كلية الآداب والعلوم
College of Arts and Sciences
QATAR UNIVERSITY جامعة قطر

مركز دراسات الخليج
Gulf Studies Center

Gender and Return Migration: Gulf Returnees in Ghana

Md Mizanur Rahman and Mohammed Salisu

Gulf Studies Center
Working Papers
Nº 3 – September 2021

Gender and Return Migration: Gulf Returnees in Ghana

Md Mizanur Rahman and Mohammed Salisu

Abstract

Labor migration in the Global South is generally conceived as a multidimensional process that comprises three distinct subprocesses: emigration, immigration, and return migration. There is growing consensus that return migration is the least understood of these three subprocesses. In a similar vein, a gendered analysis has become more integral to migration scholarship today; yet, one area where gender matters but has not been thoroughly studied is the return migration process. Focusing on Ghanaian returnees from the Arab Gulf states, this paper examines how gender affects the migration process by highlighting gender-based socio-demographic differences in migrant experiences in terms of working and living conditions, recruitment, remittances, and reintegration and remigration. The study reports that the gender dimension of returnees' experiences constitutes an avenue of migration research that has the potential to produce a more nuanced understanding of gendered migration scholarship in the Global South.

About the authors

Md Mizanur Rahman is Research Associate Professor and a Research Coordinator in Society and Culture at the Gulf Studies Center, Qatar University. He teaches migration studies, social theories, and research methods at the Gulf Studies Program. His areas of expertise include Gulf migration, diaspora engagement, migrant businesses, labor migration, migration policy and migrant remittances. He has conducted extensive fieldwork in the Gulf, East and Southeast Asia, South Asia, Europe and North America. He has published extensively on international migration issues in the Gulf and Asia. Dr Rahman was a member of Migration Research Leaders Syndicate for the 2018 Global Compact on Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration, spearheaded by the IOM – the UN Migration Agency - based in Geneva.
Email: mizan@qu.edu.qa

Mohammed Salisu is a PhD candidate at the Center for Gulf Studies, Qatar University. He holds a BA in political science and Arabic from the University of Ghana, an MA in Arabic Language and Literature from the American University in Cairo, a second MA in Contemporary Islamic Thought and Muslim Societies from the Hamad bin Khalifa University in Qatar. Between 2012 and 2015, he served as a lecturer in Arabic Studies and Islamic Political Thought at the Ghana Institute of Languages and the Islamic University College of Ghana respectively.

About the Working Papers

The Gulf Studies Center Working Paper Series (GSC WPS) is an online repository of Gulf-focused research papers in the Social Sciences and Humanities. The GSC Working Paper Series acts as a publication resource to facilitate the rapid and open-access dissemination of work by Gulf Studies scholars, QU faculties, and other scholars working on the Gulf region. The papers cover the wide-ranging topics related to all of the major themes of GSC's research clusters around Society and Culture, Politics and Security, and Economics and Energy. Some of these GSC Working Papers will be subsequently developed for publication as journal articles or adapted as book chapters. While all GSC WPS papers are open access and free to download, please properly reference any contents of these papers that are used in other publications by citing the author, year of publication, the title of the publication, and the number of the GSC WPS paper.

To cite this Working Paper

Md Mizanur Rahman and Mohammed Salisu. 2021. Gender and Return migration: Gulf Returnees in Ghana. Gulf Studies Center Working Paper No. 3. Doha: Qatar University Gulf Studies Center.

Introduction

The study of international migration has disproportionately focused on South–North migration, that is, movement of people from the Global South to the Global North. In 2017, the Global South hosted some 43 percent of the world's around 258 million international migrants.[1] Of those, 97 million, or 87 percent, originated from other developing countries or regions in the Global South. Based on a recent report published by the International Organization for Migration (IOM), since the year 2000, the average annual growth in the number of migrants living in the Global South has outpaced that in the Global North.[2] However, the international migration of labor in the Global South is hardly a one-off event; it is rather a multidimensional process that generally comprises three subprocesses: departure from the home country (emigration), arrival at the host country (immigration), and return to the home country and reintegration (return migration). There is growing awareness that the return is the least understood among these stages; research tends to focus principally on the emigration and immigration processes (Dako-Gyeke, 2016; Oomen, 2013). Understanding return migration requires adopting a dialectical approach to migration, simultaneously considering both the home and the host countries (Girma, 2017; Negi et al., 2018).

The study of return migration focuses disproportionately on migrants returning from the Global North to the Global South (Oomen, 2013). Yet, although a certain percentage of returnees from the Global North do indeed move to the Global South, significant return migration flows actually take place within the Global South. Globally, South–South migrations have increased in importance and number (Hujo and Piper, 2010), and the most sought-after destinations for such migrations include the six member states of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Indeed, the GCC states account for by far the largest movements in South–South migration (Fargues and De Bel-Air, 2015). The GCC member states altogether host nearly 35 million international migrants out of a total population of 54 million (Babar, 2020:343). Broadly speaking, we can identify three attributes of Gulf migration: (1) it is interregional in geographical scope; (2) it is temporary in duration; and (3) it is primarily carried out by single males and single females (Fargues and Shah, 2017; Jureidini, 2019; Gardner, 2010; Babar and Gardner, 2016).

Although South–South and South–North migration flows are linked in many ways, research has revealed certain distinct trends that differentiate migration motivations, processes, and implications across this great divide (for details, see Castles and Wise, 2008; Short, Hossain, and Khan, 2017). For instance, South–South migration is less selective and more temporary. Whereas policy discussions concerning South–North migration often revolve around the potential for migrants to attain citizenship, residency, or reunion with family members, in South–South migration, the equivalent discussions center on migrant worker treatment and human rights issues. South–South migrants are generally poorer and lower skilled (Anich et al., 2014); however, these low-wage migrant workers generate a higher total volume of remittances globally, covering the daily necessities of millions of families in the Global South (World Bank, 2016). In labor migration, remittances and return are an integral part of the migration process (Stark, 1991; Rahman, Tan, and Ullah, 2014; Gmelch, 1980; Smith and King, 2012). In other words, the experiences of emigration, remittance, and return are inextricable in the South–South return migration process.

1 IOM briefing, please find details here: http://www.ipsnews.net/2018/09/promoting-good-migration-governance-south-south-cooperation/ Retrieved on the 16 February 2019 at 3.04 pm

2 International Organization for Migration (IOM) briefing, please find details here: http://www.ipsnews.net/2018/09/promoting-good-migration-governance-south-south-cooperation/ retrieved on the 18 March 2019 at 9.18 am

With the increasing femininization of migration, scholars have been examining various aspects of migration from the perspective of gender (Halfacree and Boyle, 1999; Donato and Gabaccia, 2015; Piper, 2008). A quick survey of the literature on gender and migration reveals a mushrooming of work that addresses these issues (Donato et al., 2006; Herrera, 2013; Hondagneu-Sotelo and Cranford, 2006). Scholars have also revealed the ways in which the migration process is intrinsically tied to gender relations (Grasmuck and Pessar, 1991; Nawyn, 2010), reaching a general consensus that gender is central to all aspects of migration (Girma, 2017). However, despite this consensus, the use of gender as an analytical category is sharply skewed toward the examination of emigration and immigration, leading some scholars to call for more studies on return migration from a gendered perspective (Girma, 2017; Negi et al., 2018; Samari, 2019).

