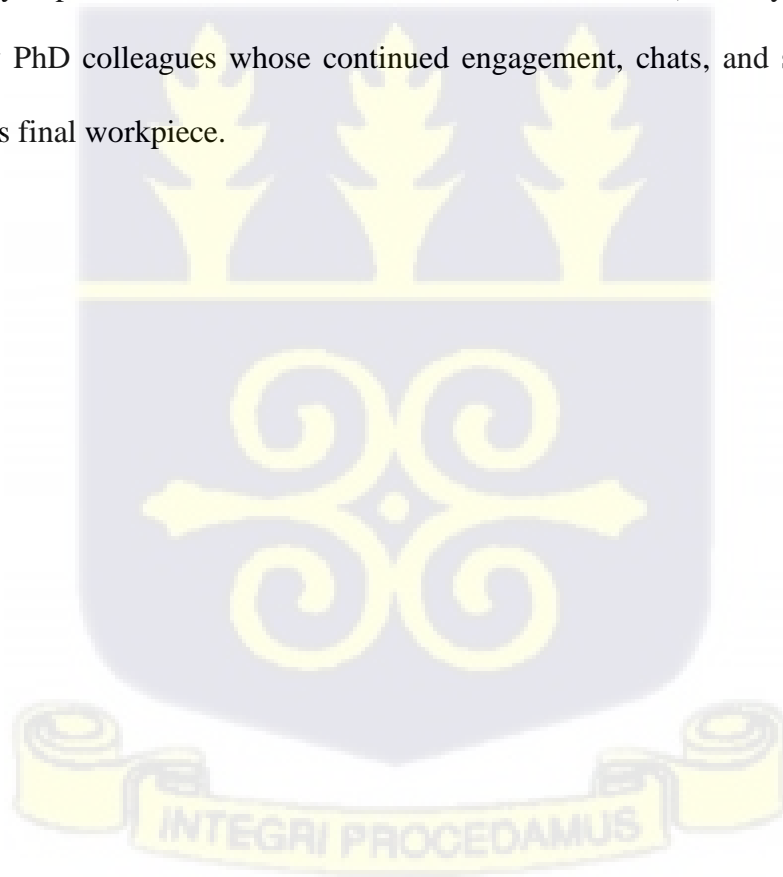


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ACRONYMS/ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| AEMA | Ayawaso East Municipal Assembly |
| AMA | Accra Metropolitan Area |
| CBD | Central Business District |
| CBO | Community-Based Organization |
| COHRE | Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions |
| EA | Enumeration Area |
| ERP | Economic Recovery Program |
| FBO | Faith-Based Organization |
| GAMA | Greater Accra Metropolitan Area |
| GSS | Ghana Statistical Service |
| ISDF | Informal Settlements Development Facility |
| ISSER | Institute of Statistical, Social and Economic Research |
| LC | LifeCourse |
| LUSPA | Land Use Spatial Planning Authority |
| MSA | Metropolitan Statistical Area |
| NGO | Non-governmental Organization |
| PHC | Population and Housing Census |
| RM | Residential Mobility |
| SDG | Sustainable Development Goals |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNCHS | United Nations Centre for Human Settlements |
| UNHSP | United Nations Human Settlement Programme |

CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Residential mobility remains one of the most conspicuous forms of mobility in cities. The questions of where and why people move remain cardinal issues for city authorities and governments for planning and development purposes as the rate of urbanization continues to rise significantly in the Global South (Myers & Myers, 2020; UN Department of Public Information, 2018). Over 54 per cent of the global population lives in urban areas which is expected to continue (UN-Habitat, 2018). Researchers have identified residential mobility's role in understanding population dynamics in cities (Coulter, Ham, & Findlay, 2016). Residential mobility is the movement of populations within a metropolitan area or neighbourhood (Li & Mao, 2017). In cities where these movements are not properly guarded and planned, it could lead to several challenges including slum development and city sprawl. This relationship between slum developments and residential mobility has not been adequately explored, especially in developing nations where the situation is rife.

Close to 1 billion of the world's population resides in slums mostly in the global south, and this is projected to triple by 2050 (Friesen, Taubenböck, Wurm, & Pelz, 2019; Jorgenson & Rice, 2016). These projections raise questions about the relationship between slum proliferation and residential moving choices. The relationship is bidirectional as moving decisions in slums could lead to slum upgrading while residential moving decisions may shape the typology and characteristics of different slums. Slums per the United Nations, are defined as communities that lack access to improved water, improved sanitation, enough

living area, durable housing, and security of tenure (UN-Habitat, 2006). These five key factors show how slums vary significantly in their levels of deprivation and typology that shape moving decisions. Studies on residential mobility in the Global South are multidimensional due to the geographical disparities in the socio-economic, political, and environmental factors. These factors present unique contexts for different countries in the Global South cutting across urbanization, inequality, and informality, which have largely shaped the region's growth and development. Access to affordable housing, high cost of rents, inadequate infrastructures, and livelihoods are major drivers of residential mobility in the Global South (Agunbiade et al. 2013; Dupont, 2007; Huchzermeyer, 2008). Many low-income settlers in cities struggle to access decent accommodation. For example, Patel and Arputham (2007) argue that the Dharavi slum in Mumbai, India continues to house over a million people due to the unfavorable conditions to access formal housing in the city. Due to its prime location close to a major airport, plans to redevelop the slum often exclude the concerns of the dwellers. Such actions lead to unjustified displacements and relocation of the poorest in the city to other informal settlements. Similarly, in Nigeria, Agunbiade et al. (2013) argue that many low-income workers are forced into informal settlements such as the Makoko slum in Lagos due to tenure insecurity and inadequate formal housing policies in the city. Others have argued that the rapid urban expansions witnessed as sprawl in most cities in the Global South result in inadequate affordable housing and high cost of rents (Dupont, 2007; Huchzermeyer, 2008). Huchzermeyer (2008) argues that the Kibera slum witnesses high population turnover due to economic pressures that force people to seek cheaper accommodation in the slums and peripheries. Further, new climatic vulnerabilities have influenced residential mobility decisions in certain cities in the Global South. For example, due to the recurrent flooding and erosion along coastal Barisal in Bangladesh and the river bank erosion of the Mekong Delta in Vietnam many of its residents are displaced and forced

to find new accommodation (Dang et al., 2003; Islam, 2016). Kinship and social networks have also been found to play key roles in relocation decisions in the Global South (Ballesteros, 2010; Awumbila et al., 2014). Urbanization processes such as gentrification and displacements have also led to relocation decisions in cities. The classical case of the expectations of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil during the 2014 World Cup and 2016 Olympics events saw the evictions and displacements of low-income residents in slums (favelas in Brazil) such as Vila Autodromo situated close to the Olympic park (Sachez et al., 2013). Teppo and Millstein (2015) also found that the re-development of urban areas such as Woodstock through gentrification has displaced many low-income people, pushing them to seek alternative accommodation in the peripheries and disrupting the social networks and daily livelihoods.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, ongoing insurgencies including terrorism, kidnappings and abductions have led to residential displacement of families and individuals. As noted in the UN-FAO (2024) report close to 44 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa are forcefully displaced or flee from their homes due to violent extremism, political instability, inter-communal clashes over land as well as climate-induced factors. However, how these displaced persons respond to finding new homes as refugees, asylum seekers or returnees remains sketchy in the literature. These factors call for a deeper understanding of residential mobility studies in the Sub-Saharan Region, especially among slum dwellers.

This study opines that a fundamental issue worth exploring to deal with slums in developing countries is a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of slum dwellers' residential

mobility behavior. This study provides insights into the relationship between slum typologies and residential mobility.

Slums suffer deeply from poor housing, poverty, indecent and overcrowded conditions, and limited access to basic amenities (Satterthwaite, 2014; Addo, 2014). The situation is further exacerbated by the historically failed approaches by governments to deal with the myriad of challenges including affordable housing (Fox, 2014). The rising housing deficit in the global south has prompted attention from researchers as captured in the New Urban Agenda. This agenda targets achieving housing sufficiency in cities through sustainable urban development guided by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) 1 and 11. The target of the goal includes the eradication of poverty (SDG 1), as well as providing adequate housing and basic services and upgrading urban slums (SDG 1) (Watcher, Hoek-Smit, & Kim, 2018). While these calls offer potential solutions to the urban housing crisis, the literature on residential mobility in the global south lacks comprehensive insights into how urban residents navigate this issue. Strategies to secure housing and other micro and macro factors influencing their decisions to stay, move, or adjust remain inadequately addressed (Badmos et al., 2020; Bertrand & Delaunay, 2005; Patel, et al., 2020). The residential mobility behavior and dynamics are even sketchier among slum households (Greenlee, 2019; Morris, Manley, & Sabel, 2018; Mahabir et al., 2016) and need deliberate research attention.

Residential mobility (RM) has been defined variously depending on the context in which it is examined. Its origin is traced to the pioneering work of Rossi (1955), which saw RM as a way in which various families adjust to their housing needs to accommodate the changes that occur along the family lifecycle (Van Beckhoven, Bolt, & Van Kempen, 2009). Morris,

Manley, and Sabel (2018) also explained that the process of RM is not straightforward, but rather one that hinges on individual preferences, resources, opportunities, and constraints. The factors influencing residential mobility have been grouped into three (3) categories (Morris et al., 2018), namely, individual/personal, life events, cultural and social preferences. These factors (detailed in Chapter 2) trigger the residential mobility decisions of individuals and households. These conditions could change from simple to complex relations that occur along the LifeCourse of people, which account for the difficulties encountered by researchers in conceptualizing RM.

Since its inception, RM research has largely followed 3 major theoretical and analytical approaches including the lifecycle, LifeCourse, and neighbourhood changes. These theoretical paths resonate with the three (3) groups of factors influencing residential mobility (Morris et al., 2018) (Theories discussed in detail in Chapter 2). The Lifecycle approach focuses more specifically on how individual biographical factors influence residential mobility decision-making (Rossi, 1955). The second approach, the LifeCourse approach, focuses on “lives within the context of families, societies and historical time” (Kok, 2007, p.204). Evidence from new research shows a strong relationship between neighbourhood changes and residential mobility (Feijten & van Ham, 2009; Parkes, Kearns, & Atkinson, 2002; van Ham & Clark, 2009). This research, however, does not consider the three approaches as mutually exclusive but rather complementary to dealing with the complex nature of residential mobility in urban slums in the African context. The literature review showed that RM research has largely followed the positivist paradigm, irrespective of the approaches discussed (Manja et al 2016; Clark & Coulter, 2015; Hedman, 2011). These studies relied on longitudinal panel survey data which were mostly available in the context of

the Global North. Researchers have relied on retrospective data in the Global South, where such data are unreliable or absent in most cases. Though not an entirely new research design, most retrospective studies have also followed the positivist paradigm gathering retrospective quantitative data. This study will be among the few to adopt an interpretive paradigm using retrospective qualitative data to explore the RM experiences of slum dwellers in Accra, Ghana.

1.2 The Problem Statement

The Global South, where most of the projected 3 billion additions to the urban population are expected (UN-Habitat, 2018), would also bring many challenges to urban authorities. Among these challenges is the rapid rate of urbanization and the necessity to meet the urban infrastructural needs, particularly those of slum populations in sub-Saharan Africa. As slum dwellers navigate the complexities of urban life, particularly in their quest for residential 'freedom', there has been limited academic attention given to the interplay between two prevalent phenomena: residential mobility and slums in the region. This necessitates a deeper exploration of the urbanization process and its impact on the residential mobility of slum dwellers.

In Ghana, the number of people who continue to move into urban areas from rural areas, mainly for economic reasons is on the rise (Awumbila, Owusu, & Teye, 2014; Diao, Magalhaes, & Silver, 2019). By 2012, over 4.7 million people had moved from rural to urban areas, with over 50 per cent of the population living in urban areas (Molini and Paci, 2015). Provisional results from the 2021 Population and Housing Census (PHC) make Accra the most populous region with a population of over 5.4 million and 1,236 persons per square kilometre (Ghana Statistical Service, 2021). This has profound implications for urban

planning, as the city for years, has struggled with meeting the infrastructural needs of its dwellers (Owusu, 2008; Oteng-Ababio & Agyemang, 2012; Owusu & Oteng-Ababio, 2015). Common challenges include the rapid sprawling of peri-urban areas and land conflicts, rising land and rent costs, urban poverty, population growth, and inadequate housing (Asafo, 2020; Fosu, 2021; Owusu, 2013) have all been argued as the drivers of the slum proliferation (Adi & Ayambire, 2022; Gilbert, 2007; 2009; Simon, 2011). The country's housing deficit stands at an increasing high of 1.8 million, indicating the government's failure to meet the annual 100,000 units supply (CAHF, 2016). The current 40,000 annual supply is primarily filled by private real estate companies which prices out the majority of poor urbanites; as such, the problem of access to housing persists in the city of Accra especially (World Bank Group, 2018). As such, many urbanites are pushed into alternative, cheaper housing conditions primarily found in informal settlements and slums where conditions are deplorable and access to social amenities is lacking. Arguello, Grant, Oteng-Ababio, & Ayele (2013) described the situation of Korle Gonno as a degrading informal Indigenous neighbourhood from overcrowding and high poverty, with 6-9 persons per room on average and income levels of 1-2 dollars per day. The situation, however, mirrors that of most slums in the city as they share similar characteristics. Much of the urbanization literature in Ghana and Accra mostly explored slum growth, the factors influencing their growth (Fox, 2014; Jones, 2017; Oppong, Mayer, & Oren, 2015; Stacey & Lund, 2016), and the socio-economic implications on urban development, yet very little is established on the interplay between residential mobility in urban Accra and the dynamics of life in slums.

The challenges associated with rapid urbanization have led to the proliferation of slums across the capital. According to Paller (2012), more than 5.5 million people live in slums in Ghana,

with the majority living in the capital Accra. Indeed, it is estimated that a total of 125 informal settlements and slums could be counted in the capital city, with many of them at a matured stage of development, accounting for 38% and 16% of the city population and land area coverage respectively (UN-Habitat, 2011). Slums have become a typical scene in Accra where endemic urban poverty and the high cost of land and housing have pushed poor migrants to congregate in these areas (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). The proliferation of slums in Accra persists, with characteristics that continually make it an attractive zone (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). The informal sector continues to be a critical driver of the city's economy, employing many slum dwellers. Their role in providing and sustaining the city's growth cannot be overemphasized, as has been argued in the case of Agbogbloshie, a slum area that employs over 6000 people, and is glorified for its innovation in dealing with tons of e-waste generated in the city of Accra and beyond (Oteng-Ababio, 2014; Oteng-Ababio, van der Velden, & Taylor, 2020).

The various government interventions in dealing with slums have not been successful, including the policy of benign neglect, forced eviction and slum clearance, resettlement programs and slum upgrading (Arimah, 2011; Beall et al., 2010; Jones, 2017). The slums in Accra vary significantly in size, access to essential resources, and tenure security (Engstrom et al., 2019; Jankowska, Weeks, & Engstrom, 2011; Watcher et al., 2018). Based on access to primary resources and legal recognition/tenure security, Paller (2012) classified slums in Accra into 3 including formally recognized, unrecognized and those under threat of eviction. However, the extent to which these typologies represent the dynamic state of slums and influence the residential mobility decisions of the dwellers has not been adequately explored.

Several factors influence the residential mobility choices of people in urban areas especially in Accra. Critical among these factors include the personal characteristics of the individual and his or her household, LifeCourse events, and the characteristics of the neighbourhood (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2012; Basolo & Yerena, 2017; Morris et al., 2018). These factors directly affect the residential decision-making behavior of people at the micro or individual level. However, there are also macro-level conditions that influence the residential moving choices of the individual (Gomaa, 2023). At the micro level, few studies attempt to broaden our knowledge of the residential moving behavior of urban dwellers. Gyimah (2001) and Ardayfio-schandorf (2012) adduced several factors as accounting for the increasing residential mobility among migrant and indigenous populations. Factors such as family structure and lifecycle, job locations and work opportunities, housing, social ties, and environment influence decisions on residential relocations. Interestingly, both studies found that residential mobility is fluid and frequent among the population in Accra. The studies also found that migrant households tend to change residence more frequently as compared with indigenous households which they consider as more stable. As noted by Gyimah (2001), the study found that residential mobility was very frequent at an average of 2 moves among first-time migrants in the city. However, the frequency of moves declines with increased years of stay as they become more stable.

These studies have focused mostly on why people move in the city, however, in slums such as Nima and Old Fadama where people are stacked and rooted, living in precarious and degrading environmental conditions, neighbourhood conditions such as strong kinship and cultural ties (Owusu et al., 2008), very little is known on its influence on residential mobility decisions. As such, a complex interplay of socioeconomic, biographical, and neighbourhood

factors may influence Residential Mobility behavior in urban informal and slum settlements. As noted by the few existing studies enumerated, in the context of Accra, slums present a stark contrast in their historical, social, and spatial conditions. Yet, the dynamics of residential mobility remain underexplored.

Yakubu and Spocter's (2020) study in Tamale revealed that people's residential moving decisions were based on mistrust and sociocultural practices embedded in spiritual interpretation of life events. In the city of Takoradi, Yankson et al., (2017), found that the reason for the residential mobility in the new Oil City was the excess demand for housing over the supply, leading to the high cost of rent. Data from the GSS (2014) report shows that the number of urban dwellers in Accra renting, constituted 52 percent, while owner-occupied accounted for 28 percent and others make up 20 percent. This data has implications for residential mobility decision-making. It is noted that renters make many residential moves compared to homeowners (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2012). In a city where rental costs have gone so high that ordinary citizens are unable to afford the demand for years of rent advance, they resort to alternative means of accommodation mostly in slums and informal settlements.

In Accra, slums like Nima and Old Fadama are characterized by deteriorating infrastructure, overpopulation, and high socio-economic vulnerability (Agyei-Mensah & Owusu, 2012; Farouk & Lawson, 2014; Fiasorgbor, 2013; Owusu, Agyei-Mensah, & Lund, 2008; Richmond, 2019; Stacey, 2018; Yorgri & Hong, 2021). However, despite these challenges, many slum dwellers showed remarkable rootedness. This paradox raises critical questions about the factors influencing the stability of slum dwellers' mobility in the slums: Why do

slum dwellers in such deplorable conditions choose to stay rather than relocate? What implications does this have for urban development and policy-making in Ghana?

Furthermore, top-down tactics that ignore the lived experiences and choices of slum inhabitants are frequently used in urban planning initiatives predicated on assumptions about their desire to relocate. Interventions in slums run the danger of sustaining marginalization and weakening community resilience in urban slums in the absence of empirical data on the complex dynamics driving residential mobility and immobility. This study, using two known slums, Nima and Old Fadama, explored the factors influencing the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers.

1.3 Research Objective

This study broadly aimed at understanding the nature of slum development and explored the factors influencing the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers. The specific objectives are as follows:

1. To explore the typology of slums and the nexus with residential mobility in Metropolitan Accra.
2. To analyse the biographical factors potentiating the residential mobility of slum dwellers.
3. To assess the socio-economic effect of residential mobility on slum dwellers.
4. To explore the influence of neighbourhood characteristics on residential mobility in slums

1.4 Research Questions

This study was guided by the research question, what slum typologies exist, and what factors influence the residential mobility patterns of slum dwellers in Accra?. The specific research questions are as follows:

1. Do slum typologies influence people's residential choices in the city of Accra?
2. What biographical attributes trigger residential mobility decisions in slums?
3. What socio-economic stressors in the LifeCourse of slum dwellers influence their decisions to stay or relocate from the slum?
4. What slum neighbourhood conditions trigger the residential mobility decisions of slum dwellers?

1.5 Thesis Structure

This thesis was structured into 8 chapters with two major divisions. The first division made up of chapters 1 to 3 of the study provided insights into the neglected relationship between residential mobility and slum development and proliferation. It further provided a deeper understanding of the residential mobility situation that faces slum dwellers who constitute a sect of the urban population, especially, in sub-Saharan Africa. The section, finally reviewed related literature on the residential mobility concept, theories that drive RM research, the study areas, and the methodology employed. The second aspect of the work was devoted to providing the empirical results from the data analysis and the incorporation of state-of-the-art literature to support or refute the study's findings. This focused on creating a new typology of slums in Accra, exploring how slum dwellers' biographical factors, socio-economic

conditions, and neighbourhood characteristics influence residential mobility decision-making. The remaining stand-alone chapters are further discussed as follows.

Chapter Two focused on reviewing the literature to build on existing debates in the field of residential mobility. The chapter dealt with conceptual interpretations of residential mobility and how it relates to the mobility behavior of slum dwellers. Further, the chapter discussed the drivers of residential mobility and the approaches adopted in RM studies since its introduction. The relationship between residential mobility and slum proliferation was also explored. Finally, the chapter discussed the historical development of slums, government approaches to dealing with them and suggested sustainable measures to integrate slums into proper governance structures. The second aspect of the chapter sought to examine theoretical approaches underpinning RM research and how the conceptualization of both LifeCourse and Neighbourhood theories helped to unravel the RM behavior of slum dwellers.

Chapter Three explored the methodological issues relating to the study. First, the chapter provided contextual details on the study area (Accra Metropolitan) with a focus on the slum communities selected for the study which includes Nima and Old Fadama. Specifically, the chapter further explored the historical development of the study areas, physical characteristics, demographical change, socio-economic status, developmental challenges, and new dynamics occurring.

Chapter 4 presented the empirical results from the data analysis on the first research question which states, ‘Do slum typologies influence people’s residential mobility choices in the city of Accra? The chapter developed a new typology of slums in the city of Accra based on a refined definition of slums. It further looked at how slum typologies influence residential mobility choices.

Chapter 5 was devoted to answering the second objective which sought to explore what biographical factors act as stressors that trigger RM among slum dwellers. The chapter analysed slum dwellers' mobility behavior through the theoretical lenses of the LifeCourse and Neighbourhood change to unravel the biographical conditions or factors that may cause residential dissatisfaction among slum households or individuals. The study argued that a mix of these theoretical approaches will produce a more nuanced outcome on RM in slums.

Chapter 6 assessed the third objective of the study which focused on the socio-economic factors that trigger moving decisions among slum dwellers in the study areas. The study pays particular attention to socio-economic factors, as it is believed to be one of the most complex situations in slums, and people's survival in the city is strongly tied to their social connections along ethnic lines, religious leanings, as well as their economic activities and status in the community. These factors are plausible trigger points for residential mobility decisions.

Chapter 7 dealt with the fourth objective which sought to understand the neighbourhood characteristics that combine to influence the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers. This was of particular interest to the researcher as parts of these conditions may also be regarded as socio-economic. However, these conditions have seldom been looked at in the context of residential mobility. The chapter, therefore analysed how various neighbourhood conditions either solely or jointly contribute to dissatisfaction among residents in slums, ultimately leading to an increased desire to move residential homes.

Chapter 8 The concluding chapter of the study provides a summary of the key findings under each research objective and provides a concluding statement on each. The chapter also provides recommendations based on the study findings and areas for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORY AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The chapter is dedicated to a review of related literature on the study. It discusses the theories to guide the research and concludes with a conceptual framework. The first section dealt with the literature review focused on defining RM, the concept of Slum Revisited and Contextualizing the Growth of Slums in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area. It argued that residential mobility and migration complement each other in providing a full-scale interpretation of people's moving decisions. Further, the section also discusses the origin of slums and their relative importance to urban Accra. It is argued that slums should be noted as dynamic rather than static entities as this conception has implications for the residential mobility decisions of the slum dwellers. The chapter also reviewed the literature on the theories driving this study. It focused on the LifeCourse and Neighbourhood theories. The review of theories provided the foundational basis to draw a conceptual and analytical framework that guided the discussion of results in the analytical chapters of the study. This chapter was necessary for the study as it provided the scholarly context within which the contributions of this study can be clearly and better appreciated.

2.2 Defining Residential Mobility

The concept of residential mobility is not new in the urban literature, however, for several years it has been a cursorily researched subject matter. Others have looked at residential mobility as synonymous with migration and tend to treat the two subjects together. Migration has, however, received greater attention over the years, especially, with rising interest in

international migration issues theorized as transnationalism and diaspora (King, 2012). Until the realization that defining migration was becoming even more complex, early researchers sought to distinguish the conceptualization of the two (Coulter, Ham, & Findlay, 2016). Distance has been used as a major distinguishing variable between the two terms which both involve mobilities of people from one location to the other. Migration has been linked with long-distance travel beyond regional and national boundaries, with the main motivation being seeking higher education or job opportunities to support livelihoods. Residential mobility, on the other hand, has come to be associated with distance travel mostly to satisfy the housing needs of people (Bailey, 2009; Bailey and Livingston, 2007; Jakubczak, 1989).

The distinction was important to the development and advancement of the field of residential mobility which has since gone through several (re)conceptualizations as well as become an interdisciplinary subject of interest. The multi-disciplinary nature of residential mobility has had both positive and negative implications on the growth of the subject. Positively, residential mobility research has helped in shaping policies on the structure and configuration of the city in physical and social terms. Understanding where and why people choose to stay in an area provides policymakers with information on which areas of the city are in decline for which reason there is increased residential mobility out of such areas. Similarly, areas that continue to attract similar kinds of population, help in understanding the population dynamics as well as the structuration of the society. On the other hand, multi-disciplinary expansions in residential mobility studies have led to a refined definition of the term based on the subject area of the researcher. As such, the term has become nebulous in its usage over time as one can only understand it within the context of use and focus of the research. This creates a conflicting picture of what the concept represents rendering it inadequate in most cases as it

fails to cover all essential aspects that affect residential mobility decision-making. Largely, geographical, and sociological perspectives are the leading influence on residential mobility research. The subject of residential mobility itself leans towards geographical scholarship whereas the frameworks and philosophical underpinnings draw from theories in sociological studies.

Roseman's (1971) definition of residential mobility draws on Rossi's (1955) normative definition of a discrete one-way transition from one dwelling to another. This definition resonates with traditional approaches which conceptualize residential mobility as a linear life cycle and consider age as the driving variable along which people transition into various defined stages of life. Jakubczak (1989, p.5) defines residential mobility as "a move from one dwelling to another within a given local area, often defined as job market" and further defines it as a "Short distance move, within a country or Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)". This definition also followed the earlier limited definition of RM; however, it considers geographical factors as key to understanding the reasons for which the elderly, especially, decide to relocate.

In the study by Geist and McManus (2008), they similarly defined residential mobility as a highly graded life event that is central to the transition to adulthood. Drawing on sociological frameworks, they argue the need to understand geographical residential mobility through a linked lives perspective of families in the LifeCourse approach over the traditional family life-cycle models. Others who similarly defined residential mobility along these lines include also Coulter et al. (2016, p.366) who argued that the definition of residential mobility and immobility be "reconceptualized as relational practices that link lives through time and space

while connecting people to structural conditions”. Again, the background of the lead author is sociology, which influenced their choice of the framework of LifeCourse and argued on how people’s lives are configured by the links and connections through the relationality concept.

All the above definitions, though still relevant for contemporary studies in residential mobility studies, have also faced some criticism with notable changes in contemporary family lives and configuration in the city. As argued by McHugh et al. (1995) many people also engage in short-distance repeated or cyclical residential mobility, and this has not been adequately captured in existing definitions. Based on these considerations, Coulter et al. (2016) propose two forms of residential mobility that have been overlooked by literature, which include residential itinerary and transience. They conceptualized residential itineracy as shifts between multiple homes, as they all function as temporary places of homes for the individual. The main evidence to support this form of residential mobility is borne out of the high rates of divorce, lone parents, and children living with patchwork families. Secondly, residential transience is defined as “occurring when people move in an unstructured fashion between residences (for young adults this often involves using the parental home as a safety net), without having a single centre of gravity” (Stone et al., 2011, cited in Coulter et al., 2016 p. 360). These definitions only reemphasize residential mobility as an active process rather than an event.

This study, however, contends that in slums where friendship and kinship ties remain strong, the links to securing a place to stay have not received much research attention, especially, in the Global South. This study will probe this relation further, to reveal contemporary changes in living arrangements to deepen our understanding of new forms of residential mobility.

In the Global South, however, empirical studies on residential mobility in slums and informal settlements in urban areas have revealed several dynamics. These studies vary greatly regarding their geographical focus, the factors influencing residential mobility decisions, and the implications for growth and development. Studies by Badmos et al. (2020) on the determinants of residential location choices by slum dwellers in the Lagos megacity were conducted in four slums using a mixed-method approach. The study results revealed that the growth in the slum population was largely driven by migration rather than through birth.

Again, the results showed further that slum dwellers stay in slums as a permanent home and not a temporary home. The factors that influenced people's decisions to stay in the slums include gender, housing status, household size, marital status, cheap housing, place of work, number of bedrooms occupied, and attachment to the neighborhood. These factors overlap with the findings of Fattah et al. (2015) who analysed the factors influencing the moving intentions of households in Penang, Malaysia. The study revealed that many households' moving intentions were influenced by factors including age, homeownership, employment, housing type, and socio-economic status of residents. These intentions revealed that residents were dissatisfied with their housing and wish to relocate, however, they are largely constrained by the high costs of rent or mortgage purchase and the cost of moving to a new location. On the contrary, in Lagos, Aliu study focused on the dynamics of residential mobility in the Ojo area of Lagos Megacity, Nigeria which is a low-income area. The study found out that, unlike the factors influencing residential mobility in other cities cited earlier, similar factors including gender, employment status, and neighbourhood conditions did not significantly influence residential mobility in the Ojo neighborhood. However, other factors

such as family formation, economic status, eviction, job change and selling conditions were significant predictors of residential mobility decisions.

These studies have shown that slums have become an integral part of the urbanization ongoing in the global south and any belief that slums can be eradicated from the cities through evictions and demotions may not be realistic. Studies by Albuquerque and Guedes (2021) argued that international agendas such as the cities without slums sent a rather wrong signal to many who interpreted it to mean, eradicating slums from the city. The study results show that there is a need to engage in participatory projects that involve slum dwellers themselves who must participate in the transformation and upgrading of their neighborhoods into liveable and more humane environmental conditions as demonstrated through the Museke Sustainable (MUSSUS) program (Sebambo, 2015). This program aimed at upgrading and transforming the slums in Luanda, Angola's capital city through social housing and its dwellers economic fortunes. Similar projects are replicated all across the sub-region including the Kenyan slum upgrading program (KENSUP) (Sebambo, 2015) which is the transformation and upgrading program for the Kibera slum in Nairobi city, Kenya.

Empirical studies have revealed the importance of residential mobility studies to understanding the growth and development of cities (Agyei-Mensah & Owusu, 2012; Gyimah, 2001; Owusu & Agyei-Mensah, 2011; Sinai, 2001). The findings of most residential mobility studies on the city of Accra have aided in understanding the city's expansions, especially towards the periphery. Residential mobility studies have also influenced the development of useful policies targeting urban development (Acheampong & Anokye, 2013; Andreasen & Agergaard, 2016; Sawyer, 2014). Studies by Andreasen and Agergaard (2016)

revealed that residential mobility is key to the city's expansion. The study findings show that urban residents stay in the inner core of the city area for a long time (Fagerlund, 2010; Sawyer, 2014) however as the desire to become homeowners set in, they move to develop cheaper acquired lands in the periphery of the city in Dar es Salam. These initial developments in the periphery became a strong catalyst to the urban expansions witnessed. These findings are in line with Acheampong & Anokye (2013) whose study in Kumasi, Ghana, using the Alonso model of access-space-trade-off sought to investigate decision by households to live in peri-urban areas of Kumasi. Their study established that factors such family relations, low land price, low house rents, workplace proximity significantly influenced people's decision to stay in the periphery towns of Abrepo and Esreso in Kumasi and noted this development to continue. Residential mobility studies therefore are essential to our understanding of the spatial distribution patterns of urban populations and their segregations as well as the physical expansion of the urban area (Acheampong & Anokye, 2013; Bayoh et al., 2006; Bruch & Mare, 2012).

2.3 The Concept of Slum Revisited

Slums' existence dates as far back in history with the word 'slum' first appearing in the Vaux vocabulary of the Flash language (Davis, 2004, p.12) and rightly so labelled with a negative connotation. The term was seen as synonymous with "racket" or "criminal trade" (Prunty, 1998, p.2). As such, the term broadly was used to describe tenements in industrialized Europe and North America (Gilbert, 2007) that were regarded as substandard conditions and unworthy of human habitation. They were considered places with health threats to their inhabitants as well as an abode for criminals who perpetrate all manner of crimes in the cities. Slums were, therefore, places of stigmatization and stereotyping.

Prunty (1998, p.2) noted that one of the earliest definitions of the term slum was “the practice of hiring ready furnished lodgings and stripping them of the plate, linen and other valuables”. Such definitions and tagging of slums led to two schools of thought about their existence. The first was that slums change people and make them what they are. That is by saying slums end up making people misfits for the society with such characteristics of dirty conditions, dilapidated structures, and immoral characters just as supported by Godwin (1854, p.1) who observed that ‘homes are the manufactories of men; as the home, so what it sends forth’. Similarly, Coleman (1985) believes that where flats used as homes become of substandard conditions, they breed rotten people with criminal tendencies. Secondly, others hold the position that the reverse was somewhat plausible, that is, people made the slum. Slum-making was purely seen as the making of people by choice or conditions they find themselves. Proponents recognized the character of persons as the cause of slum-making while proffering moral reformation as the solution to reforming characters (Gilbert, 2007).

Attempts to objectively define slums have been on the table of slum researchers to date. Slums are only defined in the context of absolute versus relative arguments. Underlain attempts to define slum in absolute terms is the understanding to provide a universal definition with which a single measure of what constitutes a slum would apply irrespective of the context. The UNCHS (2001) definition looked at slums as providing shelter to deprived people living in cities and defined them as places with no access to a) basic municipal services – water, sanitation, waste collection, storm drainage, street lighting, paved footpaths, roads for emergency access b) schools and clinics within easy reach, safe areas for children to play c) places for the community to meet and socialize. This definition was looked at again

and refined by the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat, 2003) to refer to households that lack one of the following a) access to improved water b) improved sanitation c) sufficient living space d) durability of housing e) secure tenure. This has become the most extensively used definition of slum by researchers and practitioners (Adams, 2018; Ishtiyag & Kumar, 2011; Reabetsoe Mpe, 2014; Stoler, Tutu, & Winslow, 2015; Teferi & Newman, 2017).

The definition, however, was criticized because it was limited to only the physical and legal dimensions of slums leaving out issues to do with the social dimensions of slum living (Gilbert, 2007). For example, standards of what constitutes a slum vary across space and time as what may be regarded as a slum in one country may perfectly be an acceptable place of accommodation in another. Again, Gilbert (2007) argues that slums remain anything but homogenous as the level of provision of the amenities listed in the definition may vary between slums. The level of deprivation and access to amenities may vary considerably among slums at different geographical scales (UN-Habitat, 2003; Gilbert 2007). Beyond this criticism, Ezeh et al. (2017) also noted two major issues arising out of this definition. First is the issue that the term slum is largely a construct and could be defined on various parameters (5 parameters in the case of the UN-Habitat definition above) that are difficult to capture in a single definition. As such, the construct of 'slum' may not meet the universal objective. Secondly, the component of the slum as a spatial entity is also missing in the definition as many look at slums as a collection or continuum of dwellings (Engstrom, et al., 2017; Engstrom et al., 2015; Jankowska et al., 2011).

On the other hand, some researchers view slums in relative terms and therefore, advanced arguments against the absolute definition of what constituted slums. As such, criticisms discussed earlier leveled against the UN-Habitat attempt to provide an absolute definition that would fit into those raised by the relative school of thought. The relativity of the construct slum is supported by arguments that slums are not stable across time and space (Fox, 2014; Gilbert, 2009). Slum conditions may further deteriorate or improve over time due to self-help or NGO initiatives or even direct interventions by the state. Again, with changing definitions of the standards that define what structures or neighborhoods constitute slums, the factors that define an area or unit as a slum today may be revised later. The acceptability of sanitation facilities sets a typical example. In Western Europe, at a point in time, sanitation facilities fitted outside were considered acceptable but in contemporary times only indoor sanitation facilities are acceptable to meet sanitation standards (Gilbert, 2007).

Another teething issue in the conceptualization of slums has been about the word 'slum' itself and many consider it as rather pejorative, emotive, and connoted with condemnation and dirt (Flood, 2002). In his writings, he noted that in the West, the term slum is no longer fashionable as it is pejoratively associated with all forms of unacceptable acts in society. Slums denote places with the worst forms of housing conditions and deplorable sanitation, poverty-stricken dwellers, and associated with crime, health outbreaks, violence, and substance abuse. The Cities Alliance (2006) defines slums as 'neglected parts of cities where housing and living conditions are appallingly poor'. This conceptualization has led to many researchers who, conscious of the effects of such negative stereotyping, attempted the coinage of varied alternative names including informal settlements, irregular settlements, spontaneous shelter, self-help housing, squatter, unplanned settlements, and urban villages

(Turner, 1965; Mangin, 1967; Koenigsberger, 1976; Jones, 2017). Gilbert (2007) in his assessment of these alternative terms recognized that they are unable to represent fully the idea and processes involved in defining slums. However, it appears along the line many researchers have resorted to treating informal settlements and slums as synonymous. The UN-Habitat (2012) treats both terms as synonymous as they possess many characteristics that essentially are indistinguishable. Other researchers such as Mahabir et al. (2016) similarly treat both slums and informal settlements as synonymous justifying the point that both are one and have no apparent differences in their representation.

On the other hand, slums have been argued to be different from informal settlements and hence, the two cannot be treated as synonymous terms (Hurskainen, 2004; Rashid, 2009). According to Jones (2017), informal settlements refer to unplanned settlements that are not recognized by the state. In contrast, slums refer to settlements with deplorable and substandard structures, that are most deprived because of poor constructions, age of existence, neglect, and limited availability of amenities. In most cases, informal settlements are illegally established. However, in a few cases, they may have extra-legal approvals from the owners of the land or residents living there. Slums, on the other hand, are not necessarily considered illegal as they may have secured land tenures (UN-Habitat, 2015; Drakakis-Smith, 1981). However, it is admitted that the boundaries between the two terms remain blurred as slums could occur amid informal settlements, whereas an informal settlement could contain some slums depending on scale and context (Jones, 2017).

Slums again have been conceptualized as transitional settlements that are associated with the modernization process of development. As such, proponents contend that as cities undergo

heavy urbanization and industrialization processes that may lead to economic growth, slum dwellers will gradually work themselves out of poverty to their desired life (Frankenhoff, 1967). Others see slums in the entire city growth and transformation process as both a product and a process that are critical to the modernization process (Turner, 1969). This conceptualization looks at slums as the first point of shelter for poor rural-urban migrants. The slums usually found in the inner city are also close to major market centres where businesses are booming and busting (Ezeh et al., 2017; Fox, 2014). Poor slum dwellers work tirelessly with the hope of increasing their economic gains and eventually moving into the formal housing market. However, this is not always the situation, firstly not all modernization processes lead to economic growth. The case is cited for Sub-Saharan Africa which has experienced over two decades of urbanization without accompanying growth (Fox, 2012). Also, the assumption that growth in the economy would trickle down to those in slums may not be entirely accurate as such effects have been detected as rather minimal and insignificant (Buckley and Kalarickal, 2005). This thesis argues that the conceptualization of slums therefore as part of the process of modernization might not entirely hold. The baseline factor that seeks to improve the lives of the poor migrants in the slum is income and until their economic fortunes are improved while they achieve social mobility, growth in urbanization and industrialization are not sufficient conditions to improve slums and their dwellers (Fox, 2014).

The conceptualization of slums is critical to studies on residential mobility as the perceptions of what constitutes slums would also influence governments' response to the needs of slum dwellers and consequently, their decisions on residential mobility. However, the general conceptualization of slums in absolute and relative terms remains crucial to this study as first,

in absolute terms the study would seek to measure how residents respond to the availability or otherwise of specific variables of measure and how that affects their mobility decisions. Also, slum as a relative concept would help build new concepts around the social dimensions as understood and defined by the slum dwellers' own experiences. As slums remain heterogeneous, this study would provide a nuanced understanding of the concept of the slum as held by the people within the context they exist.

2.4 The Challenge of Predicting and Identifying Slums

The previous section of this thesis has sufficiently dealt with the characteristic factors that account for the synonymy of slums and informal settlements. Such confusion may remain difficult to completely overturn, as the usage of both terms is subject to context-specific situations. The lack of clarity on the definition of both terms has implications for their identification and prediction. Against this backdrop, the United Nations revised its basic definition of what constitutes a slum and adopted key features that were aimed at providing quantitatively measurable indicators. However, this thesis identifies that the multi-dimensional nature of slums makes it both a spatial and social issue. Whereas the spatial elements may be quantifiable for an objective measure, that of the social attributes remains a challenge (see Table 3.1 for the definition of each indicator). The definition also gives us the standard guidelines as to what is acceptable as the limits to measure every indicator. These indicators have largely influenced the work of researchers who have sought to objectively predict slum neighborhoods within the city or town (Engstrom et al., 2015; Engstrom et al., 2019; Jankowska et al., 2017). The methods used could be classified broadly into spatial and non-spatial methods (Engstrom et al., 2019; Weeks et al., 2007). The AMA and UN-Habitat (2011) using a combination of the 2000 population and housing data, aerial photographs and city officials and household respondents, produced a dichotomous slum/non-slum map.

Table 3.1: Indicators and Thresholds for Defining Slums.

| Characteristic | Indicator | Definition |
|--|---------------------------------|---|
| Access to water | Improved drinking water sources | A household has an improved drinking water supply if it uses water from sources that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> piped water into dwelling, plot or yard; <input type="checkbox"/> public tap/ standpipe; <input type="checkbox"/> tube well/borehole; <input type="checkbox"/> protected dug well; <input type="checkbox"/> protected spring; <input type="checkbox"/> rainwater collection. |
| Access to improved sanitation facilities | Improved sanitation facilities | A household is considered to have access to improved sanitation if it uses: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Flush or pour-flush to piped sewer system, septic tank or pit latrine; <input type="checkbox"/> Pit latrine with slab; <input type="checkbox"/> Composting toilet; <input type="checkbox"/> Ventilated improved pit latrine. <p>The excreta disposal system is considered improved if it is private or shared by a reasonable number of households.</p> |
| Durable housing | a. Location | A house is considered durable if it's built on a non-hazardous location. Hazardous sites include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Geologically unstable areas (landslide/earthquakes and flood areas); <input type="checkbox"/> Garbage dumpsites; <input type="checkbox"/> High industrial pollution areas; <input type="checkbox"/> Unprotected high-risk zones (e.g. railroads, airports, energy transmission lines). |
| | b. Permanency of structure | The permanency of a housing structure is determined by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Quality of construction (materials used for wall, floor and roof); <input type="checkbox"/> Compliance with local building codes, standards and bylaws. |
| Overcrowding | Sufficient living area | A house has sufficient living area for household members if not more than three members share the same room |
| Security of tenure | Security tenure | Households have secure tenure when they have effective protection against forced evictions through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of documentation (formal title deed to either land or residence or both); <input type="checkbox"/> <i>De facto</i> or perceived protection against eviction. |

Source: UN-Habitat GUO Data, 2010

The method predicted the presence of 78 slums within the city of Accra (Engstrom et al., 2015). Another method used was the 2000 population and housing census dataset in classifying slums based on first, a dichotomous slum and non-slum neighborhoods using the same indicators. The results were then used to create a slum index with neighborhoods having one or more of the indicators deemed to be the worst slums compared to those with only one or none (Engstrom et al., 2015). Engstrom et al., (2015) noted that the dichotomous methodology adopted by the AMA and UN-Habitat (2011) was very limited and lacked the spatial element of the neighborhoods. Their spatial methodology which involved the use of Quick bird images predicted more accurately the clusters of slums within the city of Accra. This result, when overlaid on the AMA and UN-Habitat (2011) dichotomous map largely coincided with the clusters, predicting an accuracy rate of 94.3% and a Kappa of 0.91. However, when compared with other field-based methods, the deviation and accuracy were weak. Their conclusion, however, was that remote sensing-based methods were a better predictor of slum neighbourhood locations compared with other methods.

This conclusion, however, leaves much to be desired, as this thesis argues that such classifications or predictions are a simplification of the reality of slum neighborhoods. This method presents slums as static neighborhoods to say changes do not occur. Very few efforts are made to understand how such places are made over time, and how the everyday processes of place-making are contributing to changing the landscape. Again, not all features of what constitutes slums can be mapped, as some indicators or aspects of people's lives such as 'Agency' and 'Sense of Place' as described in the LifeCourse theory, cannot be mapped (Coulter et al., 2006). These, however, constitute very essential aspects in understanding the growth and development of slums from the perspective of the dwellers' experiences which shapes all aspects of the slum. For example, studies by Owusu et al. (2008) noted that slum

dwellers in Nima have multiple livelihoods as a strategy to survive and a deep sense of communism, giving dwellers a high sense of security and safety. This finding can be said to define Nima as a slum of hope rather than despair. As such, any such description of Nima as a slum based on a selected measurable indicator would only reaffirm that slum neighborhoods are uninhabitable, hazardous, and poverty-ridden neighborhoods (Gilbert, 2007; Fox, 2014). Finally, this thesis argues that any attempt to objectively define and predict slums cannot be objective enough. Slums remain very complex entities and continue to exhibit changing characteristics even within the same country, city or town (Gilbert, 2007). The ‘objective prediction of slums’ claim, would only likely push us back into the realm of arguments surrounding the use and adoption of the word slum as pejorative, emotive and a slur on the dwellers (UN-Habitat, 2003; Davies, 2006; Gilbert, 2007; Huchzermeyer, 2014; Mayne, 2017). The arguments advanced here are summed up by Gans (1990, p.274) who stated that *“the term slum is like the underclass that lumps together a variety of highly diverse people who need different kinds of help”*. This indicates the complexities associated with identifying and predicting what constitutes a slum.

Another method used in identifying slums has been through policy approaches and interventions that governments consciously advanced. This is the situation where governments enact laws or the local assembly acts that guard against the use of the term ‘slum’. These largely are attempts to ensure that the stereotyping effect of the name slum on neighborhoods and their inhabitants was reversed. For example, the Egyptian government implemented the International Settlement Development Facility (ISDF) through presidential decree #305/2008. The Act aimed to replace the terms, ‘slum’ or ‘informal settlement or ‘Ashwa’iyyat’ with two new terms, namely, ‘Unsafe Areas’ and ‘Unplanned Areas’. The Act explains the two new terms as follows: ‘Unsafe Areas’ refers to areas that are prone to life-

threatening conditions due to inappropriate housing, exposure to health risks or tenure insecurity. The ‘Unplanned Area’ on the other hand, refers to the situation where a settlement fails to conform to local planning regulations. This mirrors similar attempts in Ghana to regulate the use of the term, slum, which has become so derogatory and stereotyped slum areas and their inhabitants as places of crime, irresponsibility, dirt, poverty, and unintelligent and uneducated set of people. These for several years have been debunked by various studies (Owusu et al., 2008; Stacey & Lund, 2016).

The methods and approaches discussed above remain inadequate in predicting and identifying slums. This also accounts for the difficulties in arriving at a universally acceptable definition to guide policies on slum development. From the foregoing, this thesis criticizes the current methods and approaches adopted at various levels to deal with slums, including the definitions that guide their operations on the following grounds. First, current definitions and methods applied in understanding slums are a simplification of the reality of slums. Slums represent very complex entities whose characteristics distinctly vary spatially across space and time. This complexity cannot be simply understood by any set of selective indicators and methods. The complexity of slums arises right from how it is conceptualized in a particular study, as this would influence the choice of data and methods to be applied.

2.5 Contextualizing the Growth of Slums in the Greater Accra Metropolitan Area

The proliferation of slums in Accra dates far back to the colonial period with a complex mix of political and socio-cultural dynamics (Fox, 2014). Many have linked slums incidence in Accra and Ghana as a direct offspring of the form and nature of our urbanization and modernization processes (Owusu, Agyei-Mensah, & Lund, 2008; Songsore, 2009). Since the

capital of Ghana moved to Accra in 1877, there were deliberate policies that saw the concentration of development within the urban core, neglecting the development and expansion of basic amenities existing in traditional neighborhoods like Ga Mashie, Chorkor, Shiabu and Taabo, and Ashaiman (Fox, 2014; Arguello et al., 2013; Paller, 2019). The disparities in the levels of growth led to population densification, endemic poverty, poor and inadequate housing, and lack of access to basic services in traditional and poor neighborhoods.

During the post-colonial period, governments made frantic efforts to resolve the housing conundrum that was at the centre of the disparate spatial development of the city. Governments failed to gain control of large portions of land in the city (Goldstein & Udry, 2008; Bank of Ghana, 2007; De Soto, 2000) and unsuccessful housing policies through state-led interventions (Paller, 2014; Fuseini et al., 2017), private institutions led interventions (Blocher, 2006; Gough & Yankson, 2000) could not resolve the housing challenge. The housing deficit is estimated at 1,600,000 (Awuvafoge, 2013, p.13), with an annual deficit of 1.8 million units (ISSER, 2013 cited in GSS, 2010; Kuffo et al., 2023).

Ghana has more than 5.5 million slum dwellers, the bulk of whom reside in the country's capital, Accra. It is estimated that the capital city contains 265 informal communities, 78 of which are at a matured level of growth. These settlements and slums account for 38% and 16% of the city's population and land area coverage, respectively (Mensah, Osa, & Yeboah, 2021; Paller, 2012; UN-Habitat, 2011). Slums have become a common scene in Accra where endemic urban poverty and the high cost of land and housing have pushed poor migrants to congregate in these areas (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). Slum-dwellers have also been

noted for their entrepreneurial energy to mobilize resources to bring development to themselves and their community. Slums also give hope to their dwellers as they are noted to pursue multiple livelihood strategies (Afenah, 2012; Oppong, Asomani-Boateng, & Fricano, 2020; Owusu et al., 2008). Slums in Accra, however, are not the same, especially in terms of their legal recognition by the state and in the provision of public services. Based on these two criteria Paller (2012) classified slums in Accra into 3 classes, those formally recognized (Nima), unrecognized and face the threat of eviction (Old Fadama, Abuja). Slums are also dynamic and change in form and status over time as seen in the case of Nima (Fiasorgbor, 2013; Owusu et al., 2008). Since this typology, old slums have changed, and new ones sprung up across the length and breadth of the city with very little known about these changes. As such, this study proposes that slums are dynamic and change over time, and as such, typologies should consider multiple factors occurring in a continuum of change. As part of the objectives of the study, therefore, a new slum typology was developed with a multiple-factor approach which considered slums within a continuum of growth.

2.5.1 Policies and Institutional Frameworks on Slums in Ghana

There is no single policy or framework targeted directly towards slums and or informal settlements in Ghana. Rather, these activities have been regulated through other near-policy frameworks that address issues relating to the slums and informal settlements in a piecemeal fashion. These policy documents also draw heavily on international conventions and treaties that guide how nations should deal with slums and informal settlements. Dealing with slums and informal settlements in Ghana requires a careful review of all policy documents that address issues relating to slums and informal settlements. Policy documents include the National Urban Policy Framework (NUPF) and Action 2012; National Housing Policy

(2015), Ghana Shared Growth and Development Agenda (GSGDA), and National Spatial Development Framework (NSDF) 2015-2035.

The National Housing Policy remain critical to advancing the course of the urban proletariat whose urban conditions are at the forefront of all urban developmental agenda. Historically, the provision of urban housing has been a direct state-led intervention from precolonial and colonial times, until Ghana gained independence in 1957. The colonial period saw the building of many state-led urban housing projects under the supervision of the Department of Social Welfare and Housing (DSWH). These state housing schemes were inadequate to meet the housing demands of the urban dwellers. Post-independence governments noting this shortfall made social housing a core aspect of the government's mandate while establishing various State-Owned Enterprises (SOEs) to execute numerous housing projects across the country. These SOEs included the Ghana National Housing Cooperation (GNHC), Tema Development Cooperation (TDC), Bank for Housing and Construction (BHC) and the Low-Cost Housing Committee (LCHC). A good number of houses were put up by these SOEs and given out at discounted costs to government workers. This, however, could not adequately resolve the increasing number of urbanites who were still in need of accommodation.

The demands for accommodation led to new reforms by the government, aimed at meeting the urban accommodation challenges, especially, in the 1980s and beyond. These new reforms included the liberalization of the Ghanaian economy, attracting Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs), and promoting external trades through import substitutions. Due to the failure of the SOEs to meet the housing demand gap, the state withdrew its support for the housing provision while stimulating the private real estate developers to lead the provision of

housing. This reform led to the gradual withdrawal of all SOEs in the housing sector including the State Insurance Company (SIC) and the Social Security Trust Fund (SSNIT). Although significant improvements were recorded in the housing sector, estate developers have largely focused on meeting the needs of middle-high income earners. As such, many of the low-income earners continue to face urban housing challenges. A critical sector dealing with the housing needs of the urban poor is individuals who build for rent. They build incrementally and rent out to the urban poor; however, this sector has not received the needed support and guidance from the government. In light of the rising levels of urbanization coupled with the increased urban housing gap, many of the urban poor have resorted to finding alternative shelter in the slums. This has increased the number of urban poor living in slums in the city.

