



Exploring personal problems of returnee 'Kayayei' in Zebilla, Ghana, through the lens of rational emotive behavioural therapy

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Abstract

This study primary interest is to exploring personal problems of returnee 'Kayayei' in Zebilla, Ghana, through the lens of Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy. The constructivist research paradigm was applied for the investigation. The study used a phenomenological design and a qualitative research approach to gather data. The study's target population consisted of young female returnee "Kayayei" from Zebilla. For the purpose of the study, 11 participants were chosen using snowball and purposeful sampling procedures. The instrument that was used to collect data for the study was the interview guide created by the researchers themselves. The qualitative data was analysed thematically from the themes identified. The survey found that unintended pregnancies, health problems, and unemployment were the most personal concerns faced by returnee Kayayei. The study concluded that the returnee "Kayayei" adopted coping mechanisms like getting married, taking up small-scale jobs, and taking up apprenticeships in an effort to overcome all of these personal obstacles. The government, through the MoH and GHS, should arrange public health education for these young returnee "Kayayei" on reproductive health needs, HI/AIDS, sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and unsafe abortions. In order to enhance their living conditions in Zebilla, returnee Kayayei should also participate in government and non-governmental intervention projects including SADA, dressmaking, hair dressing, and shea butter production.

Keywords: Returnee 'Kayayei', personal problems, migration, coping strategies, reintegration

Introduction

In Kumasi and Accra's scorching sun and bustling streets, women are frequently seen carrying variously heavy loads on their heads, some of whom have children strapped behind their backs. Their attire and the pans or boards they carry typically indicate that they are common carriers or commercial head-porters, known as "Kayayei" in Ghanaian context. Historically, the Ghanaian transport sector has relied heavily on the Kayayei to transfer goods and supplies. Ghana has a lengthy history of head portage that dates back to colonialism, according to Kwankye & Cofie (2007) [33]. In Ghana, women have historically held head porter positions in the home, according to Aggarwal, Demirguc-Kunt, and Martinez-Peria. According to reports, rural women in Ghana and other African countries transport agricultural products for domestic or commercial use using head pottery. In Ghana today, this practice is still widespread in both rural and urban regions.

They are a typical feature of Ghana's big cities' unofficial transportation industry. They are present across the cities in all areas. To a native Ghanaian, what they do may seem weird to outsiders, but it is just part of their everyday routine, and they receive little to no attention outside from the market vendors and store owners they frequently work with. They can be seen in the open on quiet evenings in Kumasi and Accra, on platforms at truck stops, in temporary wooden buildings that are improvised, and in market women's booths during the day (Bessey, 2014) [9]. These females who are primarily opposed to poverty and underdevelopment in Northern Ghana, have travelled great distances from their home regions to work in the cities in order to make a living for themselves.

Nonetheless, the study concentrated on the individual requirements of returnee Kayayei, also known as "Kayayoo" in the local vernacular; they are head-porters. The migrants are referred to as "paa-o-pa" in Kumasi and "Kayayoo"

(single) or "Kayayei" (plural) in Accra. The Ga word "Kayayoo" refers to a lady who carries head burdens in exchange for a prearranged payment. In terms of etymology, Kayayoo is derived from the words Hausa and Ga. "Yoo" in Ga signifies lady, while "kaya" in Hausa means commerce or things (Awumbila, 2007; Yeboah, 2008; Yeboah & Appiah, 2009) [7, 59, 58].

The majority of Kayayei employed in Accra, according to documented data, are from the five northern regions; women make up 47% of the workforce compared to 37% of men (GSS, 2008, GLSS5). Because of their poor status in the unorganised sector of the economy, the majority of Kayayei are unskilled workers. They work in the "five Ds" jobs-dirty, hazardous, and challenging-as seen in Asia (ILO, 2001) [29]. Ghana Statistical Service states that women are disproportionately affected by poverty and that the country's northern areas are impoverished. According to Yeboah (2008) [59], poverty feminises. Women travel to southern cities in search of economic opportunity, where they take up the unregulated informal sector job of portering (Yeboah, 2010) [60]. In the larger cities, the Kayayei is the more frequently spotted north and south migrations (Yeboah, 2010) [60]. Internal migration from Ghana as a result of decades of economic hardship in the north is directly responsible for the Kayayei phenomena.

However, most women have benefited from the Kayayei occupation. Many women's careers have made it possible for them to live comfortably in their homes and purchase clothing, kitchenware, and other marriage-related items as they get ready for marriage (Kwankye, 2012) [32]. It has also helped pupils with their studies, which is another effect. During their extended school breaks, students can earn enough money by working as Kayayei to cover their educational costs. As a result, there are now fewer girls quitting school due to financial hardships.

Although, Ghana has a high rate of migration, but it has not gotten the attention it deserves. The most of the research centred on the movements' economic analysis. Van der Geest, (2011) [54] posited that because comprehensive migration data has been generally lacking over the years. Nonetheless, some noteworthy attempts have been undertaken to identify the primary trends and causes of migration in Ghana. According to (Caldwell, 1969) [11] majority of these research are descriptive, they frequently include survey statistics that are cross-tabulated and other data that provides insightful information about the causes, scope, and patterns of migration. Thus, the literature states that factors such as job search, education, marriage, and other family-related concerns are the main causes of migration, but it doesn't go into much detail about welfare concerns (Caldwell, 1969; GSS, 2012) [11, 25].

Based on empirical information, there has been a rise in migration trends over the past century, with about half of the migrants being women. Migration inside a nation and migration across international borders can occur for a variety of reasons. A person may relocate for social, political, or economic reasons. The movement variation may be "voluntary" or "forced," depending on the source (Martin, 2005) [37].

Despite almost fifty years of independence from colonial rule, the five (5) north and south regions of Ghana still have varying levels of development. Significant development

disparities between Ghana's northern and southern areas have traditionally been caused by the development plans of the pre- and post-independence eras. But colonization's aftermath left Northern Ghana not just marginalised but also at the vanguard of breaking national records for Kayayei migration, which explains why young people are still leaving in the twenty-first century.

As a result, the country's expansion process created a geographical split between its northern and southern parts, which in turn caused economically active people to relocate between them in quest of jobs in agriculture and mining (Awumbila, 2007) [7]. Moving from the North to the South, "Kayayei" migrants pick up and absorb cultural norms and values that are distinct from those of the North. It can be challenging for communities and migrants to reintegrate into the local way of life or into northern civilization after they return to the North. Again, this only provides a partial and insufficient picture of the situation of returnees, or "Kayayei," in Ghana, given the importance of their individual efforts. In order to present a comprehensive overview of the personal issues experienced by returnees, or "Kayayei," in Zebilla, Ghana, it was imperative that this critical knowledge gap be investigated. This was accomplished by using rational emotive behavioural therapy to examine these people's personal problems, which led to the creation of the study gap.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the research were to

1. Explore the personal problems of returnee Kayayei in Zebilla.
2. Identify possible coping strategies of returnee Kayayei through the ABC Model.

Literature review

Challenges in Reintegration of Returnee Kayayei

According to IOM (2015) [30], reintegration refers to the process of reintegrating an individual back into a group or grouping. Reintegrating a migrant into their community, country of origin, or place of habitual residency is one example of this. Taft (1979) [47] further defines returnees' reintegration as the migrants' initial process of learning to adjust to new circumstances upon their return to their childhood towns. Reintegration was characterised by Taft (1979) [47] as "a state of emotional stability and absence of internal conflicts and tensions," or alternatively, "the absence of psychoneuroses." Nonetheless, this study investigates the social and psychological needs of a female head porter who returned to Zebilla within the framework of rational emotive behavioural therapy.

However, the literature currently in publication offers perspectives for the reintegration issues that returnees encounter in their home communities. The main obstacles to full integration for most returnees to Western Ireland were the slow tempo of life, a lack of social services, a lack of employment opportunities, and the need to make new contacts. (Gmelch, 1980; Chirum, 2011) [27, 13]. The primary obstacles to reintegration among returnees to the Caribbean, according to Eikaas (1979) [16], were climate conditions, lack of employment opportunities, personality changes, and fear of social disgrace among those who had performed poorly at their various destinations. According to research by Levine (1982) [35], the main issues with re-integrating for the majority

of Southeast Asian returnees were low living standards, housing scarcity, lengthy job search times, and family disputes, especially those involving husbands and wives.

According to Marmora and Gurrieri (1994) ^[36] majority of returnees, personal characteristics are among the key variables influencing post-return resettlement difficulties. Preston (1994) ^[42], for instance, discovered that the primary barrier to education and employment in Namibia was the incapacity of the most of returnee to speak the language fluently. Cerase (1974) ^[12], discovered that the more time spent abroad, the more challenging it is to reintegrate in Italy, with fewer than 10 years in the US posing the least amount of difficulty. Cerase (1974) ^[12] also discovered that those who returned to Italy had a tendency to isolate themselves because they were unable or unwilling to fit in with Italian society.

