

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: Undocumented Labour in Saudi Arabia
The Case of Jeddah

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Abstract

In the last few decades Saudi Arabia and Jeddah has experienced a massive flow of undocumented migrants. This phenomenon is particularly interesting in Saudi Arabia because it involves migrants from different continents and countries, offering the opportunity of a cross-sectional analysis of their communities. This thesis will focus in particular on the case of Jeddah as a case study that serves as a representative microcosm for the whole country. For the first time, using a qualitative analysis, a researcher has been able to access some of the undocumented migrant communities living in the city in their own environment and, through face-to-face interviews, to gather their personal narratives about their lives as the “undocumented.” In particular, this research will analyse twelve communities chosen for being the most representative in the city of Jeddah: the African (e.g., Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali, Sudanese, Chadian, Nigerian, Burkinabe, Ghanaian, and Cameroonian), the Yemeni, and the Filipino and Indonesian ones. Despite sharing the common experience of living as undocumented in the Kingdom, their relationship with the members of their communities, with the other communities and with the Saudi society are as varied as their backgrounds. This study also offers the opportunity of a discussion on the immigration policies adopted by Saudi Arabia and on their failure in tackling the problems of the undocumented migrants on its soil. In this regard, the study ends with recommendations for Saudi policy makers. Due to the sensitivity of the subject, the researcher guaranteed full confidentiality and anonymity to the interviewees from all the communities who accepted to share their experiences with him.

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A note on transliteration and use of names

Library of Congress Arabic Transliteration System:

Consonants

ء	°	ط	ṭ
ب	b	ظ	ẓ
ت	t	ع	°
ث	th	غ	gh
ج	j	ف	f
ح	ḥ	ق	q
خ	kh	ك	k
د	d	ل	l
ذ	dh	م	m
ر	r	ن	n
ز	z	ه	h
س	s	و	w
ش	sh	ي	y
ص	ṣ		
ض	ḍ		

Vowels

Long	ا	ā	Short	َ	a
	و	ū		ِ	i
	ي	ī		ُ	u

I have used the above Library of Congress Arabic Transliteration System for the bibliography. Arabic words describing technical concepts follow the same form when mentioned for the first time but all subsequent mentions are transliterated without macrons and dots. The reason for this is to facilitate the reading for non-Arabic speakers. Capitalisation of the definite article has only been adopted for names of places (e.g. Al-Karantina). Although this work has faced the common challenge of finding a scientific way of transliterating Arabic words and names, the researcher has endeavoured to be consistent throughout the work and has tried to follow some basic rules. For example, well-known Arabic names in English have been spelt in the form found in English lexicons. To follow this trend, different signages found throughout the city of Jeddah are reproduced here in their non-italicised form.

Chapter One

An Overview of Labour Migration to Jeddah

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Jeddah: A brief history

Modern Jeddah is located on the eastern coast of the Red Sea, approximately halfway between the Suez Canal and the southern tip of the Arabian Peninsula. It is the country's largest and most important port. It is situated in the Western region of Saudi Arabia and “stretches for about 50 kilometres north-south along a narrow-lying coastal platform cutting across the Quaternary and Tertiary lime stones, known as the ‘Tihama’.”¹

The city of Jeddah (as it is most commonly spelt)² first achieved significance in 647 AD when the third Muslim caliph ‘Uthmān ibn ‘Affān (644-656) turned it into a port. For commercial and religious reasons Jeddah was the main city of the historic *Hijaz*³ province serving as a port for pilgrims arriving by sea *en route* to Makkah and Madinah (the second holiest city in Islam after Makkah). After the

¹ Peter Vincent (2003). *Jeddah's Environmental Problems*. Vol. 93, No. 3. pp. 394-412.

² According to the literature, there are three competing etymological and spelling opinions about the name of Jeddah: One of the earliest Arab historians and a native of the city Jeddah, Ibn Faraj (d. 1602) spelled it as “*Jaddah*” with an “a” (*maftūh*). It is said that the city was named Jaddah—which means grandmother in Arabic—after Eve, the grandmother of all humanity who, according to many chronicles, landed from heaven to this city and was buried there. In 1975 the alleged *Maqbarat Ummāna Hawa’a* (Grave of our mother Eve) was sealed with concrete by the Saudi religious authorities because they accused some Muslim pilgrims to the site of praying to it (Ṭarābulṣī: 2008). Abu-Nasr (2008) recently noted: “Like hundreds of Muslims who visit Saudi Arabia for pilgrimage in nearby Mecca, the Iranians had heard the legend that Eve was buried in that spot. The two blue signs inscribed with “The grave of our mother Eve” flanking the cemetery entrance appeared to add credibility to a story passed on by generations of Saudis but not scientifically proved.” Other scholars postulate that the city’s name should be spelled and pronounced Jeddah with an ‘l’: it is said that Jeddah was named after the son of a tribal leader of Qudha’a, who was born there more than 2500 years ago. Modern scholars such as Al-Ansārī (1980, p. 70), Ṭarābulṣī (2008, p. 8) insist that the city’s name should be spelled and pronounced as “*Juddah*” with a “u” (*ḍamma*) which means “seaside” in Arabic and that the name Jeddah is derived from “the *Juddah* of a river means riverbank.” This version of the name was widely accepted after an extensive debate in the 1980s among scholars of Arabic language and history.

³ The term *Hijaz*, literary means barrier in Arabic.

beginning of Islam, and its rapid territorial expansion, Jeddah's economic importance significantly increased its geopolitical importance. Whoever controlled the port of Jeddah automatically controlled Makkah, the land of Arabia in general and *Hijaz* in particular. In this regard, all the caliphal dynasties that ruled large parts of the Islamic world found it imperative to bring Makkah, the "symbol" of Islam, along with the *Hijaz*, under their direct control as an indication of their power and prestige over the rest of the Muslim empire. As a result, historically, Jeddah has been the subject of rivalry among various powers in the *Hijaz* region, within the Arabian Peninsula and the outside world. As a consequence of who controlled this strategic city, Jeddah was ruled by many different dynasties. The following table provides a list of the different dynasties and dates of their rule of Jeddah:

Table 1: list of the different dynasties and dates of their rule of Jeddah

Name of the rulers	Date	Nature of control
Qudha tribe	200BC	Direct control
Khuza tribe	100BC	Direct from Makkah
Quraysh tribe		Direct from Makkah
The Pious "Righteous" Caliphs	622-661AD	Direct from Madinah
The Umayyad House Dynasty	661-749	Direct from Damascus
The Abbasid Dynasty	750-1258	Indirect from Iraq & Egypt
Tulunid Dynasty	868-905	Indirect from Egypt
Ikhshidid Dynasty	935- 969	Indirect from Egypt
Fatimid Dynasty	969-1171	Indirect from Egypt
Ayyubid Dynasty	1171-1250	Indirect from Egypt
Mamluk (Bahri) Dynasty	1250-1382	Indirect from Egypt
Mamluk(Burji/Circassian)Dynasty	1382-1517	Indirect from Egypt
Ottoman Dynasty	1517-1916	Indirect from Egypt
Saudi Dynasty (first state)	1803-1813	Direct from Najd
Egyptian Dynasty Mohammad Ali	1805-1844	Direct from Egypt
Ottoman Dynasty	1840-1916	Direct from Istanbul
Hashemite Dynasty	1916-1924	Direct from Makkah
Saudi Dynasty (third state)	1926-Present	Direct from Riyadh

Source: Adapted from Abū Dawūd, 'Abd al-Razzāq (2011), *Jiddah: Mu'ṭayāt al-makān wa āfāq al-zamān. Aldar Alarabia Nashroon, Bayrūt, Lebanon*, pp. 13-64.

Due to its location and importance as the gateway to the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, over time, Jeddah has been one of the most important cities on the Red Sea with a prosperous port that has engaged in all types of trade

activities, including the slave trade.⁴ These commercial activities enabled it to develop as a trading hub on the Red Sea. During its long history, many merchants from different lands decided to migrate and establish their businesses in this town. At the same time countless pilgrims, in particular, but also freed slaves, and visitors to the holy cities from different domains and throughout different eras decided to settle in the *Hijaz* (Ochsenwald, 1980: 118) for religious, social, economic, or political reasons.

These waves of migration made Jeddah's population extremely culturally diverse. At present, Jeddah is one of the most cosmopolitan cities in the world with a population that includes, along with its native Arab tribes, many migrant communities from the Muslim and non-Muslim world. Contrary to the Saudi government's strict regulations, laws on migration, work permits and the overstaying of visas, research in this area indicates that in the past there was no specific law that forbade or hindered the wish of any Muslim to live or settle close to the holy cities in the *Hijaz* region,⁵ and or to engage in commercial transactions as a labourer or merchant.⁶

Due to the 1930s/40s exploration of oil that began with the end of WWII, Jeddah enjoyed the social and economic changes experienced by the rest of Saudi Arabia. In 1948, Jeddah's walls were demolished,⁷ preparing the city for its first modern expansion. As the country prospered, due to the new oil revenues, the demand for skilled and non-skilled foreign workers increased dramatically. This trend was also observed in Jeddah, where the number of overstayers and undocumented migrants began to rise due to its geographical location on the

⁴ Ochsenwald (1980 p. 118) By the early 19th century, European powers, particularly Great Britain, sought to abolish the slave trade outside Europe, including the Middle East.