Governments since independence have adopted a slum clearance approach that has been met with resistance over the years (Gillespie, 2016). The absence of a National Urban Policy for a long period until the new one passed in 2012 created a vacuum and lost opportunity to regulate housing infrastructure development in the city. The National Urban Policy Framework (2012) and Action seek to harmonize the challenges confronting the city while defining a path of solution. Slum and informal settlements proliferation continues to be a top management problem for city authorities. The National Urban Policy Framework (2012) and Action seek to promote Urban Regeneration and Slum Upgrading and Prevention as the new strategy which is a significant departure from a myriad of unjustified approaches adopted in the past. The city authorities have largely relied on slum clearance and bulldozing as strategies to address the problem, but such practices are not endorsed in any g. The National Urban Policy Framework (2012, p. 10) and Action specifically defines Slums as “housing

which falls below a certain level necessary for human development”. The definition acknowledges that below certain standards as provided for by the UN-Habitat definition, these neighborhoods do not represent safe places for human habitation. As such, as part of its initiatives to achieve objective 7 which aims to “improve access to adequate and affordable low-income housing,” the 4th initiative states: “Upgrade slums and dilapidated housing stock, especially in urban areas selected as growth poles.” According to Crentsil & Owusu (2018), they argued that Accra city has been governed through an entrepreneurial approach which sought to transform the city to be globally competitive and attract foreign investments. As such, the urban rich class controlled the growth and shape of the city to the neglect of the urban poor while ignoring the role of the informal economy. To achieve this goal, they adopted an unfriendly approach to slum clearance under the guise of decongestion strategies. This contradicts Lefebvrian’s argument in his “right to the city” concept, which calls for all urban dwellers to be accommodated in city plans, especially the poor, rather than favouring only those who already have power and resources (Marcuse, 2012).

The National Urban Policy Framework (2012) and Action further acknowledge the land-use disorder and uncontrolled urban sprawl as resulting in haphazard development which leads to the development of new slums and informal settlements. The high levels of urban unemployment and the cost of land account for people's inability to invest in housing, forcing especially, the poor urban dweller into slum areas for shelter. The policy stresses the need to prevent the formation of new slums while taking action to upgrade existing ones. However, urban regeneration and upgrading are not new to the Ghanaian landscape. These started many years ago with Ghana participating actively and benefiting from several of such initiatives sponsored through community finance mobilizations and international bodies' support. As far

back as 1985, the East Maamobi Infrastructure Upgrading Project under the Accra District Rehabilitation Project (ADRP) was implemented through a joint program with the World Bank. The project targeted improvements in roads, footpaths and drainage to link the neighbourhood to other parts of the city. The project also provided new water points and Ventilated Pit Latrines in the beneficiary communities. Another major upgrading project was under the Urban II Project and the Priority Works Project implemented between 1985 and 1996 in Accra, Tema, Kumasi and Tamale. These projects like the ADRP, also saw the provision of basic infrastructures needed to support low-income neighborhoods to access water, street lights, drains and roads (See Banes, Huque, & Zipperer, 2000 for details of historical upgrading projects).

Another major slum upgrading project that Ghana benefited from was the UN-Habitat's and Ghana Federation of the Urban Poor (GHAFUP) Slum Upgrading Facility (SUF) in Tema/Ashaiman Metropolitan Areas (TAMSUF) and the Sekondi/Takoradi Local Finance Facility (STMA-CSUF). The former is popularly referred to as the Amui-Djor Housing project which saw the completion of a mixed residential facility that included 31 residential blocks in a 3-storey building, 15 open stores, some commercial bathrooms and a 12-seater public toilet in 2009. This project constituted a major landmark shift in the city's approach to dealing with slum communities and mirrors what Roy (2014, p.139) describes as "market-oriented inclusive growth" and is further discussed by Gillespie (2018) as a milestone achievement towards a shift towards collective self-help housing provision strategy for low-income groups. Close to the SUF was the Participatory Slum Upgrading Programme implemented in Ga-Mashie aimed at improving housing and livelihoods of the community people. The project saw the renovation of the community centre through the Ga Mashie

Development Agency (GAMADA) that included a library, basketball court, sewing and art centres and a boxing gym, a training and conference centre.

These efforts re-ignited efforts to replicate and expand such upgrading projects in other slum neighborhoods even though these are still far from being achieved (Gillespie, 2018). It has also become a foundational basis for the need to draft the National Slum Upgrading and Prevention Policy. Slum upgrading connotes “improvement of slum household living conditions which can be achieved through better water supply, sanitation and other basic urban services; housing improvements; and provision of tenure security” (UN-Habitat, n.d.). This definition is necessary to avoid the slippery boundaries of confusing the interpretation of slum upgrading as slum clearance and bulldozing under the overarching strategy of decongestion. Studies by Crentsil & Owusu, (2018) reveal the case of incoherences in the policies at the national and district levels. Where national-level policies and frameworks focus on urban regeneration and slum upgrading, district-level policies such as decongestion present a counter approach and spirit.

The National Shared Growth and Development Agenda II (2014-2017) is a policy document aimed to guide medium-term development plans at the sector and district levels of implementation. Such documents indicate also where the government's budgetary allocations are directed. The document paid some attention to urban development and slum upgrading and prevention. For example, just like the other policy documents discussed, slum proliferation is highlighted as a response to the rising urban population in the cities with limited social, commercial and physical infrastructure to support this growth. Under slums prevention and regeneration, the policy document noted the past and ongoing efforts of the

government to upgrade slums, however, these are limited. It also acknowledged the upgrading project at Ashaiman, however, it also noted the slow approach in replicating the same, over other slums. The document offered pathways to Ghana's plans to upgrade existing slums and prevent the emergence of new ones by outlining key strategies, including slum renewal and redevelopment programs, strengthening and enforcing legal frameworks on slum development, promoting the participation of slum dwellers in planning and decision-making, and enhancing infrastructure facilities in slum areas. Six years after this GSGDA II ended, not much has changed with the transformations expected in the slums. The National Spatial Development Framework (2015-2035) only cursorily mentioned slums and informal settlements. The document did not give any spatial attention to this very important urban conundrum except to note the existence of slums and informal settlements in the city and the need to invest in these places to support the urban poor households who live there.

This study, however, observed a recurring trend in the policies reviewed, wherein the challenge of slums was acknowledged by all the policies and frameworks. The missing link, however, is the lack of a central implementing body directly responsible for the implementation of these policy ideas (Gillespie, 2016; Jones, 2017). Acknowledging that several aspects of the challenges that face slums may be at the doorstep of different institutions, there was still the need to monitor centrally, how these targets on slum redevelopment and regeneration and prevention of the formation of new ones. Where there is a central body ensuring that these individual state institutions respond to the policy directives, this largely can be seen as the weak institutional arrangements, especially, at the district and local levels where implementations are to take place. There is also the case of weak connections between the national policies and the implementing bodies at municipal and

district levels who continue to deal with slums against those internationally acceptable standards (Crentsil & Owusu, 2018).

Also, the absence of a specific policy document on slums is a major setback for the transformation needed at that local level. Despite the mention of a slum upgrading and prevention policy framework, this is yet to come to fruition. This study contends that a specific policy document on slums may lead to targeted implementation and monitoring of progress on specific indicators of slum development. This document would also draw on the several policy documents discussed here already to guide a medium-to-long-term guide to implementing specific developmental targets in slum areas.

Finally, slum upgrading and prevention would influence people's choice of residential neighborhoods and their moving behavior. Slum houses many urban dwellers within the low-income bracket with difficulties accessing basic amenities. Many urban poor will continue to seek shelter in the slums as they cannot afford to pay for rent in the main city due to limited financial ability. As such, they may remain in the slums for as long as they stay in the city. Also, slum dwellers may remain in the cycle of poverty due to the lack of options for affordable housing, and this hinders their ability to have satisfactory access to residential accommodation of choice. Slums and informal settlements also suffer from tenure insecurity and land insecurity. As a result, they hesitate to make any form of investment in residential homes as they fear the risk of being evicted. This feeling of insecurity of tenure hinders residential mobility decision-making. Further, the continued absence of a proper policy framework on slum upgrading and regeneration may encourage slum dwellers to make residential decisions, however, its absence would lead to a perpetuation of their existence.

2.6 Theoretical Underpinnings of the Research

The complexity of residential mobility issues in the global south requires that the guiding theories adequately address the various aspects of the issues under investigation. Despite the increasing use of the LifeCourse theory in assessing residential mobility studies, this study triangulated it with the Neighbourhood Change theory, which provides flexibility in determining people's residential mobility decisions in a neighborhood. This sub-section will present the two theories and subsequently, a conceptual framework to deal with the case under study.

2.6.1 The LifeCourse Perspective (Theory)

The lifecycle conceptualization of RM has spanned several years of adoption and implementation. Over these periods many have also come to measure individual biographical characteristics against changes in the lifecycle, aimed at a deeper understanding of how various individual factors could influence relocation decisions. Most researchers have largely followed binary decision-making in the models developed with the outcomes, to move or stay, leaving other probabilities or possible explanations out of the model (Eluru et al., 2009). In Böheim and Taylor's (2003) study, they sought to investigate how residential mobility decisions are influenced by the labour market (employment) largely using the British Household Panel Survey data. Using discrete choice models, they sought to measure how individual employment status and the conditions in the labour market influence RM decisions. The study noted that people will only make such decisions where they are convinced that the moving decision will bring higher satisfaction than remaining in their current location. As such, among all factors examined (socio-demographic, employment, and

housing characteristics), employment-related factors are the most vital determinants of moving decisions.

The lifecycle, therefore, has become limited in explaining the full set of factors that could influence RM decisions. Some researchers describe RM as, “a discrete one-way transition between dwellings” (Clark et al., 2006; Coulter, Ham, & Findlay, 2016 p.8). Others argue that RM cannot be presented in such simplified models or as, “a straightforward or uniform process” (Morris et al., 2018 p.114), as it is a complexity of social issues that depends on the interrelationship between cost benefits, opportunities and constraints, and availability of resources and individual preferences (Van Beckhoven et al., 2009). Arguments raised to support this viewpoint on the limitedness of the lifecycle model cited various changes to people’s lifecycle which necessitated the calls for a reconceptualization of RM. For example, McHugh, Hogan, and Happel (1995), argue that proponents have paid no attention to the phenomenon of repeated or cyclical short-distance RMs, which refers to individuals who have multiple residences and continue to shuttle between these residences for various reasons. Again Morris et al. (2018) argue that the complexities and changes occurring within the family structures and the observable new patterns in domestic living exposed the limitedness of the definition of residential mobility. Another argument that came much later was advanced mainly by the proponents of the ‘new mobilities paradigm’ (Sheller & Urry, 2006) who see mobility as a critical feature in contemporary life. As such, any attempt to continue to analyse movements as discrete or still processes from one location to another will be limited as movements have become active practices. A new theory thought to deal with these shortcomings emerged as the LifeCourse theory.

This approach is not new to geographical enquiries, especially, in the fields of population studies, migration and mobility studies, behavioral geography, regional science and feminist geography (Bailey, 2009). The LifeCourse perspective also has firm roots in sociological and psychological studies and indeed in the social sciences in general. Its application has reached the far ends of scholarships due to its conceptual nature which provides a firm starting point for macro-micro level social problems through effectively employing the interrelations between structure and agency (Wingens et al., 2011). Although its development is usually considered to be multi-disciplinary with each field advancing its separate course, the earliest writer on the LifeCourse perspective is traced back to Elder's (1974) pioneering work in the early 1960s. He examined the influence of historical factors on family, education and work and made a call for a developmental theory.

The early writers, focused on single-factor sequencing as used in the life cycle theory to analyse child growth, marriage, having children and the children marrying and the cycle moving on to another generation (Mortimer et al., 2003). Others further developed the idea largely by adopting a historical perspective to understand various social and cultural issues confronting families, organizations, and social movements (King, 2009; Della Porta & Diani, 2006). In recent years the LifeCourse perspective has been applied largely in explaining the patterns of order in the everyday life of an individual (Bailey, 2009). According to Feijten and Mulder (2005), the LifeCourse perspective conceptualizes the long-term individual biographies that usually is structured rather than sequenced based on time and the ordering of life events that are intrinsically linked (Elder et al., 2003). LifeCourse perspective focuses on the 'dynamic interplay of societal structuring and institutional framing of migrants' life courses and the patterns of migrants' biographical mastering of transitions and coordinating

of life spheres' (Wingens et al., 2011). According to Shanahan and Macmillan (2008, p.55), there are 6 most used guiding principles to the Life Course Theory. They include historical time and place, situational imperatives, linked lives, agency, life stage and accentuation. The historical time and place principle is explained by the fact that individual life courses are influenced by the time and places in which they experience life. The life of a migrant reflects the historical, economic, social, cultural and political experiences that impact their life course. Time and place are also key to geographical studies as they have transformative influences on individual lives, the life course in space and time are spatially configured as trajectories or pathways. Therefore, to geographers, these individual life courses in time and space must be understood within such contexts of temporal and spatial contingencies (Bailey, 2009).

The second principle of situational imperative refers to the cases where a new development or situation imposes a sort of social demand that limits the individual's behavior. A typical example is to look at a situation where an individual in a household decides to migrate. This single action would bring changes into the household including reassigning responsibilities and changing schools for children among others. The third principle of linked lives seeks to emphasize the point that individual lives are not separated from the wider society and that it is interdependent on other relations through embedded social networks and relations (Bailey et al., 2004). The decision of an individual to migrate is taken and agreed on by the whole family as his/her success means a lot to the family back home. Further, the principle of agency is explained as individuals using the opportunities and constraints which they face to construct and shape their life course and biographies. The next principle of life stage explains that the life course of the individual is affected and influenced by changes occurring in the society, for example, young migrants have the ability at that young stage to learn the language at the destination area than adult migrants. Lastly, the principle of accentuation

relates to the individual migrant quickly picking up all social and psychological resources at his destination to shape his decisions (See Wiggins et al., 2011 for deeper explanations on principles).

However, in any research, the application of these principles is based on the research questions and the subject of study rather than attempting to apply all of them simultaneously. The life course perspective further hinges on two core concepts that drive critical analysis in empirical research. They include the concepts of transition and trajectory. The first concept is defined usually as the ‘changes in state that are abrupt’ as in a transition from being employed to becoming unemployed. The transition concept is analysed usually as point-like events and so the researchers must define each point of transition clearly, for example, single, married, childless, mother, divorced and re-married (Wiggins et al., 2011).

Similarly, the life course trajectories refer to the long-term or long phase within the life course of an individual. Trajectories are embedded in the concept of transition as it is marked by a similar sequence of events. With the conceptual difficulties in clearly distinguishing the two concepts, the Life Course Theory generally tends to relate trajectories to specific institutions which interlock with life events and transitions. Trajectories, therefore, have been defined with structural establishments such as school, work, retirement, health or family trajectory (Wiggins et al., 2011). What again distinguishes trajectories is their ability to endure large amounts of minor variations without any significant change in the overall direction (Abbott, 1997).

2.6.2 Neighbourhood Change Theory

As is suggestive of the name, this approach seeks to investigate the varied changes that occur in specific neighborhoods as time changes. Regarded as the general approach, the process of Neighbourhood change is complex and follows one of three defined trajectories of decline, upgrade or stable change that may occur in the physical or social environment (Zwiers, Kleinhans, & Van Ham, 2017). There are generally three theories or perspectives used in explaining neighbourhood change. These have for years been applied based on the subject matter and objectives of the researcher or even the discipline of research. These perspectives include the Ecological, Subcultural and Political Economy (Temkin & Rohe, 1996; Van Beckhoven et al., 2009).

Firstly, the Ecological Perspective takes its roots from the urban ecology traced to the University of Chicago School of Sociology. This theory relies heavily on structural forces that tend to trigger a change in neighborhoods. This largely has followed the deterministic models of measuring change as ecologists tend to understand how change comes about through natural forces (Pitkin, 2001). Varied models have been used to illustrate how change has been measured by this school of thought. As discussed in Temkin and Rohe (1996) the models of invasion/succession, filtering and border models have been extensively applied. The invasion/succession developed by Burgess (1925) presents a concentric circle representing an order of land use in an urban area. Changes in the urban area lead to the invasion of an area by a more dominant activity that succeeds in what is considered a higher value than the previous activity. This approach has been criticized for following the natural processes of evolution and seems not to meet the realities of urban change. Following this, Hoyt's (1933) model sought to expand and build upon the earlier model by applying the

economic model. His model explains that as the city witnessed the development of new neighborhoods it will naturally attract an outward expansion. The new development is based on the premise that as neighborhoods become older, property owners would prefer to build new structures at the periphery rather than invest in costly maintenance works (Pitkin, 2001). This process of neighbourhood change is referred to as the filtering model. The final model explaining neighbourhood change is the bid rent and border models. This bid rent model in a similar fashion posits that the cost of accommodation would be highest in the city centres and therefore, urban residents would move outwardly to secure cheaper accommodation at the periphery. The border model further includes the role of class and race in locational decision-making by urbanites.

Secondly, the Subcultural Perspective on neighbourhood change has critiqued the deterministic assumptions that underlie the ecological perspective. They argue that urban neighborhoods are heterogeneous and therefore, varied subcultures exist that influence people's locational decisions (Temkin & Rohe, 1996). Other proponents of the Subcultural Perspective criticize the ecological perspective for its inability to examine the micro-level dynamics in neighbourhood change through the social networks and cultural systems that exist (Ahlbrandt & Cunningham, 1979). They argue strongly that the existence of social networks and cultural factors increases people's level of attachment and identity to the neighborhoods they occupy (Pitkin, 2001). According to them, these differences explain why neighborhoods are either stable, declining, or upgrading, with factors such as ethnicity, race, and lifestyle (Varady, 1983). It is, therefore, easier to see people joining forces together to fight any form of external aggression or threat to their neighbourhood (Peterman, 2000).

The final school of thought is the Political Economy which refers to a group of scholars from a multi-disciplinary field including geography, sociology, and political science. Largely seen to follow the Marxist and neo-Marxist analysis, the political economy school of thought believe in capital accumulation by the elite class in the urban area to their benefit (Temkin & Rohe, 1996). Castells (1978) posits that the city is a product for profit maximization by the dominant class who control, create, and accumulate wealth from the available resources to the detriment of the poor social groups. This is done usually through the dialectics of exchange and uses values where capitalists create higher exchange value for urban lands against their everyday use by residents (Pitkin, 2001). Neighborhoods will lose their stability, decline, or upgrade with a change in the value of the urban land. Where the exchange value of land rises due to changes in its use, it creates a disequilibrium that favours the capitalists. To such an extent, others have argued that the powerful state institution's role is also critical in defining neighbourhood change as they tend to control and distribute resources throughout the metropolis creating inequalities in access to resources (Harvey, 1973; Obeng-Odoom, 2013). In such cases, whether a neighbourhood remains stable, declines, or upgrades rests largely on these powerful state institutions rather than residents of the neighborhood. The Political Economy has gained prominence among the three perspectives and has seen wider research application.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

Having cursorily examined the main tenets of the LifeCourse Perspective and Neighbourhood Change, the conceptual framework seeks to draw on the relevant concepts as used in various empirical research to explain residential mobility among slum dwellers in Accra. Though both theories have their strengths in residential mobility research, the LifeCourse has gained

more prominence. As argued by Beige et al. (2008) LifeCourse trajectories do not occur in isolation but are linked with other non-familial and personal factors such as neighbourhood characteristics. The use of both theories in residential mobility research is limited, however, they have been mostly used separately in Western countries. It is however not surprising as the data drawn on have largely been longitudinal data which is largely absent or patchy in the global south. Though this may not be the first attempt to combine LifeCourse with Neighbourhood Change theories, the study location in Ghana makes it novel due to its limited application within the unique socio-cultural, economic and demographic context. It offers a new lens to analyse the challenges and opportunities associated with residential mobility in the Ghanaian context. Figure 2.1 shows a conceptual framework adapted from the theories discussed and called a combined approach to dealing with Residential Mobility Decision-Making. The framework is based on the assumption that isolated studies focusing on aspects of each theory continue to provide a limited understanding of residential mobility research.

Various aspects of these theories overlap and are interlinked, therefore, full exploratory research on a holistic application of the theories would provide a more nuanced understanding of the complex residential mobility issues in the global south. From the framework, the neighbourhood type of concern in this study is slums either defined as places of hope or despair. These slum neighborhoods are occupied by dwellers who actively interact with the socio-spatial environment that shapes their lives. Their life courses unfold over time as they interact and are shaped by various factors including the interplays between personal biographies, life-stage events, and neighbourhood characteristics such as housing conditions, population mix and segregation, access to social amenities and cultural identities created with long stays in the neighborhoods.

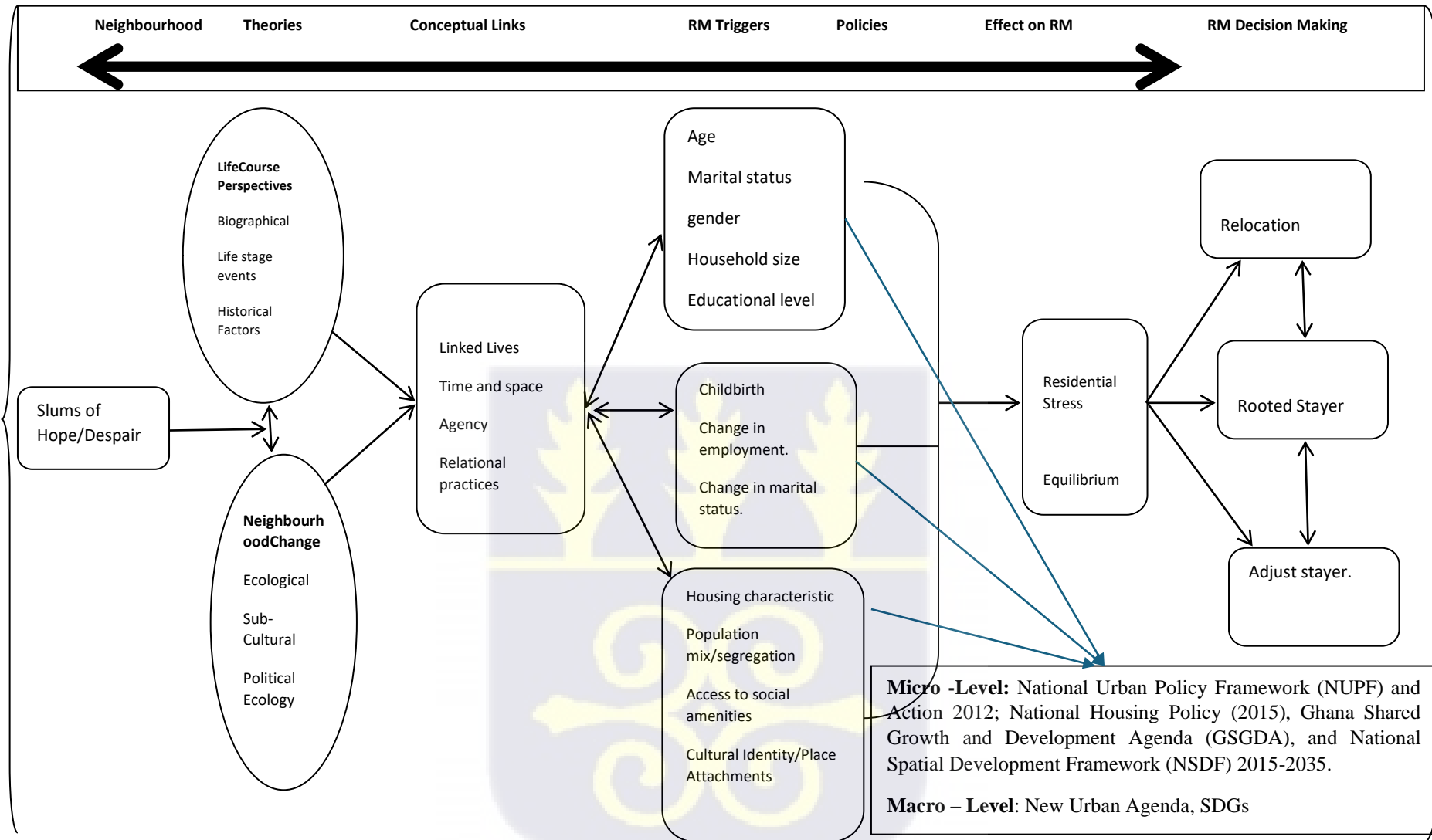


Figure 2.1: Combined Approach to Dealing with Residential Mobility Behavior.

Source: Author's Construct

The framework also acknowledges the significant impact of various macro factors on the LifeCourse of slum dwellers and their moving decisions. Global policies influence the national and city-level policies which have a significant impact on the biographies, life-stage events and neighbourhood conditions of slum dwellers. Ghana incorporates SDG 11 on sustainable cities and communities into its urban planning frameworks to achieve sustainable urban development while addressing challenges of urban poverty, housing, infrastructure and inequalities. National and city-level policies such as the National Urban Policy which addresses Slum Upgrading Programmes, the National Housing Policy, Poverty alleviation programmes, Land tenure policies and Urban Renewal and Redevelopment projects influence the growth and development of individuals and communities. These factors influence and shape the totality of the individual LifeCourse which eventually influences their decision-making behaviors on residential choices. Such interactions of these socio-spatial factors would lead to one of two outcomes. The first is the situation where the individual's interactions with his/her environment as his LifeCourse unfolds leads to residential stress or some residential disequilibrium and therefore may trigger a response. Such a response may lead to a residential decision to relocate to a new neighbourhood where he/she would be satisfied with conditions that may be better than the previous. Others may also experience residential stress, however, may choose to stay or readjust to stay at the same location because of other constraining factors such as the inability to finance the movement. However, where the residential mobility effect is satisfactory or at equilibrium with the demands of the individual, the propensity to stay would be higher or to make adjustments and continue to stay. Prolonged stays within a neighbourhood influence people's identity and the

feeling of home which leads to rootedness in the neighbourhood they may choose to stay. The use of this framework enhanced our understanding of residential mobility patterns more so because this may as well be the foremost attempt to explore holistically varied factors that may influence people's actual decision-making process at a relocation. The framework is also novel as it seeks to understand residential mobility behavior in a complex African setting such as the Nima and Old Fadama slums in Accra, Ghana.

2.8 Conclusion

The chapter discussed the literature review on selected themes that resonated with the subject of study. The focus of the review included concepts of residential mobility and slums. It further discussed the theoretical underpinnings of the research. It examined various authors and how they conceptualized the term residential mobility while looking out for possible gaps that exist in these conceptualizations. It discussed early attempts at distinguishing residential mobility from internal migration based on scale and distance. It further went on to discuss the concept of slums and attempted to objectively measure what constitutes slums. The chapter argued that current measures that focus on the use of the definitions provided by the UN-Habitat remain inadequate. Such analysis leads us into deterministic thinking of slums while neglecting the agency and experiences that slums and their dwellers go through as co-actors and co-producers of the urban space.

The chapter further discussed the triangulation of the LifeCourse Perspective theory and the Neighbourhood Change theory, as the theoretical guides underlying the study. It argues that both theories have been extensively used in the context of the Western world, however, their

application in the context of Africa was limited in the field of residential mobility. LifeCourse theory was seen as a more comprehensive theoretical lens through which individual residential mobilities could be studied as long-term biographies. While the LifeCourse may not explicitly deal with the neighbourhood conditions with which people's lives are conditioned, the neighbourhood change theory is used to complement the study. The chapter concluded with a conceptual framework organized as a Combined Approach to Dealing with Residential Mobility Behavior.



CHAPTER THREE

STUDY AREAS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The study aimed to explore the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers in Metropolitan Accra. This chapter deals with how the study was conducted, as it justifies the method and procedures adopted to conduct and analyse the data gathered. The chapter first discussed the profile of the study areas and justified the selection of the Accra Metropolitan Area for this research. Further, the chapter provided reasons why qualitative research design was adopted and justified the use of in-depth interviews as the major data collection instrument. Again, the chapter discusses how social constructionism as a philosophy underpinned the exploration of slum dwellers' residential mobility choices. Lastly, the chapter discusses the researcher's positionality and reflexivity and the ethical issues of the study.

3.2 Profile of the Accra Metropolitan Area (AMA)

This study chose the Accra Metropolitan Area (AMA) as its study area due to the overwhelming evidence from existing research indicating it as the most preferred destination for migrants from the country and beyond. The AMA accounts for the majority of the over 126 informal settlements and slums distributed across the length and breadth of the city, making it the urban area with the highest concentration compared to any other (Ardayfiostandoff, 2012; Braimah & Lawson, 2014; Mensah et al., 2021; Owusu, Agyei-Mensah, & Lund, 2008). The AMA is also home to most government and private business institutions, serving as the major business and political district of the capital. The political administration boundaries of AMA have been changing since its creation in 1898. In that light, it is difficult to provide reliable population trends of the AMA. In 2010 the population of the AMA was

1,665,086 made up of 51.9% female and 48.1% male. The annual growth is at 3.1% (GSS, 2010). In 2021, the population was estimated to be about 445,558, with an estimated 2 million commuters travelling daily in search of a wide range of services. In 2018 the newly demarcated administrative boundary of the AMA was further reduced from the previous 10 sub-metropolitan areas to include only 3 sub-metropolitan areas including, Ablekuma South, Okaikoi South and Ashiedu Keteke. However, it is important to state that the study relied on the former administrative boundary of the AMA before this demarcation was done. The study acknowledges that Nima, formerly under the erstwhile AMA, now falls within the jurisdiction of the Ayawaso East District Assembly (AEDA), established on March 15, 2018, under LI 2310. However, the study was intentionally conducted under the auspices of the AMA, as the mayor continues to hold oversight responsibility for implementing programmes and interventions in the entire city (AMA, 2020). Again, the new Ayawaso East Assembly was under-resourced and unable to respond fully to the objectives of this study.

Lastly, the study was conducted under the erstwhile AMA due to its retrospective design, which demanded a historical overview of factors that influence slum dwellers' residential relocation decisions and changes in neighbourhood conditions over time. This decision to use the erstwhile AMA administrative boundary before the 2018 re-demarcation, contributed to the gathering of retrospective qualitative data for the study. However, the views of the assembly members who have worked across the demarcating period were gathered in Nima to make up for the efforts and development plans of the new municipal assembly.

It is however salient to understand AMA as part of the larger Greater Accra Metropolitan Area (GAMA). The GAMA is made up of 29 MMDAs including the AMA (Acheampong,

2021). The AMA is the largest of all the districts despite suffering several years of change in its administrative boundary (Songsore, 2009), and this is also reflected in the change in its population over the years. The GAMA and AMA, however, remain inseparable in physical and economic delineations as both are functionally working together. The traffic is always towards the AMA which is home to a large agglomeration of businesses and receives more than a 3.5million population during the day from adjoining districts (Otiso & Owusu, 2008; Owusu & Oteng-Ababio, 2015). Since 1960, the AMA's population has increased from 338,369 to 969,195 in 1984, 440,946 in 2010 (GSS, 2014), and currently at 284, 124 (GSS, 2021), a reduction due to the re-demarcation. On the other hand, the GAMA has grown from 3,756,423 in 2010 to 4,992,911 in 2021 (GSS, 2021), with the AMA now constituting about 5.7 per cent of the total population of GAMA. However, the AMA continues to be the central focal point of the city where people and businesses converge, and this has implications for the sustainable growth of the city.

One major effect of the growth of GAMA has been the sprawling of the city into peripheral areas and the increasing proliferation of slum settlements (Acheampong, 2021). Urban sprawl is defined as the uncontrolled expansion of urban cities towards the peripheral areas resulting in spatial growth beyond the physical administrative boundaries of the city (Anarfi, Hill, & Shiel, 2020). This is not a recent phenomenon as it can be traced back to the historical growth of Accra since the colonial period notwithstanding the recent huge impacts of urbanization and globalization (Fox, 2014). The country has gone through several phases of development that have had lasting impacts on the city's growth. The Economic Recovery Policies (ERP) in 1983 implemented under the Structural Adjustment Programs was a major turning point in expanding the city's economy and physical extent (Owusu, 2013; Songsore, 2009). The

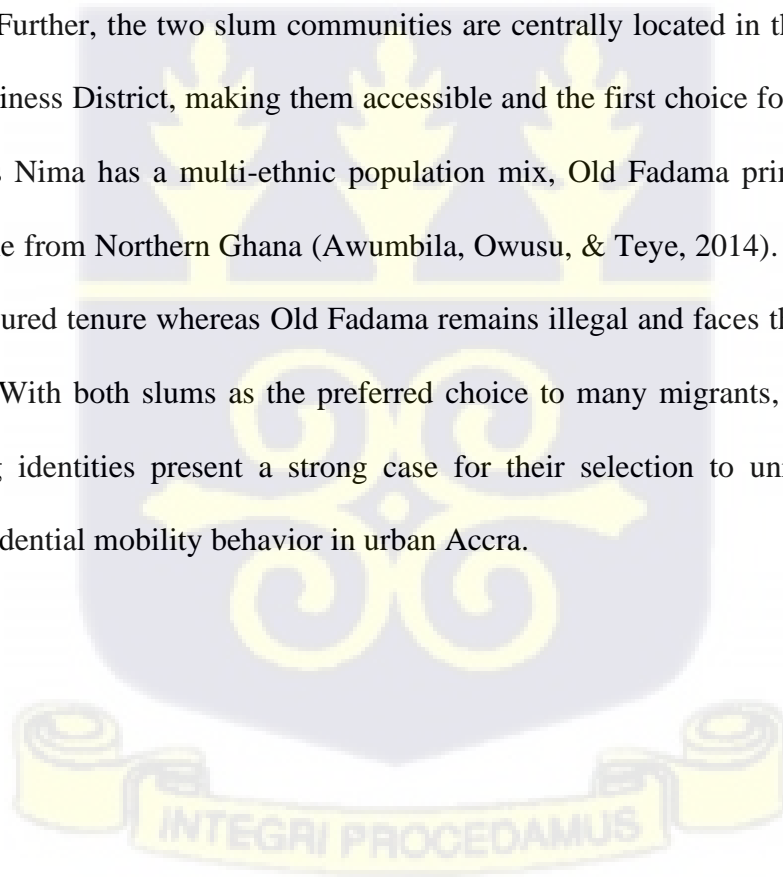
period saw the opening of Ghana's economy to the global market. It marked the implementation of policies, such as subsidy removals on social programs, and trade and foreign currency liberalization (Yeboah, 2000). Accra's development has since become disproportionately larger than that of all other cities in the country, primarily because of its position as the capital, which has attracted larger portions of the country's resources. The factors accounting for these increasing spates of peri-urban development have been discussed extensively in the literature. These factors include, but are not limited to the relatively low cost of land in peri-urban areas compared to the inner-city lands, uncontrolled urbanization, and disorganized growth of non-agricultural lands in peri-urban areas (Oteng-Ababio & Arguello, 2014; Owusu, 2013; Owusu & Oteng-Ababio, 2015).

Another major challenge faced by city authorities is the proliferation of slums as a result of the increased levels of urbanization discussed earlier. However, some writers reject this theorization of slum growth as an outcome of higher urbanization. Fox (2014) argued that the situation is an oversimplification of the causes of slum proliferation, especially, in Africa as there is no concrete empirical evidence to support such claims of demographic changes. Citing the case of Accra, he noted that whereas Accra's population grew from 393,000 to 1.2 million between 1960 and 1990, close to 58% of its population continued to live in slums and unplanned settlements. However, in the city of Phoenix, Arizona where the population grew from 558,000 to 2.02 million people over the same period, there was no concurrent growth of slums. Instead, Fox argues that the persistent urban poverty resulting from the lack of equitable distribution of resources appears to be a more compelling argument for slum growth. In any case, the ability of people to meet their housing needs or stay in decent neighborhoods is largely dependent on financial resources. Both situations as argued by Fox

(2014) are visibly present in the historical development of slums in Accra. The city faces major infrastructural challenges, especially in terms of housing demand, with the majority of the population living on meagre resources and high unemployment rates. The situation has led to varying levels of deprivation, endemic poverty and the densification of vulnerable populations in slums (Fox, 2014; Jankowska et al., 2011; Owusu et al., 2008).

3.3 Study Sites

The sites selected for the study were the Nima and Old Fadama communities in Accra. These were selected based on their similarities, but significantly the differences between them (Paller, 2012). Further, the two slum communities are centrally located in the city bordering the Central Business District, making them accessible and the first choice for many migrants. Again, whereas Nima has a multi-ethnic population mix, Old Fadama primarily comprises groups of people from Northern Ghana (Awumbila, Owusu, & Teye, 2014). Nima has a legal status and a secured tenure whereas Old Fadama remains illegal and faces threats of eviction (Paller, 2012). With both slums as the preferred choice to many migrants, their similarities and contrasting identities present a strong case for their selection to unravel the factors influencing residential mobility behavior in urban Accra.



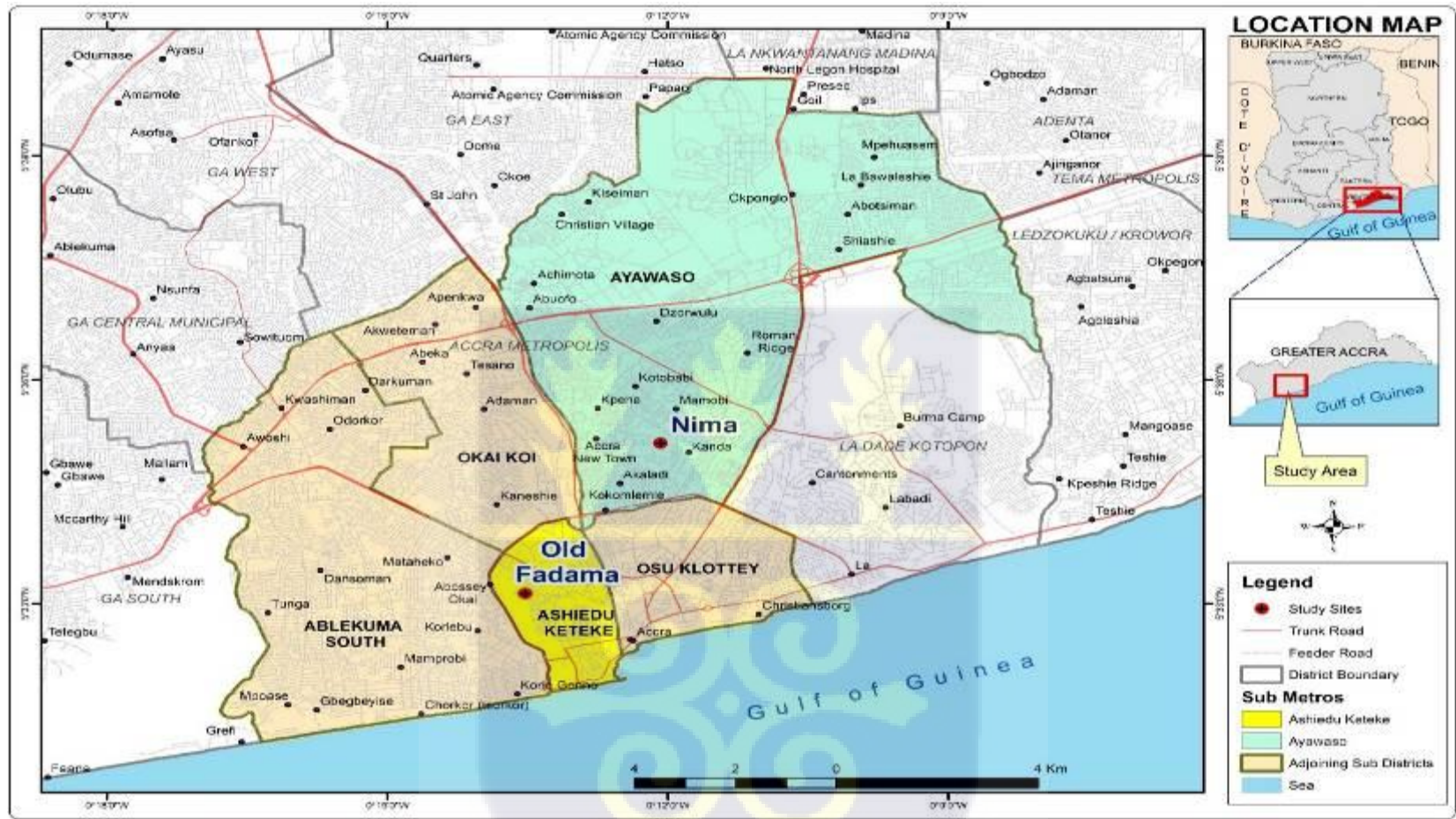


Figure 3.1: Study Area Map

Source: Authors Construct, 2022

3.3.1 Location and History of Old Fadama

Old Fadama is in the heart of the city and lies in the northwestern section of the Central Business District (CBD), bounded by the Odaw River and Korle Lagoon. The slum is less than a kilometre into the CBD and assumes a triangular shape. According to Monney et al. (2013), Old Fadama is the largest squatter settlement in the city of Accra with a total land area of 0.313km² (31.3hectres) (See Figure 3.1 for the location of Old Fadama). Old Fadama's population stood at 79,684 in 2009 (Farouk & Owusu, 2012; Monney et al., 2013). The population, however, increased to an estimated 150,000 inhabitants in 2015 (Kritz, 2020), even though the population has been described as unstable. Many of the inhabitants work in the informal sector. Old Fadama faces an eviction threat, that deters inhabitants from investing in permanent and sustainable infrastructures. The area is, therefore, characterised by wooden, metallic and iron sheet structures, poor environmental sanitation, lack of utility services, and a thriving informal economy. The location of Old Fadama, close to major markets such as Agboghloshie and the central business district gives an array of economic opportunities to its inhabitants. According to Housing the Masses (2010), the Old Fadama settlement has structures that serve residential and commercial purposes although most remain self-built and employ over 56% of the population within the slum.

3.3.2 Land Tenure System and Eviction Threats

Old Fadama, by its existence, is regarded as an illegal slum and not recognized by the city authorities/local government. As such, the land on which the settlement is established has been a bone of contention among various factions. Three stories lay claim to ownership of the land as discussed in (Grant, 2006). According to Stacey (2018), three theories have been advanced to explain the land tenure system of Old Fadama. The first claim is made by the Ga

ethnic group, who are regarded as the indigenous people of Accra. They contested the colonial government's plans to develop land they regarded sacred for infrastructural purposes. The other claim originated during the colonial period and continued into Ghana's independence, after which then-President Nkrumah gained control over the land and proposed it for industrial development contrary to the preference of the Ga people's customary institution. This plan never materialized, and the piece of land remained bare for years. Already, many rural-urban migrants, especially from the north of Ghana moved in to settle on the attractive land. The area witnessed the influx of many informal traders from the street, who subsequently settled on the land alongside the early migrants. What prompted the occupancy of the land was the government's decision to allow the establishment of the yam market at Old Fadama, which attracted Kokomba traders to the land, especially in 1994. Others who fled the north to Accra due to ethnic conflicts all settled at Old Fadama. It was only a matter of time before most of the urban destitute settled at Old Fadama where they could access some form of shelter without paying the excessively high cost of rent in the rest of the city (Gillespie, 2016; Housing the Masses, 2010; Stacey, 2018). Till today, various factions of the Ga traditional areas continue to battle the government for access to the land and see Old Fadama as a blockage to the performance of their traditional spiritual activities. The community remains resolute and has survived several attempts by the government to demolish the entire community's existence.

The slum has been on the government's radar for demolition since 2002 after they secured a court order to remove the settlement under the guise of restoration of the Korle Lagoon project (COHRE, 2004; Grant, 2006). The order has since not been carried out as residents have fought for their existence by organizing themselves into community unions and seeking

assistance from local NGOs, the Centre for Public Interest Law and the Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions (COHRE) (Afenah, 2012; Housing the Masses, 2010). Nonetheless, Old Fadama has suffered some forms of eviction over the years despite its strong political positioning and external support that keeps it in existence. Other NGOs and CBOs who fought and supported Old Fadama over the years include the Peoples Dialogue on Human Settlement, the Federation of the Urban Poor (Homelessness International), and the Shack Dwellers International (Grant, 2006; Stacey, 2018). For example, on the 20th of June, 2015, portions of the slum bordering the Odaw drain were demolished by the government as a way of dealing with perennial flooding in the city (Stacey, 2018; Stacey & Lund, 2016).

As many nations were on their knees finding ways to support their citizens during the global epidemic, which saw many deaths due to the new ravaging COVID-19 virus, the government of Ghana carried out some demolishing of portions of the Old Fadama community. The most unfortunate part of this latest demolishing was its timing, which many questioned, as the government opted to implement a lockdown in the city of Accra, regarded as the central hotspot for spreading the COVID-19 virus. The government's lockdown was declared on March 30, 2020, among a population that was already crowded in indecent homes, living in shacks. Yet, during this time, there were demolishing of shacks that affected over 1000 slum dwellers, purportedly under the guise of initiating developmental projects (Smith & Quartey, 2020). Despite several interventions and the government's subscription to several international treaties on addressing slums, the best practices for dealing with one of the densely populated slums in Accra have yet to be identified.

3.4 Location and History of Nima

Nima, on the other hand, is in the Northeast of Accra city centre, about 4 miles away. It covers a total land area of 351.6 acres and is bounded by Mamobi in the west, Kanda to the east, Kokomlemle to the north and Accra New Town to the south (See Figure 3.1 for the Location of Nima). Its emergence is traced to the early 1930s. The community began with a Zongo population dominated by Muslims, most of whom were migrants who sought menial jobs in the main city centre; additionally, there were workers for the American Military base who were returnees from World War II (Essamuah & Tonah, 2004; Owusu et al., 2008). The demographic composition of Nima saw a drastic change since the 1950s and later in the 1980s, a period that witnessed massive restrictions on Ghana's economy that brought many challenges to the population (Kang et al., 2010; Okoye, n.d.). The inability of most of the urban population to pay for and rent apartments at high costs forced lots of them including those from southern Ghana and neighbouring West African countries to settle in Nima. In the 2010 population and housing census, Nima had an estimated 80,843 population (Ghana Statistical Service, 2010). The population is highly mixed and segregated by ethnicity and primarily dominated by low-class people (Agyei-Mensah & Owusu, 2012). Major ethnic groups dominant in Nima include the Akan, mole-Dagbon, Ewe, Ga Dangme, and other smaller ethnic groups. Characteristically, it is made up of closely packed houses with dense populations in a single house (Songsore, 2009), dilapidating infrastructures, and poor sanitary conditions among others. But the neighbourhood is now described as cosmopolitan with all ethnic groups of people renting and staying in Nima.

3.4.1 Land Tenure System and Evictions

Nima, unlike Old Fadama, is considered a legal settlement and recognized by the state and does not necessarily face any form of eviction. Its emergence is linked to a Muslim cattle header called Mallam Futa, a Fulani who had a customary land agreement with the Odai Kwao family who are traditional Gas from Osu, in the 1940s (Kang et al., 2010). Mallam Futa and his followers started a community dominated by Muslims and Zongos initially producing meat for sale in the Accra central market (Owusu et al., 2008). The place, later, began to attract the population due to its prime location. The settlement, despite having legal tenure, has been depicted as growing without spatial planning, as indicated on the 1957 Gold Coast survey map and compared with the 1949 map which showed Nima as an exurban area (Brand, 1972). The settlement has since recorded haphazard expansion in building structures without access roads and drains. The government of Ghana, recognizing Nima's growth in physical extent, intervened in restoring some sanity in the physical planning space through a massive project that saw the construction of the Nima-Maamobi highway (Grant, 2009; Otiso & Owusu, 2008). The highway construction led to the relocation of some dwellers in Nima whose structures fell within the demarcated areas for construction. Accordingly, Nyametso (2012) points out that the poor residents were forcefully evicted and resettled at a new location at Madina Estate. Nima has since continued to experience changing faces while enjoying the government's gradual transformation and investment. Nima is now the capital of the newly designated Ayawaso East Municipal established under LI 2310 in 2018 (AEMA, 2019).

3.5 Methodology

This section discusses all procedures and materials used to collect data for this study. It also provided information on all participants selected for the study and the procedures used to analyse all data gathered.

3.5.1 Research Design

The study adopted a qualitative research design to understand the lived experiences of slum dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama on their residential mobility behavior (Creswell, 2018). The selection of the qualitative design was largely influenced by the study's philosophical underpinning of social constructionism. The study relied instead on the realities of slum dwellers to guide the construction of new knowledge on residential mobilities in the neighborhoods. This design is underpinned by the philosophy that allows the participants to guide the research from a subjective point of view rooted in social and historical perspectives (Creswell, 2018; Schwandt, 2007). This was particularly important as this research sought to understand the lived experiences of slum dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama to assess the residential mobility behaviors of the people and how that contributes to our knowledge of the factors that shape and reshape our cities.

The qualitative approach follows an interpretive paradigm which believes that logic flows from specific to general and that the knower and the known cannot be separated because the subject knower, is the only source of reality. It draws meaning largely from the experiences and opinions of participants as it sees reality as a social construct (Merriam, 2015; Cohen et al., 2007). The qualitative approach is the most appropriate for the study as the study sought to understand the in-depth moving resident experiences of different slum dwellers.

3.5.2 Case Study Design

The research strategy was a case study as the study sought to make an empirical investigation on slum dwellers' residential mobility in Accra, a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context (Yin, 2014). The distinguishing factor that sets case studies apart from other research strategies is their conduct within a specific context and reliance on both individual and multiple cases (Creswell et al., 2007; Yin, 2003). This study relied on multiple data sources including interviews, participant observation, and visuals (images) to explore the phenomenon of residential mobility in Nima and Old Fadama (Yin, 2003). The multiple sources of data are discussed in the next section in more detail. Case studies are regarded as flexible and allow for a mix of various methods needed to sufficiently answer the research questions (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Again, due to the relatively small number of cases dealt with, the data gathered is deep and rich for a rather comprehensive analysis of the problem under investigation. For one to determine whether a case study is the best strategy choice for research, Yin (2003) offers some guides.

First, the research must be able to respond to the following 1) the study should focus on answering the questions 'why' and 'how' 2) the behavior of your research participants cannot be manipulated; 3) the study must aim to deal with contextual conditions where the boundaries between the phenomenon under study, and the context are not very clear. These are very salient for this research as residential mobility for a long time has been studied along quantitative lines. This overlooks the relevance of other factors, especially, contextual ones, in those analyses. Again, for purposes of generating quantitative results, the in-depth explanations of the individual's decision on residential mobility are not entirely captured. As such, this study provided in-depth explanations of slum dwellers' residential mobility through

contextual analysis. Slum-dwellers were contacted in their context, environment, and situations in which they live to share their experiences on residential mobility behavior. For these reasons, the case study strategy provided the best guidance and approach for the study with its advantages over other research strategies.

3.5.3 Research Method/Instruments

Following the study's adoption of a qualitative research design, research method and instruments that supported the design and contributed to gathering the most relevant data to understand residential mobilities were adopted. The primary research method was in-depth interviews (Van Esch & Van Esch, 2013) while the main research instrument used was the semi-structured interview guide. This was triangulated with other methods including participant observations and visual imaging (photography). Triangulation of methods, either within or between methods, increases the level of rigour and validity of the data to ensure accuracy in results (Thurmond, 2001). These methods are relevant for this research as they allow for the corroboration of data gathered and enhance data credibility (Yin, 2003).

In-depth interviews involve the gathering of detailed data about a phenomenon or a person's thoughts, feelings and behavior regarding a subject matter on a one-on-one basis with the researcher (Boyce & Neale, 2006). The in-depth interviews were conducted at two levels: household and institutional. The household interviews were conducted with the heads of the household in whose absence any adult over 18 years available was selected. At the institutional level, heads of the units considered were interviewed on their knowledge of the study communities and the residential mobility behavior of the dwellers. Most importantly, institutions play key roles in developing neighborhoods under their jurisdiction. The study

assessed the influence of these roles on the moving decisions of the dwellers. In administering the household interviews, a semi-structured interview guide with open-ended questions focussing on the lived experiences of slum dwellers and their residential mobility experiences was used. Similarly, the institutional interviews were conducted as in-depth interviews with institutional heads who were purposively sampled. Questions focused on their immediate roles in dealing with slum neighborhoods, and their roles in influencing the residential mobility choices of the people. The research methods and instruments aided our understanding of the phenomenon from the individual and institutional perspectives, the realities of slum dwellers, and what factors influence their decision-making to stay, move or readjust to meet their changing residential needs.

The interviews were triangulated with other data collection methods including participant observation and visual photography. Here, the researcher actively partook and observed the slum dwellers' behavior in the slums, physical conditions of houses, the number of rooms and their sizes, space for sleeping and crowdedness, environmental conditions, people's comfort in shared spaces, and desires to stay or move through body languages and expressions. The researcher also observed how various state and non-state institutions relate with the local communities in solving daily challenges. These are significant for the study as people's decision to stay in a particular neighbourhood hinges on the daily interactions in all forms. While observing, photographs of any activity or object deemed relevant for the study were also taken with approval from the residents in charge.

3.5.4 Data Collection

The study followed a qualitative research design and adopted a retrospective in-depth interview technique to gather information from slum dwellers on their residential moves and factors influencing such decisions. The data collection began by targeting household heads, in whose absence any adult over 18 years with knowledge of the family's moving history was considered. The second leg of the interviews was conducted with state actors and non-state actors. The state actors included those clothed with duties and responsibilities under the laws of Ghana to bring development to neighborhoods. For this study, the state actors included were the Land Use Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA), the physical planner of the Accra Metropolitan Assembly, and local community Assemblymen. On the non-state actors, it included the tribal chiefs installed and recognized in the slums, other opinion leaders such as the elderly (75years and above) with knowledge of the development of the neighbourhood and peoples' moving behavior, the Non-governmental Organizations, (NGOs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), and the Faith-Based Organization (FBOs) who directly are involved in the development and growth of the slum neighborhoods. These groups of people have engaged with the community, worked closely with the people and their local leaders, and have substantial knowledge of the daily struggles and challenges that confront the slum dwellers. These classes of people have experienced life in all forms with past conditions and current changes variedly influencing their LifeCourse. The researcher also noticed happenings in the community during data collection and noted them as part of the participant observation. Pictures (still images) were taken of phenomena of interest to the study.