There are several studies on return migration that enrich our understanding from regional and global perspectives (Akesson and Baaz, 2015; Conway and Potter, 2009; Ghosh, 2000; Iredale, Fei and Rozario, 2003). We can also find a number of studies that examine return migration and development in West Africa in general (Black and King, 2004; Carling, 2004; Tiemoko, 2004; Maconachie et al., 2006) and Ghana in particular (Ammassari, 2004; Kabki, Mazzucato, and Appiah, 2004; Mazzucato, 2011; Setrana and Tonah, 2014; Apatinga, Kyeremeh, and Arku, 2020; Black, King, and Tiemoko, 2002; Wong, 2014; Terming-Amoako, 2018). Although these studies provide rich descriptions of various aspects of return migration, and although we have immensely benefited from their insights, there remains a dearth of research that illuminates how gender affects the South–South return migration process. This study attempts to fill this gap by drawing on the case of Ghanaian returnees from the Persian Gulf states.

In particular, this study explores how gender affects the return migration process by analyzing the accounts of Ghanaian male and female returnees who worked in private security companies in GCC countries. This paper identifies key aspects of migration that are influenced by gender—such as working and living conditions overseas, recruitment, remittance sending and uses, and return and reintegration—and it elaborates on these gendered aspects of migration by analyzing gender-differentiated patterns in returnees' experiences. We structure the article by first outlining the theoretical issues related to gender and return migration, then discussing Ghanaian international migration and describing the research methods used for this study. In the subsequent sections, we analyze gender-differentiated patterns with a focus on the socio-demographic profiles of returnees, the nature of work and living conditions in the Gulf, remittance sending and uses, and return and reintegration into the home society. We conclude with key findings and directions for future research.

Theoretical issues

Scholars have proposed a number of classifications for return migration, which have enhanced our conceptual vocabulary (Cerase, 1974; King, 1978; Gmelch, 1980). For instance, Cerase provides a four-fold classification of return migration: return of failure, return of conservation, return of retirement, and return of innovation (Cerase, 1974). King offers a simple classification based on temporal criteria: occasional, periodic, seasonal, temporal, and permanent returns (King, 1978). Gmelch distinguishes three main types of return migrants: temporary returnees (returnees who intended their migration to be temporary), forced returnees (returnees who intended permanent migration but were forced to return), and voluntary returnees (returnees who intended permanent migration but chose to return) (Gmelch, 1980). However, return migration has also been part of an open-ended process of movements back and forth between countries, a phenomenon often called "transnational migration" (Faist, Fauser, and Reisenauer, 2013).

A commonly used analytical framework for return migration is popularly known as the "failure–success" dichotomy. In essence, the failure–success framework for return migration suggests that failure to integrate into the host society leads to a return, in failure, to the origin country, whereas successful integration leads to either permanent settlement or to the achievement of migration goals and, thus, return migration occurs (for details, see Cassarino, 2004; Gibson and McKenzie, 2011; Makina, 2012; Nzima and Moyo, 2017). From a neo-classical economic perspective, migration of labor is caused by differences in wage rates between countries, and individual migrants choose to migrate internationally to obtain higher incomes (Todaro, 1976). More importantly, individual migrants are evaluated independently from their families, causing their social responsibilities back home to go unevaluated. Consequently, neoclassical economics views migration as a one-way process and allows no room for return motives other than economic failure in the host country (Cassarino, 2004). Under neoclassical economics, men and women are subject to the same motivations for migration; the framework therefore does not account for gender-differentiated motivations for return. In fact, Chant and Radcliffe argue that the neoclassical economics of migration is "female-aware" and has not shown itself to be "gender-aware" (Chant and Radcliffe, 1992:20).

The new economics of labor migration provides powerful theoretical insights into return migration by linking the migration decision to potential earnings in the destination region (Stark, 1991; Massey et al., 1998) while also focusing on the *family* as the relevant decision-making unit and viewing migration as a response to income risk in the developing world. The "new economics of migration" posits that individuals are obligated to remit because the migration decision is made and funded by the family for its collective wellbeing. Thus, the decision to emigrate, the decision of what objectives are to be met, and the decision to return are all mutually interdependent (Nzima and Moyo, 2017). From a gendered viewpoint, the new economics of labor migration treats households as homogenous groups that are acting rationally in the collective interest of household members. Scholars report that migration decisions often reflect power relations and the gendered division of labor, and they are influenced by individual and collective interests (Chant and Radcliffe, 1992; Nawyn, 2010; de Haas and Fokkema, 2010). Case studies have uncovered conflicts and tensions within migrant households emerging from gendered power relations (Nawyn et al., 2009; de Haas and Fokkema, 2010). A number of studies have explored the ways in which gendered power relations influence migration and remittance decisions (for a review, see Grasmuck and Pessar, 1991; Wong, 2006).

In the structural approach, the returnee is neither a successful nor a failed migrant; instead, the returnee brings back savings and remittances that have no real impact on economic development because of structural constraints inherent in their country of origin (Hugo, 2003). With regard to gender, the structuralist accounts of migration do not offer much improvement in terms of gender awareness (Wright, 1995; Scott, 1995; Oso and Natalia, 2013). With regard to the developmental implications of return migration, research has also reported the various development implications of return migration on the sending societies (Conway and Potter, 2009; Galipo, 2018). As early as 1980, Gmelch outlined some of the implications of return migration for migrants, such as the challenges of adaptation and readjustment, and the implications of return migration for the home societies (Gmelch, 1980). Many subsequent publications have concentrated on the implications of emigration and return migration upon home societies, with a focus on the "migration–development nexus" (for a review, see Papademetriou and Martin, 1991; Faist, 2008; Piper, 2009).

Scholars have also identified an ideal return migration situation, and where the return meets the basic criterion of not requiring remigration, they view it as a "sustainable" return migration (Couldrey and Morris, 2004). However, the "sustainable" return migration has come

under criticism because it conceptualizes return as the end of the migration process, overlooking the growing phenomena of remigration and transnationalism (Black and King, 2004; Jeffery and Murison, 2011; Faist, Fauser, and Reisenauer, 2013; Van Houte and Davids, 2008). As this paper demonstrates, a group of returnees may seek remigration, and remigration can have positive impacts on the home society because remigrants tend to provide for their households and promote development. In light of recent theoretical developments, we illuminate the gendered nature of migration from the returnee's perspective.

The Arab Gulf migration context

The Arab Gulf states have been a major destination for low-skilled migrants from African and Asian countries. The common narrative for explaining the demand for migrant labor in the Gulf is that the 1973 oil boom, and the unprecedented number of development projects which took place subsequently, have continued to attract massive flows of migrant labor to the region (for details, see Fargues and Shah, 2017; Babar, 2011; Gardner, 2013). Existing research on Gulf migration has contributed to the broader understanding of migration patterns (Fargues, Del Bel Air, and Shah, 2017; Babar, 2017; Gardner, 2010; De Bel-Air, 2018; Jureidini and Hassan, 2019; Babar, 2011), the causes and implications of migration (Arnold and Shah, 1986; Kuptsch, 2006; Kamrava and Babar, 2012), migrant remittances (Naufal and Genc, 2014; Rahman, 2011, 2013), recruitment and the kafala system (Rahman, 2012; Fargues and Shah, 2018; Gardner, 2013; Zahra, 2014, 2018, 2019; Aulaqi, 2014), irregular migration (Fargues and Shah, 2017), and citizenship and naturalization (Alsheikh, 2015; Jamal, 2015; Meijer, Satar, and Babar, 2021).