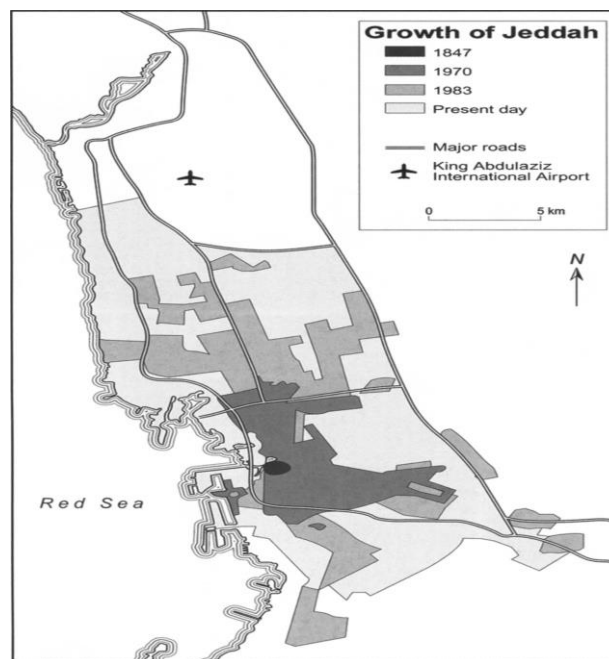
⁵ One should note that historically, non-Muslims were not allowed to enter the holy lands of Mecca and Madinah or even come as close as Jeddah. In this case, Muslims considered Jeddah and other towns in *Hijaz* region as part of the holy lands of Islam.

⁶ It should be noted that the development of the modern state concept of sovereignty and the emerging complexities and ease of travelling across borders of countries required tremendous changes in local and international laws regarding issues of migration and refugees. This issue will be discussed in chapter three.

⁷ According Bagadeer (2014 p. 366), the wall surrounding Jeddah was built by Hussain Al-Kurdi under the order of the last Sultan of the Mamluk dynasty, Qunsuwwa Al-Ghouri (1501-1516), in 1509 because he wanted to protect the Red Sea from the attacks by the Portuguese. However, other historians such as Ibn Faraj (d. 1602) contend that it was built by the Persians long before Islam.

Red Sea as well as to its wealth. Jeddah's position on the Red Sea gave it an advantage over other cities in the country. At the turn of the new millennium, Jeddah remained the biggest financial hub in the region. The map below shows the growth of the city from 1848 to the present. It highlights the very fast pace at which the city has grown, due in part—as will be shown later—to the presence of undocumented immigrants from Africa, Yemen and Asia.

Figure 1: Growth of the City of Jeddah from 1847 to present



Source: Vincent, Peter "Jeddah's Environmental Problems" p. 396. *Geographical Review* Vol. 93, No. 3 (July 2003), pp. 394-412. Published by the American Geographical Society.

For many centuries, Jeddah's physical size remained within an area of less than 2 square kilometres. Today, the total area of Jeddah is around 74,762 km which is about 3% of the total area (2,250,000 km) of Saudi Arabia. According to data released by *Al Jazeera* newspaper in 2000, its residential buildings cover 85% of the total city area. The city is economically prosperous with more than 3,000 shopping and commercial centres, and its port is the largest and most sophisticated in the Middle East, receiving 50% of all imported goods to

the KSA. The city airport receives over 10 million passengers per year.⁸ Most of the largest Saudi companies and businesses have their headquarters in the city.

It is evident that this increase in the population had an enormous impact on the city. The sudden passage from a traditional trading economy to an oil nation had in effect centralised a country otherwise very fragmented in its internal organisation. At the same time, the new flux of income originating from the sale of oil dramatically increased the living standards of Saudis, creating new needs and new job opportunities for documented and undocumented labourers.

The golden era of Saudi Arabia's oil revenue were the years between 1973 and 1981. The affluence that came from oil radically changed Saudi Arabia's economy, strengthening the power of the ruling family. In this context, Kelly (1986 Pp. 38-40.), contends that within the new reality offered by the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and also due to the international reserves accumulated during this period, the government was able to offer Saudi citizens a series of social benefits that changed the way the society was organised. For example, they were able to invest in the nation's infrastructure with the construction of 2,000 schools between 1975 and 1980. National health insurance also received a boost with the construction of 7,400 new hospital beds and 237 new outpatient clinics. The abundance of wealth derived from oil was also at the origin of a renewed construction industry. According to Kelly, between 1975 and 1980, Saudi Arabia "constructed over 13,000 km of main roads and another 10,000 km of rural roads." This improvement of the country's infrastructure and services inevitably meant an improvement in Saudis' everyday life and expectations, changing completely the social panorama of the country. This trend provided a unified platform for the implementation of nation-wide social and economic reforms which strengthened Saudi's sense of identity.

Consequentially, due to Saudis' reluctance to take on menial work and a shortage of Saudi candidates for skilled jobs, the Saudi economy has remained dependent on Westerners for expertise in specialised industries and on the

⁸ *Al-Jazera newspaper*, Saturday January 1, 2000, number 10108, p.22.

African and Asian workforce for the construction industry, domestic work, and other related services.

The presence of foreign workers in the country varied with the fluctuation of oil revenues, as well as with the changing political landscape of the area. For example, beginning in 1985, declining oil prices led to a decreased demand for foreign labour, resulting in a substantial drop in migration from Asia. Similarly, the Gulf War of 1991 sparked a series of expulsions of guest workers suspected of disloyalty, including the removal of 800,000 Yemenis. The numbers of foreign workers seemed to have decreased in the 1990s, but at the end of the decade, the flow of migrants resumed. According to official 2012 figures, foreign workers filled 66 per cent of jobs in Saudi Arabia, despite an official unemployment rate of 12 per cent amongst Saudis, and these expatriates send an average of \$18 billion each year in remittances to their home countries.

The same changes in the labour force in Jeddah can be witnessed all over the country with the presence, in particular starting from the 1970s when skilled and semi-skilled foreign Arab and Asian workers, produced an economy highly dependent on a foreign workforce. This situation, despite the different policies adopted by the government of amnesties and forced deportation, has not changed in the last decades. However, the economic crisis of the last few years saw a steadily fall in native Saudis employment and led to a massive intervention from the government to guarantee jobs to Saudi citizens. The Nitaqat campaign⁹ aimed at the “Saudisation” of the workforce started in September 2011 with the voiced opposition of the business community that saw the imposition of a quota on Saudi employees as a threat due to the high cost of labour. Since 2013, the campaign against the presence of illegal workers in the Kingdom strengthened. The construction of a 1800 km iron fence at the border with Yemen is one of the controversial steps undertaken by the government. Together with this, the Saudi government also issued a series of amnesties which made possible the regularisation of five million irregular workers. Today in 2015, the government has still to achieve its goal of replacing foreign workers with Saudis, due in part to the global economic crisis which has the

⁹ For further details, see section 1.7.3.

implementation of a large-scale job creation programme difficult. However, as this study will prove, all these measures do not guarantee any success in curbing the flow of illegal immigrant coming into Jeddah, and more into the country more generally.

1.1.2 Undocumented Migrants as the Research Focus

The last few decades have seen an increase in the presence of undocumented migrants in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and in particular in the city of Jeddah. These migrants hail from neighbouring countries, specifically Yemen, but also from Africa and Asia. Consequentially, Saudi cities, especially Jeddah, have experienced the birth of new communities of people living on their margins, but having a huge impact on their demographic, cultural and social composition.

As this work will focus in particular on the city of Jeddah, it is appropriate to point out here why the researcher chose this city. The first is that Jeddah, due its geographical position, has historically been the first port of entry for travellers from Europe, Africa and Asia. Second, immigration in the last forty years has changed the face of the city and challenged its economic and cultural composition. The third reason is that, in comparison with other cities in the Kingdom, Jeddah hosts different communities of migrants from different countries and continents. The fourth reason is that the researcher is a native of Jeddah and has lived in the city for decades. Because of this intimate knowledge of the city, he was well placed to collect the amount of data necessary to carry out the investigation.

A distinguishing aspect of this research is that it deals with ‘undocumented’ migrants. This feature distances it from other research in the field because it required a different, more challenging approach. Until now, most of the previous research on undocumented migrants was carried out by taking into account a sample of migrants who were either in prison or awaiting deportation. The researcher reckons that even if this approach allowed an insight of the reasons for their migration, it fails in identifying other important aspects of their experience in living as undocumented migrants. By contacting and studying the

community, the researcher managed to gain a unique insight of their lives in Saudi Arabia and in Jeddah in particular.

This study includes an analysis of three groups of countries. The first group is the African group which consists of nine different African communities: Somali, Ethiopian, Eritrean, Sudanese, Chadian, Nigerian, Burkinian, Cameroonian and Ghanaian. The second group consist of only one community, the Yemeni. The third and final group consists of two communities, those from the Philippines and Indonesia. All twelve communities are currently living in the city of Jeddah. As will be elucidated in the following chapters, each of these communities presents a different point of view because of the cultural and social challenges that they have to face from the moment the migrants decide to leave their home country to when they start a new life in Jeddah. Their experiences, as will be explained in greater detail in the methodology section, have been gathered through semi-structured interviews which offered unique personal narratives. In addition to that, the researcher was able to complement the information attained about their previous experiences with an analysis of the legal and social structure in which they live, in particular factoring in the impact that Saudi migration laws and policies have on their lives. The research also manages to build upon their narratives with an analysis of the reasons for migration taking into account the economic, social and cultural issues involved in the phenomena of “hidden populations” such as theirs.

Elizabeth Y. Lambert defines “hidden populations” as:

“Hidden populations”¹⁰ euphemistically refers to those who are disadvantaged and disenfranchised: the homeless and transient, chronically mentally ill, high school dropouts, criminal offenders, sex trade workers, juvenile delinquents, gang members, runaways, and other “street people. [T]hose we are all aware of to one degree or another, yet know so little about. These populations are often omitted from nationally representative surveys, largely because they have no fixed address or because they are less likely to be found at home or to agree to an interview (Lambert: 1990).¹¹

¹⁰ The findings in this study of the undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah challenge this somewhat negative stereotype portrayed by Lambert, as will be shown below.

¹¹ Edited by Elizabeth Y. Lambert (1990), *The Collection and Interpretation of Data from Hidden Populations*, Division of Epidemiology and Prevention Research, National Institute of Drug Research.