3.5.5 Selection of Respondents

Interviews were conducted with individuals on their lived experiences in slums and their residential mobility choices. Interviews were conducted with slum inhabitants in Nima and Old Fadama. A total of 40 interviews were conducted, shared equally between the study areas. Additionally, some state and non-state actors were also included. The breakdown of the list of interviewees is given in Table 3.2. The study in choosing the number of interviews is guided by Bryman's (2012) five guiding principles on sample size for qualitative interviews. Bryman quotes Gerson and Horowitz (2002, p.223) in the argument that “fewer than 60 interviews cannot support convincing conclusions and more than 150 produce too much material to analyse effectively expeditiously”. This study conducted 63 interviews due to the heterogeneous nature of the subject. However, the interview was guided by the principle of saturation (Bryman, 2012) to ensure that the information gathered does not become overly repetitive or redundant. Participants for this study have been grouped into three broad categories.

Table 3.2: List of Respondents for the Study

| Respondent | Number | | Objective |
|---|--------|------------|---|
| | NIMA | OLD FADAMA | |
| Residents | 20 | 20 | To explore their lived residential mobility experiences |
| State Actors | | | |
| Land Use and Spatial Planning Authority | 1 | | To establish the role of state actors in the city governance architecture/local development and their influence on Residential mobilities |
| Assemblymen | 1 | 1 | |
| Physical Planner of AMA | 1 | | |
| Non-State Actors | | | |
| Chiefs/other opinion leaders | 6 | 6 | To explore their roles in local development and the impact on residential mobilities. |
| NGOs | 1 | 2 | |
| CBOs | 1 | 1 | |
| FBOs | 1 | 1 | |
| Total Interviews | | 63 | |

The first category was the residents of the slums, defined as all those who stay and live within the slum either living alone or as part of a household. Those who do not sleep overnight in the slum but work in the slum would not be defined as slum dwellers for this research. This study does not include those who come to work and trade in the neighbourhood but do not spend their nights at the slum. The second category was made up of all non-state actors who play critical roles in the sustainability of the slum. The slums were governed by a group of ethnic chiefs and opinion leaders of ethnic associations. Their wealth of knowledge and living relationships shared with the two communities as well as their contribution to the course of development in these slums make them relevant to this study. They have large followers, and their influence is deep on the decisions made by residents in the slums on residential mobility. They are usually the first point of call as they are the torchbearers and historical gatekeepers whose decisions bind the communities.

To reach out to the respondents in both communities, the researcher made entry into the community through the assemblymen and the purpose for the research was clearly explained. The researcher was later introduced to a leader among the ethnic chiefs by the assembly members and again the purpose of the research was explained to their understanding for their support. The ethnic chief also appointed a community guide (research assistant) to assist in selecting respondents in the slums after the criteria were explained to his understanding. Respondents were reached out to through the snowballing sampling technique where the initial contact person made referrals to other people who fit into the criteria for the research. This snowballing technique was complemented by the experience of the community guide to ensure there was representation across various ethnic groups, religion and sex. This was

important to the research as it sought to have viewpoints from a complex and diverse slum population that contributed to the richness of the data gathered.

Lastly, state institutions that have worked closely with these slum communities either positively or negatively from one's standpoint, were considered respondents for this research. State institutions including the Land Use Spatial Planning Authority (LUSPA), and Accra Metropolitan Area (AMA), as well as the non-state institutions, non-governmental organization (NGOs), faith based organization (FBOs), and community based organization (CBOs), deal with specific issues of concern to them under their jurisdiction. Therefore, their actions and inactions influence people's residential mobility decisions in these slums. Using the snowball method, the interviews began with ethnic chiefs and opinion leaders. After this, the snowball method was used to reach out to key knowledgeable residents who have stayed in the slum for at least one year.

From available data, residential mobility is higher among renters and migrants in the city compared to indigenes and homeowners (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2012). As such, this study conceptualizes that a minimum of one year is enough for a slum dweller to gain much insight into moving behavior in these neighborhoods or personally experience some residential stress. Again, it is also common knowledge today that migrant's decisions to settle initially in the slums are influenced by kinship and friendship ties (Agyei-Mensah & Owusu, 2012; Owusu & Agyei-Mensah, 2011; Owusu et al., 2008).

Ethnic divisions were considered in the selection of respondents in both study areas as the two communities are ethnically diversified (Agyei-Mensah & Owusu, 2012; Housing the Masses, 2010; Raymond Asare Tutu, 2013). Attention was paid to this to ensure the views of various divisions including ethnic, religious and sex were well represented. The breakdown of the various categories of respondents and specific sample sizes are provided in Table 3.2.

3.5.6. Data Analysis

At the analysis stage, all data collected were coded using the NVivo software. The data analyses were deductively analysed and guided by the stages of thematic analysis of Braun and Clarke (2006). Braun and Clarke's (2006) six (6) stage analytical process includes familiarization, generating codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining themes and reporting results. They noted that the purpose of qualitative analysis is to identify patterns or themes that occur within a qualitative data set. This is particularly relevant for this study as the study seeks to establish observed patterns and recurring themes and discover new ideas, constructions, and meanings of terms from slum dwellers' narrations. Namey et al., (2008) see this method as going beyond words and phrases to generate implicit and explicit summaries from the cases examined. In the first stage, all audio-recorded voices were translated and written down manually in the English language. This set the tone for the next first stage of the analysis which involves familiarization of the data. The raw translated data was read over and over, while the researcher intuitively examined his reflexivity and positionality on the data to ensure that possible biases in translation were as minimal as possible. At the second stage, initial codes were generated from the transcripts. The codes were generated as the researcher became more and more familiar with the transcripts. These codes were generated with guidance from the philosophical position of the researcher, the

research objectives, and questions as well as the theories adopted. As such, this stage was time-consuming just to ensure that the codes reflect what the research sets out to do. The initial codes were identified and highlighted while careful reading was done in the NVivo software into which all transcripts were loaded. Phrases such as migrated, years of stay, household size, marital status, number of children, housing characteristics, wooden structures, durable housing, waste disposal, history, changed home, living alone, family relations, proximity to work, bad roads, home, resident, community life, place of stay, access to the city, arrival in the city, children, spouse, household, wooden structure, iron sheets, mud house, paper ceiling, block building, flooding, land issues, ethnicity, social cohesion, religion, belief systems and many more..

At the third stage of Braun and Clarke's (2006) classification, themes were searched for by looking at similarities and patterns in the initial codes generated from the transcript. This was tedious and required careful matching of codes by commonalities and differences. Codes such as marital status, household size, education, number of children, and years of stay were classified under the broader theme of demographic factors, whiles, place of stay, informal work, schooling, petty trader, illegal connections, NGO supports, ethnic chiefs, conflict resolution, access to the city, arrival in the city were classified under the broader theme of migration history. Other groupings included wooden structure, iron sheets, mud house, paper ceiling, block buildings were placed under the broader theme of Housing characteristics and so on. Other broader themes generated at this stage included; Initial moving decisions in Accra, Direction of residential moves, Community history, Life cycle factors, LifeCourse factors, Neighbourhood characteristics, Engagement with State actors, role of non-state actors, suggestions for policy interventions, and general comments. At the fourth stage, the

themes generated were reviewed for accurate representation and coherence in the data set. Also, the themes were reviewed for weakness and redundancy. For example, Demographic factors were reviewed as 'biographical factors', and migration history was reviewed as 'migration histories and residential mobility'. Also, LifeCourse factors were reviewed as Life-stage Factors. The reviews of the themes were done at the fourth stage to ensure that all themes reflected the range of factors listed as sub-themes under each and are also consistent and non-repetitive. At the fifth stage, the themes were defined and named for clarity in their representation. As noted in the author's writing, this involves providing descriptions for each of the themes and naming them to match the scope and focus of the factors represented in the data. For example, the factor Biographical factors were defined as attributes that relate to a person, including background, abilities, experiences, and preferences. Also, the theme 'migration histories and residential mobility' was defined as the moving decisions of respondents from their home region into the city of Accra and their subsequent changes in residential spaces in the city. Further, Life-stage factors were defined as the socio-economic factors that influence people's choice of residence as they grow from infancy to adulthood. All themes were respectively defined but mostly retained their previous names without change.

At the final stage of the six steps of Braun and Clarke (2006), these themes were used to write the report of the study, using quotations that explain the themes as data to support the findings. The write-up linked the themes to the research questions and objectives of the study with the analytical framework as a guide.

3.5.7 Ethical Considerations

Before the study engaged in the collection of data from the communities, ethical clearance was sought from the Ethics Committee for Humanities at the University of Ghana (see Appendix 5: Ethical Clearance). This was granted after the specific forms of data required for the study, the participants, and the declaration of no intention to cause harm to anyone because of the data collection was reviewed. In the field of data collection, the study participants were provided with consent agreements to be part of the study. The consent form was clearly read out to them, and further explained to include their rights to withdraw from the study at any point in time they feel like doing so. They also chose not to respond to uncomfortable questions and are well-informed about the researcher's inability to pay for their time and responses. Further, the participants were assured of their confidentiality and were kept anonymous at the reporting stage with no disclosure to any third party except for those directly in charge of the research. The researcher to the best of his ability conducted the interviews and data collection free from any form of research bias, misconduct or abuses of the participant or community members.

3.6 Reflexivity of the Researcher and Positionality

Interpretative qualitative research, by its nature, offers a mix of complex realities that may influence the data collection and report writing processes. Therefore, researchers must declare their positions relative to the research to ensure that they do not unduly influence the data collection process and the report writing with their own biases and conflicts of interest if there are. According to Alverson et al. (2008), "Reflexivity in the writing up of research problematizes the extent to which the researcher can objectively and transparently observe, as well as straightforwardly report her observations" (cited in Cole, 2013, p.52). Several factors

are noted to influence the research process and through reflexivity, the researcher can declare his interests and identity at every stage of the process on how it positions his ideological and theoretical leanings in the process. As Alvesson et al. (2008) noted, reflexivity offers the researcher the ability to declare his multiple perspectives and identities on its influence on the research. This identity complexities are explored through nationality, race, class, and culture. These are essential to our understanding of the theoretical and empirical range of the process. These factors may likely have indirect influences on the data collection processes in this research. However, those of culture, embedded in tribal and ethnic connections, as well as the researcher's prestige status as a PhD candidate, may directly influence the data collection process. Both study communities are multi-ethnic with interlocking cultures that define the uniqueness of the neighborhood. However, as the researcher entered the community, he established contact with the community leaders who sought to understand the nature of the research. Culturally, as the discussion progressed, those who were aware that the researcher was a Ghanaian and of the same ethnic descent as they considered the researcher to be one of them (an Insider). They ensured that the researcher got all the needed support from all other members of the community during the data collection. In effect, the researcher was mostly considered as an insider in the community with his open connectivity with the leaders. To show their concern for the work, one of the chiefs indicated

“Oh then I think you are just a son to me, I am your father, and I am sure your work would bring many benefits to us, I will lead you in the community but there will be another guy to support”. In another vein, one assemblyman also noted when the researcher was introduced to him, *“Then I have one of your tribesmen who is a unit committee member, I think he will be the best to move along with you and assist you”*.

In both study communities, there was no difficulty throughout the data collection, as the researcher moved through the slum neighbourhood with these well-known figures. Further, they consistently relied on the researcher's insider status whenever the participant shared the researcher's ethnic background which enriched the discussions. So, in all cases, the presence of the field assistants who were from the community allowed the researcher to quickly identify with the people while the interviews with the researcher's tribesmen appeared to be enhanced by such cultural status. On the other hand, the researcher's positionality as a student studying at the PhD level was interpreted by some as privileged and applauded, while others could not connect with what it meant and were simply unconcerned. This was particularly noticeable when you compared the researcher's reception levels at formal and informal institutional heads with community members. Upon arrival at the institutions, most of the heads were intrigued by the topic and understood the importance of the work. They gladly availed themselves to be part of the work knowing also that the output would be a good source of information in building the city of Accra. They looked at the researcher from the insider perspective, as a Ghanaian interested in a matter of interest to their institution.

Similarly, community leaders and informal organizations offered similar positive reception. However, the situation was mixed with the slum dwellers, as their attitudes towards supporting research works varied depending on their backgrounds. The researcher may liken this to the levels of exposure individuals have had to community research, as many experienced research fatigue. However, irrespective of how the researcher was received during the fieldwork, the reflexive position has always been that the research process is one whose *"experience is messy when human behavior is the data, a tolerance for ambiguity, multiplicity, contradiction, and instability is essential,"* (Wolf 1992, p.129, cited in Cole,

2013). These experiences notwithstanding, the researcher's positionality did not in any way affect the quality of the data collected, but rather aided the smooth interactions between the researcher and the participants. Both activities, reflexivity and positionality, were important elements in establishing the credibility and validity of the research because they allowed the researcher to have self-awareness of his potential biases on the research process and hence, the need to eliminate, reduce, and or manage that influence throughout the process (Probst & Berenson, 2014). This further would reduce the potential biases during the data reporting process.

3.6.9 Credibility

A major concern in qualitative studies is ensuring the credibility of the entire research process, especially, the data collected and analysed. A key defining issue of credibility is the trustworthiness of the entire process (Polit-O'Hara & Beck, 2006). This also largely validates the research work internally and increases confidence in the work. Credibility is one of the defining elements of the rigour in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The credibility of this work lies in the truthfulness of the data collection process. In the first instance, study participants were selected after consultations with community leaders and community research assistants. These participants were purposively selected from among slum dwellers who were likely knowledgeable about the neighbourhood and had relevant experiences regarding residential mobility. Their presence in the community was verifiable. The study's credibility is also established through the triangulation of the data collection methods employed. The study made use of in-depth interviews as its major method and triangulated with participants' observations and visual still photographs taken during the process. The observations were important as they captured the non-verbal responses provided

by the respondents. The triangulation method provided a double check on the responses across the different methodologies.

Further, the study also ensured that credibility was established right from the start of the research by gaining the trust of the community and institutions through detailed introduction and prolonged stay in the community. Before the start of the in-depth interview, quality time was spent with the community leaders, who walked the researcher through the community to familiarize himself with the geography of the place while being introduced randomly to some community dwellers. This was particularly useful during the in-depth interviews, as many of the people had seen the researcher accompanying their leaders in the days leading up to the data collection. This process built trust and confidence at both ends of the research. The research also employed persistent observation throughout the fieldwork to look out for events and phenomena that relate to the problem being studied. This method is also noted to enhance the credibility of the data. Finally, in reporting the data analysed, a conscious effort was made to present the findings by incorporating the words of the participants to give meaning within the context of the data. This method as noted, gives accuracy to the reports and internal validity to the research findings.

3.7 Philosophical Orientation

To standardize research across all disciplines and science, researchers tend to follow philosophical paradigms to guide their study to a logical conclusion. These guides have become non-negotiable as the nature of knowledge production and how it is produced are essential to accepting the results as a scientific production. There are two ways by which this is done to justify the study's orientation. The epistemology of a study as defined by Crotty

(2003 p.83) refers to “a way of understanding and explaining how we know what we know”. Maynard (1994) puts it succinctly as ‘providing a philosophical grounding for what kinds of knowledge are possible and how we can ensure that they are both adequate and legitimate’ (cited in Crotty, 1998, p.8). The knowledge produced should, therefore, be generally acceptable and replicable through a logically grounded framework. Secondly, the ontology of a study refers to ‘the study of being’, which relates to questions such as, what kind of world we are studying (Crotty, 2003, p.10) or as defined by Guba and Lincoln (1989), ontology is concerned with the questions, ‘what is there that can be known?’ or ‘what is the nature of reality?’ (p.83).

Residential mobility involves the relocation of families to new residencies due to shifts or changes that occur in family compositions as they transition through different life stages. The phenomenon is regarded as widespread among urban dwellers, but the intensity varies, based on several other factors. For example, homeowners are noted to be more residentially stable compared to renters (Andreasen et al., 2017). Studies on residential mobility over the years have contributed to urban planning and a deeper understanding of land-use dynamics in cities as this is informed by people's relocation decisions (Eluru et al., 2009). Studies on RM have followed similar approaches guided by such theories as Lifecycle, LifeCourse and neighbourhood change. These went through a transition where the initial focus of researchers was to look for individual biographical factors such as age, sex, income, marital status and employment status. Their inherent nature suited a discrete one-way analysis of residential mobility as a cause-effect relation (Rossi, 1955).

Deeper recognition of the relationality between individual factors and that of society brought about a shift in RM analysis. The introduction of concepts such as linked lives, situational imperatives, and life stages (Coulter, Ham, & Findlay, 2016; Wingers et al., 2011) in the LifeCourse perspective brought a more complex approach to understanding RM. However, right from its formative years, RM research has followed a positivist paradigm aimed at measuring or modelling people's RM decisions (Rossi, 1955). Methodologically, the quantitative research method underpins RM research which matches with the positivist paradigm. Another critical factor that aided this approach was the availability of longitudinal survey data on RM of people especially, in the Global North which lends itself more to statistical manipulation.

Over the years, concerns about a deeper understanding of people's RM decisions began to make waves in the discipline and many thought that a shift in paradigm to unravel individual experiences on RM was a better way for RM future research. It even became more apparent in the Global South where the availability or otherwise accuracy of longitudinal panel survey data on people's moving history was almost absent. For example, studies by Boyd et al. (2010) reveal how through the retrospective qualitative interview, deeper insights into people's moving decisions could be gained. Their study revealed factors such as hustles with landlords, children's negative reaction to the new neighbourhood and social isolation which in quantitative studies do not easily show up on recorded quantitative data. These otherwise could not be understood with quantitative data only but for the use of qualitative data.

As such, this study recognizes the complexities in understanding the residential mobility of families in slum neighborhoods who are faced with multi-faceted realities. To understand

how slum dwellers build their knowledge about the realities they experience in residential mobility, the study believes that interpretative research would provide a better response to the phenomenon. Interpretative research ontologically looks at reality as multi-faceted and recognizes that individuals have their thoughts, interpretations, and meanings assigned to their experiences. Truth and knowledge are seen as subjective and vary culturally and historically, based on the lived experiences of the individual who cannot be separated from their values and beliefs which shapes their understanding of reality (Ryan, 2018). Reality is constructed through the social realities of individuals and there is no single shared reality but individual realities are constructed (Ritchie & Lewis, 2016).

The interpretative ontology discussed resonates with the epistemological paradigm of social constructionism which is strongly adopted to guide this study. Social constructionism is underpinned by the thinking that reality is constructed through the belief systems which are subjective and pinned in the language system that exists. Knowledge remains shared and created through interactions within the context in which they are experienced (Whiting, 2007). Social Constructionism relates to ‘the relationality between people, institutions, material objects, physical entities, and language rather than the private sense-making activity of particular individuals’ (Fletcher, 2006 p.422).

Long before the formalization of social constructionism, early writers greatly influenced the thinking around this tradition. The works of Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) on epistemology and perception argued that our knowledge of the world is shaped by human perceptions and interactions rather than by just empirical observations. He argues that the reality of individuals is not defined through perceptions but rather mediated through human cognition.

Also, the works of Edmund Husserl (1859-1938) and Alfred Schutz (1899-1959) acknowledged the role of consciousness in defining reality while the latter expressed the idea of a social reality where reality is created through the everyday interactions that create shared meanings. Other known contributors to social constructionism included Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) who argued that even though norms and values of the social world exist, they are independent of the individual, however, they do influence the individual's behavior. On the other hand, George Herbert Mead (1863-1931) argued that the self is developed through social interactions through which meanings are constructed. He contributed to the understanding of social constructionism by emphasizing how shared symbols and language construct the social reality of individuals (Mead, 1934). Social constructionism is linked with sociological studies and is considered anti-realist in its approach (Hammersley, 1992). It is argued that the foundational attempt to formally establish social construction came through the works of Berger & Luckmann (1966) in their treatise titled 'The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge' (Burr, 1995). In this treatise, the writers acknowledged the influence of earlier writers especially Mead, Marx, Schutz, and Durkheim on their thinking. Social constructionism was coined and first used by Berger and Luckmann (1966). According to Hruby (2001, p.52) social constructionism is defined as "anything a society holds to be true, real, and meaningful". Social constructionists therefore argue that knowledge is constructed socially through humans' understanding and practices of the social world. A number of assumptions have been discussed in Burr (1995, p.3). This included a "critical stance towards taken-for-granted ways of understanding the world (including ourselves)". This assumption admonishes that there should be conscious efforts to understand all occurrences in the world by ourselves. Another assumption is that all knowledge is historically and culturally specific. That is to say that all forms of identity given to material things through labelling, classifications, denotations, and connotations exist within their time.

The third assumption underlying social constructionism is that social processes sustain knowledge. Various categories may fall under these social processes, however fundamental to the process is language. Language is a medium to engage the world and this is useful in the production of knowledge through the enactment of roles, sharing of experiences and constructing meaning through subjective meanings attached to materials and feelings. The final assumption of social constructionism states that knowledge and social action are interconnected (See Burr, 1995 for detail discussion). Social constructionism was introduced as an alternative to the positivist-empiricist philosophy of science that has for a long time influenced scientific inquiry. As such scholars have relied on social constructionism in the study of the process of knowledge construction that affects humans' understanding of the world through relationships in society and their social systems (Allen, 2005).

The study adopts this stance, as it hopes to probe into the complex nature of factors that influence slum dwellers' residential realities, embedded in their belief systems, interactions with their social environment, and political-institutional systems. The complexities surrounding the history and everyday life of urban slum dwellers can only be holistically understood through deep interactions with those who experience it, including the individual slum dwellers and their families, the non-state actors (Chiefs, NGOs, FBOs, CBOs), and state actors (Assemblymen, LUSPA, Physical Planner of AMA)

Social constructionism also resonates well with the theories that guide the study, including LifeCourse and Neighbourhood change, in terms of the relations that sustain and shape the individual's construction of reality. The theories hold that the life experiences and neighbourhood perceptions of the individual are collectively linked with that of the entire

family, upon which collective decisions on residential mobility are taken. As such, as individuals grow up or follow their desires, the social training they receive from their immediate family and societal norms within which they guide their lives have a significant influence on their life choices and decisions. This study examines the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers within the context of ‘Slum culture’ that exists among the people, ethnic segregations, state and non-state actor’s structures and histories built over time in the communities that have become powerful interactive forces and relational guide to slum dwellers (Crotty, 2003). This is not to say, however, that the study ignores the individual personal attributes of slum dwellers but as much as it is, those attributes are amenable to the context in which they live or exist. The realities constructed by the slum dweller, therefore, are out of his experiences of the society and environment in which he lives.

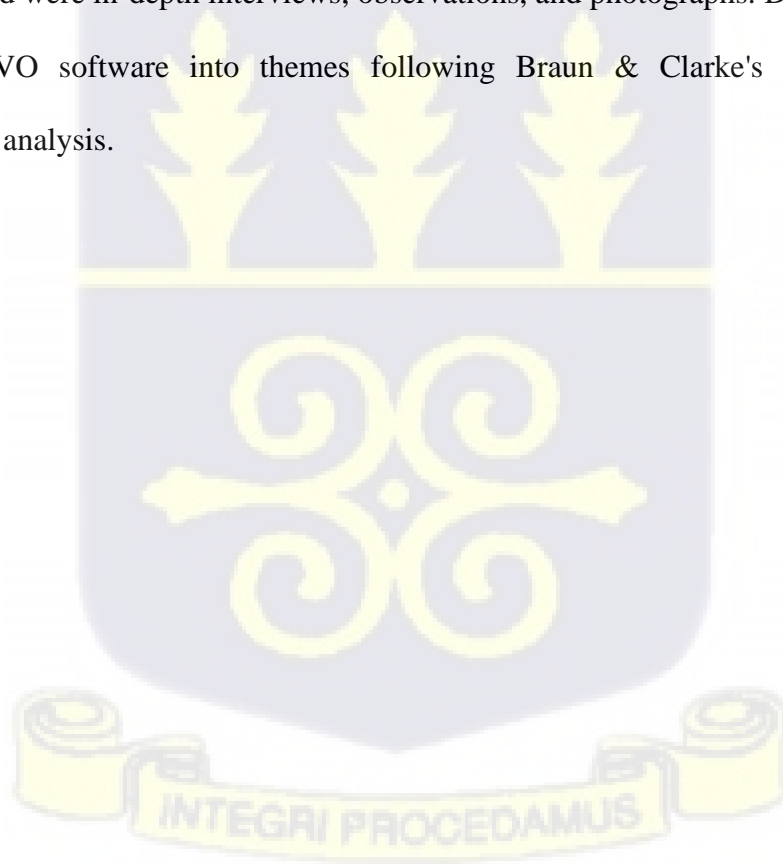
This research adopted a qualitative research design that gathered data through one-on-one interviews with slum dwellers, and state, and non-state actors to produce qualitative data for interpretation. This would provide an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the RM behavior among slum dwellers to aid in the formulation of policies on urban planning. Additionally, it would inform city planners about the factors influencing the varied land-use patterns across the city, as well as population dynamics and concentrations in slums.

3.8 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the philosophical underpinnings of the research, looked at the background of the study areas, and concluded with the methodology of the study. The philosophical underpinnings of the study were an interpretative ontology supported by its epistemological paradigm of social constructionism. Social constructionism argues that

reality is constructed through existing belief systems which are subjectively interpreted, as knowledge is co-created through interactions in the context within which they are experienced. The study was conducted within the Accra Metropolitan Area as it houses two of the most famous and old slums within the region and country at large. The two slums, namely, Old Fadama and Nima were selected to explore the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers.

Lastly, in conjunction with the research philosophy, the study chose a qualitative research design which aligns with the interpretative philosophy of research. The main data collection instruments used were in-depth interviews, observations, and photographs. Data was analysed with the NVIVO software into themes following Braun & Clarke's (2006) six-stage qualitative data analysis.



CHAPTER FOUR

SLUM TYPOLOGY AND RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY DECISIONS IN METROPOLITAN ACCRA

4.1 Introduction

The chapter argues and makes a case for a new way of classifying slums, as it departs from the traditional methods of identifying slums based on selected characteristics. This chapter answers the first research question “Does slum typologies influence people's residential choices in the city of Accra?”. Literature is replete with arguments on what constitutes slums and whether they can be objectively defined or subjectively referred to in the context of their existence. Yet, there is still no single agreed way of dealing with slums. This section furthered the arguments in support of understanding slums within the context of their existence. The section dealt with debates about slums’ existence and established a new definition of slums based on a proposed new concept called ‘slum continuum’. Based on the new concept which fundamentally looks at slums as a dominant neighbourhood production and not an exception in the African Context, a new typology of slums was proposed. It finally argues the influence of the slum typologies on people's residential choices.

4.2 Identifying Slums as a Continuum

Various definitions for what constitutes a slum have been reviewed extensively in chapter 2 of this thesis. However, this thesis further seeks to contest these existing views on what constitutes a slum and how it is currently conceptualized in the literature. This thesis sought to advance the new idea of thinking of slums as a ‘continuum’ rather than the confusing connotations given to the term. Slums do not constitute static entities but rather organisms in

perpetual dynamism in terms of the physical layout, and socio-politico-cultural factors that continue to (re)shape their existence and the experiences of their dwellers. Data gathered from the field suggests supports the idea that slums experience change and grows overtime in their existence. In the study communities, various changes observed included Change in the physical infrastructure, governance structure, socio-economic activities and Government recognition.

4.2.1 Change in Physical Infrastructure

During fieldwork interviews, notable historical changes in the physical outlook of the study communities were discussed. It was noted that, both communities have experience lots of changes in their physical outlook which shows a positive growth in the development of the slum. In Old Fadama, an ethnic chief in narrating the historical changes overtime indicated how in the the early 1990's when he arrived at Old Fadama, the place was waterlogged and used as a dump site for city waste collectors. He explained that at first sight, he was unwilling to stay in such a dirty place with scattered wooden kiosks established all over by individuals. However, his inability to afford a decent place in the main city area left him with no choice but to find his place and put up a makeshift structure. Further, the structures found in the area were at best containers but mostly plywood structures as shown in Figure 4.1. He narrated that they have transformed from wooden structures to blockhouses.

“we have made progress in this community today, first you wouldn't want to even visit here, but today from my home that used to flood at the least rain, I now have this block structure that can withstand flood and fire” (Ethnic Chief of N., Old Fadama)



Figure 4.1: Typical Wooden Structure in Old Fadama

Source: Fieldwork (2022)

This story was further substantiated by the secretary to the Ethnic Chiefs Association in the community, who also stated that, overtime we have agreed and changed certain things we used to do. Now, if your house breaks down either by fire, rainstorm or flood, you cannot put up a wooden structure again, our law is that you must find money to build a more durable block house (See Figures, 4.2 and 4.3). We have operated this rule here for the last 5 years which is why you see a lot of transformation in terms of the conversion of wooden and makeshift structures into block houses. He further noted that with support from the NGOs, CBOs and FBOs and the assembly, they are working hard to change the face of the community.

“you see how Old Fadama now has many blockhouses which are more durable than the previous wooden structures, it is because we have decided with our development partners to make rules to change all wooden structures into blocks gradually” (Ethnic Group Association Secretary, 2022)



Figure 4.2: New Block Construction ongoing in Old Fadama

Source: Fieldwork (2022)

Similarly, in Nima, the study also witnessed a transformation in the physical outlay of the community with more durable housing. According to a 72-year-old chief Imam who has stayed for over 40 years in Nima, he explained that their forefathers who acquired the lands in Nima began building mud houses which were in very good condition. He narrated that, these mud houses were strong and have stood the weather for over 3 generations who have continued to inherit and benefit from them. Our fathers build mostly in a compound housing structure where you have the house almost enclosed with an average of 7 rooms to over 15 rooms. So, for most families living in Nima, the houses were bequeathed to them and the family head continues to ensure all family members entitled to a room have access even though it is becoming difficult due to the rise in family numbers.

“We have compound houses built by our forefathers who settled here first and we have also inherited them and continue to work on them to keep them habitable” (72-year-old Chief Imam, Nima, 2022).

Also, the assemblyman of one of the electoral areas shared that while growing up in the community, the houses were not as packed as it is now, due to the increasing population, successive generations have also put up houses within any available space. This has led to congestion and many people continue to come to Nima to find a place. Even family/household numbers have sharply increased putting pressure on the existing family houses and or to build new ones in any available space. He noted that,

“As we speak now, you will hardly find any bare land in the residential areas of Nima to build unless you want to break and rebuild it altogether. Even that, people cherish the traditional compound houses so much that, it is difficult to decide to break it down” (Assemblyman, Nima)

In describing the changes observed 65-year-old Imam, explained that many people are now building block houses around with a lot of them too as storey buildings. He narrated that even with the mud houses family members are replastering them with cement and repaint as a way to give a facelift to the structure and also ensure durability for safety. He narrated that,

“Many of us are reworking our cherished old buildings bequeathed to us by replastering, painting, and changing frames. New structures are also built all over the place making Nima very packed. In some places, you cannot even pass through two buildings while others convert at least one bathhouse space to a new building” (65-year-old Chief Imam, Nima).

Another significant observation made in the physical outlook of Nima was the succession of lands by the wealthy and business class people who are putting up commercial structures around the Nima roundabout area especially, where storey building office spaces, filling

stations, and banks are seen dominating the area (See figure 4.4). The assemblyman explained that, since the building of the Nima-Maamobi highway, there have been significant boom in business along the highway and it was only a matter of time for such huge investments to start spring up at Nima. He intimated that,

“Nima is a huge outlet for business because of its centrality and the population that moves in and out of the market every day. It is the reason everybody including multinational companies are all looking for space to establish here. These have changed our outlook significantly and impacted positively on the image of Nima”

(Assemblyman, Nima)



Figure 4.3: Storey Building for office space at Nima Roundabout Source:
Source: Fieldwork (2022)



Figure 4.4: Banking and Filling Station at Nima Roundabout

Source: Fieldwork (2022)

4.2.2 Governance Structure in Slum Neighborhoods

The study also assessed how slum communities were changing in terms of how they have been governed over the years. The study results revealed that governance was key to the transformation witnessed in both communities especially in Old Fadama which for years have suffered from threats of eviction, demolition and disasters. As noted by the assemblyman in charge of Old Fadama, he narrated that, his relationship with the community has been cordial due largely to the community leadership that currently exists. He noted that the community in the past suffered lots of internal fights due mainly to ethnic misunderstandings and the superiority of ethnic groups and national politics. As such, there was a constant need for the police and the assembly to step in to resolve such tensions any time they arose. Overtime these have largely been eradicated due to alternative governance structures established in the communities that allow every ethnic group to officially enstool a chief who is recognized and respected by the people. These chiefs have together formed an association in Old Fadama and have largely dictated the form of development, engagement with development partners and partnership with the government through the assembly. This alternative governance system has

led to deeper collaborations with NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs as well as other international bodies to bring development to the area while maintaining social cohesion and tolerance among all ethnic groups.

“The people now have alternative governance arrangements through ethnic tribal chiefs and development partners and now we directly engage them for any development. This was not the case previously as the assembly did not even consider them as an existing community” (Assemblyman, 2022).

This was further confirmed by a 69-year-old resident who explained that the Nima community has undergone transformational changes in its physical outlook. He explained that before the development of the inner roads of Nima West, the community had lots of issues with sanitation, waste management, and poor drainage systems. However, the situation as he explained has considerably improved though the dense population still poses a challenge to the proper management of these amenities. With observations by the researcher, it was clear that the west of Nima (closer to Accra Newtown and Maamobi) appears to be more developed compared to the East (closer to the Kanda Highway) where there are still numerous makeshift structures that are crowded, and unplanned. However, the West of Nima’s growth and outlook overshadows that of the East as it is well planned with tarred inner roads, few public containers for waste collection, and drainage systems. However, the availability of these amenities does not indicate the absence of challenges associated with them.

4.2.3 Socio-Economic Activities

The study further observed that the two study areas have witnessed continuous changes in their social and economic conditions over the years. These changes in the socio-economic conditions have enhanced the image of the communities in the face of the negative tags on them over decades of their existence. In the case of Old Fadama, its existence has historically been a contested over the years and this has created a social tensions between the dwellers, government and traditional land owners. This was confirmed by the secretary of the Ethnic chiefs association who stated that,

“Old Fadama has been under the radar for clearance by the assembly severally and due to that, the first ethnic group that settled here disagreed with others who moved in later as they wanted to protect their territory. This has brought about several tensions between all three parties to the land as well as internally between the settlers”
(Secretary, Ethnic Groups Association, Old Fadama).

According to a 52-years-old female Wele seller, she shared how people related with others over 2 decades ago and how the situation has changed in recent times. She narrated that, there used to be several tensions in the community which was also largely ethnically segregated. Particular ethnic groups live within a defined location and may not tolerate others join them or even passing through their area with a confrontation. Further she explained that gradually, things began to change as the work of NGOs, CBOs and FBOs intensified in the community, people began to see the need to fight as a common group to keep their stay at Old Fadama. She also shared how the introduction of the Ethnic chiefs some 5 years ago has further deepened social cohesion among all ethnic groups and enhanced tolerance for each other. Her

narration also showed that living in harmony among themselves has translated into governments changing their approach towards the total demolishing of the settlement.

“today, Old Fadama is a very peaceful place, we are ethnically diverse with people from even outside Ghana living here. Yet the days of frequent fights and ethnic tensions are gone and we live together and fight a common course for our development” (52-year-Old Wele Seller, Old Fadama).

Economically, dwellers in Old Fadama have largely engaged in scral metal recycling, petty trading, informal labour-intensive activities, food vending, Kayayee, Okada (Commercial motorcycling), and artisanal works. The community boasts in these diversified economic activities that are noted to contribute to the growth of the city. According to an ethnic chief of E., he noted that the community has always been a vibrant one, however, there is a continued upsurge in the number of petty traders across the community, showing the urgency of the slum dweller in trying to make ends meet. He further described the situation noting that,

“when you stand at the entry point to the community at 4am-5am and see the number of people who move out in the thousands at dawn for work in the city and return home at 5pm-8pm, you will understand that if you are lazy you cannot stay in the slum. Everyone is busy finding something to do” (Ethnic Chief of E., Old Fadama).

Nima community on the other hand has shown similar importance in terms of their socio-economic growth. The people have shown how strong social cohesion through family and kinship ties among all the people has led to increased peace and tolerance over the years in the community. Similar to the historic narrations in Old Fadama, a 68-year-old Chief Imam recounted how the Nima community was a place of tension and chaos at a point in time. He

shared that Nima used to be full of life with young men and women who were always the targets of all the city wrongdoings. Whenever there was any crime in the city, the security agencies came to Nima to look for the miscreants. This was a worry for most of the inhabitants in community as the stereotype affected everyone. He also indicated that this negative tag goes a long way to effect the employment of people who were from or stayed in Nima.

“Nima community has been tagged as a place for all the bad boys and whenever crime is committed in the city, the first place of suspicion is Nima. Our children and everything we do is suspicious in the eyes of the city dwellers” (68-year-old Chief Imam, Nima)

However, the assemblyman in narrating the social changes he has observed in Nima, noted that it took conscious work of community leaders and chiefs to gradually work towards changing the bad image of Nima. He explained that this was done through the strengthening of community identity. This saw conscious efforts at building social cohesion among the diverse ethnic and religious groups that stay in Nima. The assemblyman further noted that the Nima community is still growing with a collective sense of belonging and protecting the interest of everyone. He indicated that it is this strong social cohesion that led to a shared identity, feeling of belonging as well as reducing the many inter-group conflicts that plagued the peace co-existence with a diverse and multicultural community.

“We have consciously over the years, try to build a community where we are each others keeper, uniting the diverse ethnic groups while enhancing the resilience of inter-ethnic groups, especially the marginalized” (Assemblyman, Nima).

To this, a pastor of an FBO in the community noted that he focuses on building trust among his church members and their families and a culture of respect with each other. To demonstrate how people related well in Nima he gave the example that

“Just look around and listen to the language used by many people here in Nima, you will mostly hear Hausa being spoken. However, many of those who speak the Hausa language are not necessarily from that tribe. I am not a Muslim but I speak Hausa just like any Muslim around and if I don’t tell you I am one, you wouldn’t know”
(Pastor of FBO, Nima).

Similarly, a 52-year-Old petty trader in Nima also mentioned two key transformations he has witnessed due to the strong social cohesion among community members. She noted that, due to the strong social cohesion, it promotes informal social safety nets that benefit everyone. She noted how there is always support from one another through informal arrangements among the dwellers, as she has been a beneficiary of these informal arrangements. She intimated that,

“I have benefited from financial and opportunity support from people in the community. And if you are celebrating anything or going through some bad moments there is always someone to emotionally support you” (52-year-old Petty Trader, Nima).

Finally, a leader of a CBO also shared how these social cohesions has led to building the community's resilience towards external shocks and enabling conflict resolutions. According to the Leader, he noticed that the community can quickly mobilize manpower to deal with any form of disaster, displacement, or in an urban health crisis. He notice that in most cases the swift response from community members leads to the recovery and adaption when crisis

occurs. He further shared that in Nima just like Old Fadama, the ethnic Chiefs and Imams play critical roles in community conflict resolution as they are trusted and respected. Their ability to resolve disputes effectively and quickly reduces the escalation of misunderstandings and peacebuilding is enhanced.

“Our Chiefs and Imams are essential to the social cohesion enjoyed in the community as everyone respects and responds to their call immediately they hear it. This has fostered more unity and understanding among members. (Leader, CBO, Nima)

The Nima Community has also grown economically overtime that has enhanced the image of the community. During the fieldwork, it was discovered that the informal economy of Nima has grown from a regularly small functioning market to become a market hub of diversified small-scale enterprises including artisans and traders. As noted by the assemblyman the Nima market has witnessed tremendous expansion of the years and has become a preferred market for all class of people across the city of Accra and beyond.

“Nima market is one of the places you can trade all food items and materials that you need anytime. I think that the vibrant market that it has become only shows the entrepreneurial spirit of the people living in Nima and their hard work and zeal for success” (Assemblyman, Nima)

A 48-year-old trader in clothing materials also explained that the transformations witnessed in the economic space of Nima over time have also opened it up for the emergence of many financial institutions including microfinance and savings cooperatives. These financial institutions have provided support to small-scale and local businesses to grow sustainably. He noted that the opportunities for economic growth associated with Nima now, attracted even

banks to establish close by in the Nima community and cited Access Bank near the Nima roundabout. He also explained that the thriving market in Nima has also pushed especially the youth to begin to learn and specialise in the creative industries, technology and service sectors to support other establishments such as educational, transport and health institutions that spring up in the community.

“On a typical market day in Nima, it’s a struggle to walk through with sellers taking over parts of the road, cars in long traffic congestions, the noise from sellers, and how busy people move in and out of shops to make their purchase shows the vibrancy, potential and how swiftly our community is transforming (See Figure 4.6)” (48-year-old Trader, Nima)

A major factor that has enhanced the economic viability of Nima was the construction of the Nima-Maamobi highway road as well as the inner roads of the Nima West community. This as noted by the Ethnic Chief of D., it has opened up Nima for access from all directions without any difficulty whether rain or shine. He believes the economic fortunes of Nima have just begun and in few years to come, the Nima market will be a major and preferred trading hub in Accra. He noted that these positive transformations in the outlook of Nima has enhanced its image and may be a critical reasons for its recent elevation to the Ayawaso East District with Nima as the capital.

“Over the years, no one will believe that today Nima will be recognized as the capital of a new district. It is because we have shown that Nima is made up people who are hardworking and ready to complement governments efforts in development. So, today many middle class people stay in Nima and go to work in Accra unlike the bad names on us previously” (Ethnic Chief of D., Nima)



Figure 4.5: A Typical Market Day Condition at Nima Market

Source: Fieldwork (2022)

The preceding paragraphs have demonstrated strongly how data gathered by this research have shown that both Old Fadama and Nima have experienced different levels of positive growth over the years. With the transformations established, the study proceeds to argue for slums to be seen as dynamic and that can be considered as dominant forms of neighbourhood production. As such, slum continuum will refer to the ability of slums to go through various forms of transformation, changing its status from time to time.

The thinking of slums as a continuum is not new in the academic literature but how this ‘Slum continuum’ as a new concept, can influence the thinking of what constitutes a slum has seldom been explored. For example, in the works of Jankowska et al., (2011) and Weeks, Hill, Stow, Getis, & Fugate, (2007), the slum continuum was explained in quantitative terms to connote how enumeration areas (EAs) that formed neighborhoods displayed continued ‘slumness’ in their appearance. The indexing of the EAs was based on 4 out of the 5 key factors defined by the UN-Habitat (See Table 3.1) to constitute slums. As such, the use of a continuum was nothing more than how EAs close to each other exhibit some level of

‘slumness’ in their characteristics to determine the worst slum neighborhoods (Engstrom et al., 2015; Jankowska et al., 2011; Weeks et al., 2007).

Drawing on these initial ideas of examining slums in a continuum rather than as static and isolated entities, this thesis attempts to build on this existing but limited expression of what a slum continuum constitutes. The concept of slum continuum as applied in this thesis goes beyond these applications, to attempt to challenge the thinking of slums as an ‘emotive’ and ‘pejorative’ term (Gillespie, 2016). Also, slums represent in themselves, a distinctive form of neighbourhood and a typology that should be treated as such. Slums represent a housing typology just as others, including high-, middle- or low-class residential areas, and formal and informal classifications (as used in GSS, 2010).

Slums should represent a distinctive form of a residential neighbourhood that should be studied in its varied forms of appearance, structure, culture, and life. This would help us to focus and understand the various forms of transitions and changes that occur in the growth of a slum. Such a measure of growth would contribute to the ability of city planners to indicate areas that may require government interventions and ensure such neighborhoods gradually are brought up to speed with the city planning structure. Slums, therefore, should be seen as a class of residential neighborhoods with defined characteristics, including governance structure, housing type, population dynamics and physical environment. Government through the exercise of its mandate for the greater good of the city, would make interventions where possible in the growth of the slum neighborhood. They may decide whether the neighbourhood is worth keeping, through consideration of several factors including land ownership and tenure of occupants, location of the slum in a safe or risky environment, and the general contribution of the neighbourhood to the growth of the main city. These points are

important, as the thesis notes that historical antecedents have shown that the government has not been entirely measured and transparent in its dealings with some known slum neighborhoods (Gilbert, 2007; Simon, 2011).

As argued in existing literature (Rao, 2012), this thesis also advances similar historical arguments on the emergence of slums and its theorizations. Slums have existed for as long as cities have existed, and have changed in form over time due to influences and interactions with globalization and modernization factors. The urbanization process of cities came with such attempts to create acceptable standards to which buildings and neighborhoods should conform. However, such standards have also swiftly changed with time aimed at matching current urbanism forms in cities. If the current standards for the city's housing structures, population and environmental conditions were applied to the city as applied in centuries past, probably the entire city would be labelled as slums (See arguments advanced by Rao, 2012, p.678). This historical antecedent helps us to reason that a slum is only a slum based on certain acceptable standards defined within a city or country. As much so, these standards lack universal applicability and vary greatly from one place to the other. Neighborhoods that may be referred to as slums in the Global North may qualify to be middle to first-class neighborhoods in a Global South city. Even among countries in the global south, the characteristics that define a neighbourhood in one country would vary greatly from those of another (UN-Habitat, 2003). This view has also been succinctly put forward by Gilbert (2007), "If a slum is a relative concept, viewed differently according to social class, culture, and ideology, it cannot be defined safely in any universally acceptable way. Nor is the concept stable across time because what we consider to be a 'slum' change" (p.700). He cited how in Western Europe, outside toilets used to be the acceptable standard, however, a house without an in-built toilet today is unacceptable in the same Western Europe.

In the city of Accra, the existence of slums over the years has been met with mixed applications of approaches to their true status in the city. The slums in the city have been categorised into different classes taking into consideration the factors used to describe what constitutes a slum (Paller, 2012). This lens (UN-Habitat definition of Slums) underlain how such neighborhoods are perceived and dealt with. Broadly, one could see various forms of responses to neighborhoods considered as slums based on factors such as their land tenure status. Those neighborhoods which are seen to exist without any form of legal title to the land, are dealt with differently compared with others which have the land properly acquired. Again, some scholars have argued that the use of tenure security of land as a measure of what constitutes a slum, is insufficient and hence, the review of the key factors by the UN-Habitat to exclude land tenure which is more complex to measure (Dovey et al., 2021). Several neighborhoods were declared slums due to the illegal acquisition of the land, and the poor and undesirable living conditions of these areas. Places such as Old Fadama have suffered this fate for so long, and continue to face threats of eviction from the government (Gillespie, 2016; Crentsil & Owusu, 2018). This thesis advances the argument that slums should be seen as an acceptable class of neighbourhood within its own unique space of existence and merits.

Many have also attempted to change the term slum with other synonyms such as informality. However, some scholars argued that this only worked especially towards the end of the 20th century. The term resurfaced in the 21st century in many writings of the UN-Habitat and World Bank writings for which many criticized these institutions as pursuing parochial interests. As such, this thesis argues that it is not the physical form of the term 'slum' per se that is the bigger problem, but the connotations assigned to the term that needs to be changed. This thesis advances the argument that a new conceptualization of the term is needed as an

antidote to the various conflicting representations of the term rather than by a mere act of finding the best synonyms.

4.4 The New Concept of ‘Slum Continuum’

The previous section dealt with the subject of the slum continuum, empirical data to support transformations in the study areas, its definition and application as a new concept to deal with the myriads of negativity surrounding the term slum. As such, this section advances the arguments further by specifically dealing with how this new concept of slum continuum can be applied and understood in our context of dealing with the term slum. The concept slum continuum, as espoused in this thesis was inspired by the ideas of Stoke (1962) in his concept of slums of hope and despair. The concepts of slums of hope and despair as he explained connotes the idea that slums that have shown great signs of prospects and growth in their socio-economic, housing, and environmental conditions offer hope to its residents. However, others show signs of sustained degeneration, retrogression and debilitating conditions and its dwellers appear to be in despair. This concept of slums of hope and despair offers scholars and other stakeholders the opportunity to see the multifaceted dimensions of the existence of slums.

The new concept of the slum continuum seeks to tackle the challenges with the concept in its old conception as discussed in the previous sections. The concept tries to propose that, slums constitute a neighbourhood in its capacity just like an informal and formal settlement, high, middle and low-income residential areas, indigenous and migrant neighborhoods. When viewed from such perspectives, it is then seen as a dominant form of neighbourhood production that requires its unique characteristics and conditions to be understood for its

development and growth. This thesis espouses that when the mindset surrounding the existence of slums is changed, the people's thoughts and approach to dealing with such environments would also change. The other challenges including access to land and ownership are very much acknowledged. The slums referred to here in this thesis, refer to neighborhoods that have existed and grown for a very long period and have become an abode for thousands of city dwellers with or without land titles on government/private lands. Again, one would ask why the new proposed term still includes the name slum, when this has been the subject of contention among scholars for decades. Many attempts at removing the term from the vocabulary have failed as its advocates such as the United Nations and World Bank institutions reintroduced them over time (Davis, 2004; Gilbert, 2009; Melara Arguello et al., 2013; Simon, 2011). The concept of a slum continuum would aid in rethinking slums from a new perspective, understanding the unique histories and transformations, and providing specific support needed to make them desired neighborhoods.

The concept refers to a process of assessing residential neighborhoods (strengths and weaknesses) through their unique growth and development transitions to determine their specific status at every point in time. As such, any attempt to delimit the status of a neighbourhood through a typology must first consider its growth trajectory from the past to the present. Three types of neighborhoods may be assessed. First, neighborhoods that have seen a positive outlook in their growth and development consistently over their period of existence. Secondly, neighborhoods that have stagnated in growth and development over their period of existence. Next, are neighborhoods that have witnessed a steady decline in their growth and development over their period of existence. This fundamental notion helps to understand neighborhoods that show prospects and give hope to their inhabitants as against

those that do not offer any form of hope but despair to their dwellers. This understanding would give us two forms of neighborhoods at the extremes as shown in Figure 4.1. It is also clear from the figure that neighborhoods of hope can transition into places of despair and vice versa. Based on the notion illustrated, this thesis espouses that slums should be looked at from a new perspective. Slums should be analysed as a dominant form of neighbourhood production based on their own merits of existence and not on some selected parameters defined under conditions that may not fully be applicable in specific African cities.

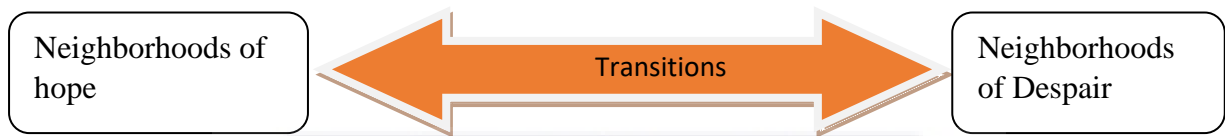


Figure 4.6: Transition in Neighbourhood Continuum

When we consider slums as a mode of production of a residential neighborhood, then juxtaposed over the model demonstrated in Figure 4.1, slums can be analysed based on their historical growth and development to determine whether their 'continuum' offers opportunities to their dwellers or not. These changes in historical growth and development refers to transitions as noted in Figure 4.1. Slums, as defined in this thesis, represent the worst form of residential neighbourhood based on existing residential typologies. Major typology of residential neighborhoods includes high income, middle income and low income, or 1st class, middle class or low class. Slums based on typologies belong to low-income neighborhoods. However, the model proposes that neighbourhood types can progress into higher types or degenerate into lower-class neighborhoods. Slums, therefore, can grow from lower-income groups to middle-income neighborhoods. Whereas examples of such may be few, there could be smaller progress recorded within a group. Income levels or development may vary from

small to huge levels among a particular neighbourhood class (e.g., high, middle, or low income). Among low-income neighborhoods, there are varied differences among these communities. The literature is replete on the income level differences among low-income neighborhoods that seem to support the view that even within a neighborhood, income levels vary greatly (MacTavish et al., 2023; Nyametso, 2012). It is based on this idea, that this thesis considers slums to represent the worst form of a neighbourhood within the low-income neighbourhood class. This is not an entirely new idea, as many scholars have also labelled slums as the worst place for human habitation (Weeks et al., 2007; UN-Habitat, 2010; Jankowska et al., 2011; UN-Habitat, 2016).

4.5 Tenets of the Concept of Slum Continuum

The concept of the slum continuum can only be fully understood and implemented based on clearly stated conditions. These conditions help to put the new concept within its proper perspective to prevent the misapplication or misinterpretation of what the concept seeks to contribute. Again, the tenets are important to serve always as a form of guide and context to the new paradigm within which slums should be considered. These are discussed in the proceeding paragraphs.