Once more, research by McGrath (1991) ^[38] shows that return migrants continued to be treated as a unique and distinct community in migration literature. According to McGrath (1991) ^[38], the majority of returnees had to deal with a variety of readjustment issues, such as the unfavourable economic climate and lack of job prospects, the unwelcoming attitudes of the locals, and the ineffectiveness and sluggish pace of business operations. Further, because of the difficulties encountered, over 25% of returnees definite planned to re-migrate (McGrath, 1991) ^[38].

Also, Zachariah & Rajan (2011) ^[62] state that one of the primary obstacles to returnees' successful reintegration is their debt and bad financial situation. Setting up or reconstructing a life after return clearly depends on the financial status, debt issues, and availability of funds. The majority of return migrants took out loans during their emigration, and their abrupt return left them with enormous debt (Boere, 2010) ^[10]. But Rajan (2013) ^[43] found that the main obstacles to the reintegration process were the state's high unemployment rate, the absence of a substitute system and an unhealthy perception, challenges to readjust and integrate into the family and society, ignorance of the state's return programme and policies, and a high debt load and unfavourable financial situation after return.

Additionally, having money improves one's chances of finding employment, for example, by starting one's own firm, which subsequently promotes social and economic integration (Thomas-Hope, 1999) ^[49]. It is evident that most migrants' migration projects are not financially successful when comparing their pre-first emigration and post-last emigration financial situations. Therefore, what many migrants believe to be the path to a better life frequently ends up being a nightmare or a letdown (Skeldon, 2005) ^[46].

In a different study conducted in Kerala, Rajan & Narayana (2010) ^[42] discovered that unemployment was a major barrier to returnees' ability to re-adjust, suggesting that the state was unprepared to welcome them. There are several obstacles in the way of returnees' reintegration, despite the fact that policies and programmes for the returned "Kayayei" are in place. Problems and challenges might have a situational or personal nature. According to Kyei (2013) ^[34], returnees' individual and structural characteristics have an impact on their reintegration. They argued that while personal problems, such as difficulty adjusting to family or home society, are not major issues, the government and other relevant agencies face significant obstacles due to excessive labour movement and the absence of substitute systems.

Reintegration in Italy is more difficult for those who have been gone for more than ten years and less difficult for those who have been in the US for a shorter period of time, according to The reintegration experiences of Italian migrants from the US in the 1960s and 1970s were the subject of Cerase's 1974 ^[12] study. Furthermore, Cerase (1974) ^[12] discovered that pensioners in Italy often withdrew from society because they were unable or unwilling to fit in.

According to Taft, 1979 ^[47], emotional stability and the absence of internal conflicts and tensions-that is, the absence of psychoneuroses-are key components of reintegration.

But colonising an area, its people, and their culture also means, in a sense, "colonising the mind," according to Taft (1979) ^[47]. These "unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world" are recognised by post-colonial critique. Wessels (1992) ^[57] argues that the marginalisation and denigration of indigenous knowledge and practises in modern psychology practise is a "continuation of colonial patterns of injustice". The customary, social, and spiritual elements of experience in Sub-Saharan African societies may be overlooked by Western psychology theory and practice. The blind application of western ideas to African situations may make it more difficult to recognise the fundamental differences in worldviews, cultural norms, and ways of being between cultures. Thus, it is imperative to determine if it is appropriate to import Western psychological interventions directly into non-Western countries (Wessels, 1992) ^[57]. Psychological treatments for children afflicted by armed war in Angola are examined by Wessells and Monteiro (2000) ^[56] for the risks associated with this approach. These programmes address medical diseases that are fundamentally spiritual and community in origin, as well as improper therapies.

Specifically, in non-Western contexts, a medical discourse on trauma may be detrimental since it might marginalise local knowledge and practice systems. There is disagreement in the literature about how combat affects mental health. The diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in reaction to children in armed conflict has been widely challenged in the psychiatric literature on several occasions (Wessells, 1992) ^[57]. In addition Wessells AND Monteiro, (2000) ^[56] revealed that in order to internal silence, which occurs when locals minimise their own traditions of knowledge and practice in an effort to look scientific and save face, local knowledge is marginalised as a result of the imposition of Western knowledge and practice).

Moreover, psychosocial programming in the Sub-Saharan region needs to incorporate culturally defined behaviours in order for Wessells & Monteiro (2000) ^[56] to claim that it is effective. A major contribution to this field of study and practice has been made by Christian Children's Fund in Angola, which has created programmes to support traditional healing rituals in post-conflict healing and reconciliation as well as the reintegration of child soldiers.

Ritual theorists, such as Emile Durkheim and Turner (1967) ^[51], view ritual as a social action that aims to bring about specific modifications, often conceptualised in terms of the cosmos. Ceremonies play intricate roles in both violence and peace-making. For instance, in Uganda, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) used spiritual ceremonies to commemorate the initiation of young rebels (Veale & Stavrou, 2006) ^[55]. Turner

(1982) ^[52] asserted that "all forms of cultural performance, including as rituals, ceremonies, carnivals, theatre, and poetry, are explanations of life itself; they draw up from the depths of sociocultural existence what is typically sealed up and unavailable to everyday observation and reasoning. Dilthey employs the term "Ausdruck," which literally translates as "to press or squeeze out" (ausdrucken). "Meaning has been extracted from an incident that begs for insightful or creative interpretation."

Personal problems and returnee Kayayei

According to Yeboah (2009) ^[58], a Kayayoo is a woman who delivers things to customers and sellers in and around commercial districts by wearing goods and commodities on her head for a modest price. One study found that Kayayei in southern Ghana tend to be younger and work less regular hours than their male counterparts who are porters. The Kayayei are mostly unskilled migrants from rural, impoverished parts of northern Ghana who travel to the south to work in the metropolis. The Kayayei people are primarily from impoverished, northern Ghanaian districts. Because of environmental deterioration, the north's rainfall patterns have changed over the last ten years. There is a positive correlation between crop failures and poor salaries in the northern rural areas and drought, unfertile soil from over farming, and insufficient work (Opare, 2010) ^[41]. As a consequence, young people from these regions have been known to move south in quest of better opportunities in urban centres. Financial troubles at home actually motivated many Kayayei to move to the metropolis, as reported by Opare (2010) ^[41]. These families were in northern Ghana. Due to their lack of formal education and hard skills, northern women who move to cities usually find employment in the unorganised sector. The porters see the kaya business as an easy way to work for themselves, one that produces results quickly and provides them with the bare minimum of resources needed for marriage or sending money to their family in northern Ghana. The Kayayei select the city they will operate in through social networking. The majority of Kayayei make arrangements to reside with relatives who are already employed in the cities while they labour in the marketplaces. According to Yeboah (2009) ^[58], Kayayei are employed by "travellers, shop owners, general shoppers, or traders" to mitigate the challenge of cars accessing the middle of the markets to load or unload products. Kayayei are frequently harassed by the police and local authorities in addition to being taken advantage of by their clients (Yeboah, 2009) ^[58]. According to one account, the female Kayayei clients harass the porters to such an extent that the author refers to it as "a woman taking advantage of another woman" (Opare, 2010) ^[41].

The Kayayei do not have access to hand trucks or wheelbarrows to assist them in their labour, in contrast to their male colleagues. As a result, these female porters frequently experience physical illnesses brought on by hard lifting. As was previously established, Agboghloshie's bad environmental conditions—such as open sewage and dense population—cause inhabitants to commonly contract malaria. Another issue is the unclean surroundings and filthy conditions in which their food is made. When illness occurs in the slums, people resort to traditional medical practices and unreliable self-medication due to low incomes and potentially a lack of knowledge about Western medical techniques

Yeboah, 2009 ^[58] Boere (2010) ^[10] demonstrated that one of the key components for each person's improved social and personal achievement is having access to money and being in a sufficient economic situation. One of the biggest obstacles to reintegrating into home society is having insufficient financial background and being indebted after returning.

The Kayayei usually live "from hand to mouth" and pay for their living expenses mostly in Kumasi with their income. Because many Kayayei who look after their kids can't afford the school costs, kids end up following their moms and starting work as Kayayei at very young ages. The Kumasi Kayayei pay a weekly or occasionally daily rent and share rented kiosks; there is a user fee for the slum's potable water, restrooms, and showers. Nevertheless, the cost of living is cheap in the eyes of the locals, even though many are unaware that the total cost of living in a slum is frequently higher than in other low-income areas. According to a study conducted in India by Zachariah (2012) ^[63], both the volume of return migrants and the number of immigrants to the Gulf and other nations are rising. In Kerala, there are 1.17 million returning migrants out of an estimated 2.33 million emigrants. Just 61000 of these returnees left their home countries during the Gulf countries' economic downturn.