Migration, in general, is an ancient phenomenon. Human societies have witnessed the movement of people and labour for millennia and have been a major cause for the creation of new nation states in different parts of the world. The most prominent example of that today is the United States of America. Human migration continues to the present day, albeit with slight modifications in the direction and characteristics of the migrant him/herself. The increasing numbers of documented and undocumented migrants around the globe can be attributed to several causes: a significant and recent increase in world population; the advancement of new technologies; the technological improvement in methods of transportation; labour market forces; and the increasing gap between rich and poor.

In the case of Saudi Arabia and Jeddah in particular, the causes for the massive migration experienced during the last 40 years are found in deteriorating political and social conditions in some locations around the world, and in Saudi and Jeddah's geographical position. Historically, many undocumented migrants settled in small communities out of the reach of the authorities in major cities in the *hijaz* region, such as the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah and their gateway, the city of Jeddah. Over time they managed to organise themselves socially and economically. Some undocumented migrants were employed in the construction sector, or sold goods on the streets. Others engaged in illegal activities, such as the sex trade, or in the undocumented, or illegal, production of alcohol. Others came with the specific intention of begging. The lack of education and the miserable economic conditions of many undocumented migrants may constitute a major factor in the present Saudi security dilemma. In particular, their socio-economic needs, if not met effectively, may cause a social, economic, or a political crisis in the near future (*Al-Watan*: 2007).¹² In addition to migrants who enter the country illegally, there are also those who are born in the country with their parents being undocumented migrants who had never been able to obtain citizenship or a legal permit.¹³

¹² *Al-Watan* (2007) Saudi Arabian newspaper report. Experts say that the huge numbers of undocumented Africans living in the southern parts of Jeddah is a problem that, if left unattended, could lead to massive demographic changes in Jeddah within 50 years.

¹³ Some undocumented migrants were fathered by a Saudi national who refused to acknowledge parentage for one reason or another.

While the impact of the Arab Spring on Saudi Arabia is beyond the scope of this study, I contend that it has affected millions of migrants who are already in Saudi Arabia and may play a role in creating new migration flows of documented and undocumented migrants into the country from Yemen, Egypt and Syria, for example. The researcher argues that these new waves of migrants may further complicate the issue of state security.

1.1.3 Overview of Chapter

This chapter consists of nine sections. The first section defines major terms and concepts. The second one presents an overview of the research on migration in the region. The third presents the focus of the study. The fourth deals with the importance of the study. The fifth provides the aim of the research by laying down its overall objectives including the macro and micro level of analysis. The sixth section is the literature review and presents an overview of the various theories used in migration research while concentrating on important variables that relate to the present study. The section also provides examples of published work done on migrants in Saudi Arabia. The seventh section will discuss key issues related to the study and will provide operational definitions of major concepts used in this research. The eighth section consists of an outline of terminology employed in this study. The ninth section presents an outline of the various chapters contained in this thesis. Before continuing, and for sake of clarity, the following section defines major terms and concepts.

1.2 Terminology

The following are explanations of key terms and concepts that will assist in navigating through the study.¹⁴

¹⁴ IOM (2011). *Glossary on Migration, International Migration Law Series*. No. 25. Some of the definitions were selected from the International Organization for Migration's Glossary on Migration 2004. (Full Glossary found at http://publications.iom.int/bookstore/free/IML_1_EN.pdf).

1.2.1 Assimilation

Assimilation is the adaptation of one ethnic or social group – usually a minority – to another. Assimilation means the subsuming of language, traditions, values and behavior, or even fundamental vital interests and an alteration in the feeling of belonging. In the case of the undocumented migrants in Jeddah, assimilation for the majority of the undocumented is almost impossible due to language, ethnicity, and the fact that there are no particular laws that make it possible for migrants to gain Saudi nationality—even those who were born in Saudi Arabia.

1.2.2 Border control

Border control is a state's regulation of the entry of persons to its territory, in exercise of its sovereignty.

1.2.3 Consular functions

Consular functions consist of the protection of the interests of the sending state and of its nationals in the receiving state; it furthers the development of commercial, economic, cultural, and scientific relations between the sending state and the receiving state. This is not provided by the majority of foreign consulates in Jeddah except that of the Philippines. Consular protection refers to consular functions aimed at helping nationals abroad; assisting in the protection of their rights and interests before local courts. In particular, protection extended to migrants arrested, sentenced to prison, in police custody pending trial, or detained in any other manner. Many undocumented migrants' communities, for example the African and the Yemenis, as will be discussed in the analysis of data chapters, suffer from lack of protection from their respective consulates.

1.2.4 Country of origin

The country that is the source of migratory flows (regular or irregular).

1.2.5 Deportation

Deportation is the act of a state in the exercise of its sovereignty in removing an alien from its territory to a certain place after refusal of admission or termination of permission to remain.

1.2.6 Detention

Restriction of the freedom of movement usually enforced on individuals by government's authorities. There are two types of detention. Criminal detention, having as a purpose punishment for the committed crime; and administrative detention, guaranteeing that another administrative measure (such as deportation or expulsion) can be implemented. In the majority of the countries, irregular migrants are subject to administrative detention, as they have violated immigration laws and regulations, which is not considered to be a crime. In many States, an alien may also be detained pending a decision on refugee status or on admission to or removal from the State.

1.2.7 Documented migrant worker

A migrant worker or members of his/her family authorized to enter, to stay and to engage in a remunerated activity in the State of employment pursuant to the law of that State and to international agreements to which that State is a party (*International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990*). In other words, a documented migrant is one who enters a country legally and remains in the country in accordance with his/her admission criteria. A documented migrant is the same as a temporary migrant worker, or guest worker.

1.2.8 Economic migrant

A person leaving his/her habitual place of residence to settle outside his/her country of origin in order to improve his/her quality of life. This term may be used to distinguish from refugees fleeing persecution, and is also used to refer

to persons attempting to enter a country without legal permission and/or by using asylum procedures without bona fide cause. It also applies to persons settling outside their country of origin for the duration of an agricultural season, appropriately called seasonal workers.

1.2.9 Exploitation

The act of taking advantage of something or someone, in particular the act of taking unjust advantage of another for one's own benefit (e.g. sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs).

1.2.10 Gatekeeper

The gatekeeper is usually a person very well-known and respected in any hidden community who acts as intermediary between the community and the outside world. In our fieldwork he played a vital role on the issue of trust and miss-trust that the researcher faced while conducting interviews with the undocumented migrants in Jeddah. Please see section 2.5 in the method chapter.

1.2.11 Irregular migrant

Someone who, owing to illegal entry or the expiry of his or her visa, lacks legal status in a transit or host country. The term applies to migrants who infringe country's admission rules and any other person not authorized to remain in the host country (also called clandestine/ illegal/undocumented migrant or migrant in an irregular situation).

1.2.12 Irregular migration

Movement that takes place outside the regulatory norms of the sending, transit, receiving countries. There is no clear or universally accepted definition of irregular migration. From the perspective of destination countries it is illegal

entry, stay or work in a country, meaning that the migrant does not have the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations to enter, reside or work in a given country. From the perspective of the sending country, the irregularity is for example seen in cases in which a person crosses an international boundary without a valid passport or travel document or does not fulfil the administrative requirements for leaving the country. There is, however, a tendency to restrict the use of the term “illegal migration” to cases of smuggling of migrants and trafficking in persons.

1.2.13 *kafālah* (Kafalah) system

Sponsorship system.

1.2.14 Labour migration

Movement of persons from their home State to another State for the purpose of employment. Labour migration is addressed by most States in their migration laws. In addition, some States take an active role in regulating outward labour migration and seeking opportunities for their nationals abroad.

1.2.15 Migrant worker

A person who is to be engaged is engaged or has been engaged in a remunerated activity in a State of which he or she is not a national (*Art. 2(1), International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 1990*).

1.2.16 Regular migration

Migration that occurs through recognized, legal channels.

1.2.17 Regularisation

Any process by which a country allows aliens in an irregular situation to obtain legal status in the country. Typical practices include the granting of an amnesty (also known as “legalization”) to aliens who have resided in the country in an irregular situation for a given length of time and are not otherwise found inadmissible.

1.2.18 Reintegration

Re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a person into a group or a process, e.g. of a migrant into the society of his country of origin.

1.2.19 Religious visitor

The religious visitor is the migrant, in the case of the Saudi Arabian experience, who enters the country with a *hajj* (Hajj) or *umrah* visa. In this regard, Hajj is the major pilgrimage to Makkah that Muslims must perform (at least) once in their lifetime (subject to financial and physical ability) and is performed in a specific part of the year. Umrah is referred to as the minor pilgrimage that is non-obligatory and can be performed in any part of the year.

1.2.20 Remittances

Remittances are defined as monies earned or acquired by non-nationals that are transferred back to their country of origin. Most movement of cash in the case of remittances is done legally through bank transfers, or Western Union offices, for example.¹⁵

1.2.21 Stateless person

The stateless person is one who is born in the city without documentation. In other words, a person who is not considered a national by any state under the operation of its law (Art. 1, UN Convention Relating to the Status of Stateless

¹⁵ Money sent home by migrants competes with international aid as some of the largest financial inflows to developing countries. In 2012, according to the World Bank Report, \$401 billion went to developing countries (a new record) with overall global remittances at \$514 billion .

Persons, 1954). As such, a stateless person lacks those rights attributable to national diplomatic protection of a state, with no inherent right of sojourn in the state of residence and no right of return in case of travel. In our study, it is equivalent to those migrants born in Jeddah with no documents, that is, any child born to one or more undocumented parents in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In certain cases, one of the parents was a Saudi national who refused, for one reason or another, to acknowledge the birth of the child.

1.2.22 Smuggler

A smuggler is an intermediary who is moving people in furtherance of a contract with them, in order to transport them without documentation across an internationally recognised state border. In this regard, smuggling is “The procurement, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit, of the illegal entry of a person into a State Party of which the person is not a national or a permanent resident (Art. 3(a), UN Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000). Smuggling contrary to trafficking does not require an element of exploitation, coercion, or violation of human rights.