The manpower engagement and facilitation policies of GCC countries are somewhat similar, especially in the context of the recruitment, local engagement, and exit of migrant workers (Babar, 2020; Kuptsch, 2006; Shah, 2008; Rajan, 2016; Rahman, 2011). The kafala system, a sponsorship or employer-based visa system, is the most preferred means to manage temporary migration in the Gulf states (Shah, 2008; Garnder, 2010). Some common features of the kafala system are that it restricts family reunification for unskilled migrants, ties them to a single employer, prevents them from marrying locals, and enforces other restrictions on their rights and movements, forcing migrants into status as transient workers in the Gulf countries (for details, see Shah, 2010; Esim and Smith, 2004; IOM, 2004; Khan and Harroff-Tavel, 2011; Rahman, 2013). Thus, the kafala system is often criticized for giving rise to practices and conditions that render migrant workers vulnerable in the Gulf (Baldwin-Edwards, 2011; Esim and Smith, 2004; HRW, 2006, 2008; Gardner et al., 2013; Dito, 2008; Shah, 2008).

Broadly speaking, research on recruitment often suggests that recruitment agencies and migrant networks play a critical role in recruiting transient migrants to the GCC countries (Eelens and Speckmann, 1990; Arnold and Shah, 1986; Gamburd, 2000; Zachariah et al., 2001; Shah, 2010). The Gulf-based recruiting agencies run and collaborate with branch offices in African and Asian countries to reach out to potential migrants and play a crucial role in bringing them to the GCC states. Migrant networks foster communication with current migrants, potential migrants, and return migrants, often facilitating their recruitment and shaping their lived experiences in the Gulf (Gamburd, 2000; Gardner, 2012, 2014; Rahman, 2011). Although the Arab Gulf countries are predominantly seen as a destination region for single male migrants, the region is also a prime destination for single female migrants from two major destination regions: Asia and Africa. The feminization of labor migration and gender-differentiated patterns of the labor market have become a pervasive phenomenon in the Arab Gulf states (Esim and Smith, 2004; Gamburd, 2002; IOM, 2004; Farnandex, 2014).

According to one report, there were around 3.5 million African migrants in the GCC states in 2017 (Atong, Mayah, and Odigie, 2018). Ghana is one of the major West African source countries for the GCC states. Ghana is both an emigrant and immigrant country in West Africa. Whereas Ghana is home to around 450 thousand immigrants, mainly from African countries, the country also has over one million emigrants living outside the country.[3] According to a KNOMAD estimate, Ghana received around US$3.7 billion in remittances in 2019, accounting for 5.5 percent of Ghana's GDP in that year.[4] A number of studies provide detailed accounts of emigration from Ghana from historical and contemporary perspectives (Anarfi, Kwankye, Ababio, and Tiemoko, 2003; Teming-Amoako, 2018; Mazzucato, 2011; Kleist, 2017; Apatinga, Kyeremeh, and Arku, 2020; Wong, 2014). Ghanaian migration is broadly categorized into four distinct phases: minimal emigration, initial emigration, large-scale emigration, and intensification and diasporization (for details, see Anarfi et al., 2003).

The first phase (from pre-colonial times up to the late 1960s) saw net immigration but at a level of emigration that was insignificant overall. The second phase (between the 1970s and 1980s) witnessed significant emigration of skilled workers and professionals, primarily to other African countries. The increase in Ghanaian migration in the late 1970s and early 1980s has often been attributed to political instability and economic downturn in Ghana (Alderman, 1994). Over two million Ghanaians emigrated between 1974 and 1981 (Anarfi et al., 2003). Migration in this phase was mainly intra-regional, with a low level of outmigration to the West. The third phase falls between the 1980s and the 1990s, a period that saw the commencement of widespread migration comprising both skilled and unskilled migrants, a surge often attributed to growing economic decline and political instability in Ghana (Manuh, 2001).

The fourth phase includes the period between the 1990s and the present. This phase is marked by the diversification of migration destinations: Ghanaians started moving to various countries in Europe and North America (Apatinga et al., 2020). It was roughly at the beginning of this period that Ghanaian migrants began emigrating to the Gulf countries (Teming-Amoako, 2018). This was also the period in which GCC countries diversified their labor-source countries to bring in labor on a large scale (Kuptsch, 2006). Little data is available on the growth in the number of Ghanaian migrants in the Gulf. According to one of the few estimates, roughly 3,112 male and 2,604 female migrants entered the GCC countries between 2015 and 2017 (Atong, Mayah, and Odigie, 2018). However, this figure does not represent reality. Our conservative estimate is that there might be presently as many as 15,000 Ghanaian migrants in the GCC countries. Given the nature of migration controls in the region, on an annual basis, a few thousand migrants usually join the labor market, and a similar number or less return to Ghana.

Data sources

This study is based on data collected in Ghana, as well as our fieldwork experiences in the Gulf countries. In the Gulf states, we observed that many Ghanaians work in security companies. It is widely assumed that security work is a male-dominated niche, yet this is not true in the Gulf states, where many educational institutions, government offices, and private companies hire both male and female security personnel for gender-sensitive services. Considering the presence of male and female security personnel in the Gulf workforce, we decided to seek out male and female security personnel who had recently returned to Ghana after completing work stints in one of the six GCC countries. One of the authors of the present paper is from Ghana, and this author has maintained personal contacts with Ghanaian migrants

3 Calculated from the data found on the KNOMAD website on emigration and immigration. Retrieved from the website on the 5th April 2020: https://www.knomad.org/data/migration/emigration.
4 KNOMAD's dataset for remittance inflows for the year 2019. Retrieved from website on the 5th April 2020: https://www.knomad.org/data/remittances.

in the Gulf as well as with many returnees in Ghana. The study thus benefited from this author's extensive personal networks in Ghana and the Gulf. We used the snowballing technique to identify further respondents in Ghana, a method that gave us unparalleled access to their views because we had been referred to them by their friends and former colleagues. We sought the assistance of a female university student to collect data from female returnees in Ghana. We interviewed respondents in the Nima, Maamobi, New Town, Alajo, and Madina areas of Accra. We collected data in Ghana between December 2019 and February 2020.

We interviewed 15 male and 13 female returnees using an interview schedule with both semi-structured and unstructured questions. We added specific questions for the male and female respondents to dig deeper into the gender-differentiated patterns of returnees' experiences. The interview schedule covered a wide range of issues, including socio-demographic information; nature of the work; the social world of migrants in the Gulf countries; earnings, savings, and remittance transfers and uses; and questions related to present occupations and earning sources as well as future plans to stay or remigrate. We documented the returnees' own views of the migration experiences, followed by discussions with senior members of the families in order to get their views. Interviews were conducted in the official language of Ghana (English) as well as *pidgin* (colloquial English), depending on the preference of each respondent. The names used in the text are pseudonyms. Although the discussions were carried out based on broader themes, specific cases are cited and presented verbatim to present migrants' viewpoints and illustrate certain positions.

Socio-demographic profiles of returnees by gender

Tables 1 and 2 present the experiences of 15 male returnees and 13 female returnees who worked in private security companies in the GCC states. The male returnees were between 30 and 44 years old, with birth years ranging from 1976 to 1990. For women returnees, the minimum age was 27 years, the maximum was 34, and their years of birth fell between 1986 and 1993. These findings suggest the existence of gender-differentiated patterns in respondents' age structures: male returnees were older on average than female returnees. We attribute this gendered age pattern to the motivations for migration among Ghanaian migrants in general. For Ghanaian male migrants, migration seems to be a long-term livelihood strategy for immediate and extended family members, whereas for female migrants, it is more associated with the individual's short-term goals, such as marriage, a phenomenon on which we elaborate in subsequent sections.