Nonetheless, it is a widely held cultural idea in Ghana that women are expected to be homemakers. As a result, women are socialised quite differently than men. Girls are socialised into a role as homemakers, while boys are socialised to fit into the manufacturing system. Girls who receive this kind of socialisation grow up to feel inferior to men and have low self-esteem (Amu, Fajobi & Oke, 2005) ^[4]. Girls' schooling is not considered a serious proposition because education determines one's place in the production system. Unfortunately, because of the time and money required, many parents do not think it is vital to send their girls to school (Yeboah, 2009) ^[58].

Furthermore, most of the 80 Kayayei, as described by Yeboah (2009) ^[58] study, did not finish their basic education, which is the first nine years of formal education, from kindergarten to junior high school. The low enrolment rates of girls in schools nationwide, and particularly in northern Ghana, are evidence of this lack of formal education. Women are forced to work as porters in the shadow economy because of this gendered socialisation, which is characterised by limited educational prospects and prevents them from participating in the socioeconomic production system.

Inadequate training represents another gendered problem that most Ghanaian women encounter. Most of Ghana's GDP is generated by the informal sector, which is mostly driven by women who work as porters, sellers, or traders. Due to their informal employment, the most of women have very little or no formal education, and their poor literacy and education levels limit their access to knowledge that could boost their productivity. Kayayei therefore have no opportunity of becoming a productive part of the economy since they lack the fundamental entrepreneurial abilities in management, marketing, planning, and pricing.

Rural Ghanaian girls' literacy and business understanding are shockingly low, largely because they are frequently taken from school before they can acquire qualitative skills. Without this crucial ability, women are frequently forced into the unorganised economy, which eventually has an impact on their productivity in Ghana's socioeconomic setting. Due to

their perceived socioeconomic standing in Ghanaian society, women are viewed as financial hazards in the country's high-risk financial sector. As a result, women find it challenging to provide security for bank and credit union loans. Although some women may be able to get bank credit, most discourage women from applying for loans from banks because of the potentially 20% interest rates (Amu *et al*, 2005)^[4]. Due to the susu collectors' propensity to steal money, as illustrated by Amina in the introduction, a significant section of the Kayayei depend on this unofficial banking system, which frequently fails. Without loans or other financial resources, women are unable to buy land or other assets. Consequently, women are forced to depend on their family for financial support. If a family member is incapable or unwilling to assist, she is in charge of taking care of herself. Due to financial gain and the pressure to marry early, the lady feels under pressure. Since she depends on her husband for money, if and when she files for divorce due to difficulties, she will be completely broke (Opere, 2010)^[41]. Several women in northern Ghana are forced to work in the illegal economy of the city due to a lack of other possibilities.

Coping strategies and returnee Kayayei

The female returnee kayayei employed different coping to ease their reintegration into their communities. These included moving away from their family homes to lessen the strain on them, working as casual labourers (mixing and carrying concrete for construction projects), getting married, weeding people farms, engaging in small-scale trading or starting their own small farms, galamsey (illegal mining), attending social events, and engaging in multiple livelihood activities while supporting family businesses (Anarfi & Jagare, 2005)^[5]. A study conducted by Anarfi and Jagare (2005)^[5] revealed that the majority of returnees reintegrate by joining alumni associations and hometown associations, joining religious organisations and churches, reestablishing contact with old coworkers and friends at meetings, training sessions, and workshops, and creating a network of friends through email correspondence, addresses, and phone numbers. They also go to social events to network with others and raise their status.

Also, Governmental and non-governmental organisations in the north have made comparable attempts to deter young women from moving to the metropolis to work as Kayayei. Furthermore, a variety of solutions have been proposed by government officials and academics. However, as per Baah-Ennumh (2012)^[8], the Kayayei phenomenon is continuing to escalate in severity. This section focuses on the steps that were previously made in the north to prevent female migration to the south in quest of better opportunities. This section will also go over how the various treatments helped the Kayayoo who returned to Zebilla communities reintegrate.

Savannah accelerated development authority

In order to aid in the reduction of poverty through agriculture in Ghana's five northern regions by 2030, the Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA) was established as an independent organisation in 2010 (Al-Hassan, 2013)^[3]. This effort was designed to support small-scale farmers, particularly women.

Reducing rural-urban migration in Ghana might have been

possible with addressing the poverty in the north. The problem is that because farm food takes a while to harvest, schoolchildren who depend on the harvest to pay their tuition are unable to do so. Most significantly, because it's hard to forecast how much a farmer will be able to make from a harvest, farm produce is unreliable. This is due to the fact that there are periods when the harvest is advantageous and periods when it is not (Baah-Ennumh, 2012)^[8]. Since many women continue to migrate in search of employment elsewhere, the SADA effort does not seem to have had the desired effect of reducing rural-urban migration. Nonetheless, the SADA initiative contributed to a rise in food supplies in Ghana's north (Al-Hassan, 2013)^[3].

Non-governmental organizations in the north

Numerous initiatives by Non-Governmental Organisations have been implemented in each of the five northern areas to lower the poverty rate and discourage female migration to cities where the Kayayei industry is prevalent. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) step in to provide the girls in the north with skills including hairdressing, dressmaking, shea butter production, basket weaving, and tie and dye. Because of the difficulties the women face on their way to job and training, these interventions have not been successful. According to Van den Berg, (2007)^[53] it is quite challenging for them to take care of themselves while they learn these abilities. Some of them place less value on the abilities they learn than someone who learned them in the south. However, (Huijsmans, 2012)^[28] claims that Swift Aid Ghana offers these northern returnee Kayayei vacation training. They also aid in their comprehension of the risks associated with migrating. It has come to the realisation that Kayayei is a profession that supports people's means of subsistence, hence it cannot be eradicated. As a result, they encourage youngsters who choose to stay in the north and attend school by supporting their education (Al-Hassan, 2013)^[3].

Government intervention

Based on Huijsmans (2012)^[28], the Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs carried out a programme known as "Operation Send Them Home." This programme has made it possible for almost 2,000 Kayayei to go back to their communities. Consequently, there are less female Kayayei in Kumasi and Accra's streets. Unfortunately, this endeavour proved to be ineffective for them, as they were forced to return to their old state of destitution and continued to struggle to make ends meet. Consequently, their aspiration to become wealthy in the metropolis remains unfulfilled.

Opera (2013) reports that in 20210, Members of Parliament from the five (5) northern regions instructed staff working for the government in the north, including Metro Mass Transit, to refuse to admit migrant children, especially students. Most students utilise Metro Mass since it's so cheap and uses voter ID to decide who should and shouldn't go. This led to a decline in the number of pupils migrating from the north to south. However, when this teaching was developed, it did not take into account the demands of the students they had stopped from relocating to the south in order to get money to pay for their studies. The main reason this intervention did not work was that there were other transport providers that did not work for the government and would have accepted

these students if they could afford their services.

Campaign for female education (Camfed Ghana)

According to Awumbila, (2008) ^[6] CAMFED Ghana is an NGO that works in the five northern regions and receives financing from the MasterCard Foundation. Their mission is to make high-quality education more accessible to intelligent but economically disadvantaged girls. The five northern areas are to be empowered through education in order to be free of poverty. However, a review of previous interventions revealed that there weren't many initiatives that were especially designed to meet Kayayei's requirements. The majority of the initiatives that had been undertaken had also not been evaluated, which made it challenging to analyse their accomplishments, shortcomings, and learning objectives. One project that the regional DOVVSU ran emphasised the importance of continuing education as a preferable option to working as a Kayayei. This was done through a range of activities focused on education for both sexes, as opposed to a specialised and scheduled curriculum. ActionAid Ghana runs girl's camps in all five regions, and one of its duties is to dissuade girls from migrating to the south to become Kayayei.

The majority of the projects that were found concentrated on giving young women and girls additional ways to earn money. Young girls in the Northern Region received skill development training from the CAMFED and RAINS. Following the completion of a training course, those who participated in the interventions received seed money and a sewing machine. In other cases, programmes ended because of a lack of funding. World Vision International trained young girls for apprenticeships and gave them seed money. Unfortunately, a lack of finance forced the project's termination. A project to teach women how to make hydraform bricks for inexpensive housing in the Northern Region of Ghana was started by the government, but financing issues prevented it from being continued.

The fact that participating in training-centered programmes was sometimes financially unfeasible for females led to their early programme abandonment, which was another major issue that emerged. Former President John Dramani Mahama provided relocation schemes to some Kayayei returnees from Binaba township and its neighbouring communities in the Upper East Region's Bawku West District. The young ladies received electric sewing machines as part of the package, and their apprenticeship expenses were covered so they could receive seamstress training. But the program's failure was caused by a lack of food assistance for the girls throughout their apprenticeship.