1. Slums represent a dominant form of neighbourhood production and should be considered within their context of existence. This thesis argues that in line with arguments for considering informality as part of the urbanization process of the global south (Dovey et al., 2021), slums are a product of this informality. Again, with the overwhelming evidence of the number of urban poor residing in slum neighborhoods, any attempt to continue to view them as a menace and deal with the physical slums and their dwellers in inhumane and draconian styles would rather be retrogressive. Rather,

governments and other stakeholders should be interested in the contributions from these neighborhoods and how to harness their energies to transform the city. Slums are critical to the existence and full functioning of cities and should be recognized and accepted by the authorities (Oteng-Ababio & Grant, 2019). As city neighborhoods are classified generally into high-, middle- and low-income residential areas, slums represent a sub-category under the low-income residential areas. Other classifications include formal and informal neighborhoods (Afenah, 2012; Fox, 2014; Mensah, Osae, & Yeboah, 2021; Okyere et al., 2018) and migrant and indigenous neighborhoods (Fiasorgbor, 2013; Arguello et al., 2013; Zaami, 2020). Slums have existed for decades, and they will continue to exist irrespective of the difficulties and challenges alongside flourishing and rich neighborhoods in cities, and may never get eliminated.

2. Slum conditions are not static but complex and change like any other neighbourhood type. In understanding the concept of the slum continuum, one needs to be appraised of the fact that the conditions of slums change slowly or rapidly depending on the slum's resilience in the face of internal and external shocks. Many have assumed that slums remain the same without paying attention to the little or rapid changes accruing in all aspects of their growth and development. Slums, like any other neighborhood, are influenced by both internal and external factors including local policies on development and growth, inflation, and cost of living in the city, market conditions among other local factors.
3. Heterogeneity in slum neighbourhood characteristics – one common misrepresentation of slums by scholars is the generic characterisation of these neighborhoods. Slums are described based on factors such as poor sanitation, overcrowding, substandard housing, risky environments, poverty, lack of access to

water and illegal occupants (UN-Habitat, 2010). These factors have been over-emphasized blurring the truth in the details not considered. Many researchers have found that in most of the reported deprived slum neighborhoods, prevailing conditions appeared to be much better at the individual and community levels (Owusu et al., 2008). This shows that despite the general picture created, there are deep variations that exist. Scholars on slums must understand the changing characteristics that make up a particular slum by examining their cases rather than the continued application of generic characteristics that make up these neighborhoods.

4. Neighborhoods are dynamic and are in perpetual transition. Slums represent a complex set of neighborhoods largely due to their informal nature. However, a careful assessment of slums shows that they are in transition and these changes must be observed and explained within the context of the change. Many scholars over the years have continued to report on slums as static and non-changing neighborhoods (Jankowska et al., 2011; Weeks et al., 2007). Nonetheless, many slums have transitioned largely into places of hope and have given recognition for their feat. The typical case is given about the Ashaiman neighbourhood (see Chapter 2) which began as a slum and was made up of poor people with uninhabitable environmental conditions. Today, the neighbourhood has transitioned from being a slum to one of the largest municipalities with thriving formal and informal businesses. These transitions should not be thought of as overnight transformations in the outlook of the slum neighborhoods but rather the gradual change in growth and development in all aspects of their existence. The government used to shy away from the Old Fadama community in all its dealings and did not offer any form of support. However, over the years, some level of informal acceptability has been given to them in recent times, as observed in their full participation in the 2020 National Population and Housing Census. They are

also well represented under the Adedenkpo Assembly. These small transitions add up to the general outlook of the place over time indicating its new strength and expansion in its sphere of influence. Similarly, the Nima community has grown beyond the derogatory and neglect attitudes of governments over the years, as it has now been elevated to the status of the capital of the Ayawaso East Municipal. This is a status which increases their visibility, influence, as well as opportunities for government development interventions. As such, these places of despair as they were regarded decades ago, have gradually transitioned up the ladder to become places of hope.

5. A key principle in the implementation of the slum continuum concept is the term transition. This term as used in this concept refers to all forms of gradual changes that may occur in a neighbourhood caused by both internal and external factors. One needs to look out for the transitions that have occurred in a neighbourhood over a period to ascertain the growth and development. Transitions may come in handy or could be observed, as little changes are seen within segments of the neighborhoods. These may also be documented in individual research as findings or observations, as well as measured independently by experts. This principle remains the guide under which the concept operates and therefore, should be understood clearly. In measuring transitions, one would probably have to rely on several available methods to measure both physical, environmental, and social factors to feed into the concept of a slum continuum. As such, while the researcher seeks to understand the environmental transitions that have occurred over time in a particular slum neighborhood, different models and applications that are employed to measure environmental changes may be applied including the use of GIS and remote sensing techniques. Again, internal factors such as government policies that affect the pricing of goods and services, inflations and cost of living may influence the historical trends in the transitions of a neighborhood.

However, these should be observed and analysed at the micro-levels to determine specific cases rather than applied in general terms over selected slums. Again, these factors may also be external, as slums are functionally linked to the growth and outlook of the larger city. The contributions from slums have largely been measured to understand how valuable these neighborhoods are to the life engine of the city. Even though slum areas are only partially integrated into the full city life, the influence of globalization, modernization, urbanization, and global climate change impacts are equally felt by these people. Even if not directly observed, they are psychologically imbibed and at every given opportunity may be applied by these slum dwellers. It is obvious that dwellers in slums today are not uneducated or illiterate but rather those who are in touch with all forms of changes including technological and digital. The use of complicated smartphones, watching shows of global interest such as European football and ownership of digital televisions are enough evidence of the impact of these external factors.

4.6 Understanding the Slum Continuum Concept

As described generally in the previous sections of this thesis, this section focuses on explaining the concept within its analytic process as described in Figure 4.2. The concept as shown in Figure 4.2 hinges on the idea that slum development goes through a perpetual cycle of transitions. Slum neighborhoods exist uniquely, but share unlimited relations with their surrounding and distant neighborhoods. The relationships are embedded deeply in the principles of linked lives which hold that people are connected with others through kin and friendship ties, and social networks (Bailey, 2009; 2004; Hörschelmann, 2011). The diagram simply explains that slums go through different forms of transitions that may be influenced

by both internal and external factors, including structural and environmental factors. As the slum interacts with these factors, it would lead to growth either positively or negatively. This growth, if positive, would contribute to uplifting the status of the slum to a place of hope. The agency of the slum dwellers plays a key role in such growths as slum dwellers' ability to develop beyond the rhetoric against them depends largely on the people themselves. Where the transition experienced fails to propel growth in the slum, it would lead to despair conditions. However, the model is not strictly for slums, as any other neighbourhood could be replaced by a slum and assessed on the same basis to determine whether they are places of hope or despair.

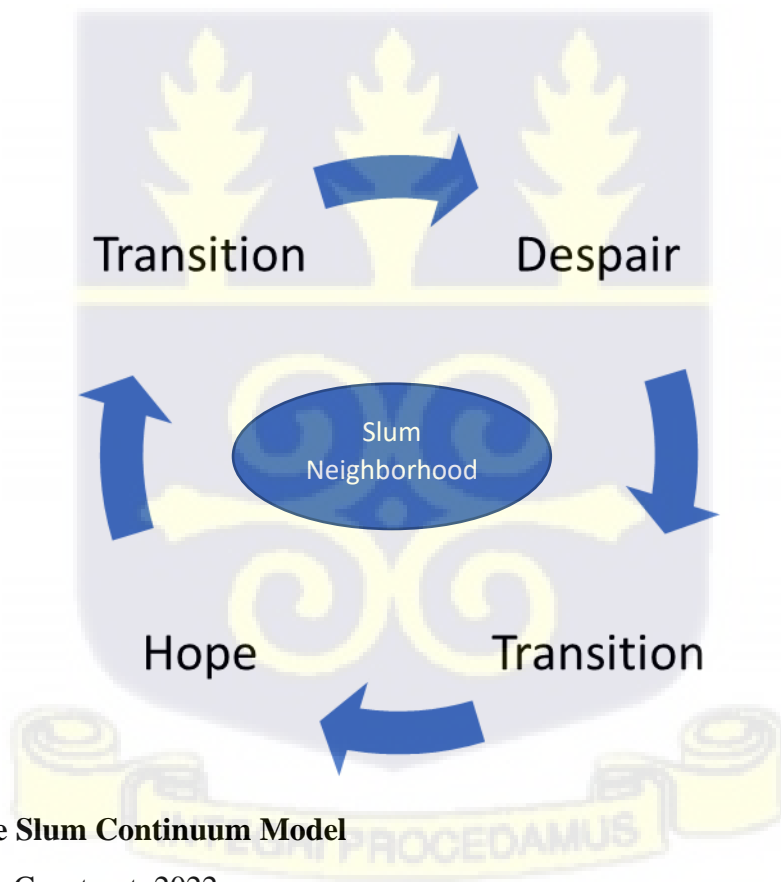


Figure 4.7: The Slum Continuum Model

Source: Authors Construct, 2022

4.7 A Typology of Slum Neighborhoods in Metropolitan Accra

The previous sections have discussed in detail the concept of the slum continuum, which helps us to determine slums of hope from despair. Based on the discussions, the study made efforts to classify slums into typologies while discussing each of them on their merits as slums of hope or despair. The typologies presented in this thesis look at the origin and current state of neighborhoods in metropolitan Accra.

4.7.1 Formal Neighborhoods to Slum Neighborhoods

This thesis defines formal neighborhoods in its very traditional sense of localities whose existence was initiated through processes legally acceptable by the government in securing lands and housing properties. These formal neighborhoods could either be initiated by the government as a public project, through private incorporations or a joint public-private venture. This typology of slum neighborhoods explains the situation that, some neighborhoods have begun from recognized positions and met all legal requirements to have access to the land on which they are established. Such formal neighborhoods, therefore, qualify to benefit from the share of the national cake for development. The provision of basic amenities such as water, electricity, health, and sanitation was done through the local assembly under their jurisdiction. These formal neighborhoods could be likened to the purchased settlements described in Paller's (2012) settlement classifications. These formal or purchased neighborhoods have plots of land outrightly bought by the early settlers from customary authorities which makes their existence and legitimacy unquestionable either by citizens or the state (Paller, 2015). Such settlements demand services from the government in exchange for the taxes paid as well as votes. The historical links of the first settlers to most of these communities are established in literature. Alhaji Futa purchased the land in Nima in

1931 which is a study site of this research. Others included Madina community which was first bought by Alhaji Seidu Kardi, Malam Bako and Nelu purchased Sabon Zongo and Zongo Malam, respectively while Tudu is traced to Braiman in the early 1900s (Agyei-Mensah & Owusu, 2012). These communities began with a population dominated by northern Ghanaians and for Sabon Zongo, few northern Nigerians. Other notable communities under this typology would include Maamobi, Accra New Town, and Kotababi among others. These set of communities also have legal access to the lands they occupy dating far back to precolonial periods and remain very diverse in the population composition. However, as the city of Accra goes through rapid population transformation and urbanization, many poor urbanites who could not afford accommodation in the main city areas moved into these areas where accommodation and access to land were cheaper to settle. Due to their multi-ethnicity, these neighborhoods also have different local ethnic leaders who form coalitions and networks with the state, politicians, and NGOs to negotiate for better resources and housing.

After these periods of initial purchase, the communities experienced growth and development largely because they transitioned into major market trading centres such as Nima (As argued earlier on in this chapter) and Tudu, while Accra New Town was noted widely for its printing business. Other markets such as Malamata have existed since, and continue to offer fresh foods from farmers from the city's peripheries. The trading status of Nima, Tudu and Malamata markets made them popular destinations for many first-time visitors to the city. Coupled with the fact that these areas had flexible and cheaper rents compared to the uncontrolled high rising rent costs in other parts of the city. Ghana's population experienced fast-paced urbanization, with the population of Accra City rising from 1.6 million in the year

2000 to nearly 2 million people by 2007 and over 2.7 million people in 2023. A greater proportion of these new urbanites sought accommodation in places of low rent costs as most of them were poor. Accra, though one of the most thriving cities, also is home to the poorest migrants from all other communities. These formal neighborhoods became a haven for some migrants who settled in these places to make a living in the city. These communities have over time witnessed several changes in their development and growth but largely remain places of hope to the dwellers. Housing conditions are better compared to informal neighborhoods (discussed in the next section) and are largely made up of durable housing materials. Observations made during fieldwork reveal that the common housing type found in these communities was the compound housing system. This included many rooms built within the same compound with a single or 2 exit points. Such houses sometimes accommodate only family members, or some rooms rented out to visitors. Many of these neighborhoods have also suffered from negative perceptions and tags with most of them noted to be a hideout for city criminals and thieves. Although these communities have access to basic infrastructure and social amenities, the increasing number of people moving in has put immense pressure on the available facilities. As such, access to these amenities may be unequally distributed and inadequate for the populations living there. With gradual government interventions, there are clear efforts at improving the neighborhoods with the agency of the individuals inhabiting the areas. As such, the stories of some of the neighborhoods are rewritten, a shift to their economic viability and contributions to developing the neighborhoods and bringing growth to the city's economy. The slum-like conditions however persist, despite the visible transitions made over the years of their existence.

The implications of this typology on residential mobility revealed that the multiple conditions explained could cause disequilibrium in the residential needs of the residents. As these neighborhoods are free from land litigations and harassment from the government, they become zones of attraction to many populations. Populations are usually mixed with migrants making up a huge portion of the inhabitants. Access to social amenities and other facilities such as schools, clinics and hospitals, business and employment opportunities all provide increased levels of attractiveness to the neighborhood. These conditions trigger residential mobility that gravitates towards the neighbourhood due to the availability and access to these necessities. However, where these facilities suffer from downgrade, it may influence people's residential decisions to relocate to other neighborhoods. These neighborhoods in Accra have also suffered from negative name connotations such as hub for criminals and illiterates, a situation that can lead to residential stress and force people to move to new and perceived safer neighborhoods. Formal neighborhoods are entitled to enjoy a great deal of government support for infrastructure provision; however, this is not always the case for neighborhoods such as Nima, Tudu, Maamobi, and Sabon Zongo. These areas have not consistently enjoyed such facilities, which has contributed to their downgrading into slums. However, these places continue to be home to thousands of urbanites, facing overcrowding conditions. Many of the inhabitants would likely continue to live in these communities despite the challenges that confront them, as there are very limited alternatives to securing cheaper accommodation elsewhere in the city. However, those with higher income levels may choose to relocate to new locations where they hope to enjoy some residential satisfaction.

4.7.2 Informal Neighborhoods to Slum Neighborhoods

Informal neighborhoods are defined by this study as neighborhoods whose establishments are considered illegal, as they do not have full rights to land and do not conform to the standards of the local assembly's planning regulations. These settlements may sometimes fall on political authorities to claim the lands they settle on. In many cases also, NGOs and FBOs are noted to fight for the rights of these establishments, dialoguing and playing middlemen between them and the landowners or government to avoid demolitions and evictions in cases where the land belongs to the government. The interventions by NGOs and FBOs have worked largely for many informal neighborhoods in the city including Old Fadama. Establishing rights to the land is a key component of dealing with slum communities and in the cases of these informal settlements, it is crucial and has implications on the development and growth of the neighborhood. Many have established strong links between rights and the legal acquisition of lands for residential purposes and the development of the land (Afenah, 2012; Arguello et al., 2013).

Residents of these informal neighborhoods only made permanent investments in the lands they occupy if they have legal ownership or strong assurances from the owners. In many such neighborhoods, infrastructure developments especially are substandard with not many efforts to improve their durability due to high levels of insecurity. However, along their trajectory of development, the situation may change where there is gradual acceptance and quasi-legal rights given to the dwellers over the land. This is seen in the case of Old Fadama, an informal neighbourhood which began with deplorable conditions due to continuous harassment from government officials and recurring threats of eviction and demolition. However, through

political wits and strategies supported by local and international bodies, the entire area has transformed largely. As stated by a resident during a field interview, he noted that,

“At the time I arrived here in the mid-1990s, my son if you don’t have the heart, you can’t even stay here. There was so much water, flooding at the least rain and for the dirt, rubbish especially rubbers, you cannot but live with them. To even put up a structure was almost impossible, I had to do a lot of filling with sawdust with help from some friends. Today Old Fadama has transformed and looks way better with the help of some NGOs and churches, it will even get better” (68years businessman, Old Fadama, 2022).

The nature of the birth of informal settlements and their locations endears them with several tensions with private and government institutions. Again, most of those who find themselves in these settlements are vulnerable and marginalised in the urban setting and do not have any form of insulation. As such, some have argued that their presence is a result of the government’s failure to meet their housing needs and survival while defending their rights to live in the city (see Stacey & Lund, 2016).

The settlements face lots of struggles with city authorities against evictions, demolishing and in most cases without any plans of relocation or support. The character and form of informal neighborhoods deter the government and local assemblies from planning for or with them, as they tend to be neglected in the developmental plans for the urban. In most popular situations the tension between this informal neighbourhood and city authorities makes them easy targets for demolition and evictions. City authorities hide under the guise of various slogans under the transformation agenda set by international bodies such as the UN and World Bank, and local authorities planning schemes to remove such places considered as incongruent to the

urban agenda (Gilbert, 2007; Arguello et al., 2013; Stacey & Lund, 2016). Typical examples of informal neighborhoods found in Metropolitan Accra include Old Fadama, King Shona or James Town Beach, Abuja CMB, and Tulako in Ashaiman outside the metropolis. Such informal neighborhoods are observed to be most prevalent among slum neighborhoods. This was confirmed during an interview with the planner of the AMA who noted that,

“These days, the conditions of typical slums are also very visible in many other neighborhoods that may not previously be seen as slums due to the lack of proper maintenance culture. But among all these settlements, the most problematic for the assembly is the informal ones which sometimes start as squatters. They are everywhere in the city these days, every space left somewhere before you know they occupy it. They establish and over a small period on the blind side of the assembly the numbers start increasing and structures are raised all over. So, the assembly needs to be constantly on the move but where are the resources to support such” (Assembly Planner, AMA, 2022).

The definition of informal neighborhoods again coincides with Paller's (2012) extra-legal settlements. These types of settlements, he noted, are becoming very widespread in the city with increasing population growth. Leaders in the community tend to change authority in the control of resources, housing, and other properties based on whose party has won the election. For new entrants into these informal neighborhoods, they rely mostly on informal networks of power including family networks to secure accommodation and jobs. There are others Paller (2015) describes as political entrepreneurs who also have so much power, and control and have links with government officials. They draw their strength from political officials in the government and control the housing market in these slums. Nonetheless, access to housing may be cheaper and more flexible in the slums and therefore, attracts many

poor migrants to settle in these areas with the hope of raising money and relocating to better housing someday in the city. Some successfully can achieve this whereas many others are trapped and remain in these shacks and kiosks forever. These extra-legal communities due to their historical background and evolution have generally been regarded as slums without any disagreements over these designations (Oppong et al., 2020; Akese and Little, 2018; Tutu, 2013; Oteng-Ababio, 2012). They have never remained the same over the years, as the potential to transform into places of hope has been on their agenda. Local authorities work with NGOs and FBOs to bring developmental changes to the community while ensuring a gradual shift in the negative narratives that make people perceive the places as habitable by only the marginalized and poor urban settlers. From the field observations and interviews presented earlier in this chapter, there is enough to speak to the case of Old Fadama as a place of hope due to the fast economic transformation of the landscape.

Informal to slum neighbourhood typologies may represent one of the complex typology types and may uniquely influence the residential decisions of the inhabitants. Their historical situation places them at a disadvantage point as they do not have full rights to the lands they settle on and do not enjoy government support in the provision of infrastructure and services. As such, their deprived conditions as described should not make them an attractive neighborhood. However, it is a haven for most low-income migrants who are unable to afford the high cost of rent and land in the main city. In some cases, they access basic needs such as water, and electricity through illegal means which burdens governments' revenue collection efforts. However, these neighborhoods are among the most densely populated with poor housing and overcrowded rooms. Over time, however, these neighborhoods grow in population, while improving their neighbourhood conditions. A typical case is that of the Old Fadama slum which has seen lots of facelifts in terms of its infrastructure, access to basic

amenities and access to schools and health facilities. They also continue to face eviction threats from the assemblies and demolition exercises are conducted sometimes without notice. These situations notwithstanding, many of the urban inhabitants continue to stay while fighting back to protect their properties on the land. People who live in such neighborhoods tend to spend longer years in the slums with a minimal desire to relocate, as they are still unable to afford the cost of rent in the main city. The LifeCourse of people living in these neighborhoods are highly irregular, however, there is also strong connectedness among them with social support for each other. As such, the challenges observed do not necessarily lead to residential stress in most cases. This explains why most of those living in these neighborhoods spend several years there and appear to be trapped with no desire to relocate. These informal to slum neighborhoods may have a more residentially stable population as is the case of indigenous to slum neighborhoods. This is because everyone owns the space they have acquired and so informally, remain the owners and gradually raise properties that keep them around. However, the probability of residential relocation within the same neighbourhood may also be prominent.

4.7.3 Indigenous Neighborhoods to Slum Neighborhoods

The indigenous slums as defined by this thesis refer to city neighborhoods made up of those considered as the original owners of the lands in the city. This leaves much of the city lands directly in the hands and control of the chiefs and family heads found in these indigenous communities. These communities in the city of Accra have existed in the pre-colonial era and have witnessed massive support and development of the neighborhoods and houses in such areas as Ga Mashie made up of the twin communities of James Town and Ussher Town. Ga Mashie is referred to as Old Accra and the historical core of the city is blessed with many of

the precolonial structures of castles and forts that later became the seat of the Ghana government in the late 1800s (Accra, 2010; Assembly, 2011). Other indigenous neighborhoods include Korle Gonno, Chorkor, La and Labadi all located along the Gulf of Guinea which borders Ghana to the south. Most of these areas have enjoyed development support and growth due to the early presence of foreign traders along the coast of Ghana. Such developmental supports were seen in the areas of huge durable housing architectures and roads. Post-colonial and successive governments after Ghana's independence left the maintenance of the neighbourhood and housing infrastructures to the families of these traditional areas. Due to the lack of investment by individual families in maintaining the structures, these areas have seen a sharp downgrade and deterioration of the housing infrastructures. Some have become death traps due to cracks in the walls and also weak pillars supporting the structures. Many scholars have over the years described these areas with dilapidated building structures coupled with poor environmental conditions as slums (Arguello et al., 2013; Oteng-Ababio, 2014).

By character, however, these indigenous neighborhoods have full rights over the lands on which they occupy and are recognized fully by the government. They are therefore entitled to all government developmental plans without any form of fear of demolition, relocation or eviction. The increasing population in the city have led to a very high demand for land for multiple purposes which has led to the very high land prices being quoted for the sale of land. More importantly is the advantageous location of these indigenous communities which form the main central business district of the city. This prime location makes the demand for land around these places increase. It is however observed in this study that, some dilapidated housing structures in the communities are being given out to developers for rebuilding into

many-storey structures. Parts of the new structure especially the last floor are given to the family while additional moneys are paid to the family. This form of redevelopment ongoing in the Indigenous communities is what is referred to as gentrification. Gentrification involves the redesigning of old residential structures into multi-purpose structures especially for trade. The rate of gentrification along the borders of the Indigenous communities and the CBD is of major concern as many are concerned about the impact of these ramifications on the Indigenous people and their culture and lifestyle. Indigenous communities in the city have also had their share of the transforming power of the city. It is also a close-knit community with its own cultural and traditional practices which shape daily lifestyles and morals. Access to housing is also closely tied to family lineages and networks. The high rate of urbanization and modernization is having its share of impact on these neighborhoods. Other tribes have also infiltrated the indigenous areas to seek accommodation while working in and around to support their daily lives. These areas are today characterised by poor housing conditions, overcrowding in households, poor sanitation and waste collection and inadequate access to clean water (Amankwaa, Owusu, Owusu, & Eshun, 2014; Melara Arguello et al., 2013b; Oteng-Ababio, 2014). As conditions worsen in these areas, they are regarded as slums, however, there is still much hope found in these areas as continued changes are occurring with governments and NGO support to revitalize the area for its touristic potential to rake in money for the community development.

This slum typology potentially influences the residential mobility behavior of the inhabitants in varied dimensions. These factors cut across historical, cultural and socio-economic factors. Indigenous communities are noted for keeping strong cultural identities with their traditions and cultures that define their existence within the city. As such, many of the inhabitants who

are indigenes are likely to be rooted in the communities as they seek to remain strongly connected to their traditions and cultural identity. Again, these indigenous settlements find themselves very close to the central business district. They, therefore, offer residential opportunities to a host of migrants who are in the city for socio-economic reasons. There is also demand for land for other new land uses such as business shops and offices close to the CBD. This has led to heightened levels of sales of dilapidated structures to be re-engineered through the processes of gentrification. Gentrification is becoming rife for commercial purposes along the fringes of indigenous communities such as Ga Mashie, Korle Gonno and Chorkor. These commercial investments have opened up economic opportunities for migrants and indigenes leading to an increasing number of people seeking accommodation in these indigenous communities. Further, the degrading physical conditions in Indigenous communities including housing, sanitation, waste disposal and crowdedness could lead to residential stress. Even though residential stress leads to relocation, it may not always be the case, as in these Indigenous communities, there are limited residential options for residents including migrants. Nonetheless, many indigenes are also noted to relocate from the community to other areas due to factors such as the physical conditional factors noted earlier. Coupled with the increase in disposable incomes, some indigenes are relocating to peripheral areas with monies realised from the sale or rent of lands for commercial gentrification. The study therefore concludes that complex interactions between the historical, cultural and socio-economic conditions of indigenous to slum neighborhoods may influence peoples' residential mobility choices.

4.7.4 Government/Private Estate Neighborhoods to Slum Neighborhoods

Some neighborhoods have been directly planned and built by the government and or private estate developers to augment the accommodation challenges in the city for a class of people usually in the middle to high-income bracket. The focus here, however, would be on the government-built estate-type neighborhoods. These neighborhoods also date far back in history to pre-colonial times, and they continue to exist. They may be construed to be a direct opposite of the indigenous neighborhoods. These neighborhoods in the metropolis include the likes of Kanda, Dansoman, Adabraka, Asylum Down and Dzorwulu areas. These neighborhoods are noted to be occupied by the middle-high income workers in the city. These neighborhoods are well-planned with inner roads, drainages, and durable housing.

The population in these areas are not as dense as compared with the other neighbourhood typologies previously discussed. It must be mentioned for emphasis that these neighborhoods are not in any way considered as slums and by extension this study does not attempt to change that narrative. However, observations of new adjoining settlements developing along them have raised some questions. Again, a number of the old structures found in these communities appear neglected with no major maintenance over the years. Parts of these communities are therefore undergoing gradual decay and downgrade over the years into conditions that make them slums.

This typology is important to note as many of the Indigenous communities began in the same way and today have gradually downgraded into slums. There is the need therefore for the alarm bells through research to be sound early enough for possible remedial actions from the stakeholders involved. A typical example of what is reported is the case of the Adabraka

community which also suffered from the twin fire and flood disasters in 2015. These disasters resulted in many homes being inundated with water, with fire engulfing and destroying some structures. As one walks from the Circle interchange into the main Adabraka streets, many old traditional houses have either been abandoned, poorly maintained and unoccupied or suffered from severe fire destruction. Aside the housing conditions, using the inner roads also reveals choked gutters and drains. The most observable feature however is the development of slum communities along the Odaw drain which is adjacent to the main Adabraka Town. These communities include the Sahara and Odawna communities dominated by wooden makeshift structures. These communities immediately present a sharp contrast between them and the Adabraka community itself in terms of the building materials as shown in Figure 4.3.



Figure 4.8: Sahara Slum developing along Odawna in Adabraka

Source: Fieldwork (2022)

These communities suffer heavily from flooding with an increasing level of flooding witnessed by residents within the Adabraka community itself. During observations and informal discussions with some residents, they noted that the drains have become choked the water flows on the street, and the waterway into the main Odawna drain has also been partly

blocked with the emergence of the slum neighborhoods along the drain constructed all manner of makeshift structures that block the natural passage of the rain waters. In Kanda especially along the highway, new makeshift structures have been built with occupants to the interchange. These small slum communities are becoming an extension of the known neighborhoods that are gradually increasing in extent. They tap into the amenities available in the main community while engaged in office work and other menial jobs in the city centre. Parts of the Dansoman communities have also been invaded by population overflow from the city areas which are building makeshift structures within any available space found in the neighborhood. This began decades ago and gradually gained ground into wider spaces in the thriving community. These neighborhoods are also experiencing increased population penetration into the communities despite lack of access to decent accommodation resulting in the squatting observed all over. In Dansoman, just like Adabraka, the levels of home maintenance have been slow rendering sections of the community suffering from housing downgrades (See Figures 4.4 and 4.5). These areas, however, do not suffer from the lack of access to basic social amenities, however, the increased population means there is pressure on the available facilities.

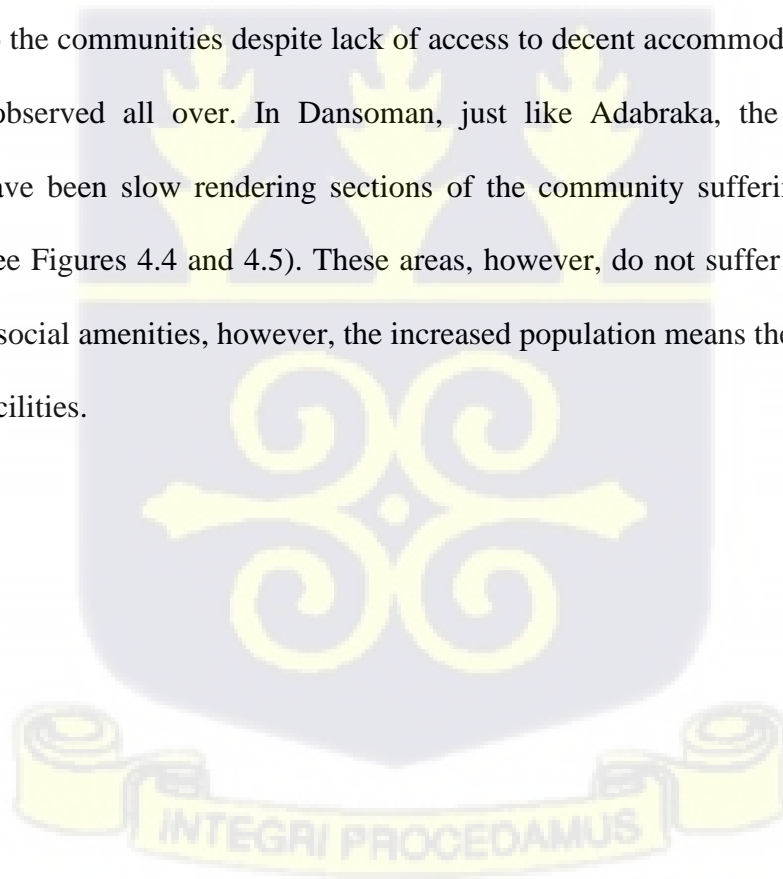




Figure 4.9: Downgrading Conditions inside Adabraka Community



Figure 4.10: Dilapidated Old Building in Adabraka Community

Those who live in the government/private estate neighborhoods to slum neighborhoods have higher tendencies to make residential mobility moves within the city. Inhabitants of this typology type are mostly people with higher disposable incomes ranging from middle-high income earners. They have the luxury of choosing their residential homes under specific preferred conditions that will bring them residential satisfaction. Where there are

downgrading conditions in the neighbourhood features, some residents would like to move out or stay within the neighborhood. People who stay in this neighbourhood typology likely have preferences on what brings them residential satisfaction and they may express multiple wishes of leaving the neighborhood. However, in the context of African cities and the city of Accra especially, such neighborhoods benefit from government support in the provision of adequate housing and basic amenities such as water and electricity. Again, infrastructures such as schools, shops and supermarkets, health facilities and transport terminals availability make these places highly attractive. With most of them located close to the CBD, its residents also enjoy the benefits of access to job opportunities and quick access to the rest of the city. These conditions would increase people's desire to stay as well as invite others to find accommodation in such localities. However, where maintenance is lacking and facilities begin to suffer deterioration, it introduces some levels of disequilibrium between people's residential needs and the conditions available. This likely would lead to residential relocation to places where they hope to enjoy satisfaction with the conditions available.

4.8 Conclusion

The chapter explored the concept of slums and typologies of slums in metropolitan Accra while proposing new typologies for understanding slums. It also examined the implications of these slum typologies on residential decision-making. It argued that existing debates on slums and informal settlements consider both terms as remaining very similar in usage and character while proposing a clear distinction between the two. It further argued that the methods adopted in measuring and defining slums were inadequate and only reinforced the pejorative and emotive conceptions of slums. The chapter criticized supposed current objective measures that only focus on quantifiable indicators to measure slums as inadequate.

Instead, the study proposed the use of the concept of the ‘slum continuum’ which measures slums based on all factors, including the agency and historical antecedents of the development of slums. This, the study argued, would allow for a holistic understanding of the growth process of the slum as a place of hope or despair. This would allow for proper targeted interventions to deal with the weaknesses and challenges that may confront the slums. It further argued based on this concept that slums should be accepted as a dominant form of neighbourhood production just as exist formal/informal, high, middle, and low-income, and indigenous and migrant neighborhoods. Based on these arguments, the chapter proposes 4 new typologies for assessing slums under the assumption that slums are organisms that are dynamic and change with time. As such, any neighbourhood could upgrade to a better one or degrade into poor conditions. The new proposed typologies include formal to slum, informal to slum, Indigenous to slum and government/private estate to slum neighborhoods. Lastly, the chapter also assessed the influence of these typologies on the residential mobility of its inhabitants. The study establishes that slum typologies have different influences on the residential mobility behavior of the inhabitants. Slum typologies with progressing conditions and government support, such as formal to slum, indigenous to slum and government estate to slum typologies would experience a more stable and rooted residential mobility. However, slum typologies with deteriorating conditions no or little government support, and or no land titles, such as informal to slum neighborhoods may likely lead to higher residential mobilities among its inhabitants. Such neighborhoods would be very unstable with a highly mobile population.

CHAPTER FIVE

TYOLOGY OF RESIDENTIAL MOVERS AND BIOGRAPHICAL FACTORS INFLUENCING RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY BEHAVIORS

5.1 Introduction

The chapter addresses the second objective of the study, which aimed to assess the biographical attributes that trigger residential mobility decisions. The study provides an account of the various trigger factors of the residential mobility of slum residents in the study areas. However, for a better understanding of these factors, the chapter first dealt with burgeoning matters from the literature review which includes debates on the link between migration and RM. The results showed that just like migration, residential mobility should be understood from origin to destination for which reason there may be beneficial overlaps. An urban slum dweller may have his origins as a migrant from outside the main city of residence. The study advances the argument that strict differentiation between the two events within certain contexts would likely lead to incomplete stories on people's mobility trajectories. The study rather proposes a complementary relationship between the two and explores the advantages that it contributes to understanding the holistic meanings of the moving histories of individuals and households.

The Chapter also explored the factors influencing the residential mobility of slum dwellers broadly discussed under individual biographical factors. These factors were explored under the lens of the LifeCourse theory to understand how the moving decisions of individuals and households were influenced by people's ages, genders, household size, marital status, and educational level. Generally, slum dwellers have been shown to exhibit high stability, with

very few residential movements observed. Most slum dwellers would rather change residences within the same neighbourhood or find a way to adjust to new residential demands to reduce moving stress.

5.2 Defining Residential Mobility in Urban Slums

Residential mobility definitions have largely followed contextual arguments that relate to a field of study or the study location. Many definitions focus on defining residential mobility as short-distance travel usually within a locality (See Literature Review on Slum Definitions). The current study situated within slum neighborhoods has differing reasons why people move in to stay in such areas. This study, therefore, refines existing definitions by introducing a new scope and dimension to give more explanatory power to the existing definitions. Current definitions of residential mobility continue to leave blurry lines in an attempt to distinguish residential mobility from migration using distance and scale (Coulter & Scott, 2015) (See arguments in Chapter 2).

This thesis strongly argues that, although current attempts to differentiate migration movements (focus on internal migration) from residential mobility are undisputed and need to be encouraged for scholarship advancement, its strict adoption has had some implications for enhancing the understanding of the motivations of migrants in the city. For instance, this study found that slum dwellers' motivations for staying in the slums are very much linked to their initial plans for which they migrated out of their origin areas. In responding to the questions on when and why they moved to the city of Accra, in Old Fadama, most respondents indicated that they came 'to seek greater economic opportunities and nothing more'.

During the fieldwork, respondents were asked to state why they migrated to the city. Subsequently they also were asked to indicate whether their initial motivation to the city has changed over the years as they changed residence in the city. The responses revealed that, in Old Fadama where the slum dwellers are predominantly migrants, their initial motivations for migrating to the city guided their continued stay till today. For example a 52-years-Old Wele seller noted that her initial motivation for moving to the city of Accra from the Volta region was because she wanted employment opportunities to earn money to support herself and her family.

“When I was finally migrating to Accra to start a new life, it was because I needed a much better economic opportunity so I could take care of myself and children” (52-years-Old Wele Trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

Again, a 52-year food vendor in Old Fadama also shared her story that she moved into the city of Accra with the hope of finding a good job and making money to support her family. She noted that the decision to move was not an easy one but lastly the family supported her idea and gave her the blessing to go. She noted she has since not regretted as despite not earning as much as she wished, a constant and regular inflow from her sales keeps her going without too much worry.

“It took time after several resistance from family but I moved to Accra over 30years ago and have been in the informal sector since. At least my reason for coming to the city was to get some employment and make money which is still the case. Now I have my own business that I depend on” (52-year-old food Vendor Old Fadama, 2022).

Similarly, a 62-year-old sculpturer in Nima indicated that he migrated to Accra in mid 1990s to better his life through economic opportunities that exists in the city. He indicated that

decision to migrate to the city has not changed every several years of stay in the city. He intimated that,

“I came here because I want to better my life like anyone else and so whatever I do its because I want to make money to take care of my needs which is why I am still here”
(62-year-old Tribe Warrior, Nima, 2022).

The quotes above have shown that, respondents continued residential movement in the city was tied to their original reason for moving to the city. Whatever reasons may account for their residential relocation behavior within the city was only possible if their original reason for coming to the city would not be affected. Some respondents in Old Fadama indicated the strong consideration of their plan (s) for coming to the city and any movement that will ensure that the goal remains intact is what they will undertake. This is the reason why most slum dwellers reject plans of relocation to the peripheries and would rather fight the relocation decision or eviction plans. In the study by Afena (2012), she indicated that after the relocation of some settlers in Nima during the construction of the Nima-Maamobi Highway to Madina Estate which was a peri-urban area at the time, most of those who were moved still found their way back to the Nima community to ply their trade in the city, as access from their new location was difficult. Most of the inhabitants in Nima today were born there, although, their predecessors or grandparents moved in as migrants compared to Old Fadama which has a larger migrant population base with many of the 1st generation migrants still living in the community. In Nima, most of the first settlers in the 1940s have died and bequeathed their properties to successive generations since. The question of when and why they moved to settle in the community did not as much yield new results. However, few others who have sought accommodation in the community also indicated, that they moved to Nima and largely Accra for job opportunities to earn money to support themselves and

family. As noted by 54-year-old food vendor in Nima, she explained that her continued stay in Nima was because this is where she gets market for her goods.

“I moved in to Nima some 30 years ago and have since traded in this community to keep my dream of making money come through” (54-year-old female food vendor, Nima, 2022).

Following the arguments advanced by Willibald, Mukiibi, & Limbumba (2018), residential mobility should be conceptualized as a relational practice rather than an event; the entire spectrum of a slum dweller’s movement needs to remain connected to understand these complex linkages. In the global south, urbanization in the urban centres is fuelled largely by rural-urban migration (Afeadie, 2021; Awumbila, 2017; Awumbila, Owusu, & Teye, 2014; Gough, Yankson, & Esson, 2019; Zaami, 2020). The process of residential movements begins from the place of origin (rural/urban area) where the individual/household conceives the idea of relocating to the urban area. This is where the controversy lies with attempts to distinguish residential mobility from migration. This study argues that such scholarship has been overly emphasized and the boundaries need to be softened for a clearer picture of people’s linked LifeCourse. LifeCourse advances the concepts of trajectories and transitions; it was not to suggest that they only happen within a city or a town. People’s life trajectories and transitions start from when they are born to when decisions are taken for their interests until they are of age to make decisions for themselves. Both affect their life trajectories as the decision to educate a child in a particular school could have lasting effects on the child’s foundational knowledge and interests in life.

Further, literature on migration, especially, internal migration has moved from just individual decision-making to migration as a livelihood strategy used by families to collectively deal

with poverty (Awumbila, 2017; Awumbila, Owusu, & Teye, 2014). However, in this study, it is apparent there are still some migrants who may make individual decisions to move to the city but still maintain strong relations with family and friends through remittances. Respondents in this study indicated varied reasons for the decision to move to Accra city. Some noted that they made individual decisions to move to the city without the household involved even though they still maintained good relationships with everyone. This was the case of a young man who finished his Senior High School education in the Upper West Region and now owns and operates a provision shop and mobile money vendor in Old Fadama. In response to why he decided to move to the city of Accra, he indicated that,

“After I completed SHS in 2018, I couldn’t get anybody to help me to continue, so in December 2019, I came to Old Fadama through a friend to make some money. I got my shop in 2020, and my girlfriend also joined me from the north later in the year. I am making some money to take care of us and my family back in the village, this place is not bad” (Provision Shop Owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

The quote also gives us a clear idea of the social network relations that brought the young man to Old Fadama though he had to overcome the obstacles of financial resources for the journey and initial settlement all by himself. He however maintained contact with the family back at home, as well as with his girlfriend who has since become his partner, and they are now living together with a child. The woman supports the business by joining the man to sell the provisions while the man focuses more on attending to the mobile money customers. The LifeCourse of the young man is still unfolding though the story would have been very different if that initial migration decision had not been made. His continued support to the family back in his hometown remains part of everyday decision-making including his residential mobility. His story helps us understand better the entire spectrum of his mobility

behavior which is essential to drawing the links between his initial migration and subsequent residential mobility decisions.

Other push factors include drought, climate change, conflicts and famine (Tschakert, Tutu, & Alcaro, 2013). In Old Fadama, especially for the ethnic groups of Kokombas and Dagombas, many of them traced their movement to the slum as a result of conflicts up in northern Ghana which transcended into the Yam market where they worked from close distance. It is the chasing of these aspirations and dreams against the individual/family constraints, resources and opportunities (Bolt, Kempen, & Weesep, 2009) that develops residential stressors along the LifeCourse of households in the cities. As such, any attempt to understand the residential mobility of urbanites without recourse to the initial origin stressor(s) may not provide a complete picture of understanding the residential mobility behavior in the cities. The thesis argues that the relationship between residential mobility and internal migration rather than international migration is more clearly distinguished as long-distance migration between countries and continents (Coulter et al., 2016; Tyner, 2013).

This (re)thinking of the relation between internal migration behaviors and subsequent residential mobilities is guided by arguments advanced by Coulter et al., (2016). They emphasized the need to rethink residential mobility as a relational practice rather than as a discrete transitional event. Residential mobility as a relational practice would mean a fluid relation between initial motivations to migrate to the city and subsequent residential moves in the city to fulfil those motivations. The individual or family motivation for migrating to the city is kept throughout the social networks created as well as through remittances back to the origin places. Evidence to support this argument is found in a plethora of studies that have

found strong relations between migrants in the city and families back home (Awumbila, Owusu, & Teye, 2014) as well as the key contribution of kinship and family ties and social capital in understanding the connection among migrants and their origin (Awumbila, Teye, & Yaro, 2017; Nikoi & Arthur, 2019; Zaami, 2020). In Willibald et al. (2018, p. 5), empirical results showed the case of a migrant in the city, who made residential moves to accommodate his relatives over a period for their education in the city, until they completed and relocated. An indication of how family members who move into the city become strong links for others to satisfy their migration and residential needs. However, it is important to note that, although the thesis argues for internal migration, it also recognizes that urban slums also include people whose movement may not necessarily fall under the category of internal migrants such as migrants from neighbouring countries, especially, Togo, Burkina Faso and Nigeria, however, the argument advanced is implied.

This study, therefore, proposes a strong consideration for the links between internal migration and residential mobilities in the cities as pointed out by the evidence adduced in this study. The reason for moving to the city is embedded in the everyday decisions of the individual including decisions on residential mobility. The boundary between migration to the city and subsequent residential movements in the city should therefore be flexible in application to understand the full range of factors influencing the individual's residential mobility decision.

5.3 Nature and Typology of Residential Movements in Urban Slums

In urban slums, different forms of residential movements can be observed after a careful study of the data collected on people's residential mobility behavior. This section examines

the nature of these residential movements by following existing typologies to give the discussion a conceptual relevance. The typologies of movements observed in this study were guided by the groupings provided by Sell and De Jong (1983) and adopted by Coulter et al., (2013). According to this typology, there are 8 residential relocation movements identified which include the rooted, wishful thinkers, contended movers, discontented movers, adaptive movers, oscillators, and the highly mobile and miscellaneous. These will be discussed in detail in the preceding sub-sections.

5.3.1 The Rooted

As defined, the rooted movers are the most immobile of all the mover types and they remain in the same house or neighbourhood and do not make any relocation move. As the proponents explained, they usually have very stable biographies and changes in their LifeCourse do not necessitate their movement. In cases and situations where they even may desire to move, such thoughts are said to be ephemeral and were never realised. The rooted are therefore immobile and hardly are dissatisfied with the housing conditions or neighbourhood characteristics. Changes in their LifeCourse are also not enough to make them move from their location.

This study, from the data gathered, observed that the rooted movers were largely found in Nima. In Nima, historical antecedents such as the formation of the town and subsequent generations who have inherited the homes from their parents have all remained in the town and hardly have the desire to move. Most of them when interviewed explained that the culture and community living in Nima is one that is of a single family. As they grew up together in this same neighborhood, they were so attached to the neighbourhood that harbouring thoughts of relocating from Nima to other parts of the city was almost non-

existent. According to one respondent who was interviewed, he explained the reason why he does not at any moment consider moving away from Nima,

“I was born here in Nima almost 57 years ago and I went to school here and did everything here, including my prayers. Having followed my father who was a mallam for all these years, I grew up to have so much love for the work that I have become a mallam myself for the last 10 years. This is my mosque where people come around at any time to consult me, and the entire house is for me. The other one there is my father’s house and mosque, how will I leave this and go to where?” (57-years-old Mallam, Nima, 2022).

In another conversation, a businessman noted that moving away from Nima would be a difficulty if not impossible as he believed that his umbilical cord was buried in the town, and it was impossible to just leave.

“To leave Nima? And go to where my brother? Nima is like my soul and blood, just look at all the boys gathered here and how we sit and do everything together. I have buildings, one around the Dodowa area and another in Madina, but the last time I went there, I don’t remember. This house here is so small because it’s a family house but because of the people and culture and how we have lived together for all these years even if I or anyone here decides to go somewhere else, I will spend every day, here in Nima. Look at my shop here, when the goods (Fabrics) arrive either through the ports or by land I spend few minutes picking them up without worries about traffic. I have not conceived the idea to relocate from Nima” (48-year-old Businessman, Nima, 2022).

Examining critically all the quotations from Nima reflect the culture and sense of attachment to the place called Nima. Culturally, there is this understanding among the young and older

generation that they cannot trade their neighbourhood for anywhere else. Most of the dwellers in Nima were born and raised in the town, growing up and creating friendship ties and social networks. These networks have lasted and served as a means of hope and survival for many who find themselves in the neighborhood. For those deeply rooted in Nima, cultural ties appear to be the primary factor influencing their sense of belonging. However, other factors such as employment opportunities and marital connections also contribute to their attachment to the neighborhood. The Mallam mentioned in the quote above finds it almost impossible to leave his duties as a Mallam because the nature of his duty demands that he interacts with a wide range of people from the Muslim faith, especially, those who come to him for prayers and divinity. The duty of a Mallam is a daunting one, as they are so much revered in the neighborhood, they find themselves. Despite the existence of 100s of Mallams in their mosques in the Nima community, each one of them can still define their sphere of influence and have people filling up their mosques during prayers.

Another key factor in explaining the rootedness of people in Nima is the compound housing system. The compound housing system in Nima contributes to the building of stronger family ties as the households continue to share the same compound. There is also the sharing of food among households and tolerance for each other. As such, different households create strong bonds over time living and practicing life together. Rootedness of the people in Nima is a common feature and it explains why many of the people interviewed kept the view that they were born here and have since not relocated to any other part of the city. Most of the residents in Nima are homeowners directly, or by family inheritance and homeowners are found to be among the most rooted.

The situation in Nima is not exactly reflected in the case of Old Fadama. In Old Fadama, the case may be slightly different, with the emphasis on who is rooted varying somewhat, depending on whether it is a household decision or not. Most of the dwellers in Old Fadama, on average, are younger compared with Nima, as such, most of them stay alone and hustle to deal with their challenges. The major concern, as expressed during interviews, was having a place where they keep their personal belongings safely, lay their heads and have access to water and electricity, which are needed to keep them going. The homeowners in Old Fadama expressed the view that though they have invested in the structures they have rented out and own where they stay, they can be described as rooted. However, this rootedness should be considered with caution due to the historical factors surrounding ownership of the lands on which they have settled. According to one businessman who owns a provision shop as well as single rooms for rent, he explained that,

“Old Fadama, if you know the underlying secret is a place of business, and for us who, despite threats from the government still dare to invest, we know and understand the system quite well. I don’t think the place will be demolished but even if they decide some of us will never lose because I have realised so much from here. I am not relocating from here, it’s a place to make money unless something dramatic happens from the government or assembly” (46years Provision shop owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

This quote is a summary of the thoughts of most of the dwellers in Old Fadama who still believed the government through the assembly could at any time find reasons to evict and demolish their properties. However, they remain resolute, noting that the current political situation gives them a significant advantage due to their numbers. This thesis argues that unlike Nima where homeowners have land titles to their buildings, the rootedness of the

homeowners in Old Fadama may not be as strong as Nima. Therefore, describing Old Fadama's homeowners as rooted may not exactly reflect the complete meaning of the typology. The study, therefore, proposes a conditional rootedness in the case of Old Fadama homeowners as they are of the firm belief that the absence of land titles can cause them to be moved at any time. Conditional rootedness, therefore, is explained by the fact that being rooted is temporary, based on land title possession and unknown government actions.

5.3.2 Wishful Thinkers

This class of residents are defined by the proponents as constantly expressing the desire to relocate to a new residential home. This, however, is never materialized due to varied reasons of limitations and constraints that face the individual. Wishful thinkers are noted never to abandon their desires to move even though they never get to move at any instance. This brings to the fore the need to differentiate between moving desires and actual movement in studies on residential relocation. It is well established that almost everyone expresses a wish to relocate at a point in time along their LifeCourse, however, until the actual move is made the intention is at best a wish. This study found many of the slum dwellers to be wishful thinkers across both study communities. This reflects the ambitiousness known of the poor as they seek to work hard, gather money, and get a better living elsewhere.

Much research on slum dwellers has reported that people opt for the slum as a haven to begin their city life while hoping to move into better neighborhoods as they generate some income (Amoako, 2018; Owusu et al., 2008; Paller, 2012). In the case of a 56-year-old trader in Nima, he noted that despite being rooted in Nima because he has a house he inherited, he hopes to get a place of his own where his children can stay and have a more comfortable life.

He explained that they are used to the social systems that make them want to stay in Nima forever, however, they are aware of the ‘better’ life elsewhere in the city which everyone wishes to enjoy.

“Nima is where we have lived and we would stay if we were alive, but people in the other parts of the city are enjoying better than us and staying in nicer mansions. For the sake of my 5 children who cannot all inherit this same room I have in the family house, I need to work and put up a building for their sake in a good neighborhood” (56-year-old Male Trader, Nima, 2022).

Similarly, in Old Fadama, a mother of 3 children expressed her innermost joy about the fact that one-day things will get better, and she would have to move into her apartment somewhere that she would be free from unnecessary harassment and troubles.

“For Old Fadama, we have suffered, since I rented this place there have been 2 fires in which I lost my belongings and now my business has stalled for almost a year. But I wish to move out to another place in Accra where I will have the peace and freedom to do my things. I like places like Adenta, Dansoman, Madina where I can work and earn money without fear of losing it just like that” (43-year-old Trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

A quote from another female trader at Old Fadama indicated how many of those living in these slums wished to relocate to other parts of the city.

“Oh, for me, I want to move out from Old Fadama, and even if I have the money today, I will just move to a new place. I am here because I don’t have the money to go and pay for rent for a year or more. Here I pay sometimes 2 weeks or monthly depending on when I have the money, I just arrange with the landlord” (52-year Food Vendor, Old Fadama, 2022).

The quotes above clearly demonstrate that slum dwellers are faced with different forms of neighbourhood stress which makes them dissatisfied with their current places of abode. Though the respondents adduced reasons to support their wish to relocate to other parts of the city they considered better, the actual reason for triggering their movement was the lack of money. Income has been reported to be one of the factors impeding people's ability to carry out their wishes of changing neighborhoods. Such wishful thinkers are, therefore, trapped in their current neighborhoods as they cannot carry out their wishes.

5.3.3 Contented Movers

As espoused by the proponents of these concepts, contented movers begin their process as wishful thinkers, however, they at a point in time move to a new location. Their movement is planned over a period and results in a contented move to a place of choice and satisfaction. They are usually satisfied with the conditions of the new location, and this is followed by a long spell of stay. They do not desire in the immediate future after relocation to change their locality but become stayers in their new neighborhood.