With regard to the educational background of returnees, 10 male respondents had a senior high school certificate (12 years of certified formal education) before traveling to the Gulf, and the other five had only a junior high school certificate (nine years of formal education) (Table 1). Seven of the female respondents had a senior high school certificate, and the other six female respondents had only a junior high school certificate (Table 2). The program of Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) up to junior high school is rigorously enforced in Ghana, leading to relatively higher rates of male and female education in Ghana. Given Ghana's colonial past, English remains the official language of Ghana, and in schools it is the medium of instruction and examination. As a result, most Ghanaians are relatively fluent in English. The educational level of returnees found in this study was relatively higher than that found in other studies on returnees in Ghana (Teming-Amoako, 2018), and this is probably due to the nature of occupations in the Gulf, where the respondents were required to serve in a multinational work environment.

With regard to marital status of the male respondents, nine were married, two were divorced, and four were single. Among the female returnees, eight were married, two were

divorced, one was widowed, and two were single. All eight married female returnees were married after returning from the Gulf. In terms of gender-differentiated patterns of marital status, 60 percent of the male respondents were married before their migration to the Gulf, whereas none of the female returnees was married before their migration to the Gulf. We attribute this gendered pattern of marital status to socio-culture forces in Ghanaian society. Whereas married men are permitted to travel abroad for work, Ghanaian families usually do not allow their married female members to travel overseas for work, unless they are traveling with their husbands or going to join their husbands. Other studies also report that female migrants tend to migrate when they are unmarried (Teming-Amoako, 2018).

This gender-differentiated pattern of marital status is an important indicator for migration decision-making. In general, male respondents tend to migrate to the Gulf with the aim of establishing a stable life for themselves and their families by building a house, maintaining the family, and covering their children's and siblings' education and other expenses. For female migrants, migration to the Gulf is often a short-cut to gaining a large amount of money that will help transform them into ideal brides in their local society. As one of our respondents revealed:

> I was 23 then, and I knew marriage could come my way at any time. Yet, I had not been able to buy the things a bride needs, and I had no capital to start a trade. So, when the opportunity came for me to travel to Kuwait in 2011, I couldn't let it go.
>
> Returnee from Kuwait, 32

All nine married male returnees had children ranging between one and four years of age. The 15 male respondents were part of families comprising seven to 16 [living] persons at the time of interview. We defined family based on residence (living at the same place and eating together). All 13 female respondents were part of families with memberships ranging from seven to 13. Thus, it is clear that the migrants' families were large, requiring more resources to support. In general, the expectations of household provisioning cut across gender and marital status (Pickbourn, 2016; Abdul-Korah, 2011). In short, the shouldering of responsibilities for household provisioning reinforces the traditional patriarchal household norms that married men have more responsibility to support the family than married women, and unmarried men have more responsibility than unmarried women, shaping gendered household provisioning across the country.

Gender-differentiated patterns of work experiences in the Gulf

Irrespective of gender, the Gulf states hire and manage migrant workers through the kafala system. In the kafala system, a migrant is sponsored by a *kafeel* who assumes full economic and legal responsibility for the migrant during the contract period, including repatriation at the end of the contract. Because the existing literature elaborates upon the various aspects of the kafala system and recruitment procedures in the Gulf countries (Gardner, 2010; Esim and Smith, 2004; Fargues and De Bel-Air, 2015), we do not address recruitment issues in this paper. We move on to investigate gendered working experiences.

Our respondents worked in different countries in the GCC states and for different durations. Of the 15 male returnees from the Gulf, five returnees worked in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, four in Bahrain, two each in Qatar and Oman, and one each in Oman and the UAE. Respondents spent between two and five years working as security personnel with various private security companies in their respective Gulf states. Seven respondents changed countries after their contracts expired, moving from Oman, Saudi Arabia or Bahrain to Qatar, UAE, or Kuwait. In one instance, a migrant moved from Oman to KSA. However, in all such

instances, the only material difference in their lives was the change in salary. Matters related to residence visas, accommodation, and general working conditions remained largely the same. Overall, all the respondents spent a minimum of two years in their respective countries, the initial contracts always being of this duration. Under this rubric, migrants must work for two years before being “freed” and must pay financial penalties if they seek to breach the contract before its due date in order to return home.

Of the 13 female returnees interviewed, four worked in Bahrain, three in Kuwait, and two each in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Oman. Respondents spent between two and six years working as security personnel with various private security companies in their respective Gulf states. Unlike male returnees, none of the female returnees changed their country of work by moving from one Gulf state to the other. Female migrants all lived in shared rooms provided by their companies. Male migrants also lived in company-provided accommodations. Male and female migrants both worked for eight hours daily.

Returnees gained different sets of skills. Male returnees tended to report that they had learned different security strategies they had not previously known (or had not known very well), gained a better understanding of how their colleagues from North Africa and South-East Asia react to issues and emergencies, and improved their spoken Arabic proficiency through interaction with locals and colleagues. However, they also sometimes felt discriminated against because some locals and companies openly objected to dark-skinned personnel guarding their buildings. Male respondents mentioned playing games with their colleagues, watching football matches on TV, chatting with families back home via social media, and visiting friends. Female respondents also reported major positive experiences in learning different security strategies they had not previously known and improving their spoken Arabic proficiency through interaction with locals and co-workers. Female returnees often reported how proud they were to provide security and protection to fellow women at their place of work. Chatting with roommates and families back home, watching movies on TV, and smartphone surfing, especially social media, constituted the bulk of their leisure activities.

Gender-differentiated remittance patterns

Gender plays an important role in shaping remittance decisions (UN-INSTRAW, 2006; Rahman and Lian, 2012). This section shows how gender influences remittance behavior. Remittance-sending is closely tied to income and savings. The typical monthly salary of a male returnee was roughly US$370 in the UAE, US$350 in Kuwait, US$330 in Qatar, US$320 in KSA and Oman, and US$300 in Bahrain. The salary of male and female respondents was reported to be almost the same across the Gulf. For instance, female respondents earned the equivalent of US$370 in the UAE, US$350 in Kuwait, US$330 in Qatar, US$320 in KSA and Oman, and US$300 in Bahrain. This gender equality in salary underscores that we must study gender and salary in *intra*-sectoral, rather than *inter*-sectoral, terms in order to observe the gender parity in salary payments. However, this does not mean that there is no gender-based pay discrimination in this region. This particular form of job (security sector) is one of the areas where there seems to be no apparent gender disparity in salary.

Both male and female respondents were reported to remit between US$100 and US$250 per month. However, migrants did not remit the whole of their savings; they tended to keep a portion of their monthly incomes. In-depth interviews reveal that although both males and females earned the same monthly salary, the females saved more than their male counterparts. This is due to the following reasons: First, the females, all other things being equal, had fewer responsibilities back home than their male counterparts. Second, unlike the males, who mostly subsisted on take-out meals, the females cooked their own food every day, leading to higher savings.

Like remittance-sending, remittance-receiving cut across gender lines. For the married male migrants, spouses were often the first recipients of remittances, followed by mothers, then fathers, and in extreme cases uncles or siblings. For the single male respondents, mothers were also usually the first recipients, followed by fathers, uncles, or siblings. A married male respondent explained, "I remitted an average equivalent of $100 monthly in support of my child's education, food, rent, and utility bills for the family," and when asked to whom he sent the remittances, he responded quickly, "As a happily married person with a child, my wife was the recipient of all monies I wired home." Female respondents sent remittances primarily to their mothers and then to their fathers, aunts, or siblings. One female respondent explained that she remitted the monies to her mother because "my mother was in charge of purchasing my marriage materials, and she was the one I could trust for that."