Finally, working under the MoGSP, the Department of Gender in the Upper East Region cooperated with the ILO in 2006 and 2007 to implement an intervention focused on shea butter extraction and processing in the district. The Intermediate Technology Transfer Unit (ITTU) provided support for the training of female head porters who were repatriated and for the installation of equipment. Though it did not specifically target Kayayei returnees, the project's goal was to make shea butter extraction and processing an enticing economic activity for young women in the area. Because ownership and management were unclear, politicisation ultimately caused the endeavour to collapse.

Rational emotive behaviour therapy (REBT)

Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT) was developed by Ellis in 1950. This method assisted you in recognising illogical thoughts and negative thought patterns that might result in emotional or behavioural problems. Rational emotive behaviour therapy is based on the notion that our beliefs and thought patterns rather than outer circumstances are what cause the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural problems we encounter.

The REBT's ABC architecture encapsulates this concept

- a. Activating or Triggering event
- b. Belief system
- c. Consequences of our belief system.

According to Ellis (Albert Ellis Institute), most outcomes were ultimately determined by our beliefs, and he believed that the triggering events were given excessive weight. This marked a significant shift from the conventional wisdom of the time and gave female returnee Kayayei hope after they lost faith in traditional therapy because they realised that we actually had far more control over the results if our beliefs are the real cause of the issues rather than the actual events.

According to Turner (2016), REBT practitioners believe that there are two types of cognition: hot and cool. Cold cognitions are how we initially understand and process what happens to us, whereas hot cognitions are evaluations of our cold cognitions. Since our cold cognitions are typically developed early in life and are not consciously comprehended, we have little control over them. Nevertheless, we can affect how we interpret our cold cognitions.

Furthermore, negative emotions that are healthy (HNEs) and negative emotions that are unhealthy (UNEs) are distinguished by REBT. HNEs emerge from adverse events that we respond to with reasonable ideas and adaptive behaviours, whereas UNEs are the product of irrational thoughts and maladaptive behaviours (Taylor, 2016) ^[48]. Helping clients reduce their irrational ideas and replace them with reasonable ones is the aim of REBT. Based on these innovative ideas, REBT was developed as a practical technique to help people acquire coping mechanisms that would allow them to overcome obstacles and handle life's challenges more adeptly.

Techniques of REBT

While there are many strategies that fall under the purview of REBT, clients will primarily study three types of approaches: Techniques for solving problems

The method of cognitive reorganisation

Coping strategies Every category of approaches aligns with a certain segment of the ABC model, providing client with techniques to employ at every stage.

Methods for solving problems

The objectives of problem-solving techniques is to help clients in confronting the activating event or adversity, which is represented by the letter A in the ABC model. Common approaches to solve problems include:

1. Capability to solve problems
2. Self-confidence
3. Social abilities

4. Capability to make decisions
5. The ability to resolve conflicts

Cognitive restructuring techniques (CRT): The goal of CRT is to assist the client in refuting irrational ideas.

Techniques include

1. Techniques that are rational or logical
2. Oriented visuals and imagery
3. Rephrasing
4. Irony and humour
5. Positioning yourself in front of your fears
6. Contrasting illogical ideas

Coping techniques: Coping strategies can be helpful when a client is struggling despite applying reasoned thought processes and is unable to alter the circumstance.

These methods can include breathing exercises, meditation, hypnosis, relaxation, and mindfulness. An A-B-C model of refuting irrational beliefs serves as the foundation for REBT (Ellis, 1962) ^[20]. Clients recognise the distressing incident (A), the accompanying feelings (C), and the associated crippling thoughts (B). Clients express their desired emotions in the event that the same circumstance recurs, refute the erroneous idea, and substitute it with a different, more sensible belief.

REBT places a strong emphasis on the value of preferences in life when analysing ideas as opposed to the rigidity of absolute thinking regarding the course of events. People achieve their objectives as a result of their preferences. On the other hand, illogical beliefs (IBs) often prevent people from achieving their objectives. Ellis (1985) ^[18] underlined that an individual's thoughts are the natural source of common illogical beliefs that cause disruptions. Ellis (1985) ^[18] has highlighted the prevalence and influence of illogical thinking as a factor contributing to client dysfunction. Thoughts on the external world or oneself are possible, but they mostly concern oneself in relation to other people. Can therapists determine that a client is irrational based on that standard? If a counsellor determines that a client's thoughts and conduct patterns are illogical, they will explain why and how changing those thoughts will be a significant step towards helping the returnee. When a client turns a particular incapacity into a generalisation, such as "I just can't do anything right," frontal attacks are not used straight away to carry out the restructuring. To avoid this oversimplification, assist the customer in identifying their past and current competencies.

The principle of Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy was pertinent to this investigation because it enabled the returnee, Kayayei, to think logically and gain significance in the community. The returnee Kayayei was assisted by RET in realising that desires and needs are not rights that should be imposed on society. Additionally, REBT assisted returnee Kayayei in cognitive restructuring so they could stop thinking negatively about themselves, recognise their positive traits, and take use of the various government and non-governmental organisation programmes available to them in order to improve their lives.

BCDE model of emotional disturbance

Ellis postulated that when someone's aspirations or aims are

suppressed or obstructed, illogical ideas arise. We could form illogical ideas about the universe or ourselves that serve as an explanation for what happened when we don't achieve our goals or obtain what we had hoped for. Consider the scenario when you are adamant about getting the job for which you applied. On the day of the interview, you make sure you look your best, practise your answers to questions, and research the company. The hiring manager decided to go with another applicant in spite of your extensive preparation. Accepting that you weren't the right fit for the position or that this wasn't meant to be are two options. However, the decision may also have a significant impact on you, leading you to believe irrational that you weren't hired.

"They can see that I'm a loser, which is why I didn't get this job," you might be asking yourself. You might be thinking, "I'm not good at anything and I never will be," or perhaps, "The hiring manager only had it out for me because I didn't get this job." I have the impression that everything is against me. Even though you can use both of these arguments to support your rejection, they are illogical and could lead to negative thoughts and behaviours in the road.

The ABCDE model can describe how such difficulties arise and are resolved, using this scenario as an example

- a. **Activating Event/Adversity:** The letter 'A' is the activation event, like getting rejected for a job, can set off an unreasonable belief in oneself. Since the inaccurate belief is being formed to help you handle the situation, it is the first step towards establishing an irrational thought.
- b. **Irrational Belief:** The letter "B" represents the irrational belief that develops after the triggering event. It's possible to harbour views such as "I'm a loser, I'm useless, and I wouldn't be able to do the job anyway" as a coping mechanism. Sometimes, even if it is obviously really sad, it is more comforting to think this than to not know why you were passed over for the job. Adopting irrational beliefs is surprisingly easy.
- c. **Emotional and Behavioural Consequences:** The results of this illogical belief make up the third element. There are always repercussions to irrational beliefs-sometimes they are emotional, sometimes behavioural, and occasionally both. Here, the outcomes could be that you become less confident in yourself, experience frequent depression (emotional), and cease seeking for employment (behavioural).
- d. **Disputes or Arguments:** You might eventually come to the realisation that your difficulties are stemming from an illogical viewpoint. You become aware of your declining self-esteem and self-defeating ideas, and you start to refute your unreasonable thinking. If you're seeing a therapist, they could be able to offer you suggestions on how to refute the notion and suggest examples of supporting facts, like "I have an amazing spouse." I must not be a loser because my husband wouldn't be with a "loser."
- e. **New Effect:** Once the illogical notion has been effectively refuted, you will experience new-ideally better-repercussions or effects. In our case, these outcomes could include feeling good about your skills, applying to more jobs, and having more confidence. According to McLeod (2015) ^[39], these advantages come

from adopting a more rational mindset and saying things like, "Maybe the hiring manager really didn't like me, but

that's her loss," or "I just wasn't a good fit for that job, but I'll find another."