1.2.23 Umdah

^c*Umdah* (Umdah) is a Saudi national appointed in each district of Jeddah by the Ministry of the Interior to act as liaison between the government and the communities.

1.2.24 Undocumented migrant

An undocumented migrant is an individual who enters or stays in a country without the appropriate documentation. It is similar to terms used in the literature such as undocumented or irregular migrant. This includes, among others: 1) one who has no legal documentation to enter a country but manages to enter secretly, 2) one who enters using fraudulent documentation, or 3) one who breaches the condition of entry (i.e., individuals coming for *Hajj* or *Umrah*)

or whose work violates the purpose of their entry and who overstays the terms of entry, remaining without authorisation.

1.3 An overview of research characteristics of migration in the region

In *The Context of Migrant Illegality and Deportability in Everyday Life* (2002), Nicholas P. De Genova states:

Illegal immigration has emerged as a generalized fact in virtually all of the wealthiest nation-states...as well as in many regional centres of production and consumption...during the post-World War II era, regardless of the political culture or particular migration policies of any given state. Migrant "illegality" has risen to unprecedented prominence as a "problem" in policy debates and as an object of border policing strategies for states around the world (De Genova: 2002).¹⁶

For decades social scientists, using the application of migration theory, have explored the economic, social and political impact caused by both legal and undocumented migration. When it comes to the situation in Saudi Arabia, a central challenge surrounding the above debates lies in which theoretical and methodological approach to adopt for its analysis. Regarding Saudi Arabia, and Jeddah in particular, the issue is how to deal with the phenomenon of migration in terms of policies that can effectively control the number of migrants that enter the country illegally. In particular, the major challenges the authorities face is improving their control on migrants who overstay their work contract as well as those who enter as pilgrims for *haji* and *umrah* and subsequently overstay their visas. At the same time, in influential quarters, it is believed that the government should deal fairly with the migrants who were born in the city and who have constantly been denied citizenship.¹⁷ These are migration issues that constitute a major challenge for the Saudi authorities.

As will be explained in greater detail in the chapter devoted to the methodology, there is no single theory that can provide a guide to the study of this

¹⁶ De Genova, Nicholas (2002). *Migrant Illegality and deportability in everyday life*, vol. 31. p. 420.

¹⁷ Council of Europe Publishing (n.d.). *Migrants and their Descendants: Guide to Policies for the Wellbeing of all in Pluralist Societies*. 978-92-871-6853-5.

phenomenon in any given country. Provisionally, it is interesting to note that the review of the literature on the theories and methodologies used in the analysis of documented and undocumented migration both in the West and in the Gulf States identifies three characteristics:

- Most research done in this area tends to use primarily economic, social, and lately, religious influence and affiliations, and variables such as wage differential, and social networks in order to explain the process of migration and its impact on both the host and sending countries. The majority of this research focusses on the migration of undocumented Mexicans to the United States. In this regard, research on undocumented Mexican migrants to the USA has been debated for several decades in terms of its impact on American political, social and economic life. The same type of debate, according to De Genova (2002: 420), can be found in Europe in the last few years.¹⁸
- The second characteristic in terms of migration theory, to be discussed in the next section, is that there is no single theory that can guide the researchers of undocumented labour migration. In this regard, Cohen (1996) contends that attempts to construct a general theory of migration have been difficult because of the extensive variety of migrations to be considered. Based on Cohen's observations, while this dissertation does not provide a specific theoretical framework, it uses various concepts from differing theories of migration in order to provide an exploratory investigation of the various hidden populations in the city of Jeddah.
- This research distinguishes itself from other previous studies by conducting face to face interviews with the migrants in their own living environments in Jeddah. To our knowledge, all the previous research was carried out with questionnaires or interviews held with detained undocumented migrants who did not feel free to express their opinions or talk about their own personal experiences.

¹⁸ De Genova (2002). *Migrant Illegality and Deportability in Everyday Life*. 31. p. 420.

1.4 The focus of the study

This study focuses on undocumented migrants who have lived and worked in the city of Jeddah over the last few decades. The discovery of oil in the region in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular, has considerably changed the social and economic structure of Jeddah. The study aims to analyse the various social, economic and security issues related to the presence in Saudi Arabia of the large number of foreign nationals residing in the country without legal permits.

In order to facilitate the analysis, the researcher grouped the undocumented migrants who come from twelve different countries (or communities) into three major groups that share ethnic background, language, or geographic location. The researcher is aware of the existence of other communities of undocumented migrants in the city such as the Pakistanis, Bangladeshis and Indians. However, due to the constraints of time and space, he considered it to be more efficient from a research point of view to limit his study to the following three groups:

- Group I includes the nine African communities.
- Group II the Yemenis.
- Group III the Filipinos and Indonesians.¹⁹

Geographically, since their arrival in the city, the majority of the undocumented migrants in this study have been living primarily in 51 different *hais* (neighbourhoods) in the southern part of the city with a minority scattered throughout the remaining *hais* of the city's 135 districts. There is no official estimate of their number but rather a few unofficial estimates given confidentially to the researcher by high-ranking officials.

¹⁹ The researcher has also collected data from two other groups. Group IV included the following undocumented communities: Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Burmese, and group V which included Egyptians and Syrians. For reasons of space the researcher did not include them in this study. However, where needed in the analysis, the researcher will allude to the rich material collected from these six communities.

1.5 The importance of the study

It is very important to gain an understanding of the functioning of undocumented migrant communities in the city of Jeddah from a variety of points of view. One of these is state security. Another is the cultural influence of a population living undocumented in the midst of Saudi society, and the economic implications as well. There are humanitarian issues to consider as well, as these people are without access to public education or healthcare. This study fills in the gap of the literature left by many other scholars who have studied foreign workers in the Arab Gulf region. In this regard, this thesis discusses various governmental policies such as amnesty, border control, new rules and regulations to control the number of documented and undocumented migrants. In addition, this study will contribute to a better understanding of the overall situation of the undocumented migrants in the city and their reaction to state migration policies, in addition to an analysis of how they are perceived and treated by the Saudi state and individual Saudi nationals.

This research gives us an essential background not only on economic and political issues, but the rather unique dimensions of the lives and working conditions of the migrants, as well as the flow of labour not only in Jeddah but also in other cities in the region. In addition, this thesis contends that if the Saudi policy makers do not engage in a constructive way to alleviate and solve the undocumented migrants' issues then within a few decades the problems of this community within Saudi society may lead to significant social, economic, and political issues.

1.6 Research questions: aims and objectives

1.6.1 Main question

The main question²⁰ this thesis addresses is: what are the major consequences (social, economic, and security) of the presence in Saudi Arabia of many foreign nationals working and residing in the country, with no legal permit to do so? In

²⁰ The main question and its sub-questions were the basis in constructing the semi-intensive questionnaire discussed in detail in chapter two.

order to better deal with the various aspects of this phenomena, and other important issues related to the above question, the researcher is using the following questions to develop the semi-intensive interview questionnaire for this study as discussed in Chapter Two. These questions include:

- Who are the undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah, how did they arrive in the city and why did they choose Jeddah in particular?
- Is there a relationship between the *hajj* and *umrah* and the phenomena of undocumented migrants?
- What kind of life do the undocumented migrants have, how do they overcome issues related to shelter, work, possibility of arrest and deportation, and medical needs and education? Do they have children in the city?
- What types of covert or overt economic activities are the undocumented migrants in Jeddah engaged in?
- Is the *kafalah* system for foreign expatriates or guest workers a fair and effective mechanism to deal with guest worker issues?
- What did the government do, tactically, to influence and 'persuade' the undocumented to leave?
- What are the future plans and objectives of the undocumented?
- What is the long-term effect of this phenomenon on Jeddah?

1.6.2 Aims

There is a significant gap in the knowledge of the undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia in comparison to the rest of the world. The survey of the undocumented migrants in Jeddah is the first effort toward narrowing that gap in migration research in the Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC), in general, and the city of Jeddah, in particular.

This study shows how the undocumented migrants are in fact more powerful and organised than expected, and that the undocumented do play an active role in shaping their own destiny. The Saudi government's ignorance about the actual events and dynamics of the lives of the different undocumented migrants can be seen not only in the failure of many amnesty initiatives, but also, perhaps, in officially available data which constitutes an unwillingness of the government to discuss the phenomena.

This draw the attention of both the migration policy-makers in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States and scholars in migration studies of the Gulf countries proposing a way to expand the study in this area, not only in the rest of the cities in Saudi Arabia, but also in other Arabian Gulf States.

1.6.3 Overall objective of the research on macro and micro levels of analysis

The researcher thought it was important, due to the complexity of the topic, to proceed by offering a micro and macro analyses of the situation. In the following two subsections, the study will list important issues that belong to the research at the macro-level (i.e., where government policy-makers are involved) to facilitate a better understanding of the types of dilemmas government officials may be faced with. Research at the micro-level (i.e., individual undocumented migrants) will follow, in order to provide a list of important difficulties faced by the communities in general, and the individual migrants in particular.

1.6.3.1 Objectives of this research at the macro-level:

- To analyse the history of the problem of undocumented migrants in Jeddah and its relation to the historical religious visits and the growth of oil revenues;
- To analyse the ethnic composition of the different communities and their geographical distribution within the city of Jeddah, and

- To predict the likely long-term consequences of current Saudi government migration policies in Saudi Arabia and the city of Jeddah in particular.

1.6.3.2 Objectives of this research at the micro-level:

- To analyse the social and economic situation of the various communities of undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah;
- To describe the demographic composition of the undocumented under study;
- To analyse their migration process;
- To determine their medical and educational needs;
- To analyse their working conditions, including their reaction to the *kafalah* system and amnesty, and
- To ascertain the individuals' life plans and goals in the long term, both with regard to the city and their attitudes towards government amnesty initiatives.