Existing literature suggests that unmarried male migrants tend to remit to male members of the family, whereas female migrants tend to remit to female family members (UN-INSTRAW, 2008; Rahman and Lian, 2009). We also found that unmarried female migrants remitted principally to their mothers, whereas married male migrants remitted principally to their spouses. In both cases, female family members were the most frequent recipients of the remittances. Women recipients also enjoyed higher status in the family as the "remittance manager." Migration enhanced interdependence across husband-wife remittance corridor as migrant husbands relied heavily on their wives left behind for the management of remittances. Mothers of migrant daughters also consulted, if not relied on, their daughters overseas in the use of remittances for competing needs. Whatever the reasons for such gendered patterns in receipt of remittances, we can argue that the receipt of remittances by women increases their influence in decisions about the allocation of income in the household and thus contributes to greater gender equality in the family.

The uses of remittances also varied along gendered lines. Male respondents reported that the bulk of their remittances (90 percent) were used for education, food, and rent/utility bills. Many of the respondents' families lived on the periphery of Accra in rented accommodations and thus had to pay monthly rent in addition to electricity, water, and gas bills. For those who lived in their own family houses, utility bills were the focus. Even the unmarried interviewees who had no children remitted for the education of their siblings. The onus, however, was highest on those who were married with children. One male respondent shared the burden of family responsibility as such:

> I had to leave behind my three-year-old, lovely identical twins and travel to Oman in 2014. And when I did, I was able to provide my family with daily bread, pay rent, pay utility bills, and settle school fees. Although I was not able to put up my own house as I planned while working in Oman, I saved my family from the ravages of poverty.
>
> Male returnee from Oman, 44

For all female respondents, remittances were overwhelmingly spent to procure marriage-related goods and to a more limited extent for school fees, food items, and rent/utility bills. Because all female respondents were unmarried before migration, and because they viewed their migration plans and their marriage plans as interrelated, their remittance uses were geared overwhelmingly toward marriage expenses.

To understand the returnees' sense of fulfillment and achievement, we asked all respondents what they wished they could have gained from the Gulf migration but had not been able to achieve. All returnees, regardless of gender, mentioned that they wished they could have bought their own house, gathered sufficient savings, and been able to send their parents to perform the annual *Hajj* pilgrimage. Although their remittances covered other necessities

like food, education, healthcare, and marriage, having one's own house or sufficient savings remained an unaccomplished goal for returnees. In short, the implications of gender-differentiated remittance patterns illuminate potential reintegration and future livelihood strategies, which we explain in the next section.

Gender-differentiated patterns of reintegration and remigration

The experience of migration in terms of reintegration and remigration also varied along gender lines. Male returnees were largely unprepared for their return home. In the return migration context, remittance-use constitutes an important indicator of sustainable return. Therefore, we delved into this category to explore how returnees are reintegrating into the economic sphere of their home societies. When we asked respondents whether they had invested in income-generating ventures, we identified a gendered pattern in their responses. Out of 15 male returnees, 10 respondents reported that they had used part of the remittances for income-generating activities, whereas the remaining five had not. The 10 respondents invested in sectors such as transportation (buying of taxis), small-to-medium size farming, opening of retail businesses for spouses and/or mothers, and other domestic businesses. However, all male respondents expressed regret for not having had a clear-cut plan before returning home and attributed their present poor savings to their insufficient incomes in the Gulf.

When asked whether remittances were invested in income-generating ventures, 11 female respondents reported that they had used remittances for income-generating activities such as dressmaking, hairdressing, local restaurant operation, and bakery and retail businesses. Although we found that such small businesses produce meagre profits, they serve as supplemental income sources. For female returnees, preparing for marriage involved not only funding the marriage ceremony but also investing part of their foreign income for post-marriage responsibilities. This rationale for investing the migration windfall probably stems from the gendered expectations of household provision in Ghanaian society. For example, L. Pickbourn reports that married women tend to supplement food staples, children's school clothing and fees, and other basic needs (Pickbourn, 2016). These obligations for household provisioning after marriage probably constituted an important motivation for our female returnees to engage in various productive activities. Investment in petty trades provides a sustained source of supplementary income that they can allocate to household gendered provisioning and thus maintain dignified status within the extended family hierarchy. Thus, female returnees exhibited more prudence and productivity in investments and budgeting for household expenses.

The unpreparedness of male returnees is also reflected in their motivations for remigration. When asked about their plans since returning home, six male returnees mentioned their desire to remigrate, whereas nine male respondents wanted to continue the search for a permanent job in Ghana. These nine male returnees had been engaged in casual jobs since returning home, serving as sales persons, construction workers, night security workers, temporary drivers, and in other low-skilled roles . Returnees who were undecided about remigration emphasized their preference for transient work overseas over irregular work in Ghana, suggesting they were considering an eventual remigration attempt. One male respondent mentioned:

> When I returned from Oman in 2014, I thought I would not travel again, but I left for the UAE subsequently. And since my contract ended and I returned to Ghana in June 2019, I am still jobless. The only way I can continue to support my mother, my siblings and be able to get married is if I migrate abroad…

Male returnee from Oman, 36

We also noted that single male respondents were more eager to return to the Gulf than their married counterparts. Correspondingly, respondents who had daughters (especially teenage girls) were more determined to remain in Ghana than their counterparts who had male children.

Whereas we observed male returnees' challenges in reintegrating into the economic life of their home country and their intention to remigrate, we noted a different strategy for female returnees. Female returnees typically returned home with clear plans for Ghana; namely, to get married and live with their newly formed family while seeking supplemental incomes locally. We also noted that female respondents' income strategies tended to be set out as early as during their schooling. We found that the majority of female respondents had learned a particular profession (hairdresser, dressmaking, etc.) after junior or senior high school, before traveling to the Gulf. They could not pursue such professions because of lack of seed capital. To earn start-up capital and cover marriage expenses within the shortest possible time, many female migrants found the solution in labor migration to the Gulf. As a married woman explained, "there is no way I can travel to any place within or outside Ghana, except with my husband, for work." Upon return, they seemed to be ready to reintegrate into society, thus neatly closing the migration circle.

Conclusion

This research has shown that emigration, immigration, and return are mutually interdependent; therefore, it is imperative to view the three phases of migration as an interconnected and composite process, and this is only possible if we examine the phenomenon from the returnees' viewpoints. In other words, returnees themselves embody the unbroken experiences of the mutually interdependent migration process, offering researchers the potential to expand the understanding of migration beyond a snapshot view of emigration, immigration, or return migration.

This study has identified key aspects of migration influenced by gender and described the gender-differentiated patterns in returnees' experiences. We have reported that male and female migrants vary in their ages, education, marital statuses, and roles in household provisioning and, thus, in their motivations for migration. The gender dimension of returnees' profiles also reveals their lives in the Gulf, remittance behaviors, and integrations or remigrations in the subsequent phases. For instance, we have reported that working hours, salary, and living conditions were similar for male and female returnees in the Gulf, yet we observed significant gender-based variation in terms of savings and remittances.

For example, males saved less than female returnees, and one factor in females' higher savings was that they regularly cooked food themselves, whereas male returnees bought take-out meals. Although both male and female returnees showed a similar range in remittance-sending, they varied in the amount and frequency of remittances, and we have attributed this difference to marital status, household gendered provisioning, and migration motivation. This study has reported that male returnees spent more on family consumption and less on productive investment. We have stated that all female returnees were unmarried, freeing up their disposable incomes for investment purposes. On the other hand, male returnees were usually married or burdened with extensive family responsibilities, and they were required to finance more of the household provisions, thus constraining the disposable incomes available for investment.