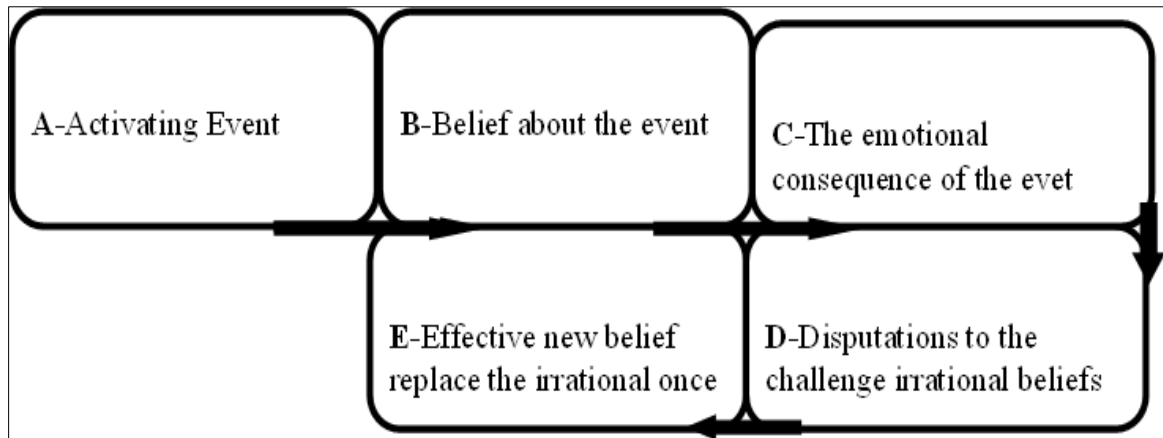


Fig 1: ABCDE-model of emotional disturbance

Through this practice, clients can learn to see the effects of their illogical ideas about the things that are significant to them. The customer is instructed to identify a prominent challenge they are having trouble with using this "REBT Consequences Analysis." It also prompts the customer to consider and write down their most significant objectives or ideals.

Relevance of rational emotive behavioural therapy to the study: Rational Emotive Therapy was utilised to examine the socio-personal issues of head porters who were returning to Zebilla, Ghana, using this theory as a framework. Ellis thought that the activating events were given far too much weight and that our beliefs ultimately dictated the majority of the outcomes (Albert Ellis Institute, 2014). The Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy (REBT) theory was applicable to this research since it made returnee Kayayei more meaningful to the community and enabled him to think rationally. Returnee female head porters were able to think rationally by using cognitive restructuring strategies and altering their illogical ideas according to REBT theory. Moreover, REBT assisted returnee Kayayei in cognitive restructuring so they could stop thinking negatively about themselves, recognise their positive traits, and take use of the various government and non-governmental organisation initiatives available to them in order to improve their lives in Zebilla communities.

Furthermore, the REBT theory was pertinent to the study because it assisted the female returnee head porters in solving problems, being assertive, having social skills, making decisions, and resolving conflicts in addition to helping them deal with activating event "A," or adversity, which causes them to develop the false belief that living and working in cities offers better opportunities.

Once more, REBT theory was pertinent to the study because it assisted the head porters who were returnee females in using hypnosis, breathing exercises, meditation, and relaxation as coping mechanisms to avoid stress and depression in their day-to-day lives. The theory also suggests that REBT was created as a useful strategy to teach young female head porters coping mechanisms that would enable them to get over their struggles and deal with life's setbacks

more skillfully. Rational Emotive Behavioural Therapy was a theory that helped young female returnee head porters identified irrational beliefs and negative thought patterns that may led them to emotional or behavioural issues in Zebilla communities. Applying REBT has the main objective of assisting young, female head porters in leading sensible, fruitful lives. The foundation of rational emotive behaviour therapy is the notion that our thoughts and thought patterns give rise to the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural problems that confront us, not the events that happen to us. Finally, REBT assisted young female head porters in realising that desires and aspirations do not constitute rights that should be pressed for. Words like "must," "should," "ought," "have to," and "need" are demands rather than statements of needs or wishes when they are used in thought.

Materials and Methods

The constructivist research paradigm was employed for the investigation. The study used a phenomenological design and a qualitative research approach to gather data that revealed an existing phenomenon. Adu (2023)^[1] used a similar research design to explore "Betting and Education Attainment: Case of Basic School Students in Sene East District, Ghana". The study's main goal is to investigate the personal issues of "Kayayei," or returnees, in Zebilla, Ghana. The study's sample is the whole population of female returnees, or "Kayayei," in Zebilla. Unfortunately, statistical issues made it difficult to pinpoint the precise number of female Kayayei returnees in Zebilla. This is due to the lack of official data or estimations regarding the overall number of "Kayayei" returnees in Zebilla. Eleven young female returnees, or "Kayayei," from cities like Kumasi and Accra were chosen for the study using a purposeful and snowball selection strategy. One tool used to collect study data was the semi-structured interview guide developed by the researchers. The interview's qualitative data were verbatim recorded, translated, and transcribed, and they were given aliases that weren't their own names. A thematic analysis was done on the data. Following the identification of themes in the participant responses, topics within and across the participant experiences were examined.

Results and Discussions

Table 1: Participants' Demographic Characteristics

Status	Frequencies	Percentages
15-25 Years	6	54.5
26-35 Years	3	27.3
36-45 Years	2	18.2
46+ Years	0	0
Educational Levels		
None	5	45.5
Primary	3	27.3
JHS	2	18.1
SHS	1	9.1
Marital Status		
Single	5	45.5
Married	4	36.3
Divorce	1	9.1
Widow	1	9.1
Years Worked as Kayayei		
1-5 Years	3	27.3
6-10 Years	6	54.5
11-15 Years	2	18.2
16+ Years	0	0
Total	11	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Table 1 above revealed that, 6(54.5%) of the participants were between 15-25 years, 3(27.3%) of the participants were between 26-35 years of age, 2(18.2%) of the participants were between 36-45 years of age and finally, 0(0%) of the participants were 46 years and above. This finding implied that majority of the returnee Kayayei were between 15-25 years which is young age. The current study supported

Todaro, (1969) [50] that most urban migrants in developing nations in Asia and Africa are typically extremely young men and women, typically between the ages of 15 and 25.

Nonetheless, as seen in table 1 above, 5 (or 45.5%) of the participants had a formal education. Three individuals (27.3%) had finished their primary education, two individuals (18.1%) had finished their junior high education, and one individual (9.1%) had finished their senior high education. This suggests that the vast majority of participants lacked formal schooling. The outcome was expected because Kayayei typically migrate away from home at an early age, which has an impact on their educational performance. These results supported Yeboah and Appiah-Yeboah (2009) [58] that 83% of the female participants employed in Accra lacked a formal education.

In addition, table 1 above reveals that 5 participants (45.5%) were single, 4 participants (36.3%) were married, 1 participant (9.1%) was divorced, and 1 person (9.1%) was a widow. This suggests that single people made up the most of the participants. The most of these female head porters are young ladies in their teens or early adulthood who are actively childbearing and who work while living in appalling conditions in the city, according to studies in the literature that the present study confirmed (Opare, 2003) [41].

Finally, table 1 showed that 3 (27.3%) of the participants had one to five years of experience as a Kayayei, 6 (54.5%) had ten to fifteen years of experience, 2 (18.2%) had eleven to fifteen years of experience, and 0 (0%) of the participants had sixteen years or more. This suggests that the majority of participants had six to ten years of Kayayei company experience.

Table 2: Thematic analysis

Themes	Sub-Themes	Quotation Verbatim
Personal Problems	Unemployment	“The poverty rate is high here due to lack of employment. (KK 1) “We had trouble finding food and housing because we had no work (KK 6).
	Health related challenges	“Mmmmm, my brother, I returned home with a lot of sickness such as severe headaches, waist and backaches”. (KK 3)
	Unwanted pregnancies	“Few of our colleagues aborted their pregnancies at any time they got pregnant in the community”. Participant 9
Coping strategies	Minor economic activities such as petty trading, helping family business	“I am now focusing on my small petty trading on market days” (KK 1) Likewise, KK 4 said that; So I thought it wise to engage in activities such as providing laundry and cleaning services
	Getting married	I made the decision to get married in order to have assistance from my spouse in raising my kids. (KK 8)
	Glasseyy	I went to the Shaanxi mining centre at Gbane to engage in galamsey activities for survival
	Apprenticeship training	I have acquired a skills in tied and dye making with the helped of the NGO (KK 10)
	Relocate from family houses	I moved out of my family's home to rent somewhere else since I can no longer handle the pressure from my relatives since I moved here. (KK 2).

Source: Field Survey, 2023

Research Objective 1: Explore the personal problems of returnee Kayayei in Zebilla

The objective of this question was to determine the personal problems facing returnee Kayayei in Zebilla. Items 3 under section B of the interview guide were used to solicit data to answer this question. Themes such as health problems, unemployment and unwanted pregnancies were identified.

Theme 1: Unemployment

The present study revealed that most of the returnee Kayayei were faced with unemployment situation in their

communities since there is no jobs for them to engage in to make a better living for themselves and their families. This was revealed by a participant 5 during the interview.

Which option do I have? [Giggles] Despite my hunger, I attempt to slumber. However, be prepared to labour for someone the following day in order to obtain cash and purchase food. Because it is challenging to sleep when one's stomach is empty. For many people in the north, finding enough food to eat every day is a significant difficulty. This place has a high poverty rate because of the jobless rate. People have difficulty obtaining food. Actually, I feel awful

and uneasy about the way I'm right now. I find it frustrating. (KK 5)

Likewise, participant 6 commented that

We struggled to find food and housing because we don't have any work. On occasion, we have an empty stomach when we go to bed. When my kids get sick, I have no idea what to do because I need money. Even on the days that we manage to eat, it is insufficient. It's hard to sleep somewhere too. Our rooms leak anytime it rains, so when it's pouring, we have to get up and wait outside until the rain stops. Life truly gets to me sometimes when I'm frustrated. I'm not content in the slightest. (KK 6).