1.7 Literature review

1.7.1 Primary sources

The primary sources constitute the interviews carried out by the researcher with the undocumented migrants of the communities considered. The data gathered has been used to analyse the experience of the migrants through one-to-one semi-structured interviews and focus groups. As will be explained in more detail in the methodology, the researcher has adopted a qualitative analysis that allowed him to compare the experiences of the different communities.

Other primary sources include the official statistics on undocumented migration published by the Saudi government. However important, the researcher reckons that the few official publications released by the Saudi authorities are not very reliable and that part of this investigation proves their fallacy in assessing the real scale of the problem. In addition, due to the secrecy in which this data is kept by the authorities, it is very difficult for a researcher to access them.

In order to understand and explain the different levels of integration of the communities under consideration in Saudi society, the researcher also had to consult the immigration laws as legislated by the Saudi government. This was very important because the policies derived from these laws deeply affect the communities of undocumented migrants and their relations with the city and the country in general. For example, Saudi immigration laws do not provide for the *ius soli*; this means that the children born to undocumented migrants do not have the right to apply for citizenship. This has created a whole community of undocumented residents without any attachment to any country of origin, yet who have a strong attachment to the city of Jeddah where they were born and where they have lived all their lives. Another important policy concerns deportation. All undocumented migrants live in fear of being deported to their home country and this fear limits their possibility of movement in and outside the city. In addition, it forces them to live in enclosed communities with little social interaction with the legal Saudi population. Despite this, most of them would not take advantage of the periodical amnesties that the Saudi government announces from time to time. This is because, although the amnesty allows them to leave the country without being arrested or fined, the Saudi authorities would fingerprint anybody leaving the country preventing his or her return.

For some communities the religious factor is also very important and operates in different ways. Most of the African and Yemeni population, for example, are Muslims and this allows them to ask for a visa for *hajj* and *umrah*. Muslims do not suffer from any religious discrimination in Saudi Arabia. The same thing is not true for the Filipino community. As the Philippines is a mainly Catholic

country, the aspiring migrants cannot apply for a visa to visit the holy cities, while the ones who do reach the Kingdom have to deal with the prohibition of the open practice of their religion.

1.7.2 Secondary sources

Finding a general theory of migration with universal validity and applicability is the perpetual dream of those working on migration research. To the ambitious this has become an obsession; to the more realistic it has remained a fond hope (Chang 1981, p. 305).²¹

In this section, the researcher will explore the undocumented migrant communities with reference to the literature on international labour migration. The work of various theorists and approaches used to study the phenomenon of legal or undocumented migrants, such as economic, social and religious theories, will be discussed briefly. This section ends with a brief exploration of examples of research done in this area in the Gulf States in general, and Saudi Arabia in particular. It should be noted that this research does not adopt any particular approach from the above theories as the only valid theoretical framework for this study, but rather adopts important “related” variables within these theories as a guide to understanding and explaining the undocumented phenomenon of migrants in Jeddah. As Ian Molho states:

A long standing and deeply rooted problem in assimilating research on migration theory lies in the diverse and fragmented nature of the field...as a result, reliance on any one single approach is likely to lead to a highly specific and incomplete view of the complex process affecting individual's location decision in the space economy (Molho: 1997).²²

Migration has been, and continues to be, an important phenomenon for study by scholars and students in the various fields of social science. The objective of most research in this area is to investigate its political, economic, and social consequences on the sending and receiving countries. In this regard, anthropologists, sociologists, and political economists of globalization, have observed that the continued liberalisation of world trade, and the movement of

²¹ Chang, T. H. P. (1981): A review of micromigration research in the third-world context. In *Migration Decision Making, Multidisciplinary Approaches to Microlevel Studies in Developed and Developing Countries*. De Jong, G. F., Gardner, R. F. (ed.) Pergamon Press.

²² Molho (1986), “Theories of Migration”, *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, pp.396.

goods and capital by which this is measured, has been matched by a spectacular liberalisation of the free movement of persons. A result of these phenomena is the consequent decline in the nation state's ability to control population movement. We are now in an era that is frequently described as being a new "age of migration" (El-Hawat and Sulley: 2007).²³

The purpose of this section is to provide a general overview of the various approaches to the subject of international labour migration. For instance, the researcher will briefly discuss a few works of scholars that relate to this study and who represent different schools of theories in international migration. For example, some of these theories include the neoclassical economic on both the micro and macro-level of analysis, the new economics of migration, world systems theory, the network theory, and the religious theory of migration.

Micro-economics in neo-classical theory states that international immigration (legal and undocumented) is a cost-benefit decision undertaken by an individual in order to maximise an expected income. Hanson (2007)²⁴ notes that neoclassical theory proposes that factors such as geographic proximity, border enforcement, probability and consequences of arrest, and ease of undocumented employment, among other factors, dictate the possibility of undocumented migration. This model also assumes that undocumented migrants, who are generally uneducated, add to, and compete with, the unskilled labour in the receiving country, and accept lower wages. Thus the main determinant for explaining international migration is the wage differentials that exist between home and destination countries.

The micro-economic theory is developed in a classic article by Sjastaad and Todaro (1962), who conceptualise migration as a cost-benefit decision. In this case, potential migrants calculate the total future increase in earnings they can

²³ El-Hawat and Sulley (2007). *Migration and Development in Africa*, African Centre for Applied Research and Training In Social Development (ACARTSOD). Expert Group Meeting on International Migration and Development in North Africa, Rabat, Morocco.

²⁴ Hanson (2007). *The Economic Logic of Undocumented immigration*. Report to the Council of Foreign Relations. Council on Foreign Relations CRS No. 26 http://www.cfr.org/contents/publication/attachments/Immigration_CSR_26.pdf [Accessed: 15 January 2015].

expect as a result of migrating to a higher-paying job, weighted by the probability of obtaining that job, and discounted by a factor reflecting the lower utility of earnings in the future. From this expected gain they subtract expected cost. If the balance between anticipated gains and costs is positive, a person decides to migrate.

On the other hand, the macro-level in the above school of economic thought stresses that the balance of labour supply and demand within regional markets determines wages. If there is a relative shortage of workers in one market and a relative abundance in another, wages will be high in the former and low in the latter. Migration represents an equilibrating mechanism between the two regions. In this case, workers in a low-wage area will move to a high-wage area.

The new economics of migration, according to Massey (1993), has arisen to challenge many of the assumptions of neoclassical theory. In this theory, decisions are made not by isolated factors but by families or households acting collectively to maximise expected income and minimise risks from home market failures; home countries in underdeveloped areas, unlike developed countries, don't have insurance for crops failure, price protection of "futures markets", or government support; in addition migration could help the country of origin's economy.

The world systems theory states that migration is a natural course following the globalization of the market economy. In this sense, "the processes of economic globalization create a pool of mobile workers in developing countries and simultaneously connect them to labor markets in particular cities where their services are demanded" (Massey et al: 1993).²⁵

A different approach from the above economic paradigm is derived from the sociological perspective. The network theory contends that interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants, and non-immigrants in origin and

²⁵ Massey, et al. (n.d.) (1993) 'Theories of International Migration: A Review and Appraisal', *Population and Development Review*, Vol. 19, No. 3, Sep., pp. 431-466.

destination countries through relations of friendship, kinship, and through shared community origin, increases the likelihood of immigration. The networks reduce the costs of migration, raise the benefits, and lessen the risks inherent in international movement. Empirical evidence seems to suggest that networks play a significant role in shaping individual and household migration decisions, and in promoting and guiding flows of immigrants. In this case, Richmond (1988), states:

Sociological theories of international migration (including refugees) should be capable of explaining the scale, direction and composition of population movements that cross state boundaries, the factors which determine the decision to move and the choice of destination, the characteristics modes of social integration in receiving country and the eventual outcome, including remigration and return movements. Studies of international migration have not attempted such an ambitious agenda. Researchers have generally focused on specific aspects, such as demographic characteristics of immigrants, migration decision-making, economic and social adaptation in receiving countries, or global trends in population movement (Richmond: 1988).²⁶

O'Reilly (2012)²⁷ notes that migration systems and networks theory is clearly a more sociological endeavour. She argues that all migration needs to be understood within the wider context of the system (the social and economic relationships between different countries in different regions), and with attention paid to the roles that family, friends, and other contacts play in assisting or dissuading migrants, helping them in settling down as well in maintaining their links with their home country. The development of such networks is often facilitated by government policies toward family reunification and, once started; migrant networks can make international flows relatively insensitive to policy interventions. In this regard, there is no such policy in Saudi Arabia.

Before carrying out the investigation, the researcher had to provide a theoretical background in order to explain the phenomenon of undocumented migrants. Because this particular investigation deals this phenomenon, it was necessary to compare different theories to prove their suitability for this project. The book *Migration Theory* (2008), edited by Caroline B. Brettell and James F. Hollifield,

²⁶ Richmond (1988) 'Sociological theories of international migration: the case of Refugees' *Current Sociology*, vol. 36, no. 2, pp. 7-25.

²⁷ Karen O'Reilly (2012). *International Migration and Social Theory*, London: Palgrave.

offers an insight to the different approaches to the field. By gathering the contributions of anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, historians and geographers, the book offers an overview of the different variables present in the phenomenon of migration, and the difficulties it poses. The problem of migration presents so many variables that its study requires a multidisciplinary approach. This is why, after considering all the different theories, the researcher opted to use the data gathered in order to explain the phenomenon without referring to any specific theory that would have limited the analysis of the final results. Nonetheless, all the factors mentioned above have been taken into account. This project and the nature of the migration into Saudi Arabia, and Jeddah in particular, offer the opportunity of useful comparisons among communities from different continents and cultural backgrounds.