Most importantly, migration for female returnees was clearly embedded in their marriage plans; female returnees were unmarried, and their migration motive was to earn and save

money overseas in order to cover marriage costs and invest in post-marriage supplementary incomes. This strategy is reflected in their uses of remittances. This study has reported a gender-differentiated pattern of reintegration and remigration, in which male returnees are less integrated into the economic sphere of their home society and are more exposed to remigration, whereas female returnees are better at reintegrating into society and are less liable to remigrate. The study suggests that return migration for female returnees is typically a closed process, whereas for male returnees it remains open-ended. In addition, a sustainable return for females is the end of the migration process, whereas for males it leads to remigration.

This paper has made a modest attempt to demonstrate how gender affects various aspects of migration, and it has shown that we can capture an unbroken thread through the different subprocesses of migration if we analyze the migration process from the returnee's perspective. However, the phenomenon of gendered migration is more complex than it appears, and a systematic gendered analysis of migration with a sizeable sample is required to better understand the migration and remigration processes. This study stresses that our understanding of gendered migration can benefit from linking and elaborating aspects of South–South migration from the returnees' perspectives.

References

Abdul-Korah, G. (2011) Now if you have only sons you are dead: migration, gender and family economy in twentieth century Northwestern Ghana, *Journal of Asian and African Studies,* 46(4):390-403

Akesson, L. & Baaz, M. E. (Eds.) (2015). *Africa's return migrants: the New Developers*? London: Zed Books

Alderman, H. (1994). Ghana: Adjustment's star pupil? In David E. Sahn (Ed.) *Adjusting to policy failure in African Economies*, Cornell University Press: Ithaca

Alsheikh, Hend M. (2015). Current Progress in the Nationalization Programmes in Saudi Arabia. Explanatory Note No. 2/2015, Florence: GLMM.

Ammassari, S. (2004). From national-building to entrepreneurship: the impact of elite return migrants in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana, *Population, Space and Place*, 10(2):133-154

Anarfi, J., Kwankye, S., Ababio, O.M., and Tiemoko, R. (2003) Migration from and to Ghana: A Background Paper, Working Paper C4, University of Sussex: DRC on migration Globalization and Poverty.

Anich, R., Crush, J., Melde, S., & Oucho, J. O. (Eds.) (2014). *A new perspective on human mobility in the South*. New York: Springer.

Apatinga, G. A., Kyeremeh, E. K., & Arku, G. (2020). Feminization of migration: the implications for 'left-behind families in Ghana, *Migration and Development*, DOI: 10.1080/21632324.2019.1703283

Arnold F and Shah NM (eds) (1986). *Asian Labor Migration: Pipeline to the Middle Eas*t. London: West View.

Atong, K., Mayah, E. and Odigie, A. (2018). *African labour migration to the GCC states: the case of Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and Uganda,* Lome, Togo: ITUC-Africa

Aulaqi, A. (2014). Saudi Arabian Investor Class Visas: An Overview. Explanatory Note No. 6/2014, Florence: GLMM.

Babar Z. (2020) Understanding Labour Migration Policies in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries. In: Rajan S., Oommen G. (eds) *Asianization of Migrant Workers in the Gulf Countries*. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-32-9287-1_3

______(2011). Free mobility within the Gulf Cooperation Council, CIRS Occasional Paper, Doha: CIRS

______and Gardner, A. (2016). Circular migration and the Gulf States, In: Solé C., Parella S., Martí T., Nita S. (eds) *Impact of Circular Migration on Human, Political and Civil Rights. United Nations University Series on Regionalism*, vol 12. Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-28896-3_3

_____(2017). The 'Humane economy': migrant labour and Islam in Qatar and the UAE. *Sociology of Islam*, 5(2-3): 200-223

Baldwin-Edwards, M., 2011. Labor immigration and labor markets in the GCC countries: national patterns and trends, [online]. London, London School of Economics, Global Governance.

Black, R. and King, R. (2004). Editorial introduction: migration, return and development in West Africa. *Population, Space and Place* 10(2): 75-83

Black R, King R, and Tiemoko R. (2002) Migration, Return and Small Enterprise Development in Ghana. Sussex Migration Working Paper No. 9, University of Sussex: Brighton.

Cassarino, J.-P. (2004). Theorising return migration: the conceptual approach to return migrants revisited, *International Journal on Multicultural Societies,* 6(2):253-279

Castles, S., & Wise, R. D. (2008). Migration and development: Perspectives from the South, Geneva: International Organization for Migration

Carling, J. (2004). Emigration, return and development in Cape Verde: the impact of closing borders, *Population, Space and Place*, 10(2): 113-132

Cerase, F.P. (1974). Expectations and reality: a case study of return migration from the United States to Southern Italy, *International Migration Review*, 8(2):245-262

Chant, S. & Radcliffe, S.A. (1992). Migration and development: the importance of gender, in Sylvia Chant (ed), *Gender and Migration in Developing countries*, London and New York: Belhaven Press

Conway, D. & Potter, R. (2009) *Return migration of the next generations: 21st Century transnational mobility*, New York and London: Routledge

Couldrey, M. and Morris, T. (Eds.) (2004). Home for Good? Challenges of return and reintegration, *Forced Migration Review*, 21 September : retrieved on 14 April 2020: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/129760/FMR21full.pdf

Dako-Gyeke, M. (2016). We never plan to return home: voices of pre-migrant Ghanaian youth, *Journal of Youth Studies*, 19(2):169-182

De Hass, H. & Fokkema, T. (2010). Intra-household conflicts in migration decision-making: return and pendulum migration in Morocco, *Population and Development Review* 36(3):541-561

De Bel-Air, F. (2018). Demography, migration and labour market in Saudi Arabia. Explanatory Note No.

Dito, M.E. (2008). GCC Labour Migration Governance. UN Meeting on International Migration and Development in Asia and Pacific. Bangkok, 20–21 September.

Donato, K. M., Donna G., Jennifer H., Martin M.IV & Pessar, P.R. (2006). A Glass Half Full? Gender in Migration Studies.' *International Migration Review* 40(1): 3–26.

Donato, K. M. and Gabaccia, D. (2015). *Gender and International Migration: from the slavery era to the global age,* New York: Russell Sage Foundation

Eelens, F. and Speckmann, J.D. (1990). Recruitment of labor migrants for the Middle East: the Sri Lankan case. *International migration review*, 24 (2), 297–322.

Esim, S. and Smith, M. (2004). Gender and migration in Arab states: the case of domestic workers. Geneva: International Labour Organisation.

Faist, T. (2008). Migrants as transnational development agents: An inquiry into the newest round of the migration–development nexus. *Population, Space and Place*, 14(1), 21–42.

Faist, T., Fauser, M. & Reisenauer, E. (2013). *Transnational Migration*, Polity: Cambridge

Fargues P and De Bel-Air F (2015). Migration to the Gulf states: The political economy of exceptionalism. In: Acosta Arcarazo D and Wiesbrock A (eds) *Global Migration Old Assumptions, New Dynamics,* Vol. 1. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger.

Fargues, Philippe and Shah, Nasra M. (Eds.) (2017). *Skilful Survival: Irregular Migration to the Gulf*, Florence: GLMM.

Fargues, P., De Bel-Air, F., & Shah, N. M. (2015). Addressing irregular migration in the Gulf States. Policy Brief No. 1/2015, Florence: GLMM.

Fargues, Philippe and Shah, Nasra M. (2018). *Migration to the Gulf: Policies in Sending and Receiving Countries.* Florence: GLMM.

Galipo, A. (2018). *Return migration and nation building in Africa: reframing the Somali diaspora,* New York and London: Routledge

Gamburd, M.R. (2000). *Transnationalism and Sri Lanka's Migrant Households: The Kitchen Spoon's Handle,* Vistaar Publications, New Delhi.

Gardner, A., (2010). City of strangers: Gulf migration and the Indian community in Bahrain. New York: Cornell University Press.