Also, participant 8 indicated that

My only problem is money. You cannot care for your elderly parents and your children if you are poor. Since I am not working, the family looks on me to take care of them in the interim. To run my own business, I also need money. I owe a lot of people in this group debts because most of them occasionally, to support the family, I had to borrow money from some of my closest friends and relatives. I'm having a terrible time adjusting to my own house because of all that has happened to me. I'm not a joyful person at all; most of the time, I feel hopeless (KK 8).

However, participant 10 echoed that

To be honest, ever since I went back to my village, nothing has been going well for me. Since my buddies no longer want to get out with me, life has become incredibly boring. My return home with nothing to provide my family and friends has caused discrimination against me even from my own family members. Right now, I feel lonely and bored. I even considered returning to my kaya business in order to continue making some small change at the end of each day. I'm sick of sitting around the house doing nothing to make money. (KK 10).

Similarly, participant KK 11 revealed that

"Mmm, my brother, my current circumstances prevent me from even being able to travel visit my extended family and close friends. I had the impression that going to Kumasi to do kaya business would help me overcome my financial difficulties, but I had no idea that this wasn't the only option. I have nothing to show off now that I'm back at home. I feel so bad about myself that I'm embarrassed to go out and see my friends who are currently better than me. I became the community's laughing stock. I'm worthless (KK 11)

Theme 2: Unwanted pregnancies

Participant 9 commented that

Few of our fellow workers chose to terminate their pregnancies at any point during their community pregnancy. Well, Last year, a tragic event occurred when a woman who desired an abortion met her untimely demise due to the usage of some remedies for the purpose. She bled to death before we could get her to the hospital in Zebilla, where we hurried her to. She wouldn't have gone to the specialist to have it aborted if she had the money; all of this is the result of poverty. I am having a very difficult time because this village does not provide any job options. Life is frustrating to me. I'm sorry to go back to my hometown (KK 9).

Also, participant 7 commented that

"Look, family pressure-especially from my parents-was the reason I returned to Zebilla. They keep telling me that you are in Kumasi aimlessly while many of my colleagues have settled down, which worries me about marriage. I was forced to return home to be married since my father even threatened to disown me as his first daughter if I didn't. In actuality, I had to abort the pregnancy because I had already spent all the money I had when I got home. Abort the pregnancy, please. Actually, I feel low and unconfident (KK 7).

Theme 3: Health problems

The qualitative findings from the participants showed that several had health problems when they went home, including severe headaches, backaches, and waist pains. These conditions could have a serious negative impact on family members who don't have much money. For example, when questioned about this, participant 1 stated.

Mmmmm, my brother, because of the Kayayei business, I came home unwell, suffering from backaches, waist, and excruciating headaches. In order to care for me in the hospital for a few months, my brothers had to sell their pets. Even my NHIS card isn't here to aid with the medical expenses. I'm concerned since I've turned into a financial burden for my family. My family thinks I'm a worthless person. I am so depressed about who I am (KK 1).

Likewise, KK 2 lamented that

Regarding myself. I truly struggle with my health; during the rainy season, I'm prone to skin rashes and malaria. It is sad for my children. They frequently get sick. I find it challenging to collect the money necessary to buy a menstruation pad every month, thus I occasionally struggle with menstrual hygiene. With all I'm dealing with right now. My stepmother, who is also my age, may have charmed me because she doesn't want me to succeed in life more than her daughter. I learned from my stepmother that the cause of my health issues was witchcraft. My NHIS card expired, but I won't use it to get treatment at the clinic until I see a ceremonial functionary. I'm powerless. (KK 2).

Also, KK 3 interviewee juxtaposes that

The difficulty I encountered included my first child. While she was visiting with her grandma, she fell ill. She spent a month in the hospital in Zebilla due to severe malaria. I was too afraid she would pass away in the middle of the night to sleep. We spent up to 500 Ghana cedis on a single medication. I was unable to pay this sum on my own, thus I was dependent on a family member for financial support. My daughter's and my NHIS cards have been expired for the last six months, and because of our financial situation, I am unable to renew them. Right now, as we speak, it is no longer useful. I'm lost, and I have no idea where to turn to get a loan to pay for my child's medical expenses (KK 3).

Likewise, KK 4 echoed that

When I'm sick, I visit the drugstore to purchase medication. However, I've heard that some people can spend more than 1,000 Ghana cedis on medical care. There was a sick sister of mine. To get the money to pay for her hospital costs, we had to go around the neighbourhood and beg from friends and family. First, the hospital asked for 300 cedis when we

visited. We also brought it. They asked for 400 cedis a second time, so we went around asking folks for loans once again. The truth is that my sister is the source of all these issues and does not have an NHIS card. Some of the bills might have been paid if she had been in possession of NHIS cards. I've been depressed for a few days because I bear all of the family's burdens. Since moving back to this community, my financial condition has gotten worse, and I have to take care of everything for the family. (KK 4).

Research Objective 2: Identify possible coping strategies of returnee Kayayei through the ABC Model

The objective of this question was to find out coping strategies of returnee Kayayei in Zebilla. Items 5 under section B of the interview guide were used to solicit data to answer this question. Themes such engaged in minor economic activities, engaged in galamsey, getting married, apprenticeship training and relocate away from the family house were identified.

Theme 1: Minor economic activities

The study found that some participants were engaged in economic activities as such petty trading, weeding of people farms, providing laundry service and cleaning as a coping strategies to reintegrated properly in their communities. Example, KK 1 expressed her desire to engage in petty trading as a coping strategy to help her reintegrate fully in her community. Participant 1 had this to say,

“.....Mmmm, my brother, I returned home with a lot of sickness such as severe headaches, waist and backaches as a results from the Kayayei business. My brothers had to sell their animals to take care of me to in the hospital for some months. But now I'm better because my brother assisted me with some money to establish a small business. I am now focusing on my small petty trading (selling onions, pepper and tomatoes) on market days. There is nothing I can do since I returned home (KK 1).

Likewise, KK 4 revealed that

My financial situation was very bad as at the time I returned home. Things were difficult for me and all the family burden was on me meanwhile, I wasn't engaged in any business to generate money. I was depressed because I couldn't even register NHIS card for my junior sister who was sick. So I thought it wise to engage in activities such as providing laundry and cleaning services from house to house for government worker in my community every day. I now earn some little money that I can use to help my family to survive since life in the north here is very difficult. Truly, I can get GhC50. Per day. In fact, things are getting better since I started this business. (KK 4).

Likewise, KK 5 echoed

“..... because there is no any job opportunities in Zebilla here, and man must survive, I started weeding on people's farms to earn money to make a living for myself and the family. Every day, I carried my hoe and cutlass to go round people houses to find out if they have farm for me to weed so that they can pay me. I earned GhC30.00 per day if I weed on your farm. I can now buy food to eat (KK 5).

Similarly, KK 6 commented that

"Ummmmmmmm! I got home and was pretty pissed off. I was so hungry that I considered returning to Kumasi for the entire day. There is nowhere to go to get food or shelter. In order to support my family's companies and make enough money for self-care, I made this decision. I believe that things are improving from what they were. I help my mum sell vegetables at the market, but we don't make much money because sometimes people don't buy much. Remember that this is not my business, this is my mother's. But if I were in the southern region of Ghana, I might be asked for quick cash in exchange for helping someone carry their bags or with any other small chore. once a day at the very least. These positions don't exist in Zebilla. My brother, I'm finding life in Zebilla frustrating because nothing seems to work in my favor (KK 6).

Theme 2: Galamsey activities

The study found that some returnee Kayayei were engaged in galamsey activities at Shaanxi mining Centre at Ghanbe. A KK 8 revealed that;

“.....In fact how to make money was my biggest challenge since I returned, everybody in the family was looking up to me to take care of them meanwhile, I wasn't working as at then.. I needed money so that I could give my parents and kids food, health care, and education. So my friend advised me to join her at Shaanxi mining centre for galamsey. In fact, I'm earning as much as GhC100.00 per day. I'm saving the money so I can establish trade for myself. (KK 8).

Similarly, KK 9 revealed that

Frankly, my brother, even since I returned from Kumasi, things are really hard for me because there were no employment opportunities in this village. I thought it to myself that I must be able to do something for myself in life since there is nothing wrong with me. My friends are doing well in Zebilla. So therefore I must tried to engage in doing something for a living. I went to the Shaanxi mining centre at Gbane to engage in galamsey activities for survival. I'm paid GhC500.00 per month. I'm saving some money to go into leaning hairdressing. No more frustration, life is getting better for me and my family because I'm now focusing saving money to start hairdressing (KK 9).