The multidisciplinary approach is also taken by David Collier and Colin Elman (2008) in their article 'Qualitative and Multi-Method Research: Organizations, Publication, and Reflections on Integration'.²⁸ In their article, the authors explain the increasing acceptance of the qualitative research in political science. This paper has been very useful because it went further in demonstrating the validity of the research's approach. The qualitative research methods the researcher chose are eclectic, since as the authors state, they rely on the links with all the research traditions mentioned above. This made it possible to take a wider approach to this specific research since it takes into account different themes, such as the personal narratives of the respondents' migration, or their working life in Jeddah, for example. Both are equally important, but not all responses belong to the same field of study. For example, along with personal data, the undocumented migrants interviewed during the research were asked, among other things, to talk about their personal experience during the process of migration, about their work, their familial ties, and their hopes for the future. This led the researcher to analyse different aspects of the problem from different thematic perspectives. The result is an overview of the situation of the undocumented migrants in the city.

²⁸ David Collier, Colin Elman (2008) 'Qualitative and Multi-Method Research: Organizations, Publication, and Reflections on Integration', in Janet Box Steffensmeier, Henry E. Brady, and David Collier (ed.) *The Oxford Handbook of Political Methodology*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

The article by Douglas Massey et al's, mentioned earlier, has been of great assistance in supporting the researcher's choice of a multidisciplinary approach to the subject of migration. This article addresses the different theories used to analyse the migration flows and their social, economic and cultural consequences. The authors state that:

Given the fact that theories conceptualise causal processes at such different levels of analysis, - the individual, the household, the national, and the international – they cannot be assumed, a priori, to be inherently incompatible. (Massey et al: 433).

This research, as suggested by Massey et al., relies on “aspects” of various theories or models of migration to explore the lives and living conditions of the undocumented in Jeddah, and the impact of this population on state security, the economy, and the social and political life of the city. All the theories mentioned above aim at explaining why an individual or a group of individuals attempt to migrate. This approach has been particularly useful for the researcher because he could move freely between one theory and the other without confining the research through borders established a priori. The researcher has been able to assess the importance that both neoclassical human capital theory and the new economics of migration have on the decision making of the migrants. He also had the opportunity, through Massey's work, to test the validity of the dual labour market theory proposed by Piore in 1979 and to discuss its conclusions. Although very important, the researcher reckons that all these theories are limited, and if a single one is applied to the Jeddah case, for example, it may lead to unreliable results.

In conclusion, the researcher applied different theories merging them in an analysis of the undocumented migration in Jeddah and in each chapter devoted to the single case studies he was able to produce new, compelling material about their lives.

At the beginning of this investigation, the researcher had also to face another theoretical challenge: he had to decide if the topic had to be analysed using a qualitative or a quantitative method. In this regard, it should be stressed that the

study of a hidden population, due to the very nature of the phenomenon, cannot be carried out using a quantitative method. In other words, the population is hidden and unknown, which makes it impossible to obtain a scientific sample to conduct a quantitative study.

One of the major objectives in this research is to distinguish itself from previous approaches. For example, this research does not contain data concerning the undocumented migrants while under arrest or after their deportation to their home countries. On the contrary, its purpose is to meet them in person while living and working in Jeddah. This approach required the use of a qualitative method to explore the eight themes regarding their lives and working conditions.

The researcher opted for this method because it guaranteed the flexibility necessary in order to organise the collection of distinctive eclectic data, such as personal data along with personal narratives. Some of the questions in the interview are of a quantitative nature. For example, data about age, gender, marital status, number of times deported and other specific information relevant to the topic. This type of data obtained from the semi-structured questionnaire was easily converted into quantitative measures and analysed using simple descriptive techniques. However, it should be stressed that regardless of using aspects of quantitative measures such as simple descriptive statistics (mainly mean, mode and median) the method used is qualitative in nature and procedure.

Once a methodology was established for the processing of the data, the researcher had to tackle another, more pragmatic aspect of the research: how to obtain the sample of population from each community as needed for the study. The researcher knew that in order to gather the necessary information, he had to try to approach communities which do not trust Saudi nationals. The use of gatekeepers and community leaders was accompanied by the utilisation of snowball sampling. In his article, 'Comment: Snowball Versus Respondent-Driven Sampling', Douglas Heckathorn (2011)²⁹ explains the importance of the

²⁹ Douglas Heckathorn (2011) 'Comment: Snowball Versus Respondent-Driven Sampling', *Sociological Methodology*, vol. 41, pp. 355-366.

snowball technique in sampling a hard-to-reach population. This method is particularly efficient when the population taken into consideration is small in comparison with the general population, when it is scattered in different areas, and when belonging to it involves a stigma difficult to overcome which creates an obstacle for any outsider who tries to make contact with it. This technique was very useful in this specific case because the communities taken into consideration in this research are hidden ones, small, and much closed due to their undocumented status. The article suggested the method to proceed which provides for a small sample of a particular population, in this case members of the different communities, from which to recruit all the other members and gain access to them. This technique will be explained more in detail in the section on methodology.

Another important source of information was the David McMurray (1999) article, 'Trafficking and Transiting: New Perspectives on Labor'.³⁰ In this article the author analyses the reasons for the massive immigration of workers to Saudi Arabia and the Gulf in general, due to the Middle East oil boom. This article provided a strong argument for analysing the reasons for most of the immigrants to move to the Kingdom, and in particular to the city of Jeddah.

Another important contribution to the study was the article written by Alan Richards and Philip Martin (1983), 'The Laissez-Faire Approach to International Labor Migration: the Case of the Arab Middle East'.³¹ This article, even though published almost three decades ago, has the advantage of offering the researcher an insight of the different concepts on migration in the West and in the Middle East, which are important factors in the overall analysis of the phenomena.

³⁰ David McMurray (1999) 'Trafficking and Transiting: New Perspectives on Labor', *Middle East Report*, no. 211.

³¹ Alan Richards and Philip Martin (1983) 'The Laissez-Faire Approach to International Labor Migration: the Case of the Arab Middle East', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, vol. 31, no. 3, April 1983, pp. 455-474.

A study undertaken by Al-Di'ij, Nāyif (2001),³² aimed at identifying the link between guest workers in violation of the *Iqāmah* (*iqamah*) system and security in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia covered the following issues:

- What are the social dangers posed by guest workers?
- What are the real reasons that lead to the violation of the *iqamah* system by guest workers?
- To what extent is the behaviour of Saudi citizens involved in the violation of the *iqamah* system by guest workers and others?

One of the most important outcomes of this investigation was that Saudi citizens are responsible for the increase in the violations of the *iqamah* system by guest workers. The research also revealed that most of the violators of the *Iqāmah* system are foreign citizens, mainly non-Arab ones. Despite its outcomes, this latter study does not provide an insight into the lives of the immigrants within their own communities. In addition, it has the limit of conducting the interviews with undocumented migrants when detained, that is, an environment in which they were not free to share their experiences frankly.

Since the investigation involves the city of Jeddah, the researcher provides a brief history of the city. This has been a useful part of the research because it was possible to link some historical aspects of the city to the migration phenomena of the last few decades. The development of the modern state concept of sovereignty and the emerging complexities and ease of travelling across borders of countries, required tremendous changes in local and international laws regarding issues of migration.

A very useful historical overview of the history of Jeddah is the classic work of Al-Ansārī, 'Abd al-Quddūs (1980), *Mawsū'ah Tārīkh Jiddah*, to which this study is mainly indebted. Other, more recent contributions to the history of Jeddah,

³² Al-Di'ij, Nāyif (2001) "*al-'Amālah al-Wāfidah al-Mukhālifah li-Nizām al-Iqāmah wa alaḡatuha bi al-Amn: Derāsah Maydāniyyah li-l-Mawqūfīn al-Mukhālifīn li-Nizam al-Iqāmah bi Idārah Murāqabah wa Mutāba'ah al-Wāfidīn bi al-Manṭiqah al-Sharqiyyah*" M.A. Thesis KSA; Akadimiyyat Nāyif Li al-'Ulūm al-Amniyyah:1422 AH/ 2001.

among others, are *Jiddah: Hikāyat Madīnah* written by Ṭarābulṣī, Muḥammad (2008), and *Jiddah: Muṭayāt al-makān wa āfāq al-zamān* by Abū Dawūd, ‘Abd al-Razzāq (2011). All of these authors recognise that most of the material in their books is based on Abd al-Quddus’ work cited above.

Another useful historical overview is offered by Angelo Pesce (1976) in his *Jiddah: Portrait of an Arabian City*.³³ In his study the author offers an overview of the city of Jeddah from the beginning until the discovery of the huge petroleum reserves that in the seventies changed Saudi Arabian society completely. Pesce’s book is a valuable source for understanding how the city of Jeddah has developed over the centuries, thanks to its closeness to the Holy Cities, becoming one of the most cosmopolitan cities hosting travellers from four continents. Another source for understanding the city’s past was written by Rex Smith and Ahmad Umar al-Zayla’l (1983) in *Bride of the Red Sea: a 10th/16th century account of Jeddah*.³⁴

1.7.3 Past studies

The following section presents brief reviews of past research concerning issues related to the presence of undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia. The objective is to clarify the difference between these past studies and the current study, in both scope and methodology. In 2002, a study was conducted by al-u’thmani entitled, ‘*Crimes of Guest Workers in Saudi Arabian Society*’.³⁵ This research aimed at studying the crime rate due to the presence of undocumented migrants as well as identifying its future trends. This study revealed that the most common offences within this sector are drug-related, followed by fraud, embezzlement and bribery. The study also revealed that the highest crime rate amongst these people was found in the city of Jeddah, followed by Riyadh.

³³ Angelo Pesce (1976) *Jiddah: Portrait of an Arabian City*, Falcon Press.

³⁴ Rex Smith and Ahmad Umar al-Zayla’l (1983) *Bride of the Red Sea: a 10th/16th century account of Jeddah*, Occasional Papers Series no. 22, Centre for Middle Eastern and Islamic Studies, University of Durham.

³⁵ al-U’thmānī (2002) ‘Crimes of Guest Workers in Saudi Arabian Society’, cited in Abdurrahman Ba Eshin (2002) Ph.D. thesis entitle *Impact of foreign labour in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Saudisation during 1990-1996*.