Contented movers are usually triggered by conditions or factors at their current locations that make them dissatisfied with the neighborhood. They experience residential stress over a longer period for which they put up plans to relocate to a new place. They carefully examine the conditions at the new location and make sure everything they need is in place before finally making the move. They are usually very satisfied with the conditions of the new area and become stayers for a long period until conditions begin to degenerate to trigger a move. Contented movers were also found to be present in Nima more than in Old Fadama. The notable difference between the residents of the two places was about the levels of satisfaction

experienced. In Nima, many residents who have moved in noted that they were very satisfied and contented with conditions in Nima generally. They indicated that they do not have immediate plans of relocating to any other place at the time of the research. This was expressed by a government worker who works with the local assembly,

“Since I moved in here at Nima and found work to do at the Assembly, I am ok with the environment and the people. I think I like Nima for various reasons especially the social communism, and multi-ethnic tolerance of the people. For now, I am very satisfied staying here and would not soon relocate, it’s a walking distance to my workplace and I don’t have to spend much on transport” (35years Male government worker, Nima, 2022).

In Old Fadama however, many of the residents there were contented with the conditions knowing very well that they do not have land titles and could be asked to move or relocate at any time. So, in indicating whether they were contented with Old Fadama, they did so cautiously but based on their plans as they had it. In the case of an Imam, he explained that,

“I moved into Old Fadama several years ago and have since not moved because I am satisfied here. Based on what I do and the money I get, I put up this building and have since lived in it for almost 20 years now. No one has worried me though the government is always threatening us. I relocated from close to the lagoon because they always come to demolish structures there and I secured this place through my friend to raise this block structure” (63 years Imam, Old Fadama, 2022).

“The environment here is good now compared with years before I came here from Kotobabi, and I have lived well since I moved in here. I don’t think I have any plans for changing my location yet, I will stay here for some time and I am satisfied” (35-year-old male trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

The reasons adduced by the respondents in both study communities explain the fact that though they could be classified as contended stayers, it is not necessarily the case that they all were satisfied with the conditions of the places they lived in. Many of them also carried the perception that slums were places where conditions may not be as best as those found in other parts of the city. However, they did not have any other choice as they were limited in their options to live in other parts of the city. Especially the environmental conditions of sanitation and waste collection were described as poor, but in the absence of other alternative locations, they remain very contended and do not wish to make any relocation decision. Many who have stayed in the two study areas for longer periods and have seen what transformations have occurred in these places, tend to cherish the efforts and hope it gets better rather than demonize the place in its current form.

The theory of neighbourhood change espouses the idea that people get dissatisfied with their residential neighbourhood as conditions further deteriorate. The theory noted that as people stay in a particular locality and the environmental situation worsens, it may lead to residential stress and trigger relocation decisions by the occupants. This is true in many studies that have established that people's decision to relocate from a particular neighbourhood was borne out of their dissatisfaction (Clark & Coulter, 2015; Feijten & van Ham, 2009; Wang, Walter, Arafat, & Song, 2019). This study, however, agrees largely with these established empirical facts but indicates that poor neighbourhood conditions do not automatically trigger residential relocation decisions. Some respondents in the slum communities prefer to stay in these communities despite the poor environmental conditions that persist. When individuals are faced with limited options on residential choices on location, they give up on all other factors

and rely on survival as a way to escape from the unguarded street homes. The slums in their state continue to offer strong locational choices to the urban poor migrants.

5.3.4 Discontented Movers

The proponents explained that discontented movers make many undesired moves which trigger new relocation desires among them. These groups of people have varied tastes and preferences for their preferred locations which are usually not met. Their stay, therefore, at a particular location may not be over a prolonged period as they may seek to find newer places where they feel their desires could be met. This occurs especially when the LifeCourse stages change swiftly with individuals. As people grow, their needs and preferences change with locations, social environments, neighbourhood characteristics, housing choices and others. Discontented movers are faced with changing tastes and preferences and easily get dissatisfied with conditions at a location or prefer newly discovered tastes for which they are willing to make changes to their residential location. This study found that slum dwellers who could be described as discontented movers were rather few. In Nima, a tenant noted that he is gathering some money to move into another area because the noise in the neighbourhood was too much for him,

“These days, you cannot even sleep in peace, during the day and night in this area, these young boys with power motorbikes will just be making noise and riding through the town all the time. It is my major worry here and very soon I will have to find a new area to move into” (37-year-old Trader, Nima, 2022).

A young single woman who sells food also expressed her desire to relocate as soon as possible due to several challenges she encounters daily:

“This area is not good for me, I wake up at dawn to start cooking and set up my business before 7 in the morning. Apart from the challenges with throwing away rubbish anyhow, my house there has so many issues. The bedroom has cracks in the wall and the roof is also leaking badly. I have complained severally to the landlord, but nothing has been done about it. The last time it was my pastor who got some people to come and work on it for me, but it has started again. I am tired of living in that house, and I am looking for a new place to move to” (38-year-old female food vendor, Nima, 2022).

Similarly, in Old Fadama, some residents noted that the challenges associated with living in such neighborhoods were a major concern, and they intend to move out to a new area. The case of a shop owner who lamented over the poor state of the environment anytime there is rain is particularly worth highlighting,

“There are no gutters here in Old Fadama and even there is no space as it is now for the gutters unless some houses are demolished. When it rains now, where to step your foot is a problem, the whole ground becomes so muddy, and the motor riders make it even worse as they consistently pass through it. My frontage here becomes messy, and you wouldn’t love to stay a minute more” (43-year-old male shop owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

The number of dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama who were discontented with the neighbourhood and were ready to relocate to other parts of the city was very few. However, many others who were discontented with the neighbourhood to some extent did not consider it sufficient grounds to trigger a residential move. Several residents in Nima and Old Fadama took so much pride in their neighbourhood and were not ready to make any new residential move because of dissatisfaction with current conditions. In Nima, the social cohesion and

cultural tolerance among the various ethnic groups strengthened people's resolve to stay regardless of whatever limitations or dissatisfying conditions may exist. As indicated by a landlord in Nima who has inherited his father's entire compound house and now rents out to people for income,

“Accommodation in Accra nowadays is very expensive, and Nima here, we try to understand each other's challenges and offer rates that are flexible and even cheap to tenants. The tenants in my house have been living there for 7 years or more and have never complained. Those bad perceptions about Nima are not there again and people live freely. We are born here, and this is where we will continue to stay” (64-year-old Landlord, Nima, 2022).

This study's results show that discontented movers don't always move immediately; some may choose to stay over another spell to make the decision. The level of dissatisfaction with neighbourhood conditions needed to trigger a residential relocation decision varies with the individual who is the ultimate decision maker. There are also other limitations that individuals in slum areas may face in their attempt to make residential relocation decisions. Such limitations largely are attributed to financial constraints and the rent systems in other parts of the city. As such, most of them would prefer to be content with their locations than to make a move.

5.3.5 Adaptive Movers

This category of movers is defined to have made at least one undesired move which distinguishes them from contented movers who do not make any undesired moves. Again, adaptive movers, after an undesired move, are likely to become a desired stayer. They are also noted to make in all, not more than 3 moves while they tend to abandon 3 or fewer

desired moves. In any case, these moves abandoned do not become a disadvantage to the adaptive mover as they later become desired stayers at the new location. This category of movers was also found in both Nima and Old Fadama although their numbers were fewer compared to the rooted and contended movers. In Nima, respondents noted that they had moved into neighborhoods they did not desire to stay in. However, due to several constraints on their part, they had to adjust themselves to survive in these areas. As noted in the case of a retired teacher, she explained that,

“When I was transferred to teach at my last station where I eventually retired, I had no choice but to find a room at a place closest to the school. A friend of mine found a place for me first around the Eastern part of Nima where the conditions were not good, but I had to just manage myself there. I did not even have enough money for a better option, so I lived there for 4 years and in my 5th year, I moved to this place on the West side of Nima which is way better and gives me much satisfaction. I have retired and I am still here” (60-year-old Retired Female teacher, Nima, 2022).

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 show the conditions of the eastern part of Nima and the western part. The Eastern part of Nima has buildings close to each other with no proper layout of roads. Buildings are also mostly constructed using inferior materials that expose the section to poor ventilation. The Eastern part of Nima appears to have very little support from the assembly to support infrastructural development. The population in the Eastern section is dominated mostly by people of Muslim origin and the penetration of other ethnic groups is limited. There are no alleys, and houses are very packed. The two sections are separated by the Nima-Maamobi highway. However, buildings of the Eastern section which are closer to the highway are of good quality, as they are mostly intended for businesses, with a few as

residential homes. The Western section of Nima on the other hand, is properly laid out by plan with tarred roads. Buildings are mostly made of brick/mud and mortar or sandcretes with a dominant compound housing style. The government through the Ayawaso East Assembly have championed the development of this section.



Figure 5.1: Housing Conditions in Eastern Nima Neighborhood

Source: Fieldwork, 2022



Figure 5.2: Housing Conditions in Western Nima Neighborhood

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

Similar cases were found in Old Fadama where few of the respondents noted that they made at least one undesired move over their periods of relocation from one place to the other. The

reasons, however, may differ from the situations in Nima as people's life trajectories and transitions do not follow any standard order. In the case of a 45-year-old yam trader, he explained that,

"I used to stay around Kotababi while coming to Kokomba yam market every day because there was too much confusion and controversy around here at the time and I didn't want to be part of it at all. I however wished I could get a place here for myself earlier because it saves a lot of money for transport. I moved into New Town, but I realised the place was too small for me and my family so after 3 years I had this land here and built my structure here which I have been maintaining small small" (45years old Yam Trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

Another respondent in Old Fadama explained that upon arrival in Accra, he felt stranded because he did not have anyone in mind before coming here. He spent his first years on the streets, sleeping in front of shops in the city until a workmate introduced him to someone who had control at Old Fadama to assist him.

"Oh, my brother, I came to Accra alone and started life as a typical street man. But God helped me through a friend, at that time when I came here, I didn't like the place at all because there was borla (rubbish) and water everywhere and I nearly went back to the street. But the man told me to clean his drinking spot until he gave me a small wooden structure. I later bought it and now raising it into blocks" (48-year-old Worker, Old Fadama, 2022).

The adaptive movers were also found to be in some higher numbers in the study communities. This is because most of the dwellers residing in Old Fadama especially have made some moves they considered undesired before their move to Old Fadama. Some of those in Old Fadama also see the neighbourhood as undesired but they had to stay due to the

limited chances of securing better accommodation elsewhere in the city. Although adaptive movers may initially make undesired moves, they often become desired stayers after their spell in the new neighborhood.

5.3.6 Oscillators Movers

This category of movers is defined to include those who have moving desires but abandon them. They are known to abandon not more than 4 desired moves while moving at least 3 times. This category of movers, when studied by the sequence of their movement, was characterized by expressing moving desires more frequently, but abandoning them as much as they expressed them (Coulter & van Ham, 2013). The proponents, in comparing oscillators to wishful thinkers noted that although they both express the desire to relocate, that of the former is more ephemeral. Oscillators may more frequently express the desire to make a residential move, yet these desires are short-lived while being characterised by a long spell of stay at the current locations. The factors however that account for the variations in the expressions of moving desires may vary when examined at different scales. Oscillators who have a more stable LifeCourse may become a stayer for a longer spell compared to those of younger ages whose desires to move may be delayed but will eventually be executed due to life careers that may necessitate their moves. In the case of Nima, oscillators were observed to have made fewer than 3 moves over their LifeCourse. These groups of people were not homeowners and did not have stable incomes due to poorly remunerated jobs. They were, however, married with children who were still living with them for which moving became a more complicated matter. Again, the study observed that such people were mostly above the age of 40 years and were men. In the case of a 52-year-old trader, he explained that,

“I wish to move to new places too but since I rented this room with my wife and children, moving would mean that I get much money to do so. Currently, my wife sells food while I trade in second-hand clothes and footwear, my three children are all in school. So, it’s difficult to manage the home and to talk about moving to a new place. It took time to get this place because 5 years ago when we finally moved, things were tougher than now” (52 years Trader, Nima, 2022).

Another 31-year-old man in Old Fadama shared his reason for making fewer moves despite constantly having the desire to move out of the neighborhood.

“if you decide to stay in Old Fadama, then you must have tough skin otherwise you cannot stay at all. The environment is bad my brother, am sure you’ve seen it all around you. On top of this is the troubles from these young bad boys but you cannot just wake up and say you want to move. I used to stay in the gbongbon (a small area around the timber market) in a wooden structure before I moved to Old Fadama to rent this place. It’s the money we want but not where you lay your head, so if you have a place, just stay there and make money first” (31 years man, any workman, Old Fadama).

The factors influencing the oscillating character of the two respondents may vary due to several factors. The obvious chief factor may be the biographical factors of age and marital status which influence the residential decision making and the decision to abandon their moving desires. Also important in the career of the two men is income (money), which is a major determinant of securing a residence place. These results also indicate that among oscillators of different age categories, those aged beyond 40 years with children are likely to have a longer spell after oscillating, compared to those below 40 years who do not have children. It is easier for oscillators who are alone to actualize their moving desires when they

suffer some disequilibrium or dissatisfaction with their housing consumption or neighborhood.

5.3.7 Highly Mobile Movers

This category of movers is classified to make at least 4 residential movements. They are described as the most frequent movers of all the categories described. Despite this characteristic, they are also noted to express moving desires while taking time to plan and execute their relocation. The proponent's study revealed that highly mobile residents tend to change residences faster when they are younger, typically under the age of 30. After 30 years, their LifeCourses are tied to their life careers, making frequent movement less of an option (Coulter & van Ham, 2013). Younger individuals who do not have a stable career form the largest class of highly mobile movers. Several biographical factors may similarly have different implications on individuals under this category. This may be found in cases where younger people with a stable career are likely to have a longer spell in a neighbourhood compared with another young person who is unemployed and informally engaged. This study revealed that the younger dwellers in Old Fadama were highly mobile due to the informal nature of the jobs they did. In the case of a scrap dealer at Old Fadama, he indicated how the nature of the job over the last 10 years contributed to his moving decisions.

“When I started this work, I was a picker, so I mostly pick around Madina areas and I used to stay with a friend in a kiosk in Madina area. Then after about 2years I worked for my boss as an agent buyer, so I had to stay at the site and measure what the pickers brought, and then my boss would pay them. So, I moved to stay in New Town first with my boss, but after a year, I moved again because the place was too small for me and his family. I was sleeping under a tent for some months before I moved to Old

Fadama to rent a single room. I have stayed here for about 6 years now and this is my 3rd rented apartment here” (29-year-old Scrap dealer, Old Fadama, 2022).

From the quote above the respondent has made several residential relocations within the city as well as within a neighborhood. The moving decisions were influenced mainly by where his job at a point in time was located. His prolonged spell at Old Fadama is because of its proximity to his work as an agent buyer in charge. The situation described here mirrors what many of the young people in Old Fadama go through. In casual conversations, many of the dwellers always say that *“Old Fadama is for the young and strong, if you cannot hustle, then you can’t stay here”*. The researcher’s reflection on this statement while conducting fieldwork and observing the population revealed the meaning. Indeed, the majority of the dwellers in the neighbourhood were ‘young’, as even the elderly were observed actively engaging in activities to earn income before the day ran out. This activeness in their daily work is what translates into their highly mobile nature. For most of the dwellers, finding a place to lay their head, while waking up to work was paramount. This is not to say that they do not have dreams, but many of them indicated their plans to move out of the slum to their buildings or rent in a neighbourhood with more satisfactory conditions. A 27-year-old gentleman who works in the yam market as an off-loader explained that,

“This place is just to settle first in the city, one day I will make money and be able to build my own house but for now we have to make the money first. My plans are plenty in my head and so anywhere that I can get a place for now, I will just live there. I stayed with 3 different friends before now renting this place for myself, so it is small, small” (27-year-old Yam offloader, Old Fadama, 2022).

Many of the young and old residents of Old Fadama have desires to move and tend to make several moves within the city before settling in Old Fadama. Even within the neighborhood, issues relating to theft, noise-making, and police cases from town may arise, leading landlords to eject tenants from their rooms. As such, the study also established a lot of neighbourhood trans-local movements within Old Fadama.

In the case of Nima, the highly mobile were also in the category of young age groups who still must relocate due to work, education or vacations in the city or beyond. The most common are those at tertiary stages who have to relocate over their school period, return to Nima and again move out for jobs in the city. However, for most of the highly mobile respondents in Nima, the place also represents a home which they continuously revisit to meet family and friends. A 32-year government employee at the ministries narrated his LifeCourse and moving trajectories as,

“I stayed with my mom and dad here in Nima since I was born until I moved to stay at a hostel in Madina for years while schooling at the University of Ghana, Legon. During vacations, I still visit Nima throughout this period. Now I work with a government agency at the ministries, and I have moved to my room in Nima because I am of age now” (32-year-old government worker, Nima).

This study reveals that the highly mobile category of people may strongly be affected by the location of their work. Work conditions, whether formal or informal, influence their highly mobile character as they seek to ensure there is proximity between work and home. This category of people mostly is of the younger age bracket who are still trying to define their life unlike those at a more advanced age who may have a more stable LifeCourse. Housing dissatisfaction did not show as a critical factor for the highly mobile category of movers. This

may be because of the perception that slum neighborhoods in themselves may not have the best of housing conditions and the situation can only become better with time. The study further noted some movers who did not directly fall within any of the 7 categories discussed above. These are necessary to be captured, as they contribute to the literature on the typology of movers, especially when the study is dealing with a particular kind of neighbourhood which has become a subject matter for controversy in the literature of urbanization and the expansion of cities. The characteristics of these new movers are worth giving attention, to contribute to our holistic understanding of the factors (re)shaping the city of Accra. The other typologies the study has defined, include circular movers, irregular movers, safety movers and unplanned/forced movers.

5.3.8 Circular Movers

The study defined circular movers as residents who live in more than 2 homes and have a defined period for stay at each of these residences. These categories of movers are mainly homeowners even though some renters could also fall within this category. Their residential movements unlike the others classified, are not tied to dissatisfaction with the neighborhood. However, this category of movers also expresses desires for relocation, which are also largely ephemeral like the case of oscillators. This is because the different homes they live in serve specific purposes related to their work schedule or family duties. As such, any moving desires expressed may largely be short-lasting as it is not followed by any plans to relocate. The route or movement of circular movers is well-defined based on scheduled plans and does not occur haphazardly. From the study, circular movers appeared to live more in Nima as compared with Old Fadama. In Nima, many people are strongly attached to the neighborhood, family, and friends and as a result, they have created a sense of home around

this attachment and sense of place. So, the many people who managed to build a house in other parts of the city still maintain their traditional or family rooms in Nima and have a regular schedule of movement between the houses. In the case of a 65-year-old man who deals in all forms of fabrics, he noted that he switches residences between the weekdays and weekends simply because he is obliged to respond to duties to his immediate family as well as the extended family.

“I have 2 homes here in Accra with my wife and 3 children living in my apartment towards the Oyarifa area, while my extended family remains in our traditional home here in Nima. Because my work is here at Nima, every day I am here and the weekends I spend it with my family at Oyarifa” (65-year-old trader, Nima).

Another 48-year-old man who works as a government employee also narrated his circular residential movement in Accra between his work and family. While he resides during the week at Teshie, he spends the weekends mostly at Nima with his wife and family.

“For Nima here, it’s always my home and you meet me today because it’s Friday and I am here for my weekend with family and friends. but mostly during the weekdays I live at Teshie where I have another house and because it’s also closer to my workplace” (48years government employee, Nima, 2022).

They also noticed that in Old Fadama the nature of this circular movement is different from that of Nima which was largely on social ties with the community. As a dominant migrant community such as Old Fadama, most of the dwellers from the northern part of the country continue to make circular movements based on seasonal demands for work. Some individuals noted that during the planting and harvesting seasons, they quickly would travel back home to work on the farms for at most 2 months before returning to the city to continue their hustles. This has become very much routined and defined for many of them. Whereas some

go to work, few also reported that they own some farmlands which they cultivate during the planting seasons. During the planting and harvesting, they travel back to the north and return in between the seasons to continue work in the city. In the case of a 34-year-old man who works in the scrap business, he narrated that,

“I came to Accra some 5 years ago and I joined my big brother in the scrap work. But I first stayed with my brother around the timber market before I moved to Old Fadama last 3 years. Every year at least I go home back to the Upper East 2 times during the season and also during harvest time. But we go in a group and stay for like 5-7 weeks before coming back here. The farm belongs to my brother but I also work on other people's farms to get money” (34-year-old Scrap worker, Old Fadama, 2022).

These circular movements for work, which have implications for the residential movement of the slum dwellers, could be likened to other conceptual typologies of movers, as espoused by Coulter et al., (2016). Residential mobility has taken on new forms that require new ways of conceptualising them as practices rather than events, as argued already in this study. Such circular or seasonal movements as defined in this study relate much with the residential itineracy proposed by Coulter et al., (2016), who opined that people frequently shift between residencies around which their LifeCourse are ordered daily. These homes they referred to, act as ‘centres of gravity’, which pulls them daily towards them, based on observed factors that account for this movement. They noted the rise in divorce cases leading to lone living, separated homes and children and parents living in reconstituted patchwork families. This study has established in addition that familial matters as discussed, and employment-related factors also lead to circular residential movements/seasonal movements or residential

itineracy. These findings have broader implications for the (re)production of residential neighborhoods in the African city.

5.3.9 Irregular Movers

Very tangentially to the circular movements discussed above, some slum dwellers were also found to engage in irregular residential movements. Irregular movers are defined by this study to refer to slum dwellers who moved in between multiple residential homes without any order. Unlike circular movers whose movements are defined, that of irregular movers is undefined, and they can move in to stay at any of their houses based on circumstances. One major reason that accounts for these irregular moving decisions includes people with multiple partners, parents living in separate homes, and cases of people owning multiple homes at the same time. This study establishes that these new forms of living were a result of the modernization of the city of Accra, as well as religious dogmas that permit some of these instances, such as having more than one spouse. These situations were found to be prevalent in both Nima and Old Fadama.

In Nima, some residents noted that they were engaged in irregular residential movements as their life careers hovered around these places of residence. According to a 49-year-old man who works in the Nima East Assembly, he explained that he lives separately from his wife with whom he has 2 children. He pays for the apartment for the woman and the children and as such, he decides where to sleep based on how the day's regular activities would go. He noted that sometimes, the children also move in to stay with him at Nima, especially during weekends and vacations, while the wife also passes through to stay over during such times.

“I have 2 kids who live with their mom at Ablekuma and go to school there. Sometimes after my days’ work, I decide to move in to spend the night with them there but I am mostly here in Nima due to my work as a unit committee member. I even have another room at New Town which used to be for my ex-wife who passed on. I keep the room and sometimes sleep there but due to some memories that come back anytime I go there; I seldom sleep over there. So, I move in-between 3 homes, in Nima, New Town and Ablekuma” (49-year-old Unit Committee member, Nima, 2022).

Again, a respondent in Nima also shared his living arrangements in multiple homes noting that,

“I have 3 residences as an Imam with 3 wives. I am permitted to have up to 4 and 5 and keep them even together without any problem. But because I don’t want them to have issues, they all have children, and they all live with their children in different places. It’s only the second one that lives in Madina, the other two live separately but in Nima here. I have to visit all of them and love them equally because that is the teaching and for me as an Imam, I must live by that as an example” (66-year-old Imam, Nima, 2022).

In Old Fadama, such separated homes were also found, however, a number of the dwellers in Old Fadama have secured lands and built in other parts of the city, mostly the peri-urban areas beyond Adenta and Kasoa. As such, they have their families either kept at these peri-urban residences or with them while they visit their other homes intermittently. In the case of a 52-year-old retired worker who now operates his own provisions shop, he has another home along the Kasoa road where he has rented out some space and kept his first son alone in the

home there. His wife and younger children are living with him in Old Fadama as she also sells food to workers in the neighbourhood to earn income.

“My brother living in Old Fadama is a strategy, we make the money here and prepare another place where we can quickly move to when the government decides to sack us. I have built at Kasoa and my first son of 27 years lives there. I am here with my wife and 3 other children. I go to stay with my son there sometimes but not regularly. Sometimes the other children want to go there to see their brother and I take them there for two days while my wife manages here” (52-years-old Retired worker, Old Fadama, 2022).

Irregular movements are necessary for various reasons as people undertake such movements to take care of themselves, their families and work. These practices are important findings to elucidate our understanding of trans-local movements in the city of Accra and how the city space is (re)produced by residential mobility. Again, the concept of residential transience as espoused by Coulter et al. (2016) may be likened to the findings expressed here under irregular movers. Residential transience refers to the situation where people move in “an unstructured fashion between residences without having a single centre of gravity” (Coulter et al., 2016; Stone et al., 2011). As irregular as the movements may be, people may be drawn to multiple homes at any point in time based on reason(s) (Oakes and Schein, 2006). Irregular movements, therefore, add to our knowledge of residential mobility in cities and how people’s LifeCourse and careers may be influenced by such movements in making residential choices.

5.3.10 Safety Movers

This study refers to safety movers as people who move for safety from some impending attack. The city of Accra is like many other cities and towns of Ghana and by extension some

African cities where there is political polarization, which leads to violent attacks pre- and post-elections. In Ghana and Accra, the 2 major political parties along which people are polarized include the National Democratic Congress (NDC) and the New Patriotic Party (NPP). It is trite knowledge that in slum areas especially, winning party members tend to will so much power and forcefully retrieve state-owned properties from the previous government's appointees, sack them from office as well as target specific individuals for attacks. This is the case of Old Fadama, a community highly polarised along the 2 party lines. There are known persons who lead each of the parties during campaigns in the communities who demonstrate bravado to win sometimes through violent means. The losing group after elections usually have their core members going undercover for fear of being beaten and manhandled by the winning party members. This has severally been reported by some researchers and continues to happen (B. E. Opong, Asomani-Boateng, & Fricano, 2020; Stacey & Lund, 2016). This situation was confirmed in an interview with one of the high-ranking tribal chiefs of the town who explained that:

“Every election year, there are people noted to be fierce supporters of a particular government and when they lose, they are chased out of the community. They find a quick means to escape until another election is done, otherwise they may be attacked by the winning parting members here in the community” (Chief of E ethnic group, Old Fadama, 2022).

The assemblyman for the area in responding to the question on people's movement in the community, also noted that,

“One group of people who must always move for safety reasons is the losing political party affiliates in the community who vigorously engaged others through violence. It is a big problem we have been trying to work on but as of now, it is still an issue in

the community. They should be concerned about how to work together to get the best from the politicians and not fight among themselves, but that is the situation” (Assemblyman, Old Fadama, 2022).

This situation was however not explicitly found to be happening in Nima even though such political violence was found in the neighbourhood as well. As explained by a unit committee member of one of the electoral areas in Nima,

“Political election-related fights and violence are very much here in Nima. During election years there are always scattered incidences of clashes between groups affiliated to the two main political parties, the NPP and NDC. What I do not know of is whether a group must resettle somewhere else because of the violence. Here in Nima, after elections, everyone is one again and you see the boys moving together because they know each other very well” (Unit Committee member, Nima, 2022).

This category of movers may not be seen as a very active group as they are aligned with political election years. However, knowledge of such may provide foundational information, as residential relocations are practices that occur over time rather than as events to capture every form of movement undertaken by people. Some have argued that no movement is too little or too much, as they are daily practices that relationally can provide meanings into how the city is coproduced by residential movements. Many other unimagined movements may be classified under safety movements where the primary aim of the residential movement is for safety reasons or because of some threats to life. For example, categories of people who may move as a result of abuses in marriages or work-related bullies and health threats may all be classified under safety movers.

5.3.11 Unplanned/Forced Movers

The final category defined under this study is unplanned or forced movers. This category is defined by this study to refer to people who must move as a result of an unexpected event such as conflicts, demolitions and evictions, disasters, epidemics among other like events. The distinguishing factor between safety movers and unplanned or forced movers lies in the person who takes the action. Safety movers own the reasons for the movement and make the decisions for their safety whereas in the case of the unplanned or forced movers, the decision to move is conditioned by an external factor for which they can be victims if they fail to move. There is, therefore, an element of danger caused by the external factor that they may not know of but occurs suddenly. Unplanned/forced movers were noted to exist in the two study communities but were more prevalent in Old Fadama compared to Nima.

The history of the existence of the Old Fadama community has hovered over issues of evictions and demolishing severally at particularly earmarked areas (Jones, 2017; Stacey & Lund, 2016). In every instance of demolition that has had political undertones, the affected dwellers are forced to relocate to new parts of the community or city and must start life over with the little salvaged belongings. Again, there have been severally reported fire incidences that have claimed life and property at Old Fadama and have resulted in pushing the victims to make unplanned decisions and temporarily relocate and find shelter. One of the chiefs of an ethnic group in an interview recounted how he was able to overcome his struggle for a permanent place after a fire burnt down an entire area including his own house.

“The fire was started from a room where one woman was cooking while she stepped out to buy some foodstuffs (that is what they said) and the charcoal caught the plywood structure and within minutes many others were all up in flames including my

structure which was the 3rd house from hers. At the time, the houses were mainly made of plywood and rubbers and cartons which all contributed to the burning. I had to stay with my brother's family for almost 3 weeks before raising something like a structure again. But I decided like many to put up a block structure after that because I lost a lot of belongings" (Ethnic Chief of D, Old Fadama, 2022).

Also, a resident recounted how she and her siblings lost their 3 wooden structures to demolishing exercises 2 times before she was able to secure her current place of residence (See Figure 6.1 for typical wooden structure at Old Fadama). She stated how the assembly officials together with some of the leaders of the community demarcated sections along the lagoon and demolished all the structures there within a short notice. She noted that there was no form of consideration or even help given out to them after such demolishing and they were left to themselves to find solutions.

"I remembered Master Oko Vanderpuye's time when they came to demolish plenty of structures along the lagoon within short notice. We even thought our leaders would intervene, only for us to return home with everything on the ground. Some of us raised another structure there again because we had no place to go at the time. There was another demolishing after 2 years and after that one, I bought somebody's shop here; he has relocated to another part of the city. I rebuilt it with block as they say anyone who wants to now build must try and use block. This is where I live now with my husband and children" (53-year-old female trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

In Nima however, the cases of unplanned/forced movers were linked to the outbreak of Cholera which occurred in the year 2014. In speaking with the assemblyman, he noted that few individuals who could not stand the spread and hospitalization of the people and didn't want to suffer the same relocated within a short period to other neighbouring communities.

He noted that the lack of information on the mode of transmission and how people should live during the rainy season and treat their wastes, especially faeces resulted in that outbreak and people's subsequent decision to relocate.

“Oh, you know when you see people being rushed to the hospital every day or hour, seeing how they were growing lean and pale, you will also be afraid, right? That is how it happened to some people who witnessed what was going on in their homes and even at schools. So, I know people at the time who decided to relocate, like my friend Abass who moved with his wife and children to Alajo. Also, a sister of mine moved to our family relations at Achimota. These people returned here at different times, some after the pandemic, others over a year and some have not returned at all” (Assemblyman, Nima, 2022).

These movements are very important to our understanding of the different kinds of movers that exist in the city. Very little attention has been given to these short-distance movements or trans-local movements that continue to shape the cityscape. How these incidences are displacing people and forcing new decisions on residential mobilities can only be understood through pioneering research with new findings from this study.

5.4 Biographical Factors Influencing Residential Mobility Decision Making

Biographical factors have featured strongly in much research as having a strong influence on the residential mobility decision-making of individuals and households. These factors largely refer to the very personal individual traits that set them apart from any other. This study focused on biographical factors of slum dwellers that included age and gender, marital status, household size and educational levels. These factors are established to play key roles in understanding the residential mobility behavior of individuals. Residential mobility is not an

event but rather a practice and representation that occurs with vast experiences that shape the decision-making abilities of individuals (Cresswell, 2010).

5.4.1 Age and Residential Mobility

Age is considered a very significant factor in understanding the residential mobility decisions of different people. Generally, it is trite knowledge that young adults are much more mobile as compared to the aged. The older individuals get, the lesser the probability of their decision to relocate. However, the younger age group who are still considered to be under the control of their parents have their mobility decisions greatly dictated by the plans and aspirations of their parents. Age differential among slum dwellers was observed to have a significant impact on residential mobility decision-making. To provide easy analytical comprehension of this section, three categories of age groups have been created, which include young adults (18-35 years), middle-aged adults (36-45 years) and those above 46 years of age. From both study communities, the pattern observed showed an increased residential move among the younger to middle age groups. The adults, however, have a reduced mobility desire.

During field interviews, it came to light that many of the adults interviewed were very mobile and had made at least 3 residential moves before settling in the study communities. Again, very similar is the case of those who are in the age bracket of young adulthood to middle-aged adulthood. In narrating their residential mobility histories and when they settled in their current place of abode, it was revealed that many of them had similarly made at least 3 or 4 moves in the city of Accra before finally settling at their current places as in the case of a 46-year-old man who had this to say,

“When you are not fully settled and you don’t have at least one dependent source of income, as a young person you have to keep moving until you are quite ok, that is why I moved about so much since I first came to Accra” (46-year-old man, Old Fadama, 2022).

For most of the dwellers especially in Old Fadama, they moved many times in the city of Accra before finally settling in Old Fadama. They see the location as one that is a haven after they had combed everywhere to find a place in the city. Many of those who reside currently in Old Fadama do not have any plans for immediate relocation even though they remain conscious of the fact that government plans for the place can change at any time. However, they retrospectively indicated that when they arrived in the city and needed to survive, a place to stay was always a challenge. In the case of a 64-year-old businessman, he narrated that:

“I came to Accra and stayed at 4 different places before settling at Old Fadama here because it wasn’t easy. At the time I was a young man who needed to make it through working around in the city, selling kinds of stuff and so on. So, I also changed residences more at that stage. But since I came to Old Fadama and had my kids, I have never moved again, from 2002” (64-year-old businessman, Old Fadama, 2022).

Also, confirming how his residential mobility behavior changed with increasing age, a 67-year-old man who operated the shower business for several years and was regarded as one of the oldest establishments in the neighbourhood explained that,

“at the time I started life in Accra, when I was in my late 20s to mid-30s I used to sell meat but had to change my place of stay 3 times before settling in Old Fadama. But since I began my shower business here in the late 1990s and got a place here, I have not moved” (67-year-old male shower owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

In Nima however, age was not so much a determinant factor of people's residential relocation behavior as most of them were born and bred in the neighborhood. Coupled with this is the fact that they remained strongly attached to the neighbourhood and have not spent any of their time away from the rooms they were born in. However, some settlers among them noted that they had made several residential moves in the city of Accra before finally settling in Nima. As such, they reckoned that the periods where they had to change multiple residences were due to their newness to the city environment and the struggle to gain their feet and settle without unwarranted challenges to their living and livelihoods. For example, in the case of a retired teacher, she explained that,

“When I first came to Accra as a teenage girl, I stayed with my aunt but later had to change to a new place because the accommodation was too small for me and her children. I moved to a new place in Achimota with my cousin before we moved our separate ways, and I went to Maamobi. From there I came to Nima, however, since I am of age and had my place of work, which is close by, I have since not relocated”
(60-year-old retired teacher, Nima, 2022).

The quotes reveal how the young in the city struggle to make a living in the city of Accra and how such desires to meet their basic needs impact their residential mobility behavior. Many literatures have noted the young to be more mobile and make many more residential moves as compared to the aged who are more stable with a livelihood and family. Again, responsibilities on the young are less and do not constrain them in any way to affect relocation plans. For the young, it is also the age to prepare oneself for adulthood, which brings compelling factors, such as education and job opportunities that may necessitate a residential move. These are well grounded in the theory of the LifeCourse which provides a

flow of how people's lives unfold with age and the duties that come with it. One is expected to attend school from infancy till tertiary degree levels, typically around the ages of 18-23 years. Afterwards, the job search and work begin, as individuals aim to secure a stable income to support their daily needs. As one hits the age of 30 and beyond, and sometimes even younger for most females, they are expected to get married and begin raising a family. At this stage, the LifeCourse theory notes the assumption of responsibilities on both the husband and wife that necessitates a slower desire to relocate. When such responsibilities as childbirth and raising a family which come with age set in, the likelihood of a residential move reduces.

The findings of this study, however, revealed that such assumed linear movements along the life course may not strictly apply in the context of slum dwellers whose life trajectories happened to be irregular and informal. As a result, such linear progression in the life course of slum dwellers coupled with the complexities of the urban economy would be unattainable. This explains why most people even the young ones living in Old Fadma have stayed in the community for a long time, as a result of other factors including proximity to the central business district and job opportunities. They prefer to remain at the same location as access to accommodation in the city remains costly and a daunting task. As noted in Coulter (2013), the propensity to meet moving desires drops with increasing age and it is even lowest among people with unstable income levels. Many slum dwellers remain among the poorest of the urbanites who may not be able to meet their moving desires due to insufficient income. Most of them make enough money for their upkeep and supporting their families back home in the village and have very little income on the side to pay for cumulative advance rents in the city.

Age, therefore, may not directly be a determinant factor in making residential mobility decisions but relates well with people's life events, which occur with age. As Clark (2013) would put it, age has "always been treated as the primary association with residential change, but can be decomposed into the events which occur sometimes in concert with age but often independently of age". So, whereas most of the young at a certain age remain dependent, they will be with their parents or guardians and when they are of age, they tend to make decisions on their own. For example, the cases shared above indicate that the continued stay of people at Old Fadama is not because they are old per se, but because they own businesses that act as a hindrance to any decision to relocate. This study agrees with the argument by Clark (2013) that events occur with age, but they happen independently.

5.4.3 Gendered Responses to Residential Mobility

The gendered dynamics of residential mobility are important to this study to provide a deeper breadth to our understanding of the mobility behavior between male and female gender types. During the data collection, single mothers, single fathers, un/married men and women, and young/old men and women duly expressed their views on their residential mobility behaviors. These were critically examined during the analysis to produce this section. It was observed during the analysis that gender differentials play a major role in decision-making at the household level. Single mothers noted the difficulties in making residential moves due to the burden of care for their children. In the case of a retired teacher who has single-handedly taken care of her 2 children, she noted that she relocated 4 times within Accra city and finally decided to stay at Nima where her profession as a teacher took her. However, she was able to manoeuvre through the residential space because all 2 of her children were not with her even though she was responsible for all their upkeep and education. The two children have

completed the Ho Technical University (Ho Poly) and University of Professional Studies (UPSA), respectively. Occasionally, the two joined her at home and stayed for vacations and returned to school so their physical absence created enough space for her ability to make the earlier residential moves. However, since settling in Nima, she noted that the cost of higher education training also put a strain on her ability to consider relocation decisions. She has assumed the role of both a father and mother in the training and raising of her children. However, she had to take on these roles remotely as she lived separately from her children. In her narration, she explained that,

“I have been a single mother for so long and that placed lots of burden on me as a mother and father for my children. I spent a lot seeing them through their education and taking care of their other needs. That also put some restraint on my movement in the city. My children lived with my family outside in Accra and only occasionally visited me in Accra. so at least I had some space to change my place of residence. But when the burden increased especially with their higher education, I decided to stay here at Nima and have since not moved again”. (60-years-old Retired Teacher, Nima, 2022).

The story of the teacher only emphasizes the place of gendered roles in residential relocation decision-making of different individuals based on their unique context. The individual LifeCourse path is critical to our understanding of the reasons why people decide to change homes. Traditionally assigned gendered roles have also changed with time including rising incidences of single parenting as in the case above. In the case of a 53-year-old Trader in Nima, she is married with children, however, the death of her parents and the elderly people in her family home necessitated her return to Nima to take charge of the family house. A traditional role known to be assigned to men in most traditional settings has due to

complexities of the modern society seen a woman take up such a role. This may not be widespread but certainly would constitute a critical new factor to observe in the changing traditional gendered roles. She explained that,

“Marriage took me to Sukura to stay with my husband and 5 children. After some years, I was told there was no elderly person left in our family house at Nima and so I must return to Nima with all my children after 25 years at Sukura in marriage” (53 years Female Trader, Nima, 2022).

From the foregoing quotes, it is clear also that traditionally recognized gendered roles have been impacted greatly in the cities especially where the cosmopolitan nature of the city with the interplay of modernization and urbanization have led to a gradual shift in traditional roles. Men have traditionally been assigned with roles of family heads and care for all family properties. However, as evident in the case cited above, circumstances such as death necessitated that a woman now take care of the extended family home and properties. The study, therefore, noted that traditionally assigned gender roles influence the residential mobility decision-making of individuals and households. As argued in Magdol (2002), moving family was a burden mostly for women who had to take care of their children, pack belongings to be moved, and purchase new household items that may be needed, which influenced the woman’s ability to work in the labour market. Beyond these traditional duties, the study revealed that women now are taking up the role of breadwinners and family heads.

The study further observed that men were likely to make many residential moves as compared to women. Women have been limited by several factors from moving their residential homes in the city slums such as taking care of family at home and engaging in petty trading in the neighbourhood of residence. In the case of a 54-year-old Leader of the E. ethnic group in Old Fadama, he explained that, though he has a new building in a suburb in

Kasoa, moving was problematic because of their business, which includes a provision shop he manages, and his wife's food vending business. He indicated how stressful he realised the work was, taking a toll on his wife, however, it fetches them lots of money, for which reason she wouldn't want to relocate to the new house. He explained that,

“My wife sells cooked rice and has to wake up early dawn every day by 3 am to prepare the dishes. Because by 4:30 to 5 a.m., people leave the slum for work, and they would buy and carry along to their workplace. It's a good source of income for the family and the reason she is not ready to relocate at all, but I do go there sometimes for some days and return here” (Leader of E. Ethnic group, Old Fadama, 2022).

It was observed during the interview sessions that men mostly moved into the city, in most cases, as single and not attached to or with any family relation. Their intention for moving into the city has been to seek for job and survive. As such, they tend to make many more residential moves in the city before ending up in the slum of Old Fadama or Nima. Women, on the other hand, moved into the city mostly with other partners, friends or family and made fewer moves within the city as compared to men. These observations were particularly identified among the dwellers in Old Fadama which is made up of migrants from other parts of the country and beyond. The study identified that the highest number of moves was made by a male migrant in Old Fadama who has stayed alone, with family, and moved based on friends' recommendations. On average, he made 4 moves before occupying his current location at Old Fadama. In contrast, females made an average of 2 to 3 moves before settling at their current location. These reflect observations of Bertrand and Delaunay (2005) whose study in Accra reveals that in most cases men were 12 per cent more mobile than women in

the city of Accra, however, where women attained higher education, the number of moves was almost the same.

In Nima however, where the entire settlement is dominated by compound housing with multi-habitation (Appeaning Addo, 2013), very minimal variation could be observed in the gender dynamics in the number of residential relocations. Both genders tend to stay long in these traditional homes without any residential moves to other parts of the city. The study established that the women prefer to stay and enjoy the family houses bequeathed to them and are satisfied with it. However, this study also identified that, in a few cases, the men in Nima chose to invest in other houses built at the fringes of the city. As such, the men in Nima were more likely to make a residential move outside the neighbourhood as compared to the women. Of course, this is due to many factors, but the most important would be finance, as the neighbourhood is generally classified as a low-income neighborhood.

Further, another distinguishing factor of gender was observed in the ownership of homes or houses. The study identified that renting out houses was a lucrative business, especially at Old Fadama where accommodation was a major challenge due to the daily influx of migrants. Largely in Old Fadama, the houses were owned by the males, rented out, and controlled by the males, whereas most of the women were either renting or staying with their partners in marriage. For example, one of the executive members of the Ewe Ethnic group noted that, due to the history behind the establishment of the community, many women were afraid to invest in such land but the men, being risk-takers, were always ready to fight collectively for their interest. This explains why he believes the homeowners were mostly men.

“Women do not want to put their monies where they cannot protect it but for us men, we take every risk and organize ourselves to protect the investment. The houses in Old Fadama belong mostly to the men with few women in recent years also beginning to put up their own houses” (Leader of E. Ethnic Group, Old Fadama, 2022).

The view expressed above was also corroborated by comments from a female bath and water business owner who noted that,

“Here it's mostly the men who owned the houses and the ‘hotels’ (small rooms for daily rent) and few women who have established themselves already and came in with their own money were also able to put up few rooms for rent. Here the government can come and sack us all at any time, it's the reason many do not want to own permanent properties such as houses” (70-year-old Female Shower Owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

These observations were not isolated from other parts of the city, as the study identified similar reasons for the high number of homeownerships in Nima. The compound housing system which dominated the neighbourhood was always traced to a male grandparent. Also, inheritance of houses was mostly given to male children to take charge while the women were given specific rooms by the head of the family. Even though the woman as a family member is entitled to the room and would not pay rent for it, the head of the family has the right to make changes to the allocation of the rooms in the future as the population of the family changes. This practice also accounts for the high number of male homeowners in the Nima neighborhood. The study also observed a few female-headed households which in most cases was due to the absence of a male elder where a respected female elder is asked to take charge of the house. This was the case of the 42-year-old quoted earlier in this section who

had to move from her 25-year-old marital home in Sukura to stay in Nima and take charge of the family house. This again is not to say there are no women-owned houses in Nima, but they are in the minority. The assemblyman in the Nima Research Area explained the phenomenon as,

“Here in Nima, the place was bought by a man and later many other men took the opportunity to buy the lands and build their structures. Women moved in to begin to acquire land later when the lands around were almost finished. Now there is no space here in Nima unless the person buys an existing plot with structures to redevelop, just see how the houses are packed up. But most of the houses are owned by the eldest men of the family” (Assemblyman, Nima, 2022).

Gender plays a vital role in the residential decision-making of individuals and households in slums just as it is the case in other kinds of neighborhoods in the city. This study, therefore, establishes that changing gender roles such as head of household and family, single parenting, breadwinner, and homeownership, act as barriers to residential mobility. As demonstrated in the results presented in this section, one’s gender is a determinant factor in decision-making on relocation. The male gender is seen to be more residentially mobile in the slums compared to the women, as men are seen to hustle and move around to make ends meet to take care of themselves and their families.

5.4.4 Marital Status and Residential Decision Making

The study also explored the relationship between people’s marital status and their residential mobility behavior in the slums. Marital status is considered a major trigger factor in residential mobility decision-making (Clark & Huang, 2003). Marital status in this study is

defined to include single, married and living with a partner, married but living separately, and widowed/divorced. These varied forms of marital status are important to discuss as they potentially can lead to a nuanced understanding of the residential mobility behavior of individuals or households.

The unmarried or singles remain very free and open from any form of marital stress or burdens that may be a limitation to residential mobility. Most of the dwellers in Old Fadama had moved into the neighbourhood as singles having engaged in an average of 3 to 4 residential moves in the city of Accra. Various reasons were adduced to support the decision to relocate from one neighbourhood to another, however, most of them also indicated how being single has enabled freer relocation decision-making. For example, in the case of a 53 year 53-year-old Driver, he explained that he had made 5 residential movements in the city before settling in Old Fadama. During all these periods he was single and had no children which largely made his movement much easier compared with the current situation where he stays with his wife and 3 children.

“At the time I was changing my house, I didn’t have anybody with me, I was alone. I got married when I was moving from Kotababi to Old Fadama, so it is here that I had all three children and I don’t think changing my home now will be as easy as when I was alone” (53 years Male Driver, Old Fadama, 2022).

Again, a 56-year-old trader narrated how her movement was free with less burden during her time as a young person in Accra seeking greener pastures in the city of Accra.

“When I was staying with my aunt at Madina in the late 1990s, I was somehow under her care, but I decided after some time to have my privacy and I moved to stay at Newtown and then moved to Old Fadama. It was just my decision so if I decide I don’t

like the place, I just found a new place and moved” (56-year-old Female Trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

Similarly, in Nima, a few residents who had moved in to rent noted that residential movement is much easier if you are alone, and they made many more residential moves in their early stages of staying in the city. A 44-year-old businessman shared his residential movement in the city of Accra after spending 32 years in his current location in Nima; he remarked that,

“I lived in my childhood years with my aunt at Asylum Down and later moved to Dzorwulu. After she lost her husband, the house was sold out so we had to relocate to a new place and that is when we came here to Nima, but I rented a room for myself and have since stayed in there” (44-year-old businessman, Nima, 2022).

For this respondent, although he was single, his early residential decisions were influenced by her aunt, however, at a later stage of life when he fully decided to be on his own, he chose to relocate to his private rented apartment and has since stayed in the same neighborhood. As such, the study established that there is the need to sometimes go beyond phrases or descriptions such as ‘married’, ‘single’ ‘divorced’ to understand the process itself as experienced by the individual. Here, though he is single in the sense of the word, his initial relocation plans were influenced by a relationship until the point in time when he had to make his personal decisions. Stating being single therefore may not be enough but a deeper understanding of how and who makes the actual moving decision matters in our understanding of residential mobility. This study reveals that the LifeCourse theory deals with individual decision-making at various transitional stages of life and in choosing life trajectories. The results further indicate that single persons are more likely to make many more residential moves as compared to others.

The study also examined the residential mobility behavior among the married, by focusing mainly on the number of moves made. Here, the study focused on the category, of married, and living together with your spouse and children. It is revealed that the number of residential movements of the married drastically reduced to an average of one among respondents, but in most cases, no relocation has happened since most couples got married in the slums. Marriage involves the union of a man, and a woman and the decision-making on relocation must be agreed upon and planned by both parties. The situation becomes more complex when children set in as this may increase the demand for more space and increase household expenditures on housing demands to reduce residential stress. This study looks at the situation among slum dwellers as a double burden on such married couples living together with or without their children. Parents must share their meagre incomes raised from hard-earned livelihoods on many other demands for the home. Children increase the financial burden on parents, especially during their training stages until after the ages of 18 and above. As such, decisions on residential relocation may not come easy as this is thought to involve a huge amount of time and finances. It may also lead to a form of delay and detraction in the education of children when they must completely change their neighborhood. Many married couples living together, therefore, consider relocation as a last resort rather than one motivated by any minor residential or environmental stressors. During the study, a married man in Nima remarked that,

“I have stayed in Nima for the past 32 years with my wife and 4 children. Since I moved in here, I have not made any other residential moves but only occasionally made some renovations to the place. Even if I decide to move now, where am I going

with my whole family, unless it is my building” (44-year-old Businessman, Nima, 2022).

Similarly, a labourer in Old Fadama shared his insights since he got married and now has 4 children. He had settled in the neighbourhood for the past 22 years and got married while already living there. However, he remains in the same neighbourhood after marrying his wife and having 4 children. He also explained that he bought the land and kept working and transforming his place over the years. From what was a wooden structure, he can now boast of a block structure which is more durable and inhabitable.

“I moved in to stay in Old Fadama in 1996 and have since not moved. It is here that I have lived all these years, got married and raised my children too in my own house here. But If I have money today, I wish to relocate but I don’t have it now” (45-year-old Labourer, Old Fadama, 2022).

These findings presume that people in slums may get stuck in residential decision-making and become immobile due to several factors, with finances being a chief concern, however, it must be noted that the study also found marriage as an enabler for residential mobility. In this case, parents upon marriage, had to relocate to a new location to start their new home. In these situations, the couple were previously residing in a neighbourhood different from the two study areas but had to move in to stay at the new places to start their new life. This also means that the common view that people moved into slums as a haven may not be entirely the case in this new era. Some of the established slums such as the two considered in this study are now seen by many as major urban neighborhoods for residential purposes while ignoring all other forms of negative connotations that may exist. A typical case was the story of a 54-year-old Food Vendor in Nima who noted that, although she was born in Nima, she

lived her early life in Burma Camp with a relative. However, marriage brought her back to Nima where she currently stays with her husband and her child.

“Nima is where I was born but I stayed with my uncle at Burma Camp in my childhood days. Even after school when I started doing my informal work, I still stayed there but I do visit Nima occasionally. But I was married to a man at Nima here and that is why I’ve moved back to Nima to stay with my husband” (54-year-old Female Food Vendor, Nima, 2022).

For most of the dwellers in the slums of Nima and Old Fadama, marriage seems to be a last stop for considering a relocation to a new neighborhood. This is particularly observable in the long years of marriage and their stay in the slum neighborhood. That notwithstanding, the study can also confirm that most of the respondents also expressed relocation desires to other parts of the cities where they believed life is much easier, better, and healthier. Marriage, however, remains a critical factor in understanding residential mobility among slum dwellers, as most of them also realised the need to renovate or expand the rooms or build additional places to make room for their children. In the case of a retired accountant in Old Fadama, he remarked that,

“I live here with my wife and 5 children, but it has not been easy. I’ve had to complete the other buildings there because of my children because when they came of age, they needed their privacy. So, I bought the land there from a man who was leaving the place and put up the block buildings there. Three of my boys now live in there while I rent out the remaining” (68-year-old Retired accountant, Old Fadama, 2022).

Similarly, an ethnic group chief also explained that he had to put up many other rooms when he realised that his children needed their privacy. He tells his story noting that he had been a driver before becoming a chief. In 1994, he realised that his work was not promising, despite driving as far as to Nigeria. Therefore, he decided to settle down and establish a new life in Accra. He moved to the city with his 3 wives and children while some additional children were born in Old Fadama. He emphasized that unless he is sacked or forced to relocate from Old Fadama, he has no plan to relocate looking at his investment and the burden of relocation in Accra. He explained that,

“as your son grows it gets to a stage where you can no longer share your room with him. I have 16 children with 3 wives, but some are working and others in various schools in Accra but 6 of them live here in Old Fadama with me and 2 of my wives. That is why I put up the story building there so that is where they all stay, while the 3 rooms down here are occupied by myself and my 2 wives” (Chief of D Ethnic Group., Old Fadama, 2022).