Theme 3: Getting married

The study found that some returnees' Kayayei got married as a coping strategy to enable them reintegrated properly into the communities. An interview with KK 3 revealed that; Mmmmm!!!! My brother, I was in a serious problem since I returned because I have nobody to help me. It was my family member who helped me financially when my daughter was sick. I decided to get married so that I get assistance from my husband to take care of my children. I really think getting married was the only option for me to be able to adjust and reintegrate in this community. Since I got married, I'm okay because I now have someone who I can rely on in financial difficult situation (KK 3).

Similarly, KK 7 commented that

Frankly, my brother, when I returned home, I faced many challenges taking care of my children and my parents. My

parents were giving me pressure to get married to a different man since my husband divorce me. I was confused at that time. Finally, I decided to listen to my parent's advice and got married to a man of my choice. I got married to a primary school teacher. In fact, my husband had been helpful to me and my family since we got married. I thought all was lost but now my life is back with happiness and joy. I'm now concentrating on my married. I give thanks to almighty God for that he has done for me. (KK 7).

Theme 4: Apprenticeship training

The study found that some returnees' Kayayei take up apprenticeship training provided by NGOs as a coping strategy to enable them reintegrated properly into the communities. An interview with KK 10 revealed that;

To be really honest, things were difficult for me when I got back home since my friends and relatives were prejudiced against me since I had nothing. I even considered returning to continue my Kayayei business, but then some other returnees and I were helped by an NGO in the north. The NGO steps in to teach us skills like hairdressing, basket weaving, shea butter production, and dressmaking (making ties and dyes). With the assistance of the NGO, I have become proficient in the art of tie-dyeing. Right now, my main goal is to learn how to make tie and dye so that I can become established. (KK 10).

Likewise, KK11 echoed her sentiment as follows

My brother, because of my financial circumstances, I was unable to even travel to see my extended family and close friends when I first moved to Kumasi. I was dissatisfied and thought about going back to Kumasi before the NGO stepped in and taught us skills like hairstyling, basket weaving, shea butter production, dressmaking, and tie and dye making.. The NGO has assisted me in developing my shea butter-making abilities. I'm starting to feel better now. Life will no longer frustrate you. I'm a happy woman now that I'm concentrating on learning how to manufacture shea butter for a living instead of returning to my previous Kayayei company (KK 11).

Theme 5: Relocate away from the family house

Another participant (KK 2) disclosed that she was under pressure from her family to move away from my family's home in order to find peace of mind, so she rented an apartment elsewhere. Participant KK 2 had this to say;

"My brother, I'm having trouble making reliable acquaintances and dealing with too many demands from my family. When you leave and return in this fashion, the family assumes you have made a lot of money, and they always hold you responsible for their problems. I moved out of my family's home to rent somewhere else since I can no longer handle the pressure from my relatives since I moved here. Another issue is that you know you lose all of your friends after living away from home for a while. You are aware that after a while of living away from home, you lose all of your friends. when you have to start over after you eventually get back. To build relationships and get along, I therefore go to all the significant social events in my neighbourhood. For example, I don't make light of church events, marriage and naming rituals, or funerals. Nobody will show up for your funeral or naming ceremony if you don't attend others (KK 2).

Discussions of Findings

Personal Problems and Returnee Kayayei

The current study's findings showed that the three personal challenges that the study highlighted were unintended pregnancies, health-related problems, and unemployment. This result corroborated Rajan & Narayana's (2010) ^[42] discovery that unemployment in Kerala was a major barrier to returnees' ability to reintegrate, suggesting that the state was unprepared to accept them. According to McGrath (1991) ^[38], the majority of returnees had a variety of difficulties with reintegration, such as a difficult economic climate and a dearth of job prospects.

First, a few participants describe how their health problems are their biggest source of personal difficulty. Many health problems, including severe and persistent headaches, backaches, and waist pains, may be attributed to the heavy traffic in Accra. Some of them leave to their communities and then come back to Accra, while others have returned carrying unplanned children or STDs. In these cases, the elderly are usually left behind to look for the sick returnees and their kids, adding to the already scarce resources. This health situation has contributed to returnee Kayayei reintegration difficult. The current research confirms Ziblim's (2013) ^[64] claim that some Kayayei return home with additional health problems, such as severe headaches, backaches, and waist pains, which may be related to Accra's heavy traffic. Some also return home with unwanted children or STDs, which some of them travel to their villages to drop off before returning to Accra. In these cases, the elderly are usually left behind to look for the sick returnees and their kids, adding to the already scarce resources.

According to Ziblim (2013) ^[64], returnee Kayayei have an impact on their communities. The majority of these girls, particularly the young single ones, have bleached their skin to become white and fair women. This is done to attract men from both the city and the country of origin who may be willing to pay a large dowry for their hand in marriage. A woman's likelihood of engaging in several sexual relationships is positively correlated with her level of attractiveness, which could have repercussions for the spread of STDs in her own country. Many divorce and family breakup cases have resulted from some of these women's fear of working in the scorching heat, which prevents them from going to the field to assist their relatives during harvest season (Ziblim, 2013) ^[64].

Second, a few Kayayei returnees had long histories of drug and alcohol addiction before they were fortunate enough to find new jobs. This is because they are unable to find work, which has led to them smoking and drinking alcohol in public areas. Some people experience depression and loneliness as a result of their childhood friends' refusal to socialise with them. Their reintegration issues have been exacerbated by this mindset. The present study backs up McGrath's (1991) ^[38] claim that return migrants continued to exist as a distinct and independent group in the migration literature. The majority of returns faced numerous readjustment issues, such as the unfavourable economic climate and lack of job possibilities, the unwelcoming attitudes of the people, and the inefficiency and slow pace of commercial operations. Due to the difficulties they encountered, it was also stated that over 25% of returnees intended to re-emigrate (McGrath, 1991) ^[38].

Thirdly, some of the migrants returning home described the various personal struggles they are dealing with, including the need to make new acquaintances, a sluggish pace of life, a lack of social services, and a lack of work prospects. As many of them have lost their long-time pals, they recognise the importance of making new connections in their neighbourhoods. Others, who came home from the city with little, had to start their lives over. Apart from farming during the brief wet season, Zebilla currently offers no white-colored employment alternatives. These were the main obstacles that prevented most returnee Kayayei in Zebilla communities in Ghana's Upper East Region from fully integrating.

This research offers models of the reintegration issues that returnees encounter when they return to their home communities. For most returnees to Western Ireland, the primary barriers to complete integration were the need to establish fresh relationships, a slow pace of life, an absence of social services, and a lack of employment opportunities. (Chirum, 2011; Gmelch, 1980)^[13, 27]. Reintegration of returns into the Caribbean was hampered by climatic circumstances, personality changes, lack of employment opportunities, and fear of social dishonour by individuals who had performed poorly at their various locations, according to Eikaas (1979)^[16]. According to a Levine (1982)^[35] study, the majority of Southeast Asian returnees faced significant challenges in reintegrating into society, including low living standards, housing shortages, lengthy job search times, and family conflicts, notably between husband and wife.

Fourth, a lot of returnees described their poverty and debt as their main personal issues. KK 11, KK6, and KK 2 claim that they are in severe financial trouble since they lack the funds to purchase, among other things, food, clothing, and bleaching cosmetics. They occasionally have to ask friends and family for food. They are gorgeous and striking when they return to Kumasi, but they cannot afford to buy decent soap to bathe in and look white again. They can't even pay back the debt because they had to borrow so much from friends and some family members. For the vast majority of returnee Kayayei in Zebilla settlements in Ghana's Upper East Region, these constituted the main obstacles to their complete integration. The current finding is in line with Zachariah & Rajan's (2011)^[62] assertion that one of the primary obstacles to returnees' successful reintegration is their debt and bad financial situation. Setting up or reconstructing a life after return clearly depends on the financial status, debt issues, and availability of funds. Nonetheless, Rajan & Narayana (2010)^[42] discovered that Kerala's high unemployment rate served as a major barrier to returnees' ability to reintegrate, suggesting that the state was unprepared to accept them.

Nonetheless, McGrath (1991)^[38] demonstrates that in the migration literature, return migrants continued to constitute a unique and independent group. McGrath (1991)^[38] noted that the majority of returns encountered a variety of readjustment issues, such as: the unfavourable economic climate and scarcity of job prospects; the unwelcoming demeanour of the community; and the ineffectiveness and sluggishness of commercial operations. McGrath (1991)^[38] also noted that because of the difficulties they were facing, over 25% of returnees firmly intended to re-emigrate.