Another study was undertaken by Al-Suryaani³⁶ (2001) regarding “*Nationalization of Guest Workers: A Case Study of the Nationalization of Mexicans in El Paso, Texas.*” The subject of this study specialised in undocumented guest workers, and revolved around two communities. One of these comprised Mexicans who had immigrated in as undocumented to the United States, more specifically Texas. The other community comprised the Burmese who had immigrated to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, in particular the Holy City of Mecca. This study aims to examine the benefit from steps taken by the American authorities in legalising the Mexicans that could potentially benefit the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia should similar steps be undertaken.

One specialised study on foreigners and security written by Al-Sulṭān³⁷ (1984) highlighted the fact that Asian workers had become a majority in the workforce in some GCC states, along with Saudi Arabia, due to their skills as manual labourers, and that they would work for low wages. Aside from this, they had greater endurance for hard work and were more obedient to their sponsors. The study suggested the dangers that might be posed by guest workers to Saudi Arabian society raising very specific security concerns. For example, Sultan (1984) contends that the increasing number of Asian workers in the Kingdom could lead their countries of origin to demand specific rights for their citizens abroad. In addition, new lifestyles could destabilise the social cohesion in the region. Furthermore, the low-cost salaries of such labour may come at the cost of the local labour force, thus leading to an increase in unemployment in Saudi society. The accumulation of these factors could put the stability of the country in real danger in the medium and long-term especially considering the absence of any specific policies to tackle these challenges.

Another study was undertaken by ʿAssāf³⁸ (1987) who used a social survey methodology that randomly selected a sample of 65 individuals, with the method of research being the distribution of questionnaires on the subjects.

³⁶ Al-Suryaani (2001) “*Nationalization of Guest Workers: A Case Study of the Nationalization of Mexicans in El Paso, Texas.*”

³⁷ Sulṭān, ʿAbdullāh (1984) *al-ʿAmālah al-Ajñabiyyah wa al-Amn*, Akadimiyyat Nāyif Li al-ʿUlūm al-Amniyyah.. Pp.124-1609.

³⁸ ʿAssāf, Khālid (1987) *Taṣawwur li- al-Takhfif min al-Iʿtimād ʿalā al-ʿAmālah al-Nāʿimah fī al-Bayt. Riyadh*: Akadimiyyat Nāyif Li al-ʿUlūm al-Amniyyah.

Also, interviews were conducted with several employees of varying nationalities along with officials from government offices which deal with migration issues as well as some owners of recruitment agencies.

The study aimed at displaying:

- An understanding of the positive and negative effects of these employees on the Saudi family in general and specifically on childrearing.
- In addition, the comprehension of this phenomenon's effect on security in particular, and Recognition as to what extent this phenomenon has spread, and the reliance of Saudi homes in Riyadh upon it.

The study arrived at several conclusions which can be summarised as follows:

- There was an increasing level of physical abuse of children by domestic workers in Riyadh homes;
- There was an absence of quotas for recruitment;
- There were many Saudis who employed such domestic labour without having any actual need for it, and Families were relying on this type of labour extending even to the raising of their children.

This latter study differs from the current research as it focuses on a specific sample group, the domestic workers. On the other hand, this current study focuses on all types of undocumented workers, including those who entered the kingdom illegally along with those who had been born in the city to undocumented parents.

A study carried out by Al-Ḥāzīm (1992) discussed a 'Plan for Confronting the Problem of Guest Worker Participation in the Smuggling of Narcotic Substances'.³⁹

³⁹ Al-Ḥāzīm, °Abdul-°Azīz (1992) MA thesis, *al-Ṭakhtīt Li-mujābahah Mushkilah Ishām al-°Amālah al-Wāfidah fī Tahrīb al-Mawād al-Mukhaddirah*. Riyadh: Akadimiyyat Nāyif Li al-°Ulūm al-Amniyyah.

This research aimed at:

- 1) Estimating the extent of guest worker participation in the smuggling of narcotic substances;
- 2) Identifying the nationalities most frequently involved in the smuggling of narcotic substances;
- 3) Identifying the latent reasons behind the venturing of these workers into trafficking despite previous knowledge of punishment and the fate of the trafficker in the Kingdom being execution exclusively;
- 4) Determining the common methods in the process of drug smuggling;
- 5) Defining the types of narcotics trafficked to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the major points of entry used to the city of Riyadh during the period of 1978-1990;
- 6) Specifying the characteristics of non-Saudi labour operating in the domain of narcotics trafficking, and
- 7) Suggesting a working policy for the creation of specialised bodies to prevent workers from going astray.

The researcher used a descriptive methodology, one-on-one interviews, surveys, statistical studies, and contemporary research as the four primary research tools to gather information from the sample group. The study revealed several findings that can be summarised as follows:

- 1) Individuals of Pakistani nationality made up more than two thirds of the individuals involved in the trafficking of narcotic substances to the city of Riyadh, followed by nationals of India, Britain, and Bangladesh in descending order;

- 2) Pakistani nationals constituted 57% of the total number of those who had been sentenced to death on charges of smuggling and dealing of narcotics;
- 3) There was no correlation between the length of residency in the Kingdom and involvement in narcotics trafficking in Riyadh;
- 4) A positive correlation exists between the involvement of guest workers in the trafficking of narcotics and their desire to achieve rapid financial gain, and
- 5) Pakistani nationals are the most involved in the smuggling of hashish at a proportion of 73% of smugglers and dealers of the drug.

Another study by Al-Zahrānī (1998)⁴⁰ conducted fieldwork interviews with members of the Passport and Naturalisation Administrative Agency in the city of Makkah. The objective of this study was to discover the real reason behind those who came to the city for *hajj/umrah* and overstayed the length of their visas. The study raised the following question: is it for religious reasons, economic, security or something different that compelled this population to overstay their visa permits?

The findings of the study indicate that overstayers of religious visas, e.g. *hajj/umrah* visas, use different illegal ways to guarantee that they can stay. According to interviews with members of the passport and naturalisation agency in Makkah, the main reason overstayers remain is economic. Yet all the overstayers interviewed while they were under arrest stated their motivation as being purely religious. This study reflects that Saudi citizens' cooperation with the authorities is very weak, (65%). The study reflected that most of the overstayers interviewed in this study were male (75%).

⁴⁰ Al-Zahrānī, °Awwād (1998) *Dawr al-Asālib al-Tanzīmiyyah fī al-Ḥadd Min Takhalluf al-Wāfidīn li-l-Ḥaj wa al-°Umrah*. Unpublished Master degree. Riyadh, Akadimiyyat Nāyif Li al-°Ulūm al-Amniyyah.

The main difference between this study from those cited above is the conditions under which interviews were conducted. In this regard, previous studies interviewed migrants who had already been apprehended and were under duress. In this current study, migrants were interviewed while they were free (i.e. not under arrest, or under threat of arrest). Because of this, the subjects were able to respond freely, that is, without fear, thus reflecting their real, undedicated, experience in the city.

1.8 Key issues and concepts

The purpose of this section is introducing some key issues which arose in the interviews and to provide various conceptual definitions and operational definitions of terms used in the research. Most of the concepts relate to all the communities of undocumented migrants under study. Thus they are important to articulate because they deal directly, or indirectly, with the general research questions that cover the themes raised during the research.

1.8.1 The *kafalah* system

The *kafalah*, or sponsorship, system for foreign expatriates to work in Saudi Arabia as well as many other Gulf states includes the following elements:

- The *kafil* (*kafeel*) or sponsor. He/she can be an individual Saudi or a non-Saudi expatriate who works in the country, or any other entity in the private or public sectors.
- A Saudi recruitment agency. A private business establishment that will recruit an individual for a fee. For example, in the case of Filipinos, between \$3000 and \$4000 is paid to the *kafeel*, who will recruit an individual for the client.
- A recruitment agency from the expatriate country. This is an agency that works with the Saudi agency to recruit migrants to train them and do the necessary paperwork to ensure arrival in Jeddah. In this case both agencies share the fees.

- A contract. This portion of the transaction has always been problematic. In short, it includes the agreed salary, the work expected, amount of work hours and a three month trial for the *kafeel* to employ the sponsored expatriate. In this case, and prior to the end of the three months, the *kafeel* has the right to request a substitute worker for free. If the trial period exceeds three months, the *kafeel* has no right to a substitute.

The problem with the above arrangement is complex. According to the Saudi *kafeel*, many recruited (expatriates) break their contract after exactly three months. As noted above, this does not force either agency to substitute or supply another expatriate, thus incurring more expense.

According to Mohammad Mahjoob (n.d.),⁴¹ historically, the *kafalah* system (sponsorship) was part of the old traditional economic practices in the Arabian Gulf area. It formulated the basis in which private ownership of goods was protected and at the same time stimulated trade. It is a social operation in which an individual (e.g., a merchant) takes on liability to pay any financial, economic or social obligations of a fellow merchant in case they fail to fulfil or meet their obligations towards a third party. The first individual is called *kafeel* (sponsor), the second *Makfūl* or *makfoul* (the sponsored individual), and the whole process is called *nizam all-kafalah* (sponsorship system).

Traditionally, local merchants adopted the *kafalah* system as a cooperative means of operating their commercial ventures. In contrast to sponsorship of a local worker, a foreign expatriate or investor, *kafalah* was common among the merchant class in cases where one of them went bankrupt or met other extreme financial hardship (e.g., a merchant losing a ship in high seas) that dramatically limited his ability to pay a debt, or any other financial obligations towards other merchants. The *kafīl* (*kafeel*), in this case, promised (verbally or in writing) to be responsible for any financial obligation required from the *makfoul* or the sponsored. The *kafalah* has been done to allow the *makfoul* enough time to

⁴¹Murād Wahba Editor (1980) Brain Drain: Proceedings of the Second Easrg Conference 18th to 23rd December 1978, Tunis. *Migration and Structural Change in the Kuwaiti Society: A Study in Social Anthropology*. Ain Shams University Press, 1980.

recover from any financial difficulties and pay his obligation on a specific date without any type of interest. It was, and still is, a common practice especially among the merchants of the same trade in Jeddah.