The views of the chief above are not at all isolated as similar trends were observed in varied forms in the case of some of the married respondents in Nima. The practice among some respondents had been to find alternative accommodation for their children in nearby family houses in the neighbourhood where rooms may be vacant. This practice was especially among the Muslims who as dictates of religious practice, gladly embrace supporting one another in times of difficulty. The practice of accommodation sharing among family members and sometimes close friends in the neighbourhood is quite a unique form of residential relocation. In the case where the children of a particular family member do not feel comfortable in the house of the parents, they may choose to join a peer friend or family member and share his/her room. In some other cases, where a room is vacant in a family

house, a child from another family may be allowed to use that room until such a time that the decision may change. This practice was confirmed in an interaction with the Assemblyman of the Research Electoral Area, who noted that,

“For us, we don’t mind, it’s about where the accommodation is available and if one makes a request, it is given out sometimes at a fee or free depending on the arrangement. Nima is made up of compound housing systems that belong to generations and as such due to marriages, people have relationships with many other families. It is these establishments that encourage the sharing of homes by children of different families. For example, my son may live in another house without paying for rent, because I share a relationship with the family head there through marriage” (Assemblyman, Nima, 2022).

The study also found out that there are many married couples who for one reason or another lived separately from each other. Couples in separated homes have their influence on residential mobility decisions. Generally, the separated also appear to have much more freedom to relocate to new neighborhoods if they so desired especially where the bonds between the two have lost their value and power. In such cases, decision-making was always left to the single parent. Another critical factor which influences residential decision-making for the separated relates to who keeps the children. In most cases, children are left with their mothers, especially in their formative years while the husband may find appropriate times to visit or be visited by the children. A typical case worth sharing was the story of a 52-year-old trader in Old Fadama, who sells Wele (cattle hide eaten as meat) and other general goods. She narrated how she had used this business to take care of all 5 of her children, the eldest working with the Ghana Armed Forces, another a professional teacher, and the remaining

three who currently stay with her at Old Fadama and are still in school. Her husband does his business away from home and does not stay with them at all. Even though he is not in Accra, he stays at Sukura whenever he is in Accra. The husband, however, has changed residence twice while she kept her home in Old Fadama since she arrived in Accra. She explained how the cost of accommodation in the city, complicated with taking care of her kids limited her ability to move to a better neighborhood. However, she is still content where she is and taking care of her children is her utmost priority. At the time of the study, it was revealed that her husband, in the last 3 years, has joined her permanently at Old Fadama. This explains the free hand of the husband in making decisions regarding residential relocation due to the absence of the burden of care for the children. Whereas the husband has made 3 residential relocations, the wife remained at her original residence and never moved while making some adjustments to her home to accommodate her children as they came of age. In cases of a married couple living apart from each other, the likelihood of higher residential mobility decisions is dependent on who bears the burden of childcare. The respondent in noting how living separately with her children for over 20 years has influenced her residential decision making remarked that,

“Since I arrived in Accra to start my Wele business, I came here to Old Fadama and have since remained in this same neighborhood. My husband comes around and leaves and hardly stays for any long period as he did not approve of my settling here. Since then, it has been my duty to look after my children for all these years. It is difficult looking at the financial burden to relocate to another place though the desire was there, we are ok here” (52-years-Old Wele Trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

The study further explored the cases of widows and divorcees, both situations involving the absence of one partner, either due to death or through mutual consent in divorce proceedings. As much as the study identifies that individual cases could produce varied responses, there is an attempt in this study to deal with the factors as separate entities. Widows or Widowers are considered to have lost their partners through death and have taken on the sole responsibility of taking care of the children and all other demands on them including securing a satisfactory accommodation. In the slums of Old Fadama and Nima, only a few were noted to fall within this category, however, the individual cases present a nuanced understanding of the aim of this study. In Old Fadama, a 70-year-old shower businesswoman narrated how she took care of her children since the death of her husband. Her husband's place of work previously determined her residential movement until 1992 when she moved to stay permanently in Old Fadama to start her own shower business. She lost her husband thereafter and became the sole parent of their 4 children. All the children she mentioned were residing in Old Fadama but were living on their own. She built additional houses with more than 10 rooms for rent; however, her children occupy some of those rooms and do not pay for rent. Since she took up the duty of taking care of her children alone, she had not thought of any relocation plan except that she had put up another house near Kasoa for unforeseen events at Old Fadama.

“Since I lost my husband, I managed to take care of my 4 children and all of them are currently with me. It is quite a difficult thing to relocate to a new neighbourhood with them, so I have expanded my home with new rooms in which they all stay. Some do have other homes in the city and do not spend their whole time here in Old Fadama. But for me, I cannot move to a new place now due to my business as well. I have a new house in Kasoa in case the government decides to sack us from here, I can move in there permanently” (70-year-old Shower Operator, Old Fadama, 2022).

In Nima, the study also found a widower who narrated his residential movement indicating that he loves to travel out and had made about 2 travels out of Ghana to work in both Nigeria and Saudi Arabia before returning to Ghana. He got married to his wife after he decided to stay in Ghana specifically Nima, where he was born and raised by his late parents. They had only a child before the early passing of his wife to eternity. He currently takes care of his daughter who is about 8 years. He had not made any more residential moves since his wife passed on and seldom visited the room where his wife stayed in at Accra Newtown due to sad memories. However, Nima has been his home since childhood, and he has no plans to relocate to any other part of the city shortly. He intends to stay here and continue to take care of his daughter and his assembly work.

“Oh, I lost my dear wife tragically some few years back and now I must take care of myself and my 8-year-old daughter. We both live here in Nima, previously she stayed with her mum at Accra Newtown, and I used to visit them daily. I do not have any plans of relocating from Nima, I stay in my own home, bequeathed to me after the death of my mother. Due to my work as an assembly member, I think I will stay here and look after my daughter too” (49-year-old Unit Committee member, Nima, 2022).

The widow and widower did not strongly indicate their preference for a new location, citing mainly their work as reasons for their continued stay in their current locations. Their marital status also did not influence their decisions on residential movements as they both were more mobile and had relocated at an average of 2 residential moves before the loss of their partners. After the loss of their partners, they both have not considered any plan of relocation but were satisfied with the conditions of their present location. In some cases, the death of a partner is seen to be a major life event that has the potential to lead to some residential stress as well as discomfort for partners and could trigger a residential move. Such death events

were regarded to have a direct impact in some cases on the needs of the home. For example, there may be a consideration for relocation in a situation where the death of a partner means that there is no need to keep a large apartment. Although existing literature points to the fact that, the death of a partner could trigger residential moves in the Global North where most of the studies were conducted, the findings from this study differ. The results from this study showed that the death of a partner did not trigger any form of residential move and did not cause any form of residential dissatisfaction. However, in the case of the widower cited in the study, he used to spend the nights between two different homes but had to stop because he wanted to avoid memories of his wife anytime he visited the house. This adds to current knowledge on life events, also known as trigger events for residential relocation, highlighting that it may not always be the case, especially among slum dwellers, who already face a huge challenge in securing new accommodation.

5.4.5 Household Size and Residential Mobility

This is particularly important, as people's decisions to stay or move to a new location also depend largely on the size of the household. Residential mobility is observed to be higher among singles and single parents compared with cohabitators and married couples with children. The number of children in the household increases the complexity of making residential mobility decisions. Though children may not necessarily be involved in the decision-making, they are an integral part of parent's decision to move. Raising children comes with a lot of duties, and parents are aware that their children desire nothing but the best. They ensure that in neighborhoods where they find themselves the children at every point in time have access to the best social group, and access to education that will propel their growth positively to become useful children in the future. Several factors increase mobility probabilities such as the number of children. As the household size increases, the

probability of relocation also decreases (van Ham & Clark, 2009). Household size has a direct influence on the resources available which is also critical in decision making for relocation.

The study found that household sizes significantly influence people's decision-making on residential mobility in the study areas. Slum dwellers in the study areas have household sizes that could be grouped into 3. The first category was households with fewer than 3 members. This group mostly include households made up of a single person(s), cohabitators without children and married couples without children. The study noted that quite a substantial number of people who live in the slums were cohabiting, though they consider themselves married. This was especially the situation in Old Fadama where many young adults find accommodation with flexible terms of payment. This category included many of the younger adults who were below 35 years old. This category of people has the propensity to change their residential places with minimal challenges. The smaller the household size, the higher the tendency to make residential changes. Even though most people tend to change their residential location, they mostly do so within the same neighbourhood and seldom move outside the neighborhood.

Some who are cohabiting and were yet to have any children were also more likely to make residential moves compared with those who have a higher number of children. In the case of a 27-year-old gentleman who lives together with his partner who is also 22 years old in Old Fadama, he explained that their current location was their third, since arriving some 5 years ago. He indicated that the conditions of the rooms contributed to their residential stress which increased the need to move to a more satisfactory place. He relocated the second time when

his partner joined him from their hometown in Northern Ghana. After a year, they have had to deal with a handful of challenges including flooding, leakages, and heat. They moved to their current place and have lived there for the past 2 years and do not have any plans of relocating yet. According to him,

“Here you do not get the rooms to be perfect, there are challenges wherever you go but some places are at least manageable. For now, we are still at the same place but if other problems come along, then we too will be forced to find a new place” (27-year-old Businessman, Old Fadama, 2022).

These movements among young adults are quite common among those who live in Old Fadama due to several factors including, low rent cost, shared rooms as well as challenges with the physical buildings. The trigger factors may differ in the case of Nima, however, the residential mobility behavior among young adults also exists. In Nima, most young adults who are of age are given their rooms either in the same family house or another in the neighborhood. The majority of them especially those of Muslim descent do not pay for the rooms they occupy as these are bequeathed through family lineage. Those who rent in Nima, have also become long-term stayers who enjoy lots of reductions on the cost of the room and flexible payment terms from their landlords. Singles and co-habitators in Nima were less likely to make residential moves compared with those in Old Fadama. In Nima, a 34-year-old businessman noted that he lives alone and had been in the same place for all his years. He did not have to move to any other place for any reason as he was satisfied with the conditions of the place he had lived since childhood.

“Since I was of age and had my room assigned to me, I have only worked hard to bring some changes to my place to make it satisfiable for myself. You know I am a

young person, and I need to ensure certain things, like having a WC and AC, ensure there are no leakages and also pimp my room to look good” (34 years old businessman, Nima, 2022).

The study also found out what it calls ‘home switching’, as a major strategy used by most young single adults to secure a place to sleep. They move in groups hold their friendship in high esteem and spend nights at each other’s place depending on how their day ends. These young men involved in home-switching are not necessarily homeless, but as they engage in daily activities, they end up sharing the accommodation of a friend. Whereas some may think of privacy as a major issue among adults, this may not be the case at Nima all the time. They can plan their days in such a way as to juggle up their accommodation space between privacy and enjoying the company of others. Groups of young people are noted to sleep very late in the neighborhood, and this includes not only those of Muslim origin but other ethnic groups as well. They spend the night at specific locations, drinking ‘ataya’ (a locally brewed herbal tea), chatting and discussing topics on football, sex, and politics till after midnight. The ‘ataya’ is the central factor for most gatherings at night as fire is set, and it is prepared and shared among themselves while they engage in discussions and arguments. This conviviality among them stretches to joining each other to spend the night. As stated by a 32-year-old man petty trader, he explained that,

“Boys are used to some of these things here, everybody has their room but sometimes it’s just the friendship that pushes us to stay with each other, we can keep talking sometimes till almost morning arguing about anything. That is what keeps us together my brother” (32-year-old petty trader, Nima, 2022).

Apart from those under the age of 35 years, the household size of those above 35 years and their response to residential mobility may vary. It must be stated that the study noted that residential decision-making among households with more than 2 members reduces with increasing members. It is believed that larger household sizes have direct implications for the resources of the family and would affect any decision to relocate all members of the family. As such, families were likely to remain at the same location for a longer time. They rather would try to fix the challenges with the current location and live with all other residential stress that may develop due to the cost of relocation. A major factor also limiting the residential movement among larger household sizes hovers around considerations for the children in the family. A location change would ultimately mean, a change in school, church, and friends, which may disrupt the smooth growth of children when they have to start all over again in a new neighborhood. To avoid these social disruptions to the lives of the children, most families prefer to adapt to the conditions prevalent at their current place. They, however, continue to work on the challenges to bring satisfaction to the household. It is for these reasons that earlier studies have always considered residential relocation among larger households as unlikely, or with limited chances.

In Old Fadama, most of the older dwellers live with their entire family and have stayed in the neighbourhood for an average of 15 years. The average family size observed by this study in Old Fadama had about 6-7 members. Most of these households live within a house owned in most cases by the father or head of the household. Whereas some households squeeze themselves into a single room or chamber and hall, others can acquire additional rooms which they give out to their children who have come of age to share. Some household heads own many rooms they have built for commercial renting but when the family is faced with

additional space due to increased numbers in the household, they are forced to release some of the rooms for family use. In the case of one of the ethnic chiefs (called N) in Old Fadama, he has 3 wives of which only the first one lives far away in the North, whereas the remaining 2 wives stay with him. He indicated that in all, he has a total of 16 children, however, most of them are in school and so do not spend a lot of time with him at Old Fadama. However, about 6 of them currently live with him with the eldest around 22 years old.

He further narrated how 26 years ago; he settled down with only one room. As time went by and the children grew up, he expanded his buildings, and currently, he has 16 rooms to himself. He has rented out about 10 while sharing the remaining among his family. Two of the 6 rooms are not occupied currently as he mostly gives that to any visitor or stranger who needs a place to sleep for a few days. He does this because of his status as a chief which attracts people, especially from his ethnic group who may come to the city for the first time to visit him when they are in accommodation distress. He does not also charge for that, but could only allow the person to stay in for just a few days to sort out his/her accommodation issue. Though for 26 years, he has not moved from his original place of residence, he has actively built new rooms to accommodate his larger household. When asked if he had plans of relocating to another place soon, he explained that,

“After struggling to put up all these storey buildings, I am also a powerful chief Imam whom people from far and near come to consult on the daily which brings me some money and you want me to leave here? No that is not part of my plans, maybe my children could find other places as they get their job and marry. I have 2 wives and young children still with me, where am I going with all of them, that is a lot of money if I must go and rent” (Chief of ethnic group N, Old Fadama, 2022).

It appears that most landlords in these slums would do anything, irrespective of the challenges to stay mainly because of the cost of relocating. They see their stay as beneficial for both business and personal reasons, as it helps them to avoid the unfavourable rental conditions prevalent in the city, which would be difficult to sustain. Most of them also believed that it was better to invest such monies meant for relocation into a different business or property elsewhere. For the landlords in Old Fadama, although they are faced with several stressors in the neighborhood, relocating wasn't an immediate option. The decision to stay irrespective of the challenge, supports one common trend observed among the landlords in Old Fadama most of whom have secured lands in the peri-urban areas of Accra, where they are putting up new residential homes. Interestingly, even those who had finished their structures were still not ready to move with their families due to the businesses they owned in and around Old Fadama. In Nima, Landlords and those who do not pay any rent because of family inheritance have shared similar views on relocating to other places.

Household size averages in Nima seem slightly higher at 7-8 members in a house, compared to Old Fadama. This is because, in Nima, the dominant building types are compound houses in which members of the extended family all live within the same house. To such an extent, cooking and sharing among each other remains a common practice. For example, a household could be made up of parents and their children and grandparents and sometimes siblings. There are, however, several households that also still maintain the typical structure of a household made up the parents and children. Most households have expressed their desire to stay in Nima and do not have any plans of moving to a new location. In any case, they also mostly lamented about the cost implication of relocating as well as the social ties that may be broken. Household heads emphasized the importance of staying together in Nima and

mentioned how that bond with family and friends has kept the neighbourhood lively and thriving.

These general views on residential mobility reflect the wider views on the influence of household sizes on people's moving decisions. Household sizes change from time to time as new members through birth are welcomed into the family. As the size of the family changes, the likelihood of movement becomes even more impossible. People were likely to engage in making changes to their current residences to suit their living conditions rather than entirely relocate to a new neighborhood. This finding does support other studies that indicate that as household sizes increase, it may lead to residential stress and demand for additional space which would inevitably, lead to a change of residence (Aliu, 2019). His study in Ojo Lagos, a low-income neighborhood, indicated that many of the study respondents constituting 63.5 per cent were married with children and had average household sizes to be 6 members. This is very similar to the average sizes found in this study at Old Fadama and Nima. However, whereas household size was found to be a major predictor of residential mobility in Lagos, in Old Fadama and Nima it rather restrained movement to a new location. That is, the larger the household size in slum neighborhoods, the likelihood that there will be no residential relocation. This as explained, was due to the competing roles of family funds for other urgent family needs such as education, health, homecare, and travel. These residential stays were active in most cases, as the households found ways to respond to the need for additional space and facilities whenever the need arose.

5.4.6 Educational Level and Residential Mobility

The study also assessed the educational level of respondents in Old Fadama and Nima to understand if any relationship existed between one's level of education and their decision-

making on residential mobility or vice versa. In other words, do people change residences due to their educational status or pursuit of education? Feijten and van Ham (2009) noted that people's desire to relocate from one neighbourhood to another increases with higher educational status. It is believed that the characteristics of the house people stay is also related to factors including education levels and income. Those who have low education and earn lower income levels are noted to be less likely to make a desired residential move (Feijten & van Ham, 2009). The study revealed that most of the respondents in Old Fadama and Nima had only basic education up to the primary levels. Few, however, have had education up to the senior high school and university levels. Others also did professional certificate courses and post-secondary certificates. There were some respondents also who did not have any formal education as well as those who only attended Islamic school. This educational background provided some basis to assess the residential mobility decisions of households. People's level of education did not directly influence their residential mobility decision making as most of them stated other factors that may trigger their residential mobility decisions. However, some households reported variedly that at least a member of the household was living elsewhere due to education. The study classified this education related relocations as residential transience. This happens when the mover is noted to have no stable centre of gravity but move in an unstructured manner for purposes such as education (Stone et al., 2011; Sage et al., 2013). The study tries to examine both cases and relate to the situation of residential mobility in the community.

Firstly, individual's past residential mobilities did not have any link with educational attainment, as respondents noted that their main reason for migrating to the city was economic reasons. Although many of them had made residential moves on arrival in the city

and had changed residences over time before settling down at Nima or Old Fadama, most of these respondents' residential decisions were not linked directly to the purpose of education. However, in Nima, a retired teacher noted that her decision to stay in the neighbourhood was because she wanted to be closer to the school where she teaches. This decision brought her to the Nima community where she stayed for over 20 years and taught till her retirement. She explained that,

“I came to Nima purposely to teach, I am an O’level graduate, and I have been teaching as a pupil teacher for several years. I first lived with my aunt at Nima but that was when I initially came to the city but have gone on to live at 3 other places before finding a teaching job at Nima that brought me back. I have taught school children here for several years and retired just last year” (60-year-old retired female teacher, Nima, 2022).

This case however represents a single situation of residential mobility triggered by education-related reasons. This situation is not surprising, as the study areas are treated as places with low levels of education for the dwellers. So, for most of them, their decision to stay in such neighborhoods was one borne out of survival in the city. Further, their trans-local mobilities were based on economic reasons rather than education as the proxy trigger factor. As such, residential mobility decision-making among slum dwellers was independent of their educational attainment. This may partly be attributed to historical explanations that people moved into the city mainly due to economic reasons. According to Clark et al., (2014), the propensity to change locality or make a residential mobility increases with education. As the educational status of people changes, they tend to move to more advantageous places and neighborhoods with better facilities and environmental conditions. Educational levels may have strong correlations with income levels which is a major factor for residential relocation.

As the level of education changes, it is expected that people's salaries or income worth also rise, and this can trigger residential relocation to places with less residential stress. However, this was not found to be the situation at the two study sites. The majority of the people in both Old Fadama and Nima, have stayed for a long while and did not express any desire to relocate. This finding, however, does not support the earlier stated view that the desire to relocate increases with higher educational attainment. Due to the low levels of educational attainment generally among the slum population, relocating from these neighborhoods was not in their immediate plans.

Many of the households, however, indicated that part of their decision to stay was because their children could also have access to some good public schools they could afford. They also reckoned the importance of school, and how moving could be a disruptive factor for the development of their children. They explained that their decision to stay in the study areas was also due to the education of their children whom they had chosen to protect.

For example, in Old Fadama, a trader explained that,

“My last two children as we speak have gone to school and they will soon be back at home. I don't want to start moving from one place to another, it may affect the education of the child. That is why I am still here, maybe when they complete the basic primary level, and I have the means we will move to a new place” (52-years-Old Wele Trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

For others, the children attending schools served as a buffer to prevent the child from engaging with others in the neighbourhood who could be a bad influence on them. They are, therefore, concerned about the kind of company their children may keep and therefore,

believe sending them to school to be engaged is a safety net for the child's growth and development. As explained by one of the ethnic chiefs,

"I have 3 daughters all in primary school, one will close and come around here soon. I don't usually want them to end up playing around and keeping company with other children in the neighbourhood as that could bring a lot of problems. So, I make sure they stay in school and attend all extra classes, even vacation classes, to keep them busy. This environment here can be toxic to your children if you look unconcern"
(Ethnic Chief, Old Fadama, 2022).

Similarly, in Nima, one parent made a complaint about the social environment and how children in the neighbourhood could become a nuisance and bad influence on their children. She was keen on ensuring that her son was mostly in school and kept away from doing bad things or associating with certain kinds of children in the neighborhood. She has only one son and the father of the son also travels around a lot, so she knows keeping a son was not an easy task in the neighbourhood where she lived. She indicated how school was going to protect her son to some extent from joining any bad company. She stated that,

"This is Nima, where everything can happen, the good, bad, and ugly but it depends on how you handle your children. For going to school, I make sure my child is always in school and I take responsibility for his upbringing. If I don't do that, he could be influenced into bad company" (54-year-old Female Food Vendor, Nima, 2022).

Many of the dwellers in these neighborhoods have come to embrace education as a way out and do everything possible to ensure their children of school-going age take advantage of the government schools in the neighborhood. In Nima, where there are a lot of Muslims, observations during data collection revealed that there were many Islamic schools within the

community where these children were taught Arabic recitations as well. As explained by an Imam in Nima,

“Now education is very key and so we try so much to ensure that the children are all in school. Some even attend regular schools and still, come for the Arabic lessons as this is very essential for our cultural development. Some for now only attend Arabic schools but we encourage their parents to also move them to mainstream education. Gradually, we shall all achieve the education we need for our children” (66 years Imam, Nima, 2022).

Another phenomenon established was that several children engaged in residential transience due to higher level education. Some parents noted that their children were in secondary schools, training colleges, nursing training as well as universities across the nation and so do not spend time mostly with them. They visit during vacations and go back to school as soon as school resumes. According to one male trader in Nima, his son was in the University and since his secondary school, he kept moving to the boarding house and back during vacations. Now at the University, even during vacations, he sometimes chooses to work (Internships) and may visit home for a short period.

“My son is at the University of Winneba doing a master’s now and he stays on campus as a resident. Since he was growing up, I have always put him in the boarding system, so, he spends a lot of time in school and very little time at home. But he still visits home at the least chance he gets for a few days before returning to school, he is a professional teacher” (68-years-old retired Accountant, Old Fadama, 2022).

This study generally found out that, largely education was not a direct trigger factor for residential mobility in Nima and Old Fadama, however, it contributed to household residential mobility decision-making. Many households, especially in Old Fadama who have stayed for a long period, stated how they wouldn't want the education of their children to be interrupted due to relocation to another neighborhood. They would prefer that their children complete the stages of their education before deciding to relocate. As such, education here has rather acted as a barrier to residential relocation and not a trigger factor. Lastly, the study established that residential transience was a common feature among households due to higher levels of education. These were observed among children who attended boarding school systems at the basic levels and children at secondary and tertiary levels of education.

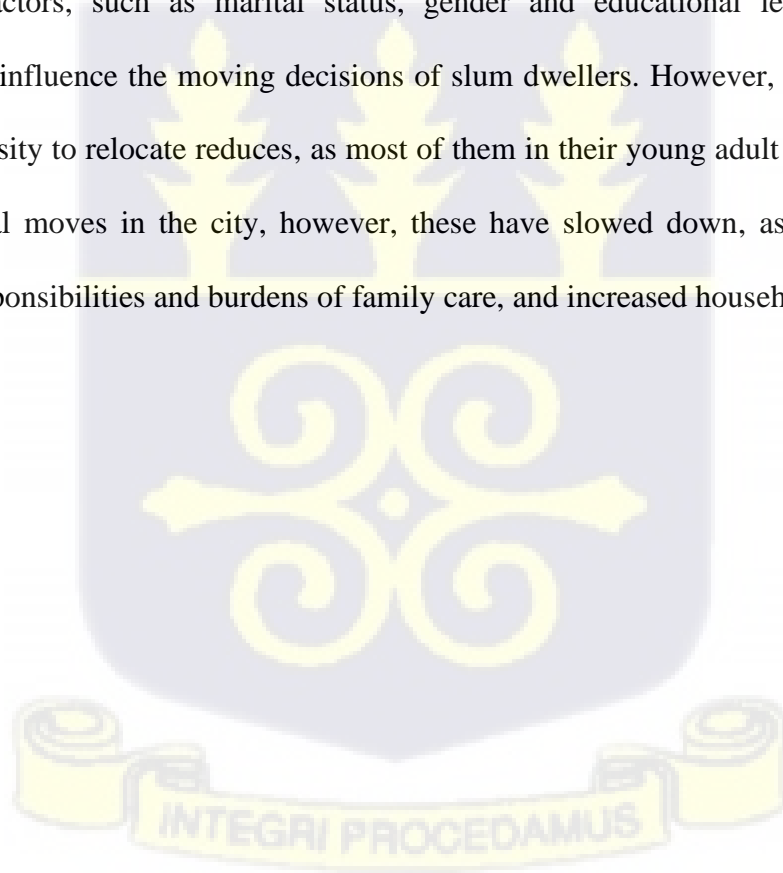
5.5 Conclusion

This chapter sought to explore the factors influencing residential mobility among slum dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama. However, it began by resolving conceptual debates between the differences in residential mobility and migration (Internal migration). The study argued that researchers' continued search for the strict difference between both mobility events may be a disincentive for understanding the totality of residential mobility factors. The study proposes that to comprehensively understand the residential mobility of migrants in the city, there was the need to explore their initial motivations for moving to the city which subsequently influences their residential mobility decisions throughout their stay in the city.

The chapter further explored the nature and typology of residential moves. The results showed that all existing typologies adopted from the literature were present in both slums, however, the study further observed that some residential moves could not fall under any of

the typologies indicated. The study argued for their inclusion as new forms of typology of moves observed. The new typology of moves included circular, irregular, safety, and unplanned/forced movers.

The study further sought to explore the factors influencing the residential mobility of slum dwellers in the study areas. These were broadly discussed as biographical factors which influence residential mobility decision-making. The results were mixed and revealed that biographical factors influenced slum dwellers' prior mobility behaviors in the city while having minimal effect on their current location in the slum. The study revealed that biographical factors, such as marital status, gender and educational level have higher propensities to influence the moving decisions of slum dwellers. However, as slum dwellers age, the propensity to relocate reduces, as most of them in their young adult ages made many more residential moves in the city, however, these have slowed down, as they grow with many other responsibilities and burdens of family care, and increased household sizes.



CHAPTER SIX

SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS INFLUENCING RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY DECISION

6.1 Introduction

This chapter assessed another set of factors referred to as socio-economic factors that influence residential mobility decision-making among slum dwellers. It focused attention on such socio-economic factors which the study also referred to as Life-stage factors because these socio-economic-related events occur within different stages of the life cycle of individuals. The study particularly assessed three (3) key factors which included childbirth, employment status, divorce/separation and homeownership. The chapter found that childbirth and divorce/separation generally trigger residential movements among slum dwellers. A change in employment status and homeownership have very little influence on the relocation decisions of slum dwellers as most people who experienced them were more residential stable and rooted.

6.2 Life-Stage Factors Influencing Residential Mobility Decision Making

The stages occur within the life cycle of individuals which according to this study, refers to changes that occur to individuals as they experience life across various ages. Wingens et al., (2011) define Life-stage as one of the guiding principles of the LifeCourse theory around which sociological meanings are placed on the individual's life transitions and trajectories. The principle states that “the effects of societal changes on individual lives vary across the LifeCourse, i.e., depending on the life stage in which an individual experiences an event”. These experiences could range from very simple to complex life-stage situations. The experiences of individuals occur at specific stages of their lives and have a different impact

on their growth. As such, there is the need to decouple these experiences at the various stages of the individual to unpack their impacts on various events. Studies by Winstanley et al. (2002), also argue that life stage factors broadly encapsulate the household attributes, nature of housing and the housing market as well as access to amenities (Rabe, 2017). However, this study defines life stage factors to include mainly the housebound characteristics around which everyday decisions on residential mobility are made.

This study analyses some life events that happen along the life trajectories of individuals to examine their influence on the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers. The life events examined in this study included childbirth, change in employment status, divorce/separation and homeownership as classified in Morris et al., (2018 p.114). The life stage factors examined in this study may bring enormous changes to the composition of families. How these events are handled at various stages of the individual or household's growth trajectory is key in determining the amount of space required by the family, resources available to sustain accommodation demands and general response strategies adopted to dealing with residential mobilities. As noted by Coulter & van Ham, (2013) and Morris et al., (2018), life events have a direct influence on residential mobility decisions due to the disequilibrium that occurs between people's needs and the available resources based on varied circumstances. However, no single event can be said to be responsible for the decision to make a move. As such, these factors act individually in such a way as to contribute to the final decision. This section, therefore, focuses on understanding the influence of these life events on the residential mobility behavior of individuals and their households.

6.3 Role of Childbirth in Residential Mobility

The study examined childbirth as a critical factor in residential mobility. At a particular stage in life, it is expected of people to bring forth new babies into the world. This phenomenon or event has implications for the housing needs of families and the spaces available for use (Michielin & Mulder, 2008). Childbirth increases the number of people who live in a household and as the household size increases, there is also a demand for additional space in the house for new and old members. Childbirth in some cases requires new housing conditions to accommodate the child within the best of housing and environmental conditions. As such, for many, giving birth to a newborn may be a significant determinant for residential mobility decision-making for the individual and household. In most cases, the birth of a new baby would lead to some readjustments in the household to ensure some level of satisfaction for all members. Earlier studies from the West especially, establish strong links between childbirth and residential mobility (de Groot, Mulder, Das, & Manting, 2011). However, Li's (2004) study in Beijing, China, revealed that childbirth was an insignificant determinant of residential mobility among households. The study found out that the birth of a child did not necessarily lead to a desire to change or actual changes in the residential preference for parents. It is however worth noting from the literature that the position of childbirth in the LifeCourse of parents has varied impacts on residential mobility decisions.

This study, therefore, examined the incidence of childbirth and how households responded to the residential decisions and demand for additional space in the houses. Retrospectively, respondents narrated their experiences after childbirth on the demand for space adjustment, or relocation to be made. This was done in 2 categories which included, those who made residential moves to new locations and those who had to readjust their current housing conditions to accommodate the newborn baby.

Regarding dwellers in the slum who had to relocate to new houses after childbirth, this study found that only a few people relocated entirely to a new accommodation due to childbirth. In the case of a 52-year-old trader who sells Wele and other goods, she narrated that, her first and second children were born before she moved in to stay at Accra at Old Fadama. However, only her last child was born at her current place and the other two were brought along to her second place of residence at Old Fadama. After she parted ways with her sister whom she first stayed with on arrival at Old Fadama, she paid for a single room (Bar) in Old Fadama where she stayed for 3 years and later had to rent a new place because she lived with two of her children at the time and was heavily pregnant and the place was too small for them and uncondusive. She managed to gather resources, bought a new wooden house and relocated to this new place (her current location) in Old Fadama where the rooms are much bigger to accommodate all of them. She gave birth to her lastborn and did not have issues with her space at all.

However, as the household size increased, and the children grew up there was still the need to create additional space for her older children whenever they visited as well as the other 3 that were living with her. She acquired additional space to build a storeroom for her Wele business to free up her immediate room for their comfort. Later, she had to put up additional structures for rent and now has 14 rooms in all with 10 of them rented out for business. She also noted that the original materials used for the building were plywood, but she rebuilt some parts of the building especially where she lives with her children into a full block-and-mortar structure for their comfort and safety. This she narrated was very important as she nearly lost her daughter in a fire that caught her home some years ago. Listening to her story, she narrated that,

“I am a mother of 5 children, two are of age and working in other parts of the country but 3 are with me here in Old Fadama. My previous place at Old Fadama was too small for me and 2 of my children at the time, so before I had my last child, I tried hard and rented this place, which was a wooden structure at first, so that we could have enough space for ourselves and my business. The room is big enough now, it was previously not this big and comfortable but because you have children you keep making small adjustments to improve the conditions for you and your children’s good. My husband also now stays with us, and we are fine” (52-years-Old Wele Trader, Old Fadama, 2022).

Similar to the story shared above, another household head shared his story, recounting that,

“I live in Old Fadama with my wife and 3 children. I moved in to stay at Old Fadama alone before I later married my wife and brought her to join me here. We had all three children here at Old Fadama. I have stayed at a place at Old Fadama which was a small single room but before my wife delivered the second child, we relocated to this place here and have since lived here. We had to move because the first place was too small and rented. This place was sold to me by a friend who left Old Fadama, and I rebuilt it into this block structure. It used to be all wood before I bought it and I gradually raised the block. Now we don’t have any problem, even with our 3rd child, the room is big enough and I have 7 other rooms that I have rented out. In fact, at a point, I wanted to expand this one even more, but there was no space otherwise I would be entering someone else’s land, the children and my wife, the space is enough for us. I do make small changes to the house just to keep it in shape and safe from external challenges” (44-year-old Bar Owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

Further, some respondents also noted that although they did not change their locations, they had to make intentional adjustments to the house to accommodate the increasing number of household members through childbirth. The study can confirm that this was widespread in Old Fadama compared to Nima, which was an already built-up area with very minimal space for expansion to take place. Again, in Nima, most of the occupants either inherit their homes or have familial arrangements, which exempt them from rental payments. In Old Fadama, most families resort to building new structures in the same neighbourhood to allow some of their children to move into the other rooms. In some cases, the structure is refortified to allow for a supra-structure to be added for additional rooms. These have provided additional space to families to meet their housing needs and satisfaction. A male carpenter and Pastor narrated how he secures accommodation for his family,

“I have lived with my wife and 4 children here at Old Fadama for so long a time now. First, I used to stay in one single room with my wife and 2 children. However, after giving birth to the 3rd and 4th child, there was the need to get additional space to care for us. I arranged my resources and put up additional structures. Now I have up to 11 rooms of which I stay in the chamber and hall room with my wife. My children also sleep together in one of the big single rooms. The eldest one is now in Senior high school so unless vacation he is mostly not around. The other 3 are comfortable and their room is just next to ours, I ensure they are ok. This environment is made up of both good and bad people so you must be concerned about your children, and as a pastor, I ensure they do not mingle with any miscreants and learn bad habits. All the other rooms I rented out, I look at the people well, and do my quick investigations before renting to you because I don’t want anyone who will give me trouble or influence my kids badly” (46-years-old carpenter and pastor, Old Fadama, 2022).

In a similar case recorded in Nima, a 52-year-old male water vendor also narrated how he dealt with his accommodation challenge as he gave birth to additional children. He recounted that,

“I was born here in Nima and have lived here all my life. I have seven children and I live with them and my wife. It's only one of my daughters who is married and lives with her husband. I used to live with my wife only in one of the rooms in the family house way before we started making our babies. After my dad passed away and we shared the rooms, I have 3 rooms in my name. So, when my children are of age, they join their other siblings in one of the other rooms. I stay in a chamber and hall with my wife while the children live in one of the single rooms. The other single room I have rented it out at 50 cedis per month to support the house, all the rooms are within the same compound, so I see my children always and make sure they are ok” (52-years-old Male Water Vendor, Nima, 2022).

In Nima, a 49-year-old trader (in Men’s Wear), recounted how he had to make some adjustments to his room to make the conditions satisfactory enough for his family.

“I was born and bred in Nima, where I stay in my room which I inherited from my grandmother. Since I lived here, I have stayed at the same house but only changed my room to this one after the death of my grandmother. When I got married and we started having children, I realised the mud used to plaster the house had fallen off and the painting also was very old. I tried working on them gradually, at the birth of my first child, I had to replaster the entire structure with cement so it could be durable and safe for occupancy. But it involves lots of money and it's not easy in Accra here like that. After the second child, I completed the plastering, painted the inside and outside and changed the window frames and doors. Now you can see it looks nice and

safe. For us we are adults so sometimes we don't pay attention to these but immediately children come in, it's a different thing. Their safety and happiness in the house are our responsibility" (49-year-old Male Trader, Nima, 2022).

The cases cited above are classic situations that describe how childbirth influences the residential mobility decisions of individuals and households. The households noted that their previous residences created disequilibrium between their needs, preferred room size, and housing conditions, hence, prompting them to make a mobility decision, following the birth of new children. The parents were seen making residential moves in the interest of their children as they were responsible for their comfort and safety at their age. The lives of the children were largely linked with their parents' decisions, so their needs must always be considered in any decision-making on residential moving behaviors. As noted by Elder et al., (2003), one of the principles on which the LifeCourse theory is anchored is the principle of 'linked lives', which expresses the relationships that exist between individuals and their connections with others. Residential mobility decisions are also configured by broader ties with kinships and social networks (Mason, 2004), and this includes concerns about children. As such, residential mobility decisions of parents take into consideration the concerns of children as they are the most vulnerable and could be adversely affected socially, environmentally, and health-wise. This finding supports other findings which indicate that the presence of children in a house was critical to making moving decisions in a house (Morris et al., 2018). This is so because the movement of adults mostly is decided by them, but that of children is done on their behalf by their guardians. As such, the parents consider so many things to determine when to move and how far to move. This is critical because decisions to move children have the potential to also destabilize their growth, social

networks, and education (Popham et al., 2015; Bailey & Livingstone, 2007). This study, therefore, argues that childbirth and the presence of children in the homes of slum dwellers were a determinant factor for residential mobility or immobility decisions considered by individuals or households in Nima and Old Fadama.

6.4 Change in Employment Status and Residential Mobility

Another factor in determining the residential mobility behavior of individuals or households rests on their employment status. People who are engaged with work are noted to express lesser desire to move unless there is a change in the work location. People naturally want to work at offices close to their place of residence to cut down the cost of transportation and commute time (Böheim & Taylor, 2002). This is important among slum dwellers who mostly engage in informal paid work or self-employed work mostly in the city centres. As much as possible, they want to live in neighborhoods closer to the city centre where they work to enjoy the advantages of distance and cost (Gilbert, 1999). This section relied on Böheim & Taylor (2002) in analysing the influence of change in employment status on residential mobility decision-making. They classified the employment status into 3 classes including, the employed, unemployed, and self-employed. This classification particularly fits the situation of slums discussed here, as these places are made up of individuals with complex forms of work opportunities. Generally, the majority of those living in the slums are typically considered to be working in the informal sector either privately or employed under another. A few work in the public or government sectors whereas others remain unemployed.

This study establishes that some relationship exists between people's employment status and their residential mobility behaviors. This is particularly evident in the Old Fadama

neighbourhood where the dwellers' primary purpose for continuing to stay in the slum was about their businesses and trade. The labour market is highly informal, and dwellers engage in all manner of work with varied pay arrangements. The types of opportunities available (as confirmed by the Assemblyman of the area as well as the secretary to the Association of ethnic chiefs) to the residents of Old Fadama include, scrap work and e-waste collections (mostly done by the youth ranging between the average ages of 12 to 35 years), head porters (mostly by young girls from the northern part of the country), Okada riders (mostly young males of 17 -30years), community water vending and public shower business (mostly owned and managed by adults of over 40years), food vendors within and outside the neighborhood, petty traders, mostly home-based and also street hawkers. Also noticeable were room renting for business 'hotels' (mostly done by adults of over 40 years), prostitution (mostly by foreign nationals) and artisanal works such as hairdressing, carpentry, barbering, driving, sewing, handicrafts, and sculpturing work. For those whose workplaces were located outside the neighbourhood into the main city markets, most of them rely on their informal jobs to pay for their rent to continue to stay at Old Fadama as renters.

In Nima, according to one of the assemblymen for the area, the most common work opportunities include home-based trading, general merchandise trading, market-based foodstuff sellers, head porters, drivers, Okada, government workers and artisanal works, as mentioned in the preceding paragraph. However, in Nima, these job opportunities are conducted to bring community cohesion among members. As such, they form a strong cultural bond with their work which is a motivation for continued stay in the locality.

This study revealed that for those who were employed in the public sector, the propensity to move or relocate was higher due to reasons that they wanted to be as close to the workplace as possible. However, this applies mainly to renters rather than homeowners who may not want to incur additional costs to finding a place of residence while owning a house. Renting employees, however, are mostly concerned about distance and the cost of work. In a city where traffic congestion at peak hours could make people spend lots of productive hours on the road, many would use residential relocation as a way out. These views were confirmed during interviews with dwellers at both Old Fadama and Nima who were employed in the government sector. In a narration by a previous employee of a formal institution, he noted that,

“I formally worked at Accra Brewery and at that time I stayed at Lapaz. But through my friends, Alhassan and especially Alidu I am here today at Old Fadama. You know that Old Fadama and Accra Brewery are very close to Lapaz. The white people at the workplace have some watch to time everyone when they arrive for work, so if you are late, you cannot change it. And you know those white people if you are late one second, they will deduct from your pay. So, you can hear that the salary is 11 million but at the end of the month, you can't take all. So, my friends advised me to stay here with them because Old Fadama and Accra Brewery are closer than Lapaz. So, I followed their advice and I stayed with them until someone was selling his room, it was a wooden structure [see figure 6.1] but they used rubber to cover it and we used paper (carton) to cover the top. It was always a challenge in rainy seasons. But I bought it and small, worked on it and now I have this structure. But now I don't work for Accra Brewery again, I had moved to become security personnel for Access Bank in Accra and later worked with Aviation until I was struck with diabetes, and I cannot put on my boots again. That is why I resigned and now I am self-employed and it's a

good source of income than even the government employment here at Old Fadama. I have built at Kasoa but I do not have any intention of leaving my business here to relocate there yet. I have 56 rooms that I rent out for money and now I charge phones, sell water, provisions, and other things. You understand why I cannot leave here now?" (2nd Vice President of an Ethnic Tribe, Old Fadama, 2022).



Figure 6.1: Typical wooden (Plywood) Structures at Old Fadama

Source: Field Data, 2022

Further, the study also revealed that there is some relationship that exists between the self-employed and their residential mobility behavior. The study argued that most of the self-employed dwellers preferred to stay in the slum due to the money benefits they made from their businesses. Most of them see the neighbourhood as a thriving business market due to the dense population found in the area. As many of them would love to state, anything you want to sell, someone is looking to buy it in the next moment. Every business will thrive and succeed here. These thoughts were mostly coming from the dwellers who had their businesses and plied them within and around the immediate surroundings of the neighborhood. As indicated a Tribe Warrior who is a sculpturer and designs his works for

sale in and around Nima, explains that

“The only work I do now is this sculpturing of different objects and I have customers who either pre-request for a particular art or come to look at what I have and select. At other times especially weekends when the market area is very busy, I do move my art for sale on the roadside. I do sell to people from different places including the whites whenever they come around. This is what I have done for the past 29 years I have stayed in Nima” (62-year-old Tribe Warrior, Nima, 2022).

Another resident at Old Fadama also recaptures how work at Old Fadama has thrived for him for over 30 years now and he continues to ply the same trade to survive. According to the 67-year-old operator of public shower and toilet facilities, he recounted that,

“This is what I have done since I arrived in Old Fadama. I am among the few who began the business of selling water in this area, and I later added the showers and toilet. The money I made from one led to building another. It is this same business I used to build all the block houses I have here today and even now, I still make a lot of money. I do not have any plans to move yet, because where I am now, the government cannot come again to claim this community, but even if it happens, I have my own house in Kasoa and my hometown. For now, I will be here for the business and money” (67-year-old male shower owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

The population of Old Fadama is huge and this provides a strong market base for home businesses to thrive. These views also are evident in the increasing activities of Homebase trading in the neighborhood. Most houses try to create a small space for a shop to sell quick-moving goods such as food and provisions. This market is quickly becoming conspicuous as well as profitable to those who engage in it within the neighborhood. Some food sellers in the

central city areas and the market centres prepare their food from the Old Fadama neighborhood. Such food vendors set up fires very early and prepare foods that are moved to the city areas for sale throughout the day. This activity reaffirms the energy in the agency of the people in the slums and how much they work to contribute to the daily needs and demands of the city and its overall growth. In a conversation with the 2nd vice President of an ethnic group in Old Fadama, he narrated how the food vending business of her wife has seen growth over the years. He narrated that,

“Here my wife cooks rice, so I am here always. Then you know this scrap people, our people here we called them scrap people, they are doing that iron iron scrap. Some of them get up as early as 4:00 am, so by 2:00 am my wife should be outside cooking and by 4 am you have to send the food to them to buy before they go out. One day you have to sleep here and see how by 4 am people will be going out. Here you will not see anybody in the morning like this, at dawn, they are going out. Before you see them, is by 6-7 pm. The human traffic from this road to that place and the other side, when they are moving at dawn, is heavy. So, my wife is here, she can’t stay at Kasoa and be coming here. She must stay here and wake up early, you, see? We prepare food and the food will finish at 7-8 am then she will come home. Like the big rice bag, she cooks it only twice and it's finished. So, there is business here.” (2nd Vice President of an Ethnic Group, Old Fadama, 2022).

Another resident of Old Fadama reaffirms his reasons why he does not think that he is going to leave the neighbourhood anytime soon.

“You see what I sell here, provisions (petty trader) and do my lotto business small. Even though there are general challenges we all face, like my firstborn, Emmanuel, who attended Accra Polytechnic there are no jobs in my hometown as well as in

Nima. But I can say this place is far better, now this place opposite my shop is even a hotel which is mostly patronized especially at night, so we sell to the people who stay around here, it's like the main centre of the town. Moreover, this place is like a business centre. We are very populated here, with more than 90,000 people. So, I see this place as where I can get enough income to cater for the children until another opportunity bigger than this presents itself. I am also able to live in peace here as I do not meddle in the issues of others. (60-year-old petty trader and lotto writer, Old Fadama, 2022).

The situation is no different from what transpires in the Nima community as the entire community has petty trading shops dotted all around in front of houses (See Figure 6.2). Almost every home has a shop attached to the front of it which trades in petty goods. This has become a way to support the livelihoods of families with income from their daily sales. For most of the dwellers in the Nima community, these businesses are only a contributory factor to their decisions to stay in the neighborhood, unlike Old Fadama where business appears to be the topmost attractive reason for the decision to stay. However, it must also be stated that self-employment in Nima was one of the major means of livelihood for the people. The presence of the big Nima market and its buzzy nature remains the best evidence yet of the agency of the population and desire to hold the destiny of their lives in their own hands (See





Figure 6.2: Trading on Frontages of Houses in Nima

Source: Field Data, 2022

Most of the petty traders and homebase traders mentioned how they can raise good income from their sales to take care of their families. They do not see any need to relocate to another place as they believe that the situation in Nima is even better than in other places.

As narrated by a 44-year-old businessman, in Nima,

“I have stayed in Nima for so long and I trade in all sorts of goods. I buy and sell anything that I feel will make a good profit for me. This I have done for several years and still counting because there is always a buyer somewhere waiting. Nima is big with a lot of people and others from other parts of the city for so many reasons including shopping in and around the Nima market which is always busy. This business I have done this for the 32 years I lived here to take care of myself and my family. I have no intention of leaving Nima because I get more than even the business, and I don’t think I can leave here” (44 years businessman, Nima, 2022).

Again, a 42-year-old female food vendor who sells tea mentioned that she has been in the business for the past 15 years even though she does switch business in certain seasons. Giving further details, she indicated how over the years she has survived mainly on her business in the neighbourhood and looked after her younger sister before she recently got married and left for her husband's home. Though she indicated difficulties in selling at certain times, that is general with all business as there were good days and bad days. She noted that although she has the desire to move out of Nima someday, that is far from being realised at the moment, as she does not have the financial resources yet. In narrating how her business has contributed to her decision to stay at Nima, she recounted that,



Figure 6.3: A Busy Market Day on the Nima-Maamobi Highway

Source: Fieldwork, 2022

“This business sometimes, people don’t think it is worth doing but I tell you that this is what I have lived on for so long. And especially the young men and ladies who stay up at night, my location has become their base the night where they can sit and have toasted bread tea while they chat. I have made lots of good friends who also dash me some money once in a while. This business has created a new family as well for me in

customers and if I consider relocating, I think about the business and my new family”
(42years female food vendor, Nima).



Figure 6.4: Regular Busy Market Day in Nima (Busy Highway & Grains for sale)

Source: Field Data, 2022

The third relationship established was that between the unemployed and their residential mobility behavior. The study argued that most of the unemployed in the slum areas were most likely to stay since they face the real limitation of access to financial resources to take care of their immediate needs. These needs cannot be traded for any other thing as a priority in their lives. Relocation as deduced from their responses was the last on their mind even though some expressed the desire to do so if it were possible. As such, the study argued that people's unemployed status influenced their decisions to be rooted in the community. The unemployed as used in this section refers to those individuals who were not engaged in work that will lead to a sustained remuneration. As such, people who have previously been engaged formally and informally but at the time of the research have terminated such engagements were considered unemployed. The study observed that this category of people cuts across people from different backgrounds. For example, a 72-year-old man indicated that he does not currently do anything that earns him any money. However, he lives in the care of

his 7 children who work in the formal and informal labour markets in the city. He was content with their support and does not think he has any form of worry over taking care of himself. Again, he lives in a family building that was bequeathed to him and he currently also doubles as the family head. For such an individual the decision to relocate does not even arise in the first place as it appears the odds for his stay are higher. However, when asked whether relocating to a new area in Accra was an option he was considering, he responded that,

“To relocate, at this age to where again? I only have enough to take care of my immediate needs and I cannot seek rent anywhere in Accra now. I think I am content here and satisfied with my conditions” (72-year-old unemployed man, Nima, 2022).

The study established that depending on the employment status of the individual, mobility behavior also varies. Those who were in employment both formal/informal and self-employment were unlikely to make any relocation move as they considered the work and the remuneration as a strong reason to want to stay. People stay in slums because they are unable to make ends meet to meet the huge demands of staying in the main city. They consider the slums as a flexible alternative to survive in the city. As the businesses they engage in continue to thrive and bring income that sustains them, it is believed that they consider their location as a haven. For those in Old Fadama, self-awareness of the situation of the area was a key reason for people’s decision to stay. They consider the place as a no man’s land and that the government has the power to evict them any day. They do not strongly consider the place as home, but rather as a temporary place where they can gather every money possible as long as they continue to live there. The decision to relocate was not an immediate option for many as the situations of the slums have also changed drastically over the years. For others, the huge number of people who currently stay in Old Fadama for political reasons was

enough to keep the community in place without any fear of eviction. Old Fadama, for many of the dwellers, is considered as a business hub and everyone desires to work and earn a lot of money. Nima on the other side is home to its dwellers who do not have to bother about government intrusion any day. The conviviality enjoyed with friends and family together with the growth in numbers offers huge employment opportunities to the people. Even the unemployed in both slums do not consider relocation as an immediate decision. This is because they already live in locations that match their financial status and strength. Unlike the situations of unexpected job loss or prolonged job loss in middle to high-income areas, this can lead to a necessary change in residential location to match the reality of the financial status (Warner & Sharp, 2016).

6.5 Change in Marital Status and Residential Mobility Behavior

This study also observed that change in marital status could have implications on the residential mobility behavior of dwellers in slums. The two observed changes in marital status included living apart together (LAT) and the death of one partner (Widowed). This concept of LAT as explained in Green (2010 p.144), refers to people in long-term committed relationships living apart. The term is also used to describe people in distance relationships as well as commuter marriages (Coulter et al., 2016; Green, 2010). These relationship types are broadly described under the umbrella of non-residential partnerships. They contribute significantly to our understanding of the residential mobility behavior of people. This study observed that married couples who were living apart (not necessarily due to a legal separation), tend to experience residential mobility differently. For a partner, the likelihood of change in the residential environment was much higher than when compared with married partners living together. LAT partners have shown many more incidences of residential

change compared with couples living together. In the case of a 60-year-old retired teacher in Nima, she has moved her residence at least 4 times since living apart from her partner. She explained that she moved to Accra to stay alone while her children lived in her hometown with her family. She mentioned that while in Accra, she had had to change her residence over 4 times. She mentioned that relocating alone, was considerably less stressful in terms of cost, compared to relocating with family. This LAT concept has embedded in it the concept of residential itineracy. This concept also described earlier, plays out beautifully in this situation. The children of the retired teacher had to juggle between homes, especially, during vacations with their mum in Accra, or their father's family in the Volta Region. Their permanent residence has rather become their educational institution's place. Their mother explained that since their secondary school, they have always been in the boarding facility and that has not changed even in the tertiary level (Coulter et al., 2016). Her residential mobility behavior has been influenced greatly by her LAT from her children and husband.

The situation was not the same in the case of a 54-year-old food vendor who also resides in Nima. The food vendor was born and bred in Nima and had access to family homes before her marriage took her briefly out of Nima to Kasoa, where she stayed with her husband and their son for a few years. She, however, had to return to Nima as her permanent home because she had to take care of her family's house. She seldom visits her husband's home in Kasoa whenever she visits her sister in the same locality. Unlike the retired teacher who had to make many residential moves as a renter, this food vendor had not made any permanent residential moves in Accra except staying in their family house in Nima. Although she was LAT with her husband at a stage of her LifeCourse, her status as a house owner probably contributed to her inability to change her residential location. She explained that,

“I have short travels in the past to places like Lagos, Nigeria to cook for business for a while, however, I returned to Nima and stayed in this same room since I joined my mum back at 12 years old. After she passed on and my Aunty also followed a few years after, I used to live with my kid sister here, but she got married and relocated. But for me, this room and house is where I have stayed all my life” (54-year-old Female Food Vendor, Nima, 2022).