The current findings also corroborate pertinent research by Ghana Statistical Service (2003)^[21, 22], 2007; Awumbila

(2008)^[6], which examined patterns and trends in poverty in Ghana between 1991 and 2006 and found that the most of the country's extremely poor people resided in the country's five northern regions, where poverty rates were significantly lower than the global average. However, the confluence of all these factors compelled northerners to migrate in order to broaden their revenue streams. In summary, a number of societal, economic, and environmental factors have pushed young women to look for better opportunities in big cities in an attempt to better their lot in life.

Finally, Boere (2010)^[10] demonstrated that one of the key components of each person's improved social and personal performance is having access to money and a stable economic situation. One of the biggest obstacles to reintegrating into home culture is the lack of sufficient financial base and post-return debt. The majority of return migrants took out loans during their emigration, and when they abruptly returned, they owing enormous sums of money.

Coping strategies and returnee Kayayei

Results from the present study revealed coping strategies identified in the study were; engaged in minor economic activities (weeding on people farms, petty trading, helping family business, carrying concrete for construction work, galamsey activities), getting married, relocating away from their family houses to reduce family pressure, getting marriage, attending social gatherings and apprenticeship training. These coping strategies will help returnee Kayayei reintegrate properly in their various communities in Zebilla. Firstly, from the discussion, Barikisu response revealed that the only way she could do to survive the economic hardship was to go to Shaanxi mining centre to engage in mining activities to earned income. Some few participants revealed that they were engaged in illegal mining (galamsey) as a temporary employment to earn a living. Life was frustrating for many of them because there are no job opportunities for them, so they have to relocate to the galamsey centre to engage in the mining although they agree it is illegal, they have to survive. The current study supported Anarfi & Jagare's (2005)^[5] findings that the majority of returnees reintegrate by going to reunions and alumni associations, joining churches and religious groups, reconnecting with old friends and coworkers at meetings and creating a network of friends through exchange of contacts and addresses. Additionally, they attend social events to enhance their status and create social networks as coping mechanisms for appropriate readjustment in their communities.

Secondly, other participants (KK6 & KK 10) were of the view that they took apprenticeship course such as tailoring, hair dressing, tie and dye making skills and shea butter making skills. The northern NGOs helped them apply for the programme, and at graduation, the same NGOs will support them in opening a store. In an effort to stop young women from migrating to the cities to work as Kayayei, government and non-governmental organisations have worked in the north; nevertheless, these organisations face funding constraints. The present results support Baah-Ennumh's (2012)^[8] assertion that government and NGOs have operated in the north to lessen the movement of females seeking employment as Kayayei in the metropolis. Additionally, a number of remedies have been put out by academics and government representatives. But the Kayayei phenomenon is

still becoming more and more of a problem.

However, the current data align with Van den Berg's (2007) ^[53] assertion that several interventions by non-governmental organisations have been implemented in all five northern regions to lower the poverty rate and discourage female migration to places where Kayayei is practiced. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) step in to provide the girls in the north with skills including hairdressing, dressmaking, shea butter production, basket weaving, and tie and dye. Conversely, the women's experiences getting training and employment have made these initiatives ineffective. They are learning these incredibly tough tasks, and in the process, they have to take care of themselves. Some of them place less value on the talents they learn than someone who learned them in the South. Huijismans (2012) ^[28] also verified that Swift Aid Ghana offers these returnee Kayayei in the north vacation training.

Thirdly, some participants narrated that they have to relocate from their family houses or rent a different room in order for them to stay away from family pressure for them to get married so that they can take dowry and others families were always demanding money from them. You know if you return from south, everybody think that you came home with a lot of money. Anarfi & Jagare's (2005) ^[5] findings were supported by the current study, which found that the majority of returnees reintegrate by going to reunions, alumni associations, churches, religious groups, and meetings. They also connect with former coworkers and friends at training sessions, workshops, and meetings, exchanging phone numbers and addresses, and attending social events to enhance their status and create social networks as coping mechanisms for appropriate readjustment in their communities.

Fourthly, KK 6 & KK 8 indicated that she got married as coping strategy to enable her reintegrate full in her society. People in the northern Ghana value marriage so much that if a girl is more than twenty years and not married yet, the society begins to see as uncultured lady. How even, this practice had been in the north for decades but what we see today is different because Kayayei will always return home with children without fathers and their parents accept them. The present study contradicts (Van den Berg, 2007) ^[53], which claims that early marriages in Ghana's five northern regions have decreased as a result of the Kayayei occupation, in addition to helping one to make a living. This is due to the fact that these young females, who otherwise would have been married off, move to the south of the nation and work as Kayayei to support their family and themselves. But the study refutes Shamsu-Deen's (2013) ^[45] claim that, in Ghana's Upper East, families who offer their daughter for marriage receive four cows in return, and that, instead of giving up their daughter for marriage, families are more worried about the meagre amount of money the child brings home to support them.

Fifthly, from the results, it is revealed that KK 4 & KK 1 were engaged in petty trading and helping family business respectively as a coping strategy to reintegrate fully in their community. This current research confirms Anarfi & Jagare's (2005) ^[5] findings that some coping strategies used by the female returnee head porters to ease their reintegration into their communities included moving away from their family homes to lessen the strain from them, working as casual

labourers (mixing and carrying concrete for construction projects), getting married, weeding people's farms, engaging in small-scale trading or starting their own farms, galamsey (illegal mining), attending social events, and engaging in a variety of livelihood activities. Some of these strategies helped the female returnee head porters adapt to life in their communities.

Sixthly, the study emerge that some returnee Kayayei took advantage of numerous Government and None Governmental Organization interventions programme to cure the high poverty rate in the north and also provide north-south migration in the cities to engage in Kayayei business but end up returning home without achieving their purpose of migrating in the first place. However, some of these Government and NGOs interventions included; Savannah Accelerated Development Authority (SADA), NGOs, Camfed Ghana, Regional Advisory Information, World Vision International, ActionAid Ghana and Network Systems (RAINS). In the north, these initiatives have been successful in lowering the number of women migrating to the cities for Kayayei business and then leaving without fulfilling their original intention of visiting the metropolis. They were engaged in apprenticeship training such as hair dressing and tailoring training as a coping strategy to help them reintegrate fully in the Zebilla.

Lastly, the current study shows that the majority of the programmes reported in the literature focused on providing young women and girls from the north with access to alternative sources of income-generating activities. The CAMFED and RAINS provided skill development training to women in the five (5) Northern Regions. After completing a training session, those who participated in the interventions received seed money and a sewing machine. The project met with some success overall, but there were setbacks, particularly in Zebilla, where the participants were ridiculed by the locals for taking part in the study.

Findings

Personal problems and returnee Kayayei

1. The study found that returnee Kayayei's personal struggles included unintended pregnancies, health problems, and unemployment.
2. The study discovered that unemployment accounted for most of the personal issues faced by returnees, or "Kayayei."
3. The study revealed that some of the returnees' Kayayei were forced into prostitution and had several sexual partners in their villages as a result of their intolerable jobless position, which led to unintended pregnancies.
4. The study additionally reveals that upon their return, returnees experience personal issues in addition to feelings of disappointment, loneliness, and dissatisfaction.

Coping strategies and returnee Kayayei

1. This study revealed that returnees "Kayayei," most frequently adopted modest economic activities, marriage, apprenticeship training, and moving out of the family home as coping mechanisms.
2. The research found that returnee Kayayei enrolled in NGO-provided apprenticeship programmes to learn skills like shea butter business and dressmaking (tie and

dye).

3. The study discovered that in an effort to improve their lot in life, some returnee Kayayei participated in galamsey activities at the Shaanxi Mining Centre.
4. The study revealed that several returnees actively participated in social events including marriages, naming ceremonies, and funerals after returning home, which helped them build new social networks.

Conclusion

The life of returnee "Kayayei" has not been easy for them since they are always faced with constant personal challenges in their community. This study findings revealed that returnee "Kayayei" encounter personal challenges which included unemployment, health related issues and unwanted pregnancies. In an attempt to overcome all these personal challenges, returnee Kayayei adopted coping strategies such as engaged in minor economic activities (weeding on people's farms, petty trading, providing laundry service and galamsey activities), getting married, apprenticeship training and relocate away from their family houses. Also the study concluded on the findings that some returnee Kayayei were engaged in apprenticeship training programmes provided by NGOs to acquired skills such as dressmaking (tie and dye), hair dressing, tie and shea butter making to counter the irrational belief from the ABC emotional disturbances to reduced pressure they are going through and reintegrate properly in their various communities in Zebilla.

Recommendations

1. The study recommended the government arrange public health education on reproductive health issues, HIV/AIDS, STIs, and unsafe abortions for these young returnees, or "Kayayei," through the MoH and GHS.
2. The study recommended that, returnee Kayayei should take up Government and NGOs intervention programmes such as SADA, dressmaking, hair dressing, shea butter production to improve their living conditions in Zebilla.

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