Gardner, A., Pessoa, S., Diop, A., Al-Ghanim, K., Trung, K.L. and Harkness, L. (2013). A portrait of low-income migrants in contemporary Qatar, *Journal of Arabian Studies*, 3(1):1-17

Gardner, A.M. (2010). *City of Strangers: Gulf Migration and the Indian Community in Bahrain.* New York: Cornell University Press

_____(2014). Ethnography, Anthropology and Migration to the Arabian Peninsula. Explanatory Note No. 10/2014, Florence: GLMM.

_____(2012). Rumour and Myth in the labour camps of Qatar, *Anthropology Today*, 28(6):25-28

_____(2011). Gulf migration and the family. *The Journal of Arabian Studies*, 1(1):3-25

Ghosh, B. (2000). Return migration: journey of hope or despair? Geneva: International Organization for Migration

Gibson, J. & McKenzie, D. (2011). The microeconomic determinants of emigration and return migration of the best and brightest: evidence from the Pacific, *Journal of Development Economics*, 95(1): 18-29

Girma, H. (2017). The Salience of gender in return migration, *Sociology Compass*, 11 (5): :e12481: https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12481

Gmelch, G. (1980). Return migration, Annual review of Anthropology, 9: pp135-159

Grasmuck, S. and Pessar, P (1991). *Between two islands: Dominican international migration*, Berkeley: University of California Press

Halfacree, K. & Boyle, P (eds.). (1999). *Migration and Gender in the Developed World,* London and New York: Routledge

Herrera, G. (2013). Gender and international migration: contributions and cross-fertilizations, *Annual Review of Sociology,* 39(1):471-489

Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. and Cranford, C (2006). Gender and Migration in J.S. Chafets (Ed.), *Handbook of the Sociology of Gender,* New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers

Hugo, G. J. (2003). *Migration and Development: A Perspective from Asia.* IOM Migration Research Series No. 14. Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

Hujo, K., & Piper, N. (Eds.) (2010) *South-south migration: Implications for social policy and development*. Geneva: Palgrave Macmillan and United Nations Research Institute for Social Development.

IOM (International Organization for Migration) (2004). *Arab Migration in a Globalized World.* International Organization for Migration, Geneva: IOM

Iredale, R.., Guo, F. & Rozaio, S. (2003). *Return migration in the Asia Pacific,* Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar

Jamal MA (2015). The tiering of citizenship and residency and the hierarchization of migrant communities: The United Arab Emirates in historical context. *International Migration Review,* 49(3): 601–632.

Jeffery, L. & Murison, J (2011). The temporal, social, spatial and legal dimensions of return and onward migration, *Population, Space and Place*, 17:131-139

Jureidini R. (2019) Global Governance and Labour Migration in the GCC. In: Pal L., Tok M. (eds) *Global Governance and Muslim Organizations*. Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan

Jureidini, R. and Hassan, S.F. (2019). *Migration and Islamic Ethics – Issues of residence, naturalization and citizenship*, Leiden and Boston: Brill

Kabki, M., Mazzucato, V., & Appiah, E. (2004). ‘Wo benane a eye bebree’: the economic impact of remittances of Netherlands-based Ghanaian migrants on rural Ashanti, *Population, Space and Place*, 10(2): 85-97

Kamrava, M. and Babar, Z (Ed.) (2012). *Migrant Labour in the Persian Gulf*, New York: NYU

Khan, A., & Harroff-Tavel, H. (2011). Reforming the Kafala: Challenges and opportunities in moving forward. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 20(3-4): 293-313.

King, R. (1978). Return migration: a neglected aspect of population geography, *Area* 10(3):175-182

Kleist, N. (2017). Disrupted migration projects: the moral economy of involuntary return to Ghana from Libya, *Africa: the Journal of the International African Institute*, 87(2):322-342

HRW (2006). Building towers, cheating workers. New York: Human Rights Watch.

HRW. (2008). " As if I am not human": abuses against Asian domestic workers in Saudi Arabia. New Work: Human Rights Watch.

Kuptsch, C., (ed.) (2006). *Merchants of labour.* Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

Maconachie, R., Binns, T., Tengbe, P., & Johnson, R. (2006). Temporary labour migration and sustainable post-conflict return in Sierra Leone, *GeoJournal* 67:223-240

Manuh, T. (2001) Ghanaian migrants in Toronto, Canada: care of kin and gender relations. *Institute of African studies Research Review*, 17(2): 17-26

Massey, D. S., Arango, J., Hugo, G., Kouaouci, A., Pellegrino, A., & Taylor, E. (1998) *Worlds in motion—Understanding international migration at the end of the millennium.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mazzucato, V. (2011). Reverse remittances in the Migration-Development nexus: two way flows between Ghana and the Netherlands, *Population, Space Place,* 17:454-468

Meijer, R., Satar, J.N., and Babar, Z.R. (2021). *Routledge handbook of citizenship in the Middle East and North Africa*, London: Routledge

Naufal G. & Genc I. (2020) Labour Migration in the Gulf Cooperation Council: Past, Present and Future. In: Rajan S., Oommen G. (eds) *Asianization of Migrant Workers in the Gulf Countries.* Singapore: Springer

Nawyn, S. J., Reosti, A. & Gjokaj, L. (2009). Gender in motion: how gender precipitates international migration, in V. Demos and M.T. Segal (Eds), *Perceiving gender locally, globally and intersectionally: advances in gender research,* Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing, pp177-204

Nawyn, S.J. (2010). Gender and Migration: integrating theory into migration studies, *Sociology Compass* 4(9): 749-765

Nzima, D. & Moyo, P. (2017). The New 'diaspora trap' framework: explaining return migration from South Africa to Zimbabwe beyond the 'failure-success' framework, *Migration Letters*, 14(3):355-370

Negi, N.J., Prickett, J.C., Overdorff, A.M. and Roverts, J. (2018). Return-migration to Mexico and the gendered transnational migration process, *Psychology of Men and Masculinity*, 19(3):385-391

Oomen, M. J. (2013). *South-South return migration: Challenges and opportunities*, Background Note, ACPOBS/2013/BN09: Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

Oso, L. & Ribas-Mateos, N. (2013). An Introduction to a global and development perspective: a focus on gender, migration and transnationalism, in L. Oso and N. Ribas-Mateos (eds.) *The International Handbook on Gender, Migration and Transnationalism – Global and development perspective*s, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

Papademetriou, D.G. & Martin, P.L. (Eds.) (1991). *The Unsettled Relationship: Labor Migration and Economic Development.* London: Greenwood Press.

Pickbourn, L. (2016). Remittances and household expenditures on education in Ghana's Northern region: why gender matters, *Feminist Economics*, 22(3):74-100

Piper, N. (2008). Feminisation of migration and the social dimensions of development: the Asian case. *Third World Quarterly*, 29(7), 1287–1303.

_____(2009). The complex interconnections of the migration-development nexus: A social perspective. *Population, Space and Place*, 15(2), 93–101.

Quartey, P. (2008). The use of Aid to manage international migration; the case of Ghana, Ghana *Journal of Development Studies*, 5(1):20-38

Rahman, M.M. (2011). 'Bangladeshi Migrants in the UAE: Gender Differentiated Patterns of Migration Experiences', *Middle Eastern Studies*, 47 (2): 395-411

_____(2012). 'Bangladeshi Labour Migration to the Gulf States: Patterns of Recruitment and Processes" *Canadian Journal of Development Studies*, 33 (2) 214-231

_____(2013) 'Gendering Migrant Remittances: Evidence from the UAE and Bangladesh', *International Migration*, 51 (SI) e156-178

Rahman, M. M., Tan, Y. T., & Ullah, A. K. M. A. (Eds.) (2014). *Migrant remittances in South Asia—Social, economic and political implications.* Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rahman, M.M. & Lian, K.F. (2009). Gender and the Remittance Process: Indonesian Domestic Workers in Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia. *Asian Population Studies*, 5(2), 103-127.