Even though LAT may have influenced the residential mobility behavior of the dwellers, the findings show that other factors also enabled the observed pattern. The main underlying factor included one’s status as a homeowner or renter. As discussed in the previous section, renters in most cases were more residentially mobile compared to homeowners. This is because renters could easily face various stressors that are external to their ability to control, and the only way out was to move to a new location that offers better satisfaction to their residential needs. Homeowners, on the other hand, continue to work on the conditions of the home that cause residential stress and gradually find a way to bring some equilibrium to their present conditions and desires. This study, therefore, establishes here that for LAT partners living in slum conditions, one major factor that influences their residential mobility decision is their homeownership status. However, LAT dwellers who were renters had a higher propensity to relocate than those who were homeowners as demonstrated by the data.

Further, the study also looked at the relationship between the widowed and their residential mobility behavior. It was revealed that partners who lost their spouses were likely to relocate to new residential locations due to several factors. Some factors are emotional and psychological as many wouldn’t want to keep having recurring memories over their lost

partner. This was observed in the case of a 49-year-old Unit Committee member in Nima who lost his wife in 2020 and kept the rented apartment where they both lived with their son before her demise. He explained that he didn't feel ok sleeping alone in the apartment which was at Accra Newtown just to avoid flashbacks or memories of her. He permanently moved to stay in his own house bequeathed to him at Nima following the death of his parents. Though he continues to hold the rented apartment in his name, he is waiting for the family of his late wife to come and move her belongings so he can also give out the room and stop paying for rent. Until that is done, he hardly passes any night in that apartment and has only lived in Nima.

“I stay at two places, Nima which is my room and Newtown, just across the gutter where I rented a room where I stayed with my wife before she passed on. But for now, I am staying in Nima, and I don't go back to the house in Newtown. I am waiting for the family to pack her things from there, my rent was still yet to expire there. I have since lived here in Nima for the last 2 years and have not gone anywhere else except to visit my son who stays with my sister at Adenta” (49-year-old Unit Committee member, Nima, 2022).

In a different situation, a 48-year-old bicycle repairer also narrated his story that he had to relocate to a new residence after the death of his wife some 4 years ago. He had a child with his first wife (who died) and was now living with a new woman who had also given birth to another child. He noted that although he did not intend to have a new baby, this happened unexpectedly. However, after the death of his first wife, he had an issue with the Landlord who refused to renew his rent. He struggled to get new accommodation at his current place, which is still within the Nima neighborhood. He has since lived in this new place for the last 2 years even though in all, he has spent close to 22 years living in Nima.

“I have lived in Nima for so many years now but because of my condition (physically challenged) also, I think some people don’t want me around for so long especially Landlords. After I lost my wife, I don’t know what happened but the Landlord told me he wasn’t going to renew my rent and so I struggled to find a new place still at Nima here through a friend for the last two years, that is where I am now. I live here with a lady, I have not married yet, but we have a child. It’s even better because I wouldn’t be comfortable if it was in the same room with my lost wife, you understand, culturally it may not sound well” (48-year-old bicycle repairer, Nima, 2022).

In Old Fadama, a 67-year-old Shower Owner continued to stay in his own house even after the demise of his wife several years ago. He lives there with some of his grandchildren as well as children belonging to some members of his family. He noted that the death of his wife brought some changes to his familial structure even though he continued to stay at the same place at Old Fadama. He had no reason or choice to move anywhere because he struggled to settle in Old Fadama and for several years, built and owned his house. He recounted that,

“I lived here with my wife until her demise some 10 years ago, but I couldn’t have abandoned the place at all because this is where my work is also. I have had to stay away in my hometown for a brief period after the burial to observe some customary rites after which I came back to my place here at Old Fadama. I have not also relocated anywhere since this was my own home, which I built with monies from the shower business that I do” (67-year-old Shower Owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

Again, the data presented above on the widowed showed that as married partners lose a partner, it may lead to a change in their residential mobility behavior as demonstrated above. The similarities in the different cases of the widowed presented lie in people’s psychological

attachment to their residence before the demise of their partner. For widowhood, the relationship appears weaker if the person living is a renter compared to a homeowner. The widowed who owned their own home, tend to remain in the same home rather than moving out. In the study, therefore, widowhood does not necessarily lead to an increase in residential mobility as that depends strongly on the homeownership status of the partner alive. As established in the study, widowed partners who were homeowners did not make any residential move after losing their partners.

On the other hand, the widow/er who were renters had to make a residential move, primarily due to cultural considerations related to the death of the spouse, where remaining in the same dwelling with a new partner might be deemed culturally inappropriate. This finding corroborates some earlier studies that found that to some extent, widowhood may elevate the rate of mobility as found in Zilincikova, Linares, Artamonova, Brandén, & Schnor's (2023) study in Sweden and Belgium. Gillespie & Fokkema's (2023) study also observed that 2.7% of the sample population under observation were widowed and had a slightly higher propensity to make a residential move compared to those who were not. These studies have relied on quantitative analysis to provide definite responses to the relationships that exist between widowhood and residential mobility. In this study, qualitative data was adopted to broaden our understanding of such relationships and the results showed that there may be other factors such as home ownership and cultural and psychological reasons to determine whether the widowed was more likely to make a residential move after the death of a spouse or not.

6.6 Home Ownership and Residential Mobility in Slums

Although the theme of homeownership was tangentially mentioned in the previous sections, it also constitutes a major life-stage event for many and needs to be fully understood within the broader context of an individual's experiences with residential mobility. This section looks at homeownership in the slums of Nima and Old Fadama to provide a guide on its influence on residential decision-making among individuals and households. Homeownership in this study was understood by asking the respondents whether they own the accommodation or are paying rent on the accommodation. Where respondents do not pay any form of rent on the accommodation where he/she stays, the person is considered a homeowner. This also included people who received rooms/houses as gifts or through familial inheritance. Again, the type of structure was not considered at all in this definition, especially, in Old Fadama where people make daily efforts to convert their make-shift temporary structures into durable block housing (See Figure 6.5 for block houses under construction). As such, all housing forms including durable and non-durable, gifted and or inherited were considered homeowners as they do not pay any form of rent. The study generally found that homeowners did not move but maintained stability in their residential mobility behaviors. In the Old Fadama community where people mostly moved in from elsewhere to settle down, they have a rich history of being highly mobile people during the quest to find a neighbourhood to settle in the city. On reaching and finding a place in Old Fadama, gradually owning up a piece of the land and putting up a structure, moving on to another locality was no longer an immediate consideration. These temporary structures were gradually rebuilt into permanent structures, and upon becoming the owner of a structure, the immediate desire to relocate to a new neighbourhood did not arise. In the case of a 44-year-old owner of a drinking spot, he narrated that after arriving in Accra in 1994, he had since relocated 4 times in the city before moving in to stay at Old Fadama, where a friend secured a piece of land for him. He initially

put up a simple structure and began his business and gradually has been able to rebuild the structure into a permanent one. He also rented a shop from someone for his drinking spot business for some years, after which the owner then decided to sell it outright to him. With the monies realised from his business, he had gradually put up other rooms for rent which has now become one of his major sources of income. In recounting how he became a homeowner, he narrated that,

“I moved to Old Fadama in 2004 after I had relocated within Accra about 4 times and had to move because there were always some issues. I had to spend so many months trying to refill the waterlogged land that was sold to me through a friend here (Old Fadama) before raising a temporary structure. Over time, I have converted the building to a block house, and it is more durable now. I also have over 10 rooms that I now rent out for business. Unless something unexpected happens, I don’t have any plans of relocating to any place again” (44-year-old Drinking Spot Owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

In a similar case, a 53-year-old lotto agent also shared his story indicating that he spent several years as a renter in Old Fadama before eventually acquiring the place and becoming a homeowner. He also talked about his subsequent expansion, mentioning that he built an additional 29 rooms which he now rents out to others in the neighborhood. According to him,

“I was employed by someone as a video-maker in her shop for some years and later she put up the space for sale and I bought it and used it as my home and business place. After settling in well I managed to gradually put up other buildings for rent bit by bit and now I can boast of 29 rooms all for rent. I used to sleep on the street at Tudu when I first came to Accra but today, I also rent rooms out. Since settling well in

Old Fadama I have not made any move to anywhere else in the city” (53-year-old Driver, Old Fadama, 2022).

This narrative closely mirrors the experiences of numerous homeowners in Old Fadama, the majority of whom either constructed their structures from the ground up after buying a piece of land or acquired existing make-shift structures, often from individuals relocating out of the neighbourhood and subsequently renovated them to suit their preferences and requirements. This is generally how many homeowners transitioned into becoming landlords. Because the Old Fadama settlement is relatively younger compared to the Nima community, people continue to buy pieces of land, as well as temporary make-shift structures to reconvert into new buildings of their choice for use as homes. Such individuals are also considered by this study as landlords since they own the space given to them, as well as the make-shift structures on it. It may be considered as a make-shift structure today, however, within a short turnaround time, such structures would be converted into durable block houses. As explained by the assemblyman of the area, he noted that,

“People here have the will to do anything overnight, so you do not underestimate them at all. Now I know there is this decision among the ethnic chiefs communicated to their people to convert all non-durable houses made up of wood and containers to block houses, especially if it was caught by fire, you are forced to rebuild into a blockhouse. This they have done gradually and now you can see the neighborhood’s number of block houses has increased over the last 5 years. That is continuing and every Landlord is paying heed to that decision” (Assemblyman, Old Fadama, 2022).

This view of converting wooden and container rooms into durable block houses is a form of local effort among the ethnic chiefs to reduce the rate of fire outbreaks and loss of personal belongings and lives (See Figure 6.1 for a typical wooden structure in Old Fadama). A few ethnic chiefs re-echoed its importance and confirmed it as a running decision enforced (See Figure 6.5 for new block houses under construction in Old Fadama). As such, one should not be surprised to see a temporary makeshift structure converted quickly into a durable block building overnight. After working hard to secure land and put up a structure, whether durable or not, such individuals were not ready to relocate to any new place in the city as they considered themselves homeowners. In a few cases however, when the conditions of the area do not match the resistance level of the homeowner (non-durable), they also sell off the property and relocate to new neighborhoods in the city. These were also confirmed in the narration of a few of the homeowners and ethnic chiefs on how people secured their space for building.



Figure 6.5: Durable block and Mortar houses under construction in Old Fadama

Source: Field Data, 2022

In Nima, homeowners expressed similar sentiments about their residential mobility behavior in the neighborhood. In many cases they indicated that the houses they owned were not the sole reason for staying, but rather the presence of family and friends who have become integral to their decision-making regarding mobility. Family and friends were considered by many of the residents of Nima as strong reasons for their decision to stay. These findings align with that of Gillespie & Fokkema (2023), who found out that in the US, the proximity of family members was a significant factor influencing the decisions of older adults to remain in a neighborhood. The study noted this as an increasing phenomenon as people did not want to become lonely by moving away from family and friends. In the case of Nima, a slum area, friends and family were considered part of the neighbourhood culture into which the people were born and bred. Family and friends, therefore, were considered a very strong factor in their decision to continue to stay in the neighborhood. The homeowners in Nima would be described as the most stable compared with those at Old Fadama, as the ownership of the houses has transcended different generations and needs to be kept. Again, in Nima, most homeowners typically own specific rooms within a larger compound housing, with these rooms being shared among the family members. However, the head of the family usually holds superior rights over all the houses under his care. For example, in the case of a 51-year-old unemployed man in Nima, he explained that,

“It’s a family house. We Muslims when your elder is not there you take their room. So, I’m currently in my grandmother’s room. The men are normally given two rooms and the women get one. But this could change depending on the family size and the number of rooms available” (51-year-old unemployed, Nima, 2022).

Nima primarily consists of compound houses built by the first settlers, with the current generation being predominantly the third or fourth, as explained by one of the ethnic chiefs. He noted that the prevalence of mud and brick construction in most houses reflects their age and longstanding existence.

“The compound houses are the commonest style because our great grandparents built them, that is how we live as Muslims, family and friends mean a lot to us. Since our great grandparents left, over 60 years now, I believe this 3rd to 4th generation continues to benefit from their works and are improving them. Even the mud walls, families at least are re-plastering with cement and making them more durable”
(Ethnic Chief of D, Nima, 2022).

This study argues that homeowners in Nima and Old Fadama slums are very stable in terms of residential mobility decision-making and do not consider relocation as an immediate option. However, they continue to adjust the buildings through the extension of buildings (in very few cases due to limited space for expansion) and building additional structures on nearby lands within the same neighbourhood to move family members to avoid overcrowding. One major difference between the homeowners of the two neighborhoods is found in the historical residential mobility behaviors of individuals. Whereas most of the homeowners had nearly made several residential moves in the city of Accra before arriving in Old Fadama, in Nima which is an older settlement, most of the homeowners were born and bred in the same neighbourhood and their homes were bequeathed to them. Residential mobility behavior among the homeowners can be described as very stable even where the owner has transitioned from being a renter to a homeowner (case of those at Old Fadama).

Homeowners consider relocation as a final option rather than an immediate priority, with other factors, such as relationships with friends and family, as well as business interests, reinforcing this stance in Nima and Old Fadama, respectively. This finding relates very much with what is known in the literature, as other research reveals homeowners as a less mobile group (Ghasri and Rashidi 2015; Clark and Withers 2007), compared with renters who are considered as very mobile (Böheim and Taylor 2002; Kronenberg and Carree 2012). Whereas homeowners may enjoy higher psychological benefits through attachment to their properties, renters may not be necessarily attached and would consider moving to where the utility satisfaction may be highest. Again, Böheim and Taylor (2002), considered renting as a more flexible activity because the terms are amenable to change with less demands placed on the renter. It is the reason many who have the propensity to move around for personal reasons would prefer renting as the best choice compared to homeownership. However, Ghasri, Rashidi, & Auld (2023) found homeownership to have a decreasing effect on residential mobility in Sydney and Chicago.

6.7 Conclusion

The chapter focused on the socioeconomic factors which occur along the LifeCourse of individuals at different stages of their lives and their influence on the residential mobility decision-making process. The study results revealed that life-stage factors increase people's propensity to make a residential move. The birth of a child or the expectation of one requires some adjustments to accommodate the baby and other members of the family. Where total relocation was not possible, some adjustments could include relocating the adults to other vacant rooms in family houses as was the case in Nima. Again, the employment status of individuals also influenced their residential decision-making. Many people who were employed ensured their residential mobility decisions including considerations for their work

while the unemployed largely were rooted in the communities. Again, divorce/separation was a critical determinant in the residential mobility decision-making. Divorce often leads to a change in residence for renting surviving partners, while homeowners mostly remain in the same homes. Also, a Living Apart Together (LAT) couple reduces the stress of one partner and eases moving decision-making. LAT may also be an enabler for residential transience, especially, among their children. However, for women who retain custody of their children, the burden of caring for the family often hinders their ability to relocate, as it imposes financial constraints and other considerations related to the well-being of the children. Finally, homeowners varied between the two study areas, however, they largely remained adjusted stayers and had no intentions of relocating to new neighborhoods due to other factors such as investments, businesses, family, and friends.



CHAPTER SEVEN

NEIGHBOURHOOD CONDITIONS AND RESIDENTIAL MOBILITY BEHAVIORS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the neighbourhood conditions of the study areas by exploring how these conditions have changed over time. Also, the chapter further explores the influence of the changes in the neighbourhood conditions on the dweller's residential mobility behavior. This chapter responds to the fourth research objective, which seeks to explore the influence of neighbourhood characteristics on residential mobility in slums. Neighbourhood characteristics may refer to all physical and socio-cultural factors that exist. These conditions constitute important elements on which the residents rely for their daily activities. Changes to these conditions also contribute to the shape of the neighbourhood and the city as a whole. People's moving decisions are centred on their access to and experiences of these neighbourhood conditions.

The study, therefore, explored the relationship between neighbourhood change conditions which may either contribute to growing residential stress or account for people's decision to stay in the neighborhood. This chapter zooms in on how specific neighbourhood factors shape and condition residential mobility decisions in slum communities. Neighbourhood as used in this study follows Galster (2001, p. 2112), captured in Hedman (2011) as: "bundle[s] of spatially based attributes associated with clusters of residences, sometimes in conjunction with other land uses". The definition encapsulates neighbourhood characteristics such as population turnovers, physical and environmental attributes and inter/intra-ethnic social interactions, labour markets, institutional interactions as well as sentimental characteristics (Hedman, 2011). This chapter explores the changing attributes and character of Nima and

Old Fadama neighborhoods, the people's feeling of belongingness and identity, and how these factors relate to the individual and households' residential mobility decisions. The neighbourhood characteristics of interest to the study include the housing conditions, access to social amenities, built-up environment, and population mix and segregations. The chapter also explored the linkages between people's cultural identity (Belongingness), place attachment, and residential mobility decision-making.

7.2 Housing Characteristics and Moving Decisions in Slums

Several studies have sought to establish the links between housing conditions and residential mobility decisions (Sinai, 2001; Varady, 1983). The relationship in most cases shows a positive linkage as people tend to relocate from neighborhoods whose housing attributes deteriorate over time with little or no maintenance to keep the integrity of the structures. In slum neighborhoods, housing has generally been described as poor and unfit for habitation as compared with other parts of the city. Nima and Old Fadama have suffered these forms of stigmatization over several decades, however, these areas continue to witness massive densification of the population (Jones, 2017; Arguello et al., 2013; Smit et al., 2017). Mostly, the slum dwellers are priced out in the regular housing market pushing them to find alternative access to housing in the city. Nima and Old Fadama are home to many poor urbanites, who are unable to secure accommodation in the competing city housing market (Appeaning Addo, 2013; Ehwi, Asante, & Morrison, 2020). The study observed closely that the housing conditions in these slum neighborhoods are not static but rather going through a host of changes in the people's attempt to bring change that is satisfactory according to their abilities. These efforts usually go unnoticed as writers tend to be more focused on the narratives of government and local assemblies who continually try to discredit and push their

agenda of evicting and clearing the slums, especially, in the case of Old Fadama (Gilbert, 2009; Simon, 2011). This study has noted a major transformation in the durability of housing especially in the densifying areas of Old Fadama.

Nima on the other hand can be seen from two broad divisions where the eastern section of the neighbourhood appears to be dominated by make-shift structures made up of wooden structures and containers (See Figure 5.1). The western section remains a very compact neighbourhood with more durable housing with very little to no space for expansion except for gentrification which is rapidly transforming the looks of the community from the edges (See Figure 5.2). Most of the housing is made with bricks as built by the first settlers. Nowadays, they are typically refurbished using cement to re-plaster the entire building before painting is done. These have improved the durability of the structures and improved people's satisfaction and decisions to stay in the community. This study argues that the housing types found in Nima and Old Fadama do not directly influence the moving decision-making of the dwellers. However, most of the dwellers expressed wishes to have access to better and more durable houses in the future, particularly for dwellers in Old Fadama. This is concretely demonstrated through the people's belief that finding a place to stay was not easy in a city like Accra, and getting a place to reside even in the slums was not that easy. Many slum dwellers highly value their houses, regardless of their condition. They believe that their ability to secure a better place in the future depends on how effectively they can make money, while they survive in their current dwelling. It is a case of survival for most of them and not about living in 'mansions'.

To establish the characteristics of the houses, respondents were asked to describe the houses in terms of the building materials used, roofing types, floor types and room sizes and tell whether these were considerations in shaping their residential mobility decisions. In Nima, most of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the conditions of the house and did not intend to leave the neighbourhood due to this. They indicated strongly that the houses seen were through the hard work and toil of their forefathers and they owe them the duty to ensure there is continuity and care for their toils. They take so much pride in talking about their houses despite challenges such as roof leakages, inadequate space, unfit windows, and doors as well as broken ceilings. Their reason was that these were temporal, and they would work on them with time. To the respondents, these housing conditions do not in their view, constitute any form of dissatisfaction to the level of considering a relocation from the neighborhood. The sentence, ‘This is where I was born and raised why should I leave today because the house has issues?’, was re-echoed severally by the respondents, an indication of their strong sense of attachment to the neighborhood. As narrated by a 52-year-old water vendor in Nima,

“I have a chamber and hall for myself and my wife, and two other single rooms in which my six children sleep in Nima. We don’t have any issues with the house, we are managing it for now. I work on the building every year because I inherited it from my grandfather, so it is an old structure that I must keep maintaining because this is all we have. It’s a big compound house, and I have these 3 rooms in my name” (52-year-old water vendor, Nima, 2022).

In the case of a renter in Nima, he sees the situation a bit differently, however, at the end of the day his immediate decisions are highly limited and so he considers himself a stayer. He is

a 46-year-old businessman who trades in any goods available to him, he narrated his housing conditions as,

“I live in a single room with my wife and 4 children, but 2 are no more with me here so we are only 4 in the room now. The room is not big enough for us, but we are managing it. Because I am an old tenant and have lived here for over 32 years now, my rent is always considered and not increased like that of others. I don’t have any plans of leaving here because if I leave Nima, then I am going into my own house, but I don’t have the money yet” (46-year-old businessman, Nima, 2022).

In Nima, for both renters and homeowners, the housing characteristics did not constitute enough grounds for a relocation decision as they considered housing conditions to be part of the routine maintenance every homeowner was to do. Even among the few who expressed the idea of relocating, such decisions were mere wishes and desires that may not be actualized. The study, therefore, noted that even though housing characteristics may lead to some residential stress, the absence of alternatives and enablers makes it not a critical factor for residential mobility.

In Old Fadama, the study observed that renting was a full-time business for homeowners in the neighborhood. Many of the landlords in Old Fadama have built rooms of various sizes primarily depending on the available space rather than conforming to any standard. According to some landlords interviewed, the room size averages about 8m by 10m or smaller for regular single-sized rooms that are rented out. There are also available rooms that are built with longer spaces that average about 10m by 18m that are rented out to several individuals as gleaned from the figures provided by the different landlords. With this type of room, the Kayaye young girls are the most preferred, as they are willing to share

accommodation with larger numbers (8-16 people) in one room. Shelves are typically mounted on the walls, where they store their bags and other belongings. The floor space for each person is typically limited, equivalent to the size of a single mattress or a carton used for sleeping.

This was described by an ethnic group chief who recounted that,

“Hmm, accommodation is a problem. If you take this place I’m living in, about 7 or 8 people live in it. In some cases, 10 to 15 people. The house next to this one, almost 20 people live in there. When you open it, it’s rather small, so their belongings are kept above ground. Accommodation issues are severe” (Ethnic Group N. Chief, Old Fadama, 2022).

According to the founder of the Ghana Kayayes Association, who lives in Old Fadama himself, he noted that the sleeping arrangements among the Kayaye girls are organised and overseen by appointed leaders. As such, the leader decides at some point whether those under her leadership continue to live with her or not, and those she disagrees with must find new accommodation. He noted the rooms are woefully inadequate in terms of space, especially for girls who sometimes need privacy to take care of themselves, but that luxury is not afforded to them. Most of them also came in through friends and did not have the luxury of moving elsewhere to search for rooms. This group of girls are very mobile in the way they operate, however, the decision to move largely is not based on the housing conditions but rather on issues of disagreement with one another or a change in the social circle one belongs to. The business nature of accommodation in Old Fadama makes its acceptance among the people easier, as they see the neighbourhood as a transition point to the lives they envision in the future. Again, the fear of being evicted at any point in time by the government or landowners

also meant that people defined their stay as a factor of any eventual government action. Housing characteristics were not of major concern, as many sought a life to survive rather than to seek luxury. For example, in the case of a 68-year-old who owns a private toilet facility and operates as a water vendor, he narrated that,

“Where I stay is a block [sandcrete] house which is a chamber and hall in which I live with my wife and 3 children. It is not big enough for us, but that is what we have for now. I tried to expand it, but the waterlogged nature of the adjoining land is so much that it was always going to be a problem in rainy seasons. That is why I have not done the extension. It is my own small house, and we will stay here unless we get sacked (by the government) this is where I and my family are based for now” (68-year-old water Vendor/Private Toilet Owner, Nima, 2022).

Similarly, a 68-year-old shop owner in Old Fadama also narrated his experiences with his accommodation space, noting that,

“I stay in a single room, but I have two buildings both single rooms. I stay in one with my wife and the children also share one. My building is a block structure and it’s all tiled. I am very satisfied with the conditions of my house, and I don’t have any problem here. I have not thought of that, relocating because of the housing conditions, No, not at all” (68-year-old Shop Owner, Old Fadama).

For respondents in Old Fadama, the study can say that people’s residential mobility decisions were not tied to the housing conditions they lived in. Largely, the people psychologically believe they would not have the best housing conditions as found in other parts of the city (Keunen & Ley, 2023). The findings of this study deviate from several studies established in the literature. For example, the size of the dwelling is noted to lead to satisfaction when it

meets the needs of the household (Wang and Wang, 2020; Permentier et al., 2009). When there is satisfaction with the dwelling size, families may become stayers rather than movers. However, despite some level of dissatisfaction with the housing characteristics including dwelling size, building materials used and roofing types in both Nima and Old Fadama neighborhoods, residents prefer to continue to stay rather than relocate. This finding may shape perceptions of why people continue to stay in slums despite bad housing conditions. The findings also corroborate other studies that noted that in low-income neighborhoods, people who live in shared homes do not consider relocation as an issue in their residential mobility behaviors (Addo, 2013; Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2012; Rain et al., 2011).

7.3 Population Mix/Segregation and Moving Decision-Making

How neighborhoods are composed over a period, ethnic diversity and or segregations, and races were seen as major contributors to residential mobility decisions. In neighborhoods where population turnovers have led to the presence or sudden takeover of a new dominant set of people, this was enough to cause neighbourhood dissatisfaction among a section of the minority group who may decide to move to new locations (Feijten & van Ham, 2009; Li, Mao, & Du, 2019). Li et al. (2019) reported cases of population turnovers in neighborhoods leading to a reduction in the feeling of belongingness and attachment to the neighborhoods in the city of Guangzhou. In the case of Nima and Old Fadama, the population mix has assumed a changing nature over the period and how this has affected the people's residential mobility behavior is not well known. This study establishes that ethnic diversity was a strong unifier in slums and the gradual absence of ethnic segregation justifies the former positions. Although these neighborhoods at their initial developments were heavily segregated by ethnicity, one can demarcate where the Dagombas, Kokombas, Kotokoli, Kusasi, Ewes, Gas, Akans and

others settled (Agyei-Mensah & Owusu, 2012; Owusu et al., 2008). These segregations were almost lost as the boundaries became blurred due to intermarriages, the sale of land for its commercial value to the highest bidder and the dissolution of close ties of friendship and family. These changes have brought lots of ethnic diversity among the residents of Nima and Old Fadama who continue to experience high levels of population densification. Even though ethnic segregation still exists among the population, the boundaries are getting blurry as anyone can purchase land anywhere and put up his/her structure. As confirmed by the assemblymen of the 2 communities, they indicated that such segregations have become a thing of the past, even though there were still localities where one could have a particular tribe dominating in that area. These views on ethnic segregation were discounted by the local authorities in the community. One of the assemblymen of Nima explained that,

“Nima at first was highly segregated with very strong domination of localities like the way, the roundabout used to be a lot of Ga Adangbes and Ewes, but now, the Muslims are heavily present in that area. Even if you go to the Maasalachi area where the Malians and Nigerians used to be so present, that place is also now very mixed and all is because a lot of people are moving to look for accommodation in Nima” (Assemblyman, Nima, 2023).

Also, the chief of one of the tribes in Old Fadama narrated that,

“Okay, so earlier the town was dominated by Konkombas. But now you can count no less than 16 ethnic groups in the town. If you look at the changes in the town and the ethnic group that carries itself pompously, it is the Konkombas. Because we the chiefs represent all the ethnic groups, no single group can dominate over the fifteen others. This is what we used to overcome them, our force of numbers. We are also lucky that they listen when we talk to them. Their paramount chief is in Yendi. He heard about

the situation and sent an emissary to them. They had a meeting and decided to live in peace with us. So they also listened to us and became one with us” (Chief of Ethnic Group N, Old Fadama, 2022).

The Assemblyman in charge of Old Fadama also noted that the issue of clustering which used to be a serious thing that made it difficult for other ethnic groups to walk through specific areas without being attacked even during the day has changed so much. Now, there is a growing understanding among all the ethnic groups, and they have learnt to co-exist, recognizing that without unity, they all face the risk of government eviction. He recounted that,

“Here in Old Fadama there used to be certain areas you move to at first and the place was dominated heavily by a particular tribe and that used to even bring about fights and wrongdoings. But that has changed now because a lot of people have come into the area and continue to rent wherever there is an empty room. Many people now look at the business aspect and not only tribesmen. That has changed the clustering of groups especially those that used to foment trouble” (Assemblyman, Old Fadama, 2022).

The extent to which this change in clustering has influenced the residential mobility decisions of residents has seldom been examined. This study further establishes that the change observed in the levels of segregation in both Nima and Old Fadama has also led to very stable residential mobility patterns. These clusters were thought of as a cause of trouble and fights in the communities, however, these have reduced significantly, and people now co-exist with other ethnic groups within the same area. Peace of mind is one of the factors that encourage

people to stay in a particular area and that discourages relocation of people. As noted by a respondent in Nima, she noted that,

“This community at first there were certain areas you could not pass through even during the day because they were noted as hot spots for certain bad boys but now, we even sleep inside the compound of our houses or in front of the shops when the room is too hot. You get a mosquito net, then you can sleep, so there is no more any cause for alarm” (53-year-old Trader, Nima, 2022).

Similarly, the dwellers in Old Fadama also noted that the change in the population clustering and the mix of different ethnic groups in the locality has contributed so much to the peace and continuous stay of people in the community. They noted that previously, there was a high rate of people leaving the community due to the frequent ethnic clashes and the resulting destruction of properties. People used to sell off their properties and move to other places to settle where they could have peace of mind. However, the situation has improved through the hard work of the committee of ethnic chiefs, who are properly installed and respected by everyone in the community. Now, even when there are ethnic disagreements, they are resolved through dialogues led by the chiefs of the ethnic groups involved. As narrated by one of the respondents in Old Fadama,

“We live now as one people, for me I have lived here and seen how first certain ethnic groups carried themselves as if they were the owners of this place. However, we have all come to understand that this place is a no man’s land, and we can only survive together if we are united. That is when the idea of having chiefs installed for every ethnic group here was done properly. If you don’t have the blessing of the paramount chief who is legally accepted by the government, then you are not recognized. So, the

chiefs here have made our stay here more enjoyable and peaceful” (74-year-old Chief Imam, Nima 2022).

These findings from this research follow what is known in the literature, as many have confirmed that peaceful co-existence could lead to the continuous stay of people in a neighborhood. Clark & Coulter's (2015) study observed that there were weak associations between ethnicity mix in neighborhoods and moving decisions. The associations they observed were complex to fully understand, especially in the case of Asian minorities who had a very low propensity to move. On the other hand, they also observed that for most of the white Britons, the propensity to move was higher among them in places where the population of the minority ethnicities increased. Generally, they observed that the propensity to move was rather weak among all minority ethnicities and slightly higher for White Britons. Similar studies by van Ham & Clark (2009) conducted in the Netherlands showed the relations of out-mobilities at both the neighbourhood level and the individual levels among ethnically mixed populations. The study results revealed an increased level of out-mobility in neighborhoods with ethnic minorities and higher in those with an increase in the number of ethnic minorities.

At the individual level, the results showed that the moving population was not those who belonged to the ethnic minority but rather the natives, which confirms the situation at the neighbourhood level. Again, at the individual level, there was increased out-mobility of the Dutch natives due to the increased presence of ethnic minorities as well as non-Western minorities in the neighborhoods where they lived. These results were derived from quantitative models run on household survey data and did not quite capture the experiences and the meanings individuals attach to their decisions to move. This study addresses this gap

by providing insights from a different cultural context, where ethnicity mix and population turnovers are seen as mechanisms for strengthening social cohesion and collectively advocating for their common interests as slum dwellers. From the discussions foregoing, this study is of the view that the mere presence and increase in numbers of different ethnic populations was not enough to cause residential mobility out of those neighborhoods. Rather, the attitudes and behaviors put up by individuals or a trait known about a particular ethnic group may account for movements out of a neighborhood. Peaceful co-existence as demonstrated in the results of this study was a strong factor in keeping neighborhoods together while reducing neighbourhood stress that could lead to relocations.

7.4 Access to Social Amenities and Residential Mobility Behaviors

This study also explored people's access to social amenities in the slums and how this may influence the residential mobility decisions of residents in the area. Social amenities constitute the basic needs of every neighbourhood and influence people's decision to stay or leave (Aliu, Akoteyon, & Soladoye, 2021; Wood, 2014). Amenities such as access to potable water, electricity, sanitation, and waste disposal systems are considered under this study as constituting social amenities that are of topmost priority to the people of Old Fadama and Nima. In much of the existing literature, slums are commonly characterised as places lacking access to these facilities, however, the influence of the presence or absence of such amenities in the neighbourhood has not been extensively explored in discussions about mobility decisions in our part of the world. When people are not satisfied with the availability or accessibility of these basic needs, they tend to experience neighbourhood stress, especially in the case of renters who then may decide to relocate to new neighborhoods that would provide them with maximum satisfaction. While the general perception of slums may indeed be that

they lack access to essential facilities, understanding the implications of this perception for residential mobility within these neighborhoods is crucial.

7.4.1 Access to Water

The study first looked at the water situation in the slums and the availability and accessibility levels by the dwellers. In both Nima and Old Fadama, there was a clear indication of inconsistent flow of water. This section focused more on understanding how the current situation influences the moving decisions of individuals and households within their respective localities. For a deeper understanding of the water situation in Nima and Old Fadama, refer to the literature by Aggrey-Korsah & Oppong (2013) and Tutu & Stoler (2016), respectively. The study asked respondents to describe the water situation in the neighbourhood and how that influenced their decision-making on residential movements. Many respondents acknowledged the longstanding issue of water scarcity in the area but also noted gradual improvements over the years, particularly in Old Fadama. In Nima, despite the connections to the Ghana Water Company Limited (GWCL), many localities continue to face water challenges. They noted that their taps could go off for days (3 days at least), to months (up to 3 months) without flow and this happens very inconsistently which makes any form of planning very difficult.

In Old Fadama, very few are connected to the GWCL lines because the government still does not recognize their existence as formal and therefore, does not owe them any duty to provide all forms of basic amenities. The availability of water and other amenities is usually done by the local community leaders and other developmental partners who are non-governmental, community-based, and faith-based organizations. This was confirmed by the assemblyman who explained that,

“The people of Old Fadama and the entire settlement is regarded as illegal in the face of the government and local assembly and so they intentionally deny them the provision of any basic amenities. This has been a major challenge over the years and private partners mostly come in, to support” (Assemblyman, Old Fadama, 2022.).

The situation has led to people finding alternative ways to get access to some of these necessities. These include illegal water connections into the few pipes of the GWCL, and water tanker services in the community. Water sales have become a big business opportunity as a result, and these are mostly referred to as ‘shower owners’. These shower owners operate a range of businesses including the sale of water from poly-tanks (See Figure 7.1 for a water vending point), private baths as well as private toilets (not all of them) that usually move together. As such, they mostly rely on boreholes (wells), tanker suppliers and the GWCL as their main water sources. This business is operated by a lot of people and vending points are closer to each other than they used to be. Access to water has improved significantly compared with the situation noted some decades ago.

The situation in Nima is no different as the neighbourhood relies on the same sources of water. However, in Nima, the water vending points mostly sell water only, with the public shower business and private toilets not being very common. This is because most of the compound housing systems have in-built bathhouses and toilets as well as public toilets in the community. All the residents wanted was reliable access to water which is non-existent as they rely on the vendors. Another interesting phenomenon observed in Nima was the presence of a group of young boys, mostly of Northern descent, who were engaged in fetching water with metal cans for individuals. The cans are usually fitted at the ends of a long wood and carried by hanging it across the two shoulders, with their hands extended over

the wood to balance the water cans. This, they do at a fee, to anyone interested in their services within the community. They usually fetch the water also at a cost from the vendors and re-sell it at a higher price to the customer (See Figure 7.1 for a water vending point). The water situation in Nima appears to be of concern to most of the residents, as even the vendors sometimes complain about the difficulty in getting water to re-fill their poly-tanks before selling. Speaking to the assemblyman on the water situation in Nima, he narrated,

“Previously like some 10 years ago, water was not a problem in Nima at all, there were reliable flows, and everyone could get water to use at any time. However, I believe the increased number of people moving in to stay at Nima may have affected the water supply. The number of pipelines is the same, there have been no extensions to new areas, but the water demand has more than tripled if you observe the rising population figures of Nima. Even the increased number of water vendors in the community could not save the situation as they too do not get supply as always” (Assemblyman, Nima, 2022).



Figure 7.1: Typical Poly-tank water vending point in Nima

Source: Field Data, 2022

The respondents complain in both communities about the reliability of the water supply and how that affects their daily activities. Water is needed daily for both domestic and commercial activities and a lot of the food vendors rely on these water sources to prepare their food. Some of the residents describing the water situation noted that,

“Yes, water is a problem here. Some people have pumps to help pump water into their homes, but those who do not tend to walk distances to get water” (60-year-old Ethnic Group Warrior, Nima, 2022).

Another also noted that;

Our next issue is water. The water supply to so many people has been cut so they buy water from the tankers. We buy a bucket of water for 1 cedi here. The free water that came last year, here we didn't get some if you use the shower, it's 1 cedi here. That's the second problem (46-year-old Carpenter & Pastor, Old Fadama, 2022).

“They lock the taps every three weeks, so we have access to them once every three weeks. It was opened yesterday, so that means we are going to go another three weeks without water. Yes, at first, when it is opened on Wednesday, it is available for maybe Tuesday, Wednesday, and Sunday, but now once they open it, it flows for a while and goes off again. Yesterday I passed my aunt's end, and it was flowing for a short while and went off” (42years female food vendor, Nima).

Despite the numerous complaints about water shortages and the unreliable nature of the supply in both neighborhoods, they held the position that it was not a permanent situation as they have seen the situation change severally over the years. As such, the change in water supply reliability did not constitute any strong reason for relocation. Some noted that no matter how difficult the situation may seem, you only need to walk over some distance, and

you would get from another vendor that may be far from you, so it was not an issue to warrant relocation from the community. Although they see water issues as a form of residential stress in the neighborhood, it would not prompt a decision to move, as they see it as a problem inherent to Accra, and they believe they are even better off compared to many other areas in the city.

“Just because water is a problem, I want to leave Nima, oh not at all. This problem is everywhere, so wherever you are, you just must manage it, even in East Legon, they do have water problems. I wouldn’t leave Nima because of the water issues” (46-year-old Businessman, Nima, 2022).

7.4.2 Access to Electricity

The residents of the study communities described their access to electricity in the communities variously. Nima noted that connectivity to the National Grid posed no issues; instead, the frequent and unexplained power outages affecting sections of the community were a major concern. Moreover, illegal connections, including tapping electricity from unauthorised sources without following proper procedures, were also common. Others also resort to bypassing connections by extending power from their meter to other neighbouring houses or shops. As noted by the Assemblymen, dealing with these issues is sometimes challenging. It often requires the ECG officials themselves to allocate time to inspect the lines and potentially make arrests. However, this task is quite daunting and may pose significant challenges. Almost every home has power, and more than half of the people have meters installed by the ECG officials themselves but no matter what, people struggle to raise money to continue to pay for the light, so they are tempted to make all sorts of illegal

connections. But others pay the bills religiously and do not indulge in such practice of illegality.

The old Fadama community, on the other hand, has a lot more issues regarding access to electricity. Again, as the government was yet to accept their existence as a legal community, the extension of such amenities to the community was always going to be a challenge. The people, however, have their alternatives to power which include illegal connections. Very few people are noted to have the ECG meters and they have also turned them into businesses. Other people connect to their metres to tap electricity at a fee, paid by all to the meter owner every month (Average of GHC15 – GHC20). This is used by the owner of the meter to settle the debt owed to the ECG. As explained by one respondent,

“Well with electricity issues, it’s just a few people who own meters and rent it to us so when the time is due, or we need to pay they come round for their monies to pay for the power used. But I do not own one. I can’t tell because they allow a lot of people to tap from it. And I tap from 6 lines, thus because the light goes off anytime, so I tap from almost everyone who has a meter here. So, I change when the light goes off, and I pay each of these owners 15 cedis each every month. I just want to be sure I always have light so far as it is not a general light out” (64-year-old Provision shop owner, Old Fadama, 2022).

Apart from the illegal ‘lightpreneurs’ who continue to use the situation to make some money for themselves and family, there are others who also have quickly specialised in solving electrical connection problems for others in the community. Even though they do not have any formal training on handling electrical issues, they have done so through their informal

means and are well known and called upon each time people have challenges with their electricity connections. One such person explained how he does his business,

“I know that one major problem we have here is the light. Power outages are frequent here. So, I am always around to help with the electrical faults that face people so I can restore lights to them. I do so many works and I learnt most of them on my own. If you see people going through challenges, you quickly capitalize on that and become a problem solver for people. That is all we live for and that is what we all must do, to solve problems, or?” (53 years old Driver, Old Fadama, 2022).

Another form of ‘lightpreneurs’ found in the Old Fadama enclaves include people who tap electricity illegally and connect as many people as possible who want the light to it. They move around to collect money from each of the people connected to the meters from time to time. Those who fail to pay are disconnected until all money is collected before the power is restored. As narrated by a respondent who felt such activities affect the power supply to the entire community, and cause concern, particularly to those who legitimately purchase power,

“Because the light goes off here, I remember when I went for my first meter, I bought credit and when there is light out there are some people who take money that they are going to give to electricity people. If you don’t pay, they will remove your wire from the light pole. So if our light goes off for 3 weeks if the people collecting the money are not done then we won’t get light to work so I will plead that the government bring everyone a meter here and I am sure they will get money because one person can supply light to 200 and 300 people without buying light, so for us who buy the light to work if way, we suffer. So our main problem is light” (46-year-old Carpenter, Old Fadama, 2022).

In the case of Nima, sections of the populace do not even consider light as a problem as they believe they have access to the meters. If the power goes off, it is seen as part of the larger city power system which could affect any area. One of the respondents described the power situation in Nima as one that is part of a very strong system and does not consider power outages as an issue at all. He submitted that,

“We also have a good electricity system. Yes, we have quality light systems”. (46-year-old Businessman, Nima, 2022).

Again, in both study areas, the respondents resoundingly noted that their residential mobility decisions do not explicitly consider light as an issue, as they are aware of the general difficulties with access across the country. However, they are also aware of its daily importance in powering their electrical gadgets at home and shops and for commercial purposes. Both communities are heavy with petty trading activities that require the use of light for most of their business activities. Respondents from both study areas noted that these electricity challenges they encountered were known to them even before their arrival, however, they are focused on their businesses, managing the challenges, and finding their means to deal with them such as resorting to illegal connections. This view supports the report by Kwame & Birch (2021), which observed that illegal connections in slums and informal settlements across the city of Accra, especially in the AMA were not new. The report highlighted that over 88 per cent of households in 265 informal settlements had access to electricity. The report, however, failed to indicate how these communities had access to electricity.

7.4.3 Sanitation and Waste Management Situation in Slums

The study further assessed the conditions of sanitation and waste management situation in the two slums. It was revealed that sanitation and waste management was a huge distress for residents, who noted that the situation was in a bad state. Sanitation and waste management situation was critical in both communities, as it could have adverse effects on the health of people and could even threaten life's existence. But the situation in Nima and Old Fadama leaves much to be desired. Many of them, especially in Old Fadama bemoaned the absence of a proper drainage system and community gutters that would help move water out of the community as a bane (See Figure 7.2). Certainly, ensuring proper sanitation in a community where regular access to water is challenging poses significant difficulties. The presence of private showers and toilets managed by individuals in Old Fadama serves as a beacon of hope in dealing with the consequences of poor sanitation and waste disposal. These facilities are maintained by dedicated individuals who strive to keep them clean and usable, providing a vital service to the community. In Nima, the presence of bathhouses within compound houses is a common feature. However, the challenge lies in managing liquid waste, as drainage systems are often inadequate or non-existent. Gutters in the community are choked with solid waste, rendering them ineffective during rainfall. This often results in flooding in various sections of the community, including homes. According to the Assemblyman for Nima, he explained that,

“We (Assembly) are doing our very best in providing waste bins and containers at vantage points where the wastes can be collected, but look at the population of Nima right now, the bins are still insufficient. The main containers get filled up sometimes even in a day, the collectors come around sometimes twice a week. The containers could overflow for days, and the wind could blow the rubbers back into the gutters and choke them. The gutters themselves are very small and cannot contain the volume

of water that runs through the community leading to flooding whenever it rains. These are everyday challenges we face but we will continue to work together for the best” (Assemblyman, Nima, 2022).

A major factor contributing to the deplorable state of social amenities in slum communities is the continuous densification of the population without commensurate sustainable measures to address the pressure on these amenities, either through government, self-support, or private developers. This has left the situation in a very bizarre state, as the people appear to be helpless.



Figure 7.2: Typical Street in Old Fadama without Drainage

Source: Field Data, 2022

about the situation. The situation is even worse in Old Fadama, where the community hardly benefits from any government interventions except during election years when politicians require their votes. During election years, their leaders can leverage their numbers to lobby for development for their people, however, many of the promises made by politicians do not materialise. For example, the secretary to the Tribal Chiefs committee indicated that,

“We have received several promises from politicians who come here to campaign all the time in election years because they know we have the numbers. We were even promised waste bins and containers during the last 2020 election campaigns by the top people in government and some through the assembly (AMA) but till now when you call on them, they just keep telling stories. This community seriously needs the waste containers, it will help a lot in dealing with the amount of waste around” (Secretary, Ethnic Group E. Chiefs Association, Old Fadama, 2022).

He also touched on the issue of poor drainage in the community while recounting how many homes get flooded heavily after rainfall. He indicated that the community was situated on low ground, making it prone to flooding. Even when people dig foundations, water seeps up to the surface. Therefore, construction is typically done during the dry seasons. Otherwise, individuals must constantly use water-pumping machines to continue their work. According to him,

“The absence of drainage facilities is also worrying us, now at least we have demolished houses and created roads throughout the community. if gutters are done for us, then the frequent flooding of homes will also reduce” (Secretary, Ethnic Group E. Chiefs Association, Old Fadama, 2022).

The residents shared their views on the state of sanitation and waste disposal in the communities, and how they felt about it. In the case of a 46-year-old lotto agent and driver, he lamented the recurring pattern of broken promises by the government. He expressed willingness to pay, if necessary, to secure containers, highlighting the persistent issue of unfulfilled commitments. He also acknowledged that their community was established on a dumpsite, indicating awareness of the conditions before relocation. For him, moving to a new location due to a known challenge is not a viable solution.

“Well, the sanitation here is a problem. They offered to give us a container to keep rubbish in, but they never brought one. We would have even loved it if they had brought it and asked us to pay. To move out of the community because of this problem? Not at all. I came to this place worse than it is now. Our house was situated on a rubbish site.” (46-year-old Lotto Agent and Driver, Old Fadama, 2022).

Similarly, the secretary to an ethnic group E chief’s association also reacted to people wanting to leave Old Fadama because of these challenges. He emphasized the dilemma individuals face: staying to earn a living or relocating with no clear destination in mind.

“Eheee, so it is also worrying us. You will be seeing the filth but if you say that you want to live in a decent place, your wife and children will go hungry. So, you will consider which one will be better whether to sacrifice yourself for your wife and children to get something to eat or what. So, the person is aware that the place is not hygienic but will sacrifice himself for the sake of his family. Do you understand?” (Secretary, Ethnic Group E. Chiefs Association, Old Fadama, 2022).

In Nima, a 53-year-old trader in linens also expressed her dissatisfaction at the level of neglect by the government and assembly on dealing with teething challenges that face the Nima community. Expressing herself, she noted that the dirt in Nima should be blamed on the authorities in charge who renege on their duties and make the community continue to suffer the risk of the spread of diseases. She recounted that,

“And that rubbish dump beside the streets will be there for days. Nima, we don’t like that, they should come and take the rubbish away, because this place is also part of the city in Accra. The name of Nima is widely known sometimes for the wrong reasons, yet there are good things also happening and they don’t see them because they allow only the bad things to go out there. So, the rubbish that is always getting

full here, it's not fair, they should come and take it away" (53-year-Old Trader, Nima, 2022).

Further enquiring on how these factors can influence their decisions on moving out to new areas, most of them responded to the contrary. They indicated that Nima has seen much improvement over the years and these challenges were not peculiar to Nima only, as other parts of the city of Accra continue to face even worse cases. The stress they suffer from poor sanitation and improper waste disposal has not gotten to the level where it could trigger a residential move. As indicated by a 54-year-old female food vendor in Nima, responding to whether she has reconsidered her decision to stay in Nima due to the sanitation and waste disposal challenge, she noted that,

"Oh! But what can I do? I would just be here and if I leave and go far away and something happens to me no one knows me there I wouldn't get the required help I need but here I know them and I can fall on them at any point in time" (54-year-old female food vendor, Nima, 2022).

The study establishes that the socio-environmental challenges (Fiasorgbor, 2013; Melara Arguello et al., 2013; Raymond A. Tutu & Stoler, 2016) faced by dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama do not cause enough residential stress to trigger a mobility response. Most of them have shown much resilience despite the challenges and hold and cherish what they share socially with one another as well as their job opportunities over what they call temporal challenges that may one day be overcome. It is also clear that these residents have lived with these challenges over decades and have witnessed gradual changes in the aggregates, and so do not consider current happenings to be any different. The thesis argues that socio-environmental factors are widely known to be a major cause of residential stress in neighborhoods, as they contribute to the decay and put residents at risk of disease outbreaks.

In Western countries, these were enough to move indigenous and renters out of the neighborhood. Perhaps what we should focus on is identifying the specific demographics facing various challenges and understanding their responses to addressing these issues. Whereas the story would have been different in middle-income to high-income neighborhoods even in Accra, the low-income and slum communities continue to see these problems every day and have psyched themselves, as they have built cognitive awareness on the situation to live with it as long as they can make their daily bread (Adriaanse, 2007). This scenario exemplifies how the poor often have to make sacrifices and compromises when selecting residential locations, which ultimately leads to increased disparities and inequities in the distribution of the state's resources (Keunen & Ley, 2023).

As the neighbourhood theory would have it, deplorable, degenerating, and downgrading environments would lead to residential stress and could trigger residential mobilities, and contextualizing such claims would bring out nuanced responses. This study, therefore, establishes that poor neighbourhood conditions were not enough to trigger residential mobility even when it causes some level of residential stress in the study areas. This is because other factors might come into play including the financial abilities of individuals and households to facilitate a move, or the investments in business and structures for homeowners. Again, a closer look at the 'linked lives' principle of the LifeCourse is demonstrated in this result, showcasing its stronger effects on residential decision-making. (Hutchison, 2010; Wingens et al., 2011). People do not live in isolation within communities, rather, they have become embodiments of social networks, business partners, and dependants of family and friends who together constitute their world. The concern expressed by the 53-year-old food vendor about losing her support network upon relocating from Nima prompts a

deeper consideration of the triggering factors and interpersonal connections influencing residential mobility decisions.

7.5 Situating the Concepts of Home, Place Attachment, and Identity in Residential Mobility Decisions

The study also identified a recurrent usage of the words "place" and "house" (or "home") in the NVIVO analyses (see Appendix 1). This observation underscores the significance of examining how these concepts have influenced people's residential mobility behaviors within the two slum communities. The level of attachment individuals feel towards a specific place significantly influences how they perceive and treat that place as their home. *This study defines place in the context as a mobile entity and a process rather than a fixed position.* As such, people's experiences of what constitutes a place make it a subjective phenomenon. The way and manner individuals experience Nima and Old Fadama would influence their perception of the neighbourhood as a home or not. The home or house goes beyond the physical structure in place to encapsulate the process of homemaking or creation (Winstanley, Thorns, & Perkins, 2010). The way individuals identify with places based on their experiences over time provides valuable insights into whether they perceive the place as a temporary abode or as their home. The three concepts, home, place, and identity, therefore are interrelated and relevant to our study in unlocking the moving decisions of the slum dwellers. Where the slum dwellers identify a place as their home, their influence on the place may differ. This was observed in both places of study, as in Nima, the people showed a strong identity with the community and a strong sense of belongingness and considered it as their home. This home is defined differently by the individuals based on their own experiences. In Old Fadama, there were mixed feelings on how everyone identifies with the

place, with some considering it their home and others viewing it as a place of temporary residence.

Firstly, the historical antecedents of both communities also play a very important role in how the individuals conceived these places. In Nima, Chief of Ethnic Group D. explained that historically, when the community was not given the needed recognition and therefore were denied basic amenities to support lives, many of them considered living there as residential stress and had plans of moving out. Just like Old Fadama in the recent past, which has faced many years of threats of eviction, Nima previously faced similar concerns, which denied many of them the peace and safety to invest in their communities. As such, they do not have any attachment to the place and do not consider it as home. Today, Nima, the capital of the Ayawaso East Assembly, has gone through several phases of growth and development, and the dwellers in the community now perceive Nima as their home. It is a place that offers them the opportunities and peace they need to live their daily lives. Similarly, Old Fadama Chief of Ethnic Group E. noted that when there were constant threats of evicting and demolishing the entire slum for the government's long-marked project, none of them thought of making a home in Old Fadama. However, in recent times, the situation seems to have died down and most of them believe that demolishing or evicting the community has become a thing of the past. Many of them regained hope and considered the place as home. They proudly identify with the environment and invest in properties there.

Secondly, the study argues that the number of years of living in the community was critical to people's perception of belonging to the neighborhood. Number of years increases the likelihood of people identifying with a particular place and considering it as a home. Many of

the people living in Nima and Old Fadama who have spent several years averaging 15 years and over, see the places as their home. Attachment to a particular place often correlates with longer periods of residency, as noted by Permentier et al. (2009), a sentiment echoed by many slum dwellers, particularly in Nima. As indicated by a 96-year-old Imam,

“I am so used to the Nima community that even though I do not have the strength to move around like I used to do, I still just want to remain in Nima. I don’t have any plans to move to where my children want me to because this is my home” (96years Chief Imam, Nima, 2022).

His view is like many others who have stayed for long periods in both communities. They emphasise how they have established homes through the networks of friends they have cultivated, their interactions with neighbours, and the general social atmosphere that fosters a sense of belonging. In Old Fadama, the study also noticed that most of the early settlers in the community, whether homeowners or renters, identify strongly with the community and are passionate about preserving the existence of the community. This explains why they are usually seen at the forefront of matters dealing with strategies to avoid government eviction or demolishing threats on the community. Unlike in Nima, these old dwellers in Old Fadama know that their power to restrain the government from acting on the community may be limited, and they acknowledge that ‘anything can happen’. Despite their strong identity with the community, most of them have also built elsewhere on the fringes of the city as their alternative homes. Exploring whether they perceive their new buildings as potentially better homes than Old Fadama, where they currently reside, revealed a profound sentiment among respondents. Many expressed gratitude towards Old Fadama, attributing their status to the opportunities the community has provided. They cited the financial resources accumulated from their endeavours in Old Fadama, the supportive network of friends during both

challenging and joyful times, and the sense of security fostered by the active life in the neighborhood. These sentiments reflect a deep understanding of home that extends beyond a mere physical structure to encompass the people's own experiences with the sociocultural environment. As such, their home serves as a hub for meeting their daily needs and finding happiness, and it is a process that is still being created. When their feelings change about the environment, the place also ceases to be a home, and the process of home creation, for them, starts all over again.

It is important for us to also explore what factors specifically enable home creation in slums beyond the historical number of years lived in a neighborhood. The study revealed that in homemaking, several factors were considered by individuals. The slum dwellers' attachment to their neighborhoods was because of the following factors: feeling safe, social network and interactions, proximity to the city centre, availability of transport, access to functional markets, and informal economic opportunities. In the case of a 56-year-old trader in Nima, she noted that Nima is her home because of the freedom she enjoys in the neighborhood,

“This place is my home; I don't have any issue with anyone, and I leave freely. I go to do my daily hustles and return to my family here without fear. This place we all love each other irrespective of the tribe and support one another, I cannot leave here for any other place” (56-years-old Male Trader, Nima, 2022).

Another individual, in expressing his view on why Nima represents home, emphasized the relationship shared with several others, the support for one another, and the unity among the residents. He further noted that the social network in Nima is beyond family bonds, as they see each other as one, and are ready to support each other like family members and demonstrate solidarity in times of need. This bond is strengthened through the everyday

engagements among them, including playing games, watching football matches, praying together as Muslims, participating in Christian church activities, and joint community clean-up efforts, among other shared activities.

“Look, here we are all one family in Nima, everyone cares about the other, that is why if you are doing something wrong, anyone who sees you can correct you. We all speak one language, even the Christians speak Hausa, like my friend here, if I don’t tell you, how would you know? Nima is where we were born, and we have lived all our lives here and what we do is what makes us one and happy” (45-year-old man, Trader in Fabrics, Nima, 2022).

In Old Fadama, the feeling of home differs among the people, even though quite a significant number of them now believe that due to the size of their population, a demolishing or eviction of the entire community was impossible by the government. A relocation plan for this population would be too much a drain on the government’s coffers and as such, they would not be willing to undertake such a big project. For example, views that show feelings of insecurity in staying at Old Fadama as a home were expressed by some people,

“Those of us residing at this part of Old Fadama, we are feeling like we are now free from government worries but you may never know what any new government can do. I cannot say this is my home because it can be taken away at any time” (46-year-old Pastor and carpenter, Old Fadama) (Insecurity).

“For me, I am here to make money, Fadama is a big business place if you know what I mean. I have stayed here for the last 25 years, and I can tell you the money is here. I bought land and built my apartment near Kasoa but for now, I don’t go there often except for my children, so if anything happens here today, I am safe in my home at

Kasoa (Leader of Ethnic Group E., Old Fadama, 2022). (Distance and not closeness).

In both quotations, even though there is a clear expression that Old Fadama seems to be a home to them, they also harbour some fears should the unlikely event happen. As such, the feeling of Old Fadama as a home is shrouded in insecurity stemming from the government and assembly actions. However, the continued investments witnessed in the neighbourhood may as well be eroding these fears away. A leader of ethnic Group E in Old Fadama has a significant investment in the neighborhood, owning approximately 56 rented rooms. However, raises questions about the concept of home, suggesting that home may not always be in proximity or where a person currently resides. He considers his other house in Kasoa as home because he believes that he will someday find peace and comfort there. As such, home may be a distance away because of the feeling of insecurity at his current place, though he also acknowledges that he is strongly connected to the community through his investments.

As noted by Lewicka (2011), people are attached to particular places because of the social capital established over the years of stay, such as their capital investments, social networks, a sense of continuity, and home ownership (Mouratidis & Andersen, 2023). People's attachments to a place influence their decision to stay in the neighbourhood and they may not consider relocating soon. As people create and make a home at Nima, they abandon any other forms of stress they may face in the neighborhood, as the feeling of home is a deeply ingrained experience. Whatever residential stresses they encounter may not overcome the feeling of being home, and this explains why despite the challenges that exist in the community (highlighted in the previous Chapter), the majority of the people remain stable in their mobility behavior and do not have any moving intentions. The story was not so different

in the case of Old Fadama, with those who had already gone through the worst cases of eviction and demolishing threats by the Assembly. They simply have built a home by bonding with each other and rising to face all external forces against their residence. For most of them, it is a good feeling to protect their home where their businesses and life investments exist. Despite concerns of feeling insecure due to the unpredictable nature of changing governments, the widespread individual investments seen, show a high level of confidence that Old Fadama remains their home. One critical factor that has changed in Old Fadama is the gradual erosion of tribally segregated neighborhoods to mixed ethnicity everywhere. The increased levels of tolerance for other tribes and religions, coupled with the respect for the ethnic chief's system in place, have alleviated people's past concerns regarding fears and insecurity. Diversity in some cases has been linked with increased conflicts and chaos in a neighbourhood (Gans, 1961), but where tolerance takes the place of conflicts in densified neighborhoods with ethnic diversity, the bonds of feeling at home become stronger. These factors increased the level of residential stability in the neighborhood. This study concludes that the study communities have demonstrated strong neighbourhood connections and socio-cultural tolerance which have had a positive influence on residential mobility. With very limited cases of population turnovers in these slums, residential movements have slowed considerably with dwellers living in the slums for several years.

7.6 Conclusion

This chapter explored the neighbourhood conditions of the study areas, and these influence the residential mobility decision-making process of the dwellers. Neighbourhood conditions as used in the chapter encapsulate the socio-spatial factors that shape its development and growth. These include the physical environmental conditions, housing characteristics,

population mix and segregation, access to social amenities, and cultural factors embedded in the people's identity and place attachment. The results of the study revealed that housing characteristics were not a major trigger factor for residential mobility in the slums. Most of the slum dwellers noted that they were aware of the housing conditions before deciding to move in, however, they have made strong efforts at changing the face of their housing over the years, an indication that they will continue to stay in the neighborhood. In Nima, where most of the residents have grown up to inherit housing properties from their grandparents, they continue to do maintenance works on the old structures to keep them fit for habitation, while in Old Fadama, there is a general conversion of wooden and non-durable structures into block and mortar structures that has transformed the face of the slum. Similarly, results for access to social amenities, such as water, electricity, sanitation and waste management showed that both communities continue to face challenges with access to these amenities. Although they acknowledge that people found illegal ways to connect to these systems, the challenge did not significantly contribute to their residential stress. As such, relocation to other parts of the city was not an immediate option. Even those who wished to move recognized that such challenges persist almost everywhere in the city. Further, population mix and segregation, which is widely reported as a major trigger factor for moving decisions contributed very little to actual mobility and desires. Ethnic segregation in both communities was seen to reduce drastically, with previous local areas noted to be dominated by ethnicities, seeing a gradual mix with other tribes. Population mixes and segregation were singled out as increasing the levels of tolerance and peaceful co-existence of all the tribes, and by so doing, they strengthened their resolve to remain united to fight external aggressors.

The chapter ended with an analysis of cultural diversity among the people which has led to increased levels of place attachments. The long years of stay in the communities have increased people's identity with the place as home while becoming attached. Such feelings have resulted in lower propensities for moving out of the neighbourhood and have rather increased their levels of rootedness in the community. Generally, the results in this chapter have shown that whereas neighbourhood conditions may be regarded as drivers of residential mobility, they showed slower propensities to trigger residential moves in Nima and Old Fadama.



CHAPTER EIGHT

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This chapter is dedicated to the major findings and recommendations from the research, as the study sought to explore the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers in metropolitan Accra. The chapter further provided key contributions from this research, as well as indications on areas for further research.

Residential mobility, which involves short-distance travels within a metropolitan/district area, contributes to the shaping of the city in its socio-spatial form. In addition to that, it contributes to the physical outlook of the city's growth and shapes the social and cultural aspects of the city (Keunen & Ley, 2023). As people move their homes around the city, it leads to the distribution of population across the city with some neighborhoods becoming more densified than others. The reasons that influence people's decisions to stay or leave a particular neighbourhood are enormous and contribute to our understanding of trans-local mobilities in the city (Coulter et al., 2016; Coulter & Scott, 2015). Literature is replete on the subject of residential mobility, especially in the Global North where longitudinal survey data are available and reliable (Clark & Coulter, 2015; de Vuijst & van Ham, 2016; Keunen & Ley, 2023; Rosenblatt & Deluca, 2012; Wang et al., 2019). In the Global South, residential mobility remains relatively new partly due to the absence of reliable longitudinal survey data (Addo, 2016; A. Winstanley, Thorns, & Perkins, 2002). The limited number of researches on the subject matter were conducted by adopting retrospective quantitative survey data to understand the moving behavior, especially among urbanites, including those in informal

settlements and slums (Manja et al., 2017; Keunen & Ley, 2023; Sinai, 2001). In African cities, slums remain one of the most contested neighborhoods with varied conceptualizations of their existence from policymakers and researchers (Gilbert, 2009; Simon, 2011; York, 2015). Again, a significant number of urbanites resort to slums as their residential homes due to the absence of affordable housing and the high costs of rents in the regular housing market (Nassar & Elsayed, 2018; Yankson & Bertrand, 2012; Yankson et al., 2017). As residential mobility contributes to the (re)shaping of the city, how this event unfolds in the context of African cities, especially among slum dwellers is not well understood. This study argues that a deeper understanding of the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers reveals the development and policy gaps in planning our cities. Based on the background, the objective of this research was to explore the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers in Metropolitan Accra using retrospective qualitative interview data. The study set out to answer the following research objectives of the study,

1. To explore the typology of slums and the nexus with residential mobility in Metropolitan Accra.
2. To analyse the biographical factors potentiating the residential mobility of slum dwellers.
3. To assess the socio-economic effect of residential mobility on slum dwellers.
4. To explore the influence of neighbourhood characteristics on residential mobility in slums

To adequately respond to these research objectives, the study strategically adopted a retrospective qualitative approach aimed at understanding the factors that influence the moving behaviors of slum dwellers. This approach resonated well with the research ontological and epistemological positions which were the standpoints of interpretivism and

social constructionism. The relevance of these approaches lies in the fact that residential mobility among slums presents very contextual matters that are best understood through individual, household, and institutional lived experiences. With diverse views on the presence and existence of slums in the fast-developing city of Accra, there was the need to collate people's own experiences, sentiments and emotions regarding slum's existence and moving behavior. This study largely argued that the usage of the term slum should be maintained while the underlying meanings ascribed to the concept of what constitutes slums are revised to reflect the changing character of the agency of the people and the space. Slums are not static but rather dynamic and have evolved from a despair situation to offering hope, as demonstrated by Old Fadama and Nima. Again, slums should be seen and accepted as a dominant neighbourhood production just as any other formal, informal, High, middle, and low-income and migrant and Indigenous neighborhoods that exist. As such, it gives us the leverage to fully study them in their capacity of existence, their systems, their contributions to the city's growth as well as the challenges that confront them for redress. This way, we can support the already transforming landscapes of slums into places of more decent habitation.

As noted by Marris (1979: p.419), 'A slum is only a slum in the eyes of someone for whom it is an anomaly, a disruption of the urban form and relationships which to that observer seem appropriate to his or her values and perceptions' (cited in Gilbert, 2007). Therefore, this study argues that if the contribution of slums to the growth of the city's economy is significant (Farouk & Owusu, 2012; Gunter & Massey, 2017; Oteng-Ababio, 2012; 2014; Vijay, 2013), then slums should be defined in the context of the African city where they house a significant number of urbanites. The starting point for this proposed antithesis to what exists was an exploration of the residential mobility behavior of the slum dwellers and how such

movements have shaped and continue to shape the growth of the city. The LifeCourse and Neighbourhood change theories were adopted to understand the factors influencing the residential mobility decisions of slum dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama. The LifeCourse theory allowed for the individual and household perspectives on their experiences of moving decisions in the city of Accra. The Individual's biographical and life-stage factors were explored to reveal their influence on residential mobility decisions. The Neighbourhood change theory, on the other hand, provided insights into the people's recognition of the changing state of their external environmental conditions and how it influenced their decision-making.

The study also assessed the role of some formal and informal institutions in the slums and how that influences people's moving decisions. However, one of the major limitations of the study was its inability to listen to the views of other state institution's roles in the growth of slums, such as the Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS), National Disaster Management Organization (NADMO), the Ghana Police Service (GPS), and Ghana Health Directorate (GHD) due to the already broad scale and depth of the study. The roles of these institutions have direct impacts on slum dwellers' LifeCourse and neighbourhood conditions which have the potential to improve the quality of the stay of the residents or negatively influence their decisions to relocate. Moving decisions are complex and go beyond the individual in certain cases; as such, the unit of analysis was mainly the individual slum dweller, however with perspectives on their household's influence.

8.2 Summary of Key Findings

This section provides a summary of the major findings from the analysis of the field data presented in the analytical chapters of this thesis. These would be done based on each objective of the study.

8.2.1 Exploring the Typology of Slums and their Nexus with Residential Mobility

This section responds to the first objective of the study which sought to explore the typology of slums and its nexus with residential mobility in metropolitan Accra. This study argued that current approaches to classifying slums were inadequate and overly simplistic. These approaches apply a set of indicators that define what constitutes slums (UN-Habitat indicators), which presents slums as static entities. This study proposes slums as dynamic entities that have histories of their past which shape their continued growth and development. The study proposes the concept of ‘slum continuity’, which defines slums to include a holistic assessment of their growth by examining all transitions they have gone through to define their current state as places of hope or despair. Based on this concept, the study proposes 4 new typologies of slums, including formal – Slums, informal – slums, Indigenous – slums and Government/Private estate – slum neighborhoods. It further assessed the implications of these typologies on the residential mobility of its inhabitants. The study revealed that each typology is unique and influences residential mobility differently. Based on their physical, socio-cultural, political, and environmental factors, the residential mobility behavior of its inhabitants varies differently.

The study concludes that slum typologies have a direct influence on people's residential mobility behavior in the city of Accra. However, it is essential to understand each slum typology by its characteristic features, growth, and development patterns over the years to determine their contribution to the city. In the era where the government is a signatory to many international agendas on slums, especially the new urban agenda which calls for inclusivity, resilience, and safe and sustainable cities through slum upgrading and redevelopment, specific slum challenges and needs must be identified for targeted solutions. Slum typologies with progressing conditions and government support would experience more stable and rooted residential mobility. However, slum typologies with deteriorating conditions no government support, and no land titles may likely lead to higher residential mobilities among its inhabitants.

8.2.2 Typology of Movers and Biographical Factors Potentiating Residential Mobility

The study's objective 2 explored the biographical factors that influence the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers. The chapter delved into the arguments on the relationship between residential mobility and migration. The study findings revealed that the motivating factors for migrating to the city also determine the residential mobility behavior of the migrants in the city. A strict differentiation between the two events would lead to a partial understanding of the origin-destination motivational factors that influence residential mobility. As such, to fully understand the residential mobility behavior of urban dwellers, there was the need to first understand their motivations for migrating to the city before their subsequent moving decisions in the city, which are strongly linked with their initial motivations for coming to the city.

Further, the study also presented a typology of movers in the study areas. Following Sell & De Jong (1983) and Coulter et al., (2013) typology, the study revealed that all 8 typologies including the rooted, wishful thinkers, contented, discontented, adaptive, oscillators and highly mobile movers were found in both study areas. The study found 4 new typologies of movers, which included circular, irregular, safety, and unplanned/forced movers. The typology of movers was important to the study, as the characteristics of each mover type explained the residential mobility behavior of individuals and identifiable groups.

The study also revealed that several biographical factors influence the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers. These factors include age, gender, marital status, household size and educational level. Generally, the study revealed that before settling in the slum, many of the slum dwellers had made many more (2 – 4) residential moves when they were younger and new in the city. However, after moving into the slums, they were noted to spend longer years in the slums with a reduced number of residential moves. This supports existing evidence that the young are highly mobile in the city (Ardayfio-Schandorf, 2012). As such, the study found that among slum dwellers, the number of residential movements reduces with age. This finding was more common in Old Fadama, where most of the people had moved in to settle, unlike in Nima, where most of them were born in the neighborhood. Also, the study found that residential movements were gendered, with men having the propensity to make many more moves compared to females, especially, when they were single. The study established that changing gender roles influence residential mobility decision-making, such as head of household, single parenting, breadwinners, and homeownership. The performer of these roles would likely face lots of burdens that hinder residential mobility decision-making. However, generally, men were seen to be residentially highly mobile compared to females.

The study further revealed that married couples made a lesser number of residential moves compared with unmarried. This also depends highly on the household size. The study establishes that increasing household size would lead to a decreased desire to relocate. Most slum households with 3 or more members could not make any residential move even when they were dissatisfied with conditions, due to the financial implications involved. Also, where household sizes change, members adjust through alternative arrangements, such as home switching in Nima, and expansion/extension of rooms in both study areas. Generally, however, household sizes did not lead to a relocation decision, but rather, a continued stay in the same neighborhood. Again, these biographical factors were more evident in Old Fadama as compared to Nima, due to their unique histories of existence. Further, the study established that educational levels did not directly influence the residential mobility decisions of the slum dwellers, as people with different levels of education lived in the slums. People live in slums for specific reasons, mainly to make money or to be closer to the CBD and workplaces, factors that mostly do not take into consideration their educational levels. However, household members made residential movements that were related to education. A typical pattern was residential transience, mostly among adult children, schooling in higher educational institutions.

The study concludes that biographical factors are important triggers for residential mobility among slum dwellers. However, these factors may influence the moving decisions of individuals and households variedly. However, the histories of the existence of the neighborhoods may also influence the severity of the influence of biographical factors. Moving residences is more frequent among individuals and gets slower with marriage and further slows down when children come in. Information on these personal biographical

factors is crucial for urban planning and policy development. Drawing on the LifeCourse theory, biographical factors relate to the principle of transitions as discrete occurrences (Hutchison, 2010). The study results confirm that these transitions occur through time as one ages and experiences life. Being a man or woman also came with its transitions. For example, some men who were once homeless later transitioned into their self-built homes, got married, and took responsibility for their increasing number of household members' care. These transitions among slum dwellers did not occur discretely. Instead, they unfolded concurrently as events in the life course of the slum dweller, as described by the theory. It appears there was no point in describing the end of a particular transition and the beginning of another in the life of slum dwellers, as the growth experiences occurred concurrently in most cases. The study results, therefore, inform us to begin to think of transitions not only as discrete but also as a continuous experience that may occur along the life course.

8.2.3 Socio-Economic (Life-Stage) Factors Influencing Residential Mobility Decisions

This study also assessed the influence of socio-economic factors which the study links to the Life-stage factors, as discussed under the LifeCourse theory on the moving decisions of slum dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama. The study focused on three major factors, including childbirth, change in employment, and change in marital status. These factors have a direct influence on the general well-being of the individuals or households and influence the residential mobility decisions made. The study extends our understanding of these factors in the literature, as it established that these factors trigger residential mobility decisions (Clark & Huang, 2003; Damhuis & van Gent, 2022; de Groot et al., 2011).

However, the dynamics in the slums may not necessarily be the same as those already established in the literature. Childbirth was noted to be a major trigger for residential mobility in the slums, as many alluded to changing their place of residence while awaiting a new child, or expressing concerns about additional space needed to accommodate the anticipated new member in the household (de Groot et al., 2011; Schoenduwe, Mueller, Peters, & Lanzendorf, 2015). The moving decisions were either a change within the same neighbourhood in the slum or an adjustment to their current place to create more space. However, in Nima where such changes or adjustments in housing were impossible, adults were allocated new places, either to join their mates in another room in the same neighbourhood or given an entirely new room in another family's house where space was available. This arrangement allows their parents to focus on providing care for the younger children.

Also, change in employment is found to trigger residential mobility for most slum dwellers in their previous location rather than their current location. However, their decision to stay in their current location was influenced by the proximity to their employment, which predominantly falls within the informal sector in the central business district. This was to ensure that they remained as close as possible to their place of work, thereby avoiding lateness and traffic congestion, and more importantly, reducing transportation costs. Even when they were not seeking new employment opportunities, their current jobs were situated within the working space of the informal sector, hence, influencing their decisions to stay in the slum. However, for the few who are government sector workers, their current location was chosen to ensure easy and timely access to work and other parts of the city.

The study established that living apart together couples were likely to make many more residential movements compared to married couples living together. LAT is gradually becoming a common option for the married who for several reasons have to live apart to meet other demands, such as new jobs and the rising female job employment (Coulter et al., 2016). However, the situation may differ based on the homeownership situation of the partners. Partners who lived as LAT but are renters have a higher propensity to change residence compared with a homeowner. Also, the study revealed that the death of a partner did not directly lead to a change in residence, however, renting surviving partners were likely to make a residential move compared to a homeowner who would most likely stay in their apartment. Home Ownership was critical to residential mobility decision-making in the slums. Homeowners were unlikely to make residential relocation, especially those in Old Fadama where the homes represent their investments and source of income. In both slum communities, homeowners were mostly stable and did not consider relocating to a new area as an immediate preoccupation. Life-stage events are major residential mobility trigger factors among slum dwellers. Although it is acknowledged that no single factor was important in triggering residential mobility decisions, life-stage events exert a more direct influence on residential mobility (Morris et al., 2018).

The study concludes that socio-economic or Life-stage factors contribute to the residential mobility decision-making of households. Specifically, among slum dwellers, these factors are major determinants for their continued stay in a particular neighborhood. This study's finding, however, reveals that among slum dwellers in Nima and Old Fadama, moving decisions are influenced by people's socio-economic conditions. As there are improvements in the socio-economic conditions of individuals, it leads to investments, which include

adjustments made to housing structures to increase their residential satisfaction levels. However, the burden of socio-economic conditions on individual residential choices affects renters more than homeowners. The complex interplay of socio-economic factors is also better understood through the principles of linked lives among slum dwellers. This is because such residential mobility is also enjoyed by many through the complex life linkages that exist among the people. These extend our understanding of the relationality of linked lives and structural connections that have been argued by Jones (2014) and Coulter, van Ham and Findlay (2016). The arguments hold that we can only ‘understand objects in relation to other objects’ (Jones, 2009, 491). The study results have demonstrated how religion, kinship and friendship, culture and business investments have proven to link individuals and families together and influence their decisions to become long stayers and rooted in their communities despite other stressors they experience. These extensions were argued to become new perspectives to connect and link LifeCourse theory in residential mobility research.

8.2.4 Neighbourhood Conditions and Residential Mobility

Many researchers have established strong links between the neighbourhood characteristics and conditions and the residential mobility decision-makers of the residents (Clark & Coulter, 2015; Feijten & van Ham, 2009; Prouse, Grant, Ramos, & Radice, 2015; Wang et al., 2019). Extensive works conducted in the context of Western countries have revealed that as people’s original taste for a particular neighbourhood evolves or the original motivating factors begin to deteriorate, this is likely to lead to residential stress and the desire to move. If the level of deterioration persists, individuals may eventually decide to move to a new location. This study assessed the slum neighbourhood conditions which have largely been argued as the worst of all forms of neighborhoods. The findings suggest that despite the deplorable nature of the neighbourhood conditions including housing characteristics, population mix and

change/turnover, and access to social amenities, these neighborhoods rather witnessed intense densification with very few moving out. The study established that in Nima and Old Fadama, the respondent's residential mobility behaviors were more stable, with their stay prolonged over many years. Despite acknowledging the deplorable and degrading conditions, they noted that the current conditions were better off than it was years ago. As such, the neighbourhood conditions were not enough to trigger moving decisions in the slums. While population turnover has been reported to decrease the levels of neighbourhood attachment and decrease the attractiveness of the neighbourhood (Feijten & van Ham, 2009; Li et al., 2019), this study reports new observations. The study showed that there were increased levels of tolerance for ethnic diversity as well as decreased levels of residential segregation. This peaceful co-existence was regarded as a pillar for the survival of the slum communities and used to bargain for developmental assistance from the government and other private development partners. As such, the slums had many more rooted dwellers compared with the few wishful and uncontented residents who may wish to relocate. The study further established that the people's rootedness was also supported by the strong attachments to their neighborhoods. Prolonged stays within a neighbourhood are noted to lead to strong attachments and identity with a place. While in Nima these strong attachments were enforced by the local cultures, religion, and social networks, in Old Fadama, it was about the fortunes of income, investments, and business opportunities.

The neighbourhood change theory suggests strongly that changes of any form in the neighbourhood have the potential to trigger residential relocation. When one looks at the arguments from the ecological approach under the theory, this study found that some of the concerns may not be particularly useful to the case studied. For example, despite the gradual

rise in the number of residents who are putting up buildings in peri-urban areas, they continue to stay in the neighbourhood without a complete relocation. This behavior aligns with the economic model proposed by Hoyt (1933) within the ecological approach, while also supporting the subcultural approach, which emphasises the importance of people's attachment to a particular neighbourhood and their collective fight against external aggressions (Pitkin, 2001; Peterman, 2000). Again, the political economist viewpoint reinforces the role of the state and the dominant class in amassing wealth at the detriment of the poor, often through the inflation of urban land values. They further noted that such an activity may lead to the poor relocating to the peripheries, where land may still be cheaper. However, this study revealed that properly organized poor neighborhoods may still find a way to survive in the city and maintain their neighborhoods.

This study observed how the poor have formed various alliances, including political and international support in defending their stay to restrain government actions. This finding further extends our understanding that power may not eternally rest in the hands of the few elites who control political power, but communities, with the right connections may disarm these elites, as in the case of Old Fadama over the years. The community have withstood government eviction threats over their existence, using their numbers (power to vote and change the government), as well as support from international bodies, such as the Informal Settlement Development Facility (ISDF). The study, therefore, argues that changes in the conditions of a neighbourhood may not necessarily lead to residential mobility but could become the reason for people's rootedness and attachment to specific neighborhoods. Rootedness of slum dwellers, on the other hand, also enhances our understanding of

immobility as an active process of mobility through an active and conscious renewal of decisions to stay, as espoused by the new mobilities paradigm (Sheller & Urry, 2006).

8.3 Contribution to Knowledge

This study makes some key contributions to knowledge in the areas of urban mobility debates, and theoretical and methodological aspects of social research. These contributions are discussed in the proceeding paragraphs.

First, the study made valuable contributions to the field of geography, and specifically to conceptual debates in the urban mobility literature. The study made new arguments for ongoing debates on what constitutes slums and whether modern cities should give space to the existence of slums. Building on existing concepts, such as the slums of Hope and slums of Despair (Stoke, 1962), this study advanced arguments to criticise the shortfalls in current measures of defining slums. The objective measures, based on the UN-Habitat indicators, have only focused on quantifiable measures and left out other elements that measure the urgency and socio-spatial contributions of slums to the city's growth.

The study proposes the concept of slum continuity, which argues that slums are dynamic organisms that go through transitions, rather than being considered static entities or snapshots in time, as previous limited measures portray them (Engstrom et al., 2015; Jankowska et al., 2011; Weeks et al., 2007). The thesis called for a holistic assessment of slums, by examining their historical growth patterns to determine their state as slums of hope or despair considering the transitions they have gone through over time. Again, the study argued for

slums to be accepted as a dominant mode of neighbourhood production just as formal and informal neighborhoods-, High-, middle-, and low-income neighborhoods and migrant and indigenous communities. The evidence is buttressed by the fact that slum dwellers, as any other urban dweller, have equal rights to the city space as argued in the ‘rights to the city’ argument in the literature (Dovey et al., 2021; Huchzermeyer et al., 2018; O. Crentsil & Owusu, 2018), as coproducers of the urban space.

Secondly, this study has also contributed to the debates on migration and residential mobility in the urban literature by advancing arguments that instead of attempting to strictly differentiate both mobility events, researchers should draw on the combined advantages at the blurry edges of the intersection between both events. The motivations for migrating to the city remain like a guiding principle for the migrant throughout his stay in the city and residential mobility behavior in the city. As such, proper analysis and comprehension of the factors that influence the individual’s residential mobility behavior should include the entire spectrum of his journey from his origin (rural) to the city and other trans-local residential movements. The significance of this contribution is to enhance our understanding of the mobility factors that (re) shape the socio-spatial space of the urban.

Theoretically, the study is among the first to explore the residential mobility of urban slums through the triangulation of two major theories that influence the same process of mobility. Previous studies have investigated residential mobility by employing either theory to analyse the factors that influence people’s moving decision-making. However, this study acknowledges the complexity of residential mobility within the African context and more importantly in slum neighborhoods. Both theories complement each other in the study, as the

findings suggest that the principles of ‘linked lives’, as used in the LifeCourse theory, showed an interplay of several factors in understanding the residential mobility of slum dwellers. Again, the people’s lives are shaped through their interaction with the neighbourhood conditions as their LifeCourse unfolded. As such, the individual’s decision-making was influenced by a complexity of factors, including the interactions between personal biographies, life-stage events, and physical socio-economic, and cultural neighbourhood factors. Each of these factors contributes to the general rootedness of slum dwellers, as observed in Nima and Old Fadama in Metropolitan Accra.

Further, the study contributed to the methodologies used in research on residential mobility across disciplines, especially in geographical studies. The study overcame the high dependence on longitudinal survey data, which is a common source for mobility research (Schoenduwe et al., 2015; Warner & Sharp, 2016; Widdowson & Siennick, 2021), by adopting retrospective qualitative data. Although this method has been criticized for relying on the recall capacity of respondents, it proved vital in enhancing our understanding of the lived experiences of slum dwellers regarding their moving behaviors. The qualitative approach allowed for a deeper understanding of the specific reasons and meanings ascribed to the actions of participants, which are mostly missing in highly quantitative longitudinal data. This method also allowed participants to reconnect with their past and recount deeper memories, thereby giving more weight to the reasons ascribed to their mobility decisions. The study therefore calls for the adoption of retrospective qualitative data collection methods in the study of residential mobility, especially in the context of Africa where even quantitative data may not be available or reliable.

The study finally contributed to the development of some key concepts developed by researchers in the literature, that have guided analysis in residential mobility research. One such contribution is the typology of residential movements proposed by Sell & De Jong (1983) and adopted by Coulter et al., (2013). They classified movers into 8 major types, including the rooted, wishful thinkers, contented movers, discontented movers, adaptive movers, oscillators, highly mobile and miscellaneous. This study falls under the miscellaneous category, which they classified as any other typology not captured in their classification, hence, the current research observed four new types of movers: circular movers, irregular movers, safety movers, and unplanned/forced movers. These new classifications would contribute to further analysis of residential mobility movers, especially in the context of African cities where such movements may be complex and varied from the Western context.

8.4 Recommendations

Based on the study findings summarised in the previous section, some recommendations are made to guide urban growth and development.

8.4.1 Exploring the Typology of Slums and their Nexus with Residential Mobility

Based on the study objective one and findings, the study recommends the following:

- MMDAs who are responsible for local development should adopt a Typology-Specific Approach to the Management and Development of Slums in Accra. This is to ensure that the Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies depart from the current one-size-fit all approaches to dealing with slums and adopt targeted and tailored strategies based on each slum typology. Such tailored interventions could be to focus on improving the infrastructural challenges and land tenure issues in the Formal- Slum neighborhoods, intervene in ensuring tenure security and the provision

of basic amenities in the Informal – Slum neighborhood, focus on the preservation of the socio-cultural and historical values while upgrading infrastructure and access to basic services in the Indigenous-Slums and finally institute measures to ensure the maintenance and rehabilitation plans to protect the Government-slum neighborhoods.

- Also, the urban planning departments of the MMDAs need to utilize the concept of the Slum Continuum to access the historical growth patterns of slums in their jurisdiction, understand the transformative changes, and provide tailored interventions for sustainable transitions to liveable urban neighborhoods.
- Further, the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGDRD) should make conscious efforts to integrate residential mobility data into urban policy design. The policy must consider data on why people move in and out of Slum areas to allow implementing bodies to design interventions that stabilize communities where RM is caused by continuous deteriorating conditions and a lack of basic amenities and tenure security. These interventions will ensure the promotion of land tenure security in slums to reduce involuntary displacements and ensure a formal integration of Slums into the revenue collection on government services provided (eg. Electricity, Waste, and Water). Also, MMDAs will leverage on the data provided to ensure there is inclusive and participatory slum redevelopment projects from both the International Organizations and the Local Authorities identified in this study.
- Finally, MLGDRD should develop a Slum Typology Monitoring System that seek to periodically evaluate the physical, social, economic, cultural, and political changes in these neighborhoods. Tracking their progress will provide real-time data to inform policy adjustments.

8.4.2 Typology of Movers and Biographical Factors Potentiating Residential Mobility

Based on the second objective of the study and findings, the following recommendations are made;

- First, the MMDAs in dealing with the slum neighborhoods should differentiate Housing and Support Strategies by Slum Typology. This will help ensure that target interventions are given to specific slum types. In Old Fadama, residents were mostly settlers with stable residential patterns as such, interventions should focus on the upgrading of existing housing as ongoing through self-help upgradings while providing some form of security of tenure for them. In Nima, most residents were born in the neighborhood, and so policies should target community-driven housing upgrading.
- Also, future reviews of the Urban Policies should address Gendered Residential Mobility Patterns through the provision of support for women, especially those who are single parents and breadwinners to reduce their vulnerability levels to RM. This could be achieved through instituting support systems to individual housebuilders to complement affordable housing efforts rather than the current focus on Estate developers.
- Finally, policies on Urban Planning through the MLGDRD and the MMDAs should redefine Residential Mobility as a continuous experience rather than as a discrete one and to accommodate overlapping life transitions such as family growth, economic needs and educational pursuits in building predictive models that seek to find solutions to align with the lived experiences of slum dwellers.

8.4.3 Socio-Economic (Life-Stage) Factors Influencing Residential Mobility Decisions

Based on the third objective and findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

- First of all, the MMDAs should consider supporting Flexible Housing Arrangements for Expanding Households. This could be implemented collaboratively with the NGOs, CBOs, and FBOs as well as the local groups of Chiefs to ensure that community-based housing schemes in slums are given all forms of support to accommodate households experiencing childbirth so they can be more residentially stable.
- Secondly, the National Housing Policy under the MLGDRD should recognize the Stability of Homeownership during Slum Upgrading Programs. There is the need to support homeownership efforts in the slum areas particularly in Old Fadama where people's homes are used both as residences and income-generating investments. At least where tenure security is assured, that will encourage prolonged stay and stability in RM behavior.
- Finally, there is the need for the MMDAs to Promote Collaborative Slum Upgrading through the engagement of slum dwellers and their Chiefs, International bodies (NGOs eg. Centre on Housing Rights and Evictions) FBOs and CBOs. Such collaborations could foster participation in slum upgrading programs while ensuring the specific needs of the linked lives and life-stage transitions of people are also met.

8.4.4 Neighbourhood Conditions and Residential Mobility

Based on the fourth objective and findings of the study, the following recommendations were made;

- To begin with, the study recommends that the Local Authorities and their developmental partners such as the NGOs, FBOs, and CBOs must recognize the role of their organized alliances in the development of Slums. Slum authorities should ensure that such relations are kept and strengthened for continued support.
- Also, MLGDRD should recognize the resilience and rootedness of the slum communities in the design of upgrading programs to ensure the maintenance of social cohesion and community identity and attachments to neighborhoods. These factors serve as strong pillars around which slum communities can leverage to demand and negotiate for development assistance and policy inclusion.
- Secondly, MLGDRD should consider immobility as a conscious choice and an active process among the slum dwellers despite deteriorating neighbourhood conditions in the Urban Housing Policies. These active immobility process reflects slum dwellers RM decions that are rooted in their social, economic, and cultural factors.
- Finally, the study further recommends that the LUSPA revise its planning notes to incorporate proper zoning and developments occurring across the city through gentrification of traditional neighbourhoods, and in the peripheries where slum dwellers are investing in property development. Such plans should include refined transportation nodes and an environment that would enhance the general well-being of urbanites. These planning guidelines must also include zoning for commercial and retail activities. These plans should be followed through by assemblies to ensure implementation is followed to the latter.

8.5 Areas for Further Research

This research set out to explore the residential mobility behavior among slum dwellers in the Accra Metropolis. During observations, several intriguing dimensions emerged that could not

be fully addressed within the scope of this study. Future research on residential mobility could delve into these emerging factors to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

One notable observation from the field pertained to the roles of both state and non-state structures that directly interact with residents of slums. These structures, encompassing institutional functions, such as the provision of basic amenities, security, health services, emergency response, and development projects, significantly shape the life trajectories of slum dwellers. Exploring how the specific roles of state and private institutions in slums contribute to residential mobility could offer new insights into the factors influencing such mobility. In addition to the LifeCourse theory and Neighbourhood theories, which have predominantly focused on individuals and households, adopting institutional perspectives offers a novel angle for understanding residential mobility. Exploring the role of institutions in shaping mobility patterns could provide valuable insights into the complex dynamics at play in slum communities.

Secondly, it was observed during the fieldwork that slums not only house Ghanaian natives but also other individuals from various nationalities who live in the slums for varied reasons. It would be interesting to specifically explore the residential mobility behavior among these foreign nationals and their reasons for choosing the slum. Interestingly, not all of them would be classified as poor as they tend to live lavish lifestyles despite living in neighborhoods tagged as poor. Such studies would provide varied experiences to compare with the results from this current research, as well as other research conducted in Ghana among residents within similar environmental and social settings.

Finally, this study emphasises the importance of quantifying certain aspects of slum dwellers' lives, such as their economic status, employment rates, biographical factors, and other measurable experiences. By collecting numerical data on these factors, researchers can provide empirical evidence to justify the decisions made by slum dwellers. This quantitative approach would enhance the explanatory power of the study's findings and facilitate the generalization of results, thereby enabling policymakers to develop more effective interventions that address the needs of urban slum communities. Moreover, the study recommends the application of a mixed-method data collection and research strategy to gain mixed insight into the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers.



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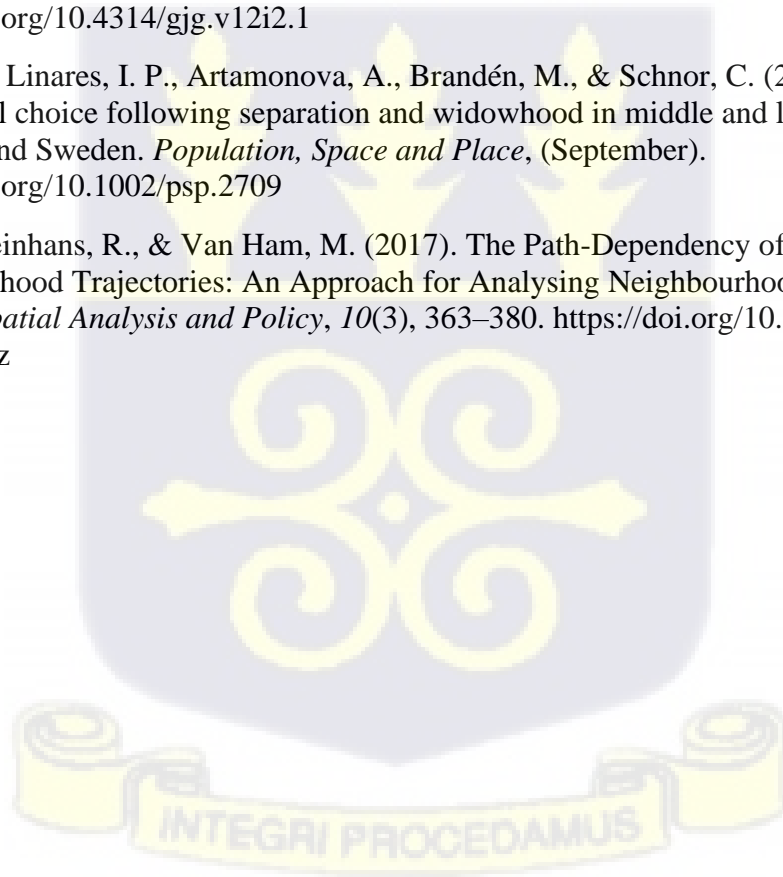
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APPENDIX 1

INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR RESIDENTS

The researcher is a PhD Candidate from the Department of Geography and Resource Development and Centre for Urban Management Studies both at the University of Ghana. The study, under the working title, **‘Residential Mobility of Slum Dwellers in Metropolitan Accra, Ghana’**, seeks to understand where and why people move from one residential apartment to the other. It also seeks to find out the reasons some people continue to stay at the same place or make adjustments to their living conditions to satisfy their accommodation needs. The study will contribute to an understanding of residential mobilities of slum dwellers and contribute to policies on housing and urban residential planning. All participants are assured that the necessary ethical clearance for the research has been sought and your consent is sought before the interview is conducted. You may also stop at any point of the interview when you are no longer comfortable. Responses provided will be treated confidentially and for academic research purposes only.

Thank you for accepting to participate in this research.

Respondent's Consent

Yes

No

Researcher – Godwin Odikro

Interview Guide for Residents

Section A - Biographical and Historical Data

Respondent is expected to provide details of his demographics as well as motivation for moving to the city.

1. Please introduce yourself (Age, Sex, Education, religion, ethnicity, years of stay in the community, Married, number of children)
2. What do you do for a living?
3. Describe your current living arrangement (shared/single, size, number of room(s))
4. Please provide a brief history of your migration to Accra (Date of arrival, initial place of settlement, reasons for relocating)

(Objective: establish the relevance of the background information of respondent)

Section B – Housing conditions and Neighbourhood characteristics

The respondent is required to discuss issues relating to the characteristics of the houses stayed and the conditions of the house and neighborhood.

5. Describe the type and characteristics of your house (Size of house, building materials, roofing type, floor type etc). (**From 1st house lived to current**)
6. Describe the conditions of your home and neighborhood?
 - *The ethnic composition of home*
 - *Relationship with other ethnic groups*
 - *Sanitation*
 - *Waste*
 - *Water/Electricity*
7. What is the nature of your tenure arrangement?
(Land tenure, House tenure)
8. What are your thoughts on the neighbourhood population density?
9. How connected and accessible is your neighbourhood with other parts of the city?
(Market centres, transport yards, education, playground, and road network connectivity)
10. What is your level of satisfaction with these characteristics and why?

(Objective: To establish the state of slum neighbourhood and Housing characteristics)

Section C – Residential Mobility Behavior of Slum Dwellers

This section deals with the residential mobility behavior of respondents and how they have navigated their way through to their current location.

11. Describe your residential mobility behavior (How often do you move/stay)
12. How do you feel about this behavior?

13. Provide a mental graph of your residential movements since you first settled in Accra with, the years/period.
 - *House 1*
 - *House 2*
 - *House 3*
 - *House 4*
14. What are the living arrangements under which you got each accommodation? (Rented, rent-free, personal house, stay with family/friends, special arrangement)
15. What is your level of satisfaction with your pattern of movement and why? (*Objective: To explore slum dwellers' residential mobility experiences*)

Section D – Factors influencing Residential Mobility Decisions

This section seeks to establish the factors/reasons influencing the residential mobility decisions of residents.

16. What factors influenced your decision to move from your place of residence to another? (**Probe the motivations for each residential movement**)

Probe under the guide of the following factors

Lifecycle/LifeCourse Factors – *Childbirth, death, Age, Marriage/cohabitation, Income, Kinship ties, ethnicity, religion, Friends, Education, employment, new job opportunity, job promotions*)

Neighborhood/environmental Factors – *sanitation, Waste disposal, quality of air, socioeconomic status, social relations, cultural factors*

State policies – *Rent regime, cost of living,*

17. If you did not move from your initial residence, what are the reasons you decided to stay?
18. What adjustments have you made to the house over time to meet your changing life course?
19. What are the reasons for the specific adjustments made?
20. What is your level of satisfaction with these adjustments and why?

(Objective: To explore the factors that influence residential mobility decisions)

F. Policy Recommendation

21. What kind of assistance would you need from the government/non-state actors to support your residential mobility?
22. What other challenge would you want to be fixed in the slum to make it liveable? (*Objective: Explore slum dwellers policy recommendations for slum development*)

Appendix II

Interview Guide for Local Authorities

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR TRADITIONAL AUTHORITY

A. Personal Information

1. Please introduce yourself (age, education, ethnicity, religion, years lived in the community)
2. What position do you hold in the community and what is your role?
3. What do you do for a living (Work engagements)?
4. Please describe your household characteristics (size, rooms, sex dynamics)

(objective: To establish the relevance of the respondent's background information and capacity)

B. The Historical and Growth Dynamics of the Community

5. Please narrate how this community came to being (first settlers, year/periods, land tenure security/ownership).
6. How many generations of this community have survived since its birth?
7. To what extent has the community changed in form (Population dynamics, physical area).
8. How has the local community been governed over the years?

(Objective: To explore the origins and growth dynamics of the community)

C. Access to and the Character of Housing in Slum

9. Describe the housing situation in your community.
10. What changes have you noticed about housing in your community (materials, structure types, size of rooms, area coverage)
11. How do people get access to housing? (Ways of securing housing in slums)
12. What types of homeownership and housing arrangements are common in your community (Rent, family and friends, free rents, private ownership etc).
13. Tell a brief history of the residential mobility behavior among residents in the community (Long/short stays, relocation within/outside community, extension of housing structures etc).

14. Do you think there are variations in this behavior among different cohorts (inter-generations, age groups, and sex)?
15. What factors do you think influence people's decision to relocate within or outside the community? (Age, education, religion, ethnicity, marriage, childbirth, job, family/friends, environment, cost of rent etc).
16. When people, relocate from your community which parts of the city do they usually go to? (Location and Direction of flow)

(Objective: To explore the strategies to access housing and the general housing characteristics)

D. Approaches to the Development of Slums

17. What has been the government's response to the concerns of the community?
18. How do you engage with state institutions to bring development to the community?
19. How effective has the response from state institutions been?
20. Which other non-state institutions have you engaged for development?
21. How is the relationship between you and these non-state actors?
22. What are some of the projects that have been successfully executed through these relationships?
23. How will you describe the changes in your community over time?

E. Challenges Confronting the Development of Slums

24. What major issues confront the community in its quest to develop?
25. What major job opportunities do slum dwellers engage in?
26. To what extent do these job opportunities influence residential mobility decisions?
27. Describe the relationship among the different ethnic compositions of the community.
28. Are there clear ethnic segregations in the community and has this changed over time?
29. To what extent have these ethnic segregations influence residential mobility decisions?
30. Are there religious segmentations in the community?
31. Do religious segmentations have any influence on the residential mobility decisions of slum dwellers?

(Objective: To establish the factors obstructing the development of Slums)

F. Policy Recommendations

32. What should the government do to help the development of slums?
33. What should government do to support the accommodation demands of slum dwellers?

(Objective: To assess the policy considerations for slums by the assembly)

Interview Guide District Assembly (Planning Officer)

A. Personal Information and Role

1. Please introduce yourself (Position/Capacity, education, age, length of time in position).
2. How important is your role within the larger city governance structure?

(objective: to establish the relevance of the respondent's background and institutional capacity)

B. The Prevalence of Slums in the City

3. What are the dynamics of slum development in the city?
4. What are the factors encouraging the growth of slums in the city?
5. What is your position on urban slums and how are you dealing with them?
6. To what extent do the conditions of slums fit into your planning regulations? (Environment, population, living conditions)
7. What is governments' strategic response to these challenges in slums?
8. What is the state of the Urban Housing situation in Ghana/Accra and what changes have occurred over the years?
9. What are the current procedures for urban housing development and have these change over time?
10. What is the nature of Ghana's housing deficit and how is the government responding?

(Objective: to ascertain the geography of slums from the perspective of city authorities)

C. Management Approaches to Dealing with Slums

11. How is your outfit dealing with slum neighborhoods that are poorly planned?
 - inconsistencies in government approach to dealing with slums.
12. What is the level of collaboration between your department and the following in executing your mandate?
 - Local community
 - Traditional leaders
 - Other state institutions
13. How effective have these collaborations been in ensuring liveable slums?
14. What is/are the specific steps put in place to ensure compliance with development planning regulations in slums?

(Objective: To explore the slum governance strategies adopted by the assembly)

D. The Challenge of Dealing with Slums in the City

15. What is your view about residential mobility in Accra/Slums?
16. To what extent do you think urban planning has influenced the residential mobility of slum dwellers?
17. To what extent do political and traditional authorities interfere with the governance of slums?
18. How is the government dealing with the issue of land titles and land security in slums? Does this influence the residential mobility of slum dwellers?
19. What is the government's plan to assist slum dwellers in accessing adequate and decent housing?
20. To what extent does your collaboration with other actors influence the mobility decisions of slum dwellers?

(Objective: To explore the factors obstructing the development of slums)

E. Policy Recommendations

21. From your experiences, how can the residential mobility situation be better managed among slum dwellers?
22. From your experiences gathered, what measures will you recommend to deal with slums in the city?

(Objective: To assess the policy considerations for slums by the assembly)

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ASSEMBLYMAN

A. Personal Information

1. Please introduce yourself (age, education, ethnicity, religion, years lived in the community)
2. What position do you hold in the community and what is your role? (number of years in position)
3. Please describe your household characteristics (size, rooms, sex dynamics)

(Objective: To establish the relevance of the respondent's background information and capacity)

B. Historical Profile of Slum

4. Please narrate how this community came to being (first settlers, year/periods, land tenure security).
5. How many generations have survived since its birth?
6. To what extent has the community changed in form (Population dynamics, socio-cultural make-up, and physical area).
7. How has the local community been governed over the years?

(Objective: To understand the origins and growth dynamics of the slum community)

C. Community Management Approaches adopted by the Assemblyman

8. How will you describe the government's relationship with slum neighborhoods?
9. What is your knowledge of the residential mobility behavior of slum dwellers?
10. What are the common challenges of the community and how are you addressing them? Do you think these challenges influence the resident's residential mobilities? *(Probe each challenge and its effect on residential mobility)*
11. How do you collaborate with the local community, traditional leaders, private organizations, and state institutions to respond to your people's problems?
12. To what extent does this collaboration inform people's decisions to stay or move from the community?
13. To what extent do you think your functional roles may influence people's decision on residential mobility?

(Objective: To explore the management strategies of the assemblyman)

D. Socio-cultural Dynamics in Slum Population

14. What is the segmentation among your population? (Ethnic, religious, sex)
15. Do you think these segmentations influence people's decisions on residential mobility?
16. What is the form of relationship among the various ethnic and religious groups?
17. Does this affect people's residential mobility decisions?
18. What are the major concerns of the people that are usually reported to you?
19. To what extent do these concerns inform the residential mobility choices of the slum dwellers?
20. What are the identifiable culture and attitude among various age groups in the population?
 - Teenagers (13-19 years)
 - Active Adults (20-59years)
 - Aged (above 60 years)
21. To what extent does the culture and attitude of the people influence people's decisions on residential mobility?

(Objective: To explore the interconnections and relationship among slum dwellers)

E. Economic Opportunities in Slums

22. What are the kinds of job opportunities available in the slum?
23. Where does slum dwellers work? Does location influence the residential mobility behavior?
24. How employable are slum dwellers in the formal sector?
25. How important are nearby markets and petty trading to slum dwellers residential mobility decisions?
26. How critical is unemployment among slum dwellers? Does it impact residential mobility?

(Objective: To explore the economic viability and attractiveness of slums)

F. Policy Recommendations

27. From your experiences, how can the residential mobility situation be better managed among slum dwellers?
28. From your experiences gathered, what measures will you recommend to deal with slums in the city?

(Objective: to suggest policy recommendations to dealing with slum challenges)

Thank you.