Rahman, M.M. & Lian, K. F. (2012). Toward a Sociology of Migrant Remittances in Asia: Conceptual and Methodological issues. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 38 (4), 689-706

Rajan, S. I. (Ed.). (2016). *South Asia Migration Report 2017: Recruitment, Remittances and Reintegration*. New Delhi: Taylor & Francis.

Samari, G. (2019). Coming back and moving backwards: return migration and gender norms in Egypt, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies,* DOI: 10.1080/1369183X.2019.1669437

Scott, C.V. (1995), *Gender and Development, Rethinking Modernization and Dependency Theory,* boulder, Co: lynne rienner.

Setrana, M.B. & Tonah, S. (2014) Return migrants and the challenge of reintegration: The case of returnees to Kumasi, Ghana, Ìrìnkèrindò: *A Journal of African Migration*, Issue 7 (June):113-142

Shah, M.N. (2008). *Recent Labour Immigration Policies in the Oil-Rich Gulf: How Effective are they likely to be?* ILO Asian Regional Programme on Governance of Labour Migration Working Paper No 3, ILO, Thailand

Shah, M.N. (2010). Building State capacities for managing contract worker mobility: the Asia-GCC context, in IOM, *World Migration Report* 2010, Geneva: IOM

Smith, D. P. and King, R. (2012). Editorial Introduction: Re-making migration theory, *International Migration*, 18(2):127-133

Stark, O. (1991). The migration of labor. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Short, P., Hossain, M. & Khal, M A. (2017). *South-South migration Emerging patterns, opportunities and risks*, London and New York: Routledge

Teming-Amoako, T. (2018). Experiences of Ghanaian return migrants from the Gulf States: A case study of NIMA, MA Thesis, Department of Migration Studies: University of Ghana

Tiemoko, R. (2004). Migration, return and socioeconomic change in West Africa: the role of family, *Population, Space and Place*, 10(2):155-174

Todaro, M. P. (1976). *International migration in developing countries: A review of theory, evidence, methodology and research priorities*. A WEP Study. Geneva: International Labor Office.

UN-INSTRAW (2006). *Gender, remittances and development: the case of women migrants from Vicente Noble,* Dominican Republic, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: UN-INSTRAW

____(2008). *Gender, Remittances and Development: the case of Filipino migration to Italy*, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: UN-INSTRAW

Van Houte, M. & Davids, T. (2008). Development and return migration: from policy panacea to migrant perspective sustainability, *Third World Quarterly*, 29(7): 1411-1429

World Bank (2016). *Migration and remittances factbook*, Washington DC: World Bank

Wong, M. (2006). The gendered politics of remittances in Ghanaian transnational families, *Economic Geography*, 82(4):355-381

____(2014). Navigating return: the gendered geographies of skilled return migration to Ghana, *Global Networks* 14(4):438-457

Wright, C. (1995). Gender awareness in migration theory: synthesizing actor and structure in Southern Africa, *Development and Change*, 26:771-791

Zachariah, K. C., Mathew, E. T., & Rajan, S. I. (2001). Social, economic and demographic consequences of migration on Kerala. *International Migration*, 39(2), 43–71.

Table 1: Profiles of Ghanaian male returnees from the Arab Gulf States

Case Number	Gender	Age	Marital status	Years of formal education	Year of first migration and country	Average income per month (US$)	Average remittances per month (US$)	Two key recipients of remittances in Ghana	Three key areas of uses of remittances	Planning to stay or remigrate
1	Male	34	Single	9	2013 UAE	370	150	Mother & Father	Rent/Utilities Education & Food	Leave
2	Male	44	Married	9	2014 Oman	300	200	Spouse & Mother	Education, Rent/Utilities & Food	Stay
3	Male	41	Married	9	2012 Bahrain	300	150	Spouse & Aunt	Rent/Utilities, Food & Education	Leave
4	Male	37	Married	9	2011 Saudi Arabia	320	250	Spouse & Father	Food, Education & Utilities	Leave
5	Male	43	Married	9	2011 Saudi Arabia	320	170	Spouse & Father	Education, Rent/Utilities & Food	Leave
6	Male	40	Divorced	12	2016 Qatar	330	230	Father & Mother	Food, Education & Health Service	Stay
7	Male	38	Married	12	2012 Bahrain	300	200	Spouse & Mother	Education, Food & Health Service	Leave
8	Male	41	Married	12	2012 Qatar	330	200	Spouse & Mother	Education, Food & Rent/Utilities	Leave
9	Male	31	Single	12	2017 Saudi Arabia	320	200	Mother & Father	Rent/Utilities, Health & Food	Leave
10	Male	40	Single	12	2017 Saudi Arabia	320	150	Mother & Father	Food, Utilities & Education	Leave
11	Male	38	Married	12	2016 Saudi Arabia	320	200	Spouse & Sibling	Education, Rent/Utilities & Food	Leave
12	Male	39	Married	12	2015 Kuwait	350	200	Spouse & Mother	Education, Food & utilities	Leave
13	Male	40	Married	12	2013 Bahrain	300	220	Spouse & Mother	Education, Food & Health	Leave
14	Male	30	Single	12	2014 Bahrain	300	100	Mother & Uncle	Utilities/Rent, Food & Health	Leave
15	Male	36	Divorced	12	2014 Oman	300	150	Mother & Uncle	Education, Food & Utilities/Rent	Leave

Source: Authors' fieldwork data

Table 2: Profiles of Ghanaian female returnees from the Arab Gulf States

Case No	Female returnee	Age	Present marital Status	Years of formal education	Years of first migration to the Gulf and country	Average incomes per month (US$)	Average remittances per month (US$)	Two key recipients of remittances	Three key areas of uses of remittances	Planning to stay or remigrate
1	Female	32	Divorced	9	2011 Kuwait	350	200	Mother & Father	Marriage Items & Food	Stay
2	Female	27	Married	12	2010 Bahrain	300	200	Mother & Sibling	Marriage Items & food	Stay
3	Female	27	Single	9	2012 Oman	300	150	Mother & Father	Marriage Items & Food	Stay
4	Female	28	Single	12	2011 Oman	300	150	Mother & Sibling	Marriage Items & Food	Stay
5	Female	32	Married	12	2012 Saudi Arabia	320	150	Mother	Marriage Items & Food	Stay
6	Female	33	Widow	9	2010 UAE	370	250	Mother & Father	Marriage Items & Food	Stay
7	Female	29	Married	12	2012 UAE	370	210	Mother & Father	Marriage Items & Food	Stay
8	Female	30	Married	12	2011 Bahrain	300	200	Mother & Sibling	Marriage Items & Food	Stay
9	Female	28	Single	9	2010 Kuwait	350	200	Mother & Sibling	Marriage Items & Housekeeping	Stay
10	Female	32	Married	12	2012 Kuwait	350	150	Mother	Marriage Items & Food	Stay
11	Female	29	Married	12	2011 Bahrain	300	150	Mother & Father	Marriage Items & Housekeeping	Stay
12	Female	34	Married	9	2010 Bahrain	300	100	Aunt & Father	Marriage Items & Education	Stay
13	Female	31	Divorced	9	2015 Saudi Arabia	320	150	Mother & Sibling	Food & Education	Stay

Source: Authors' fieldwork data