In the past, foreigners working in Jeddah as menial labourers were limited in number, most of them coming from Yemen. The remainder of labourers were largely slaves from the African continent. The economy of Jeddah prior to the discovery of oil was based on the export and import of goods from various countries. The port of Jeddah was a major hub for foreign businessmen from India, Egypt, Persia and Syria, amongst others. The local economy depended on annual *haji* and *umrah* seasons where thousands of pilgrims arrived in Jeddah by ships from around the globe in order to perform the Muslim religious rituals.

The new oil-based economic structure transformed the concept and scope of the *kafalah* system, as noted above, from the traditional practice limited to Jeddah's merchants, to include new foreign expatriates drawn to the Saudis' new-found wealth. The economic restructuring, a consequence of oil revenues, produced an increased demand for professional, skilled, and unskilled labour not only in the oil industry but for governmental plans for infrastructure and other needed projects. Specifically, in the private sector, the demand for expatriates increased dramatically.

For example, in the past, affluent families in Jeddah used slaves as domestic labourers in their homes. Over time, domestic labour such as drivers, housemaids and other menial household positions, were substituted by temporary workers who required temporary visas, and these workers required a *kafeel*. The *kafalah* system expanded, as noted above, to include foreign labour from Arab countries in the beginning, and then later included workers from Africa and South Asia. The preferences of the state shifting from one nationality depended on not only the supply and demand in the international labour market but also politics in the area as the researcher will discuss in the data analysis chapter.

At this point it is important to note, as an example of these shifts in preference, the fact that the government in the 1950s and 1960s noticed that Egyptians, for instance, made greater demands on the system compared to Asians. Furthermore, the Yemeni and Palestinians, who had had a largely neutral impact on the Saudi-Arabian system, were expelled after Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait, as explained in the Yemeni data analysis chapter.

Today, the Saudi *kafalah* system has expanded to include all types of foreign professional expatriates such as engineers in construction projects and doctors and nurses in private hospitals and clinics. In addition, skilled and non-skilled labourers are needed in all sorts of projects due to acute shortages of native Saudis in these areas. Nevertheless, in all cases, any foreign individual regardless of skills and training needs a Saudi *kafeel* to allow them to enter the country and obtain a valid *iqamah* (residency permit). For instance, a family that needs a housemaid must pay a local agency a particular sum of money to obtain a worker for them.

1.8.2 Amnesty initiative

Saudi Arabia has launched several nationwide amnesty programs during the last three decades to legalise hundreds of thousands of undocumented immigrants in the country in general, and the city of Jeddah in particular. The move, it is assumed, is designed to assist Saudi authorities to better manage the growing population of foreign undocumented workers, meet labour shortages in certain sectors, boost security, and reduce human trafficking from Yemen and other African countries. Through the last few decades, the Saudi Arabian government has issued various amnesty initiatives to control the ever-increasing number of undocumented in Saudi cities, especially in Makkah province.

The standard procedure for the amnesty initiative is to provide the migrants a grace period in which to rectify their legal status or face penalty, jail, and deportation. Very often, after the deadline, Saudi authorities begin an extensive campaign of rounding up thousands of undocumented workers; this may last

from a few weeks to a few months. In these instances, different government agencies carry out raids on all types of local markets, restaurants, mini-grocery stores, shopping centres, and residential areas.⁴² For instance, in 1995 the Saudi government gave amnesty to all the undocumented migrants. This initiative occurred due to religious pressure from the *ulama* and various consulates in Jeddah. Many of those who ended up being deported to African countries were not accepted in their original countries. This happened because they did not have passports, or were sent to the wrong country. The situation was so chaotic that a black, disabled Saudi citizen was deported and his family had to go to the African country where he was deported to in order to bring him back home.

1.8.3 Niṭāqāt

Niṭāqāt (*Nitaqat*) was a programme introduced by the Ministry of Labour in June 2011. The word *nitaqat* means "areas" or "zones" in Arabic. The program classified all companies into four zones: red, yellow, green, or platinum, according to the percentage of Saudis they employed in their companies. Each zone or range had either privileges or punishments that could lead to their forced closure if they fail to employ a certain percentage of Saudis. Alternately, rewards consisting of granting them a permit to bring in more foreign expatriates could be offered as the percentage of Saudis the companies employed increased.

Nitaqat created a big change in the Saudi labour market. Most companies were in the red zone, this meant they did not meet the required percentage and, therefore, they needed more Saudi workers in order to stay in business. It is worth noting that Saudi Arabia never had a minimum wage, but in September 2012 King Abdullah announced a new one of \$800 per month for Saudis working in the public sector, while encouraging the private sector to adopt the same measure.

⁴² 'Saudi's undocumented immigrants draw fear of "infiltrators'
"<http://www.reuters.com/article/2013/03/27/us-saudi-immigrants-slum-idUSBRE92Q0MA20130327>

1.8.4 Deportation laws

One of the most widely discussed issues is deportation since it touches the lives of many undocumented migrants. From 2012 to 2014, more than one million expatriates have been deported due to two new laws. These new laws require all undocumented migrants to work only for their sponsor otherwise they are subject to deportation. Every worker is required to obtain a work permit for an annual fee of \$650. This money goes to the Saudi Human Resources Development Fund which uses the funds to train Saudis citizens to enter the labour market. In order to enforce the new laws, the Ministry of Labour teamed up with the Ministry of the Interior employing 1,000 inspectors. The new government established jail terms for Saudi citizens who do not comply with the laws when dealing with the organisation of labour. As a result of these measures, the supply of foreign labour shrank approximately 20%, causing the wages to rise, and an increase of jobs available to Saudi citizens (Adel Faqih, 2013). However, these measures caused many undocumented migrants to go into hiding in order to avoid being deported under this new scheme.

1.9 Key issues raised in the course of the interviews.

This section deals with particular issues that were raised during the interviews and relate to the overall analysis and interpretation of data collected for this research. First, it provides information and analysis on “Dispute settlement mechanisms” used among the undocumented migrant communities, for example, among the African undocumented migrants within their own community and with other communities in the same or other district(s). Second, it presents a brief discussion on the amnesty initiative by the Saudi government and the general reaction towards it by the African undocumented. Third, it gives examples of “underground economic activities” such as:

- 1) The selling and buying of work permit visas in Saudi Arabia;
- 2) The business of marketing stolen *iqamah*, passports and other goods;
- 3) The marketing of nearly-expired goods;
- 4) Begging, the sex trade and other undocumented activities and

5) Remittances as an underground activity.

1.9.1 Dispute and settlement mechanisms

This section provides information on the ways leaders of the undocumented migrants in Jeddah settle disputes that arise among its members and, sometimes, among “other” undocumented migrants within their own community and with other communities in the districts. Older members, male elders, of most of the undocumented migrant communities in Jeddah play a great role in solving problems and issues such as disputes among their own communities. They also cooperate with elders from the other communities to resolve issues within their districts. Many migrants abide by and respect their decisions. Interviewee number one⁴³ in one of the districts in south Jeddah said:

If a fight, for example, occurs in the district among members of the same community or between different communities, the *imam* of the mosque also contributes to solving problems. Most of the undocumented do not want local Saudi authorities to enter their neighbourhood to resolve any dispute. In these cases, they will be subject to arrest, jail and deportation.

1.9.2 Underground economic activities

The underground economy, according to Al-Muṭayrī (2012),⁴⁴ began in the developing countries during their colonisation period and in the advanced economies when the taxation system started. This type of economy drew the attention of researchers in the early 1970s. Most scholars in this area summarise the attributes of the hidden economy as:

- Often small in size;
- Extensive use of technology;
- An organised competition;
- Dependence on personal connections;

⁴³ See Appendix 3 for more details about each interviewee.

⁴⁴ Al-Muṭayrī, Ḥamid bin Dakhīl (2012) *Qiyās Ḥajm al-Iqtisād al-Khafī wa Atharuhu ‘alā al-Mutaghayyirāt al-Iqtisādiyyah ma‘a Dirāsah tatbīqiyyah ‘ala al-Mamlakah al-‘Arabiyyah al-Su‘ūdiyyah khilāl al-Fatrah*. 1390-1430 AH (1970-2009) AD.

- Flexibility of wages;
- Ability to absorb the unemployed;
- Ease of entry, and
- No official registration of the business activity.

Al Mutairi (2012) contends that the positive impact of the hidden economy is its ability to absorb the unemployed, create new income, provide cheap goods and services, quick response to market demand and supply. But he also notes its negative impact on unemployment and inflation.

Table 2: Size of hidden economy in Saudi Arabia during the period 1999-2005.

Years	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Size of hidden economy (%)	18.4	18.4	18.2	18.4	18.9	19.2	19.4
Gross national product (in million \$)	160957	188441	183013	188551	214573	250339	315337
Size of hidden economy (in millions) \$)	29616	34673	33308	34693	40554	48065	61175

Source: Friedrich Schneider and Andreas Buehn p.16.

The above table indicates that the size of hidden economic activities in Saudi Arabia increased during these five years. For example, it grew from 18.4% in 1999, to 19.4% of the gross national income of the country. In other words, the revenues from hidden economic activities went from \$29,616 million in 1999 to \$61,175 in 2005. The next section describes some major activities in the underground economy in greater detail.

1.8.2.1 The selling and buying of work permits and visas in Saudi Arabia.

From interviews with various undocumented migrants in the city, the researcher found out that many migrant workers pay large sums of money to agents in their home countries to secure what they believe are advantageous 'free visas' that will allow them the flexibility to find their own jobs in the Kingdom with only a nominal sponsor. These ostensibly legal documents are generated when Saudi citizens or companies apply for, and are granted, visas for foreign workers but

have no intention of employing them. Saudi individuals with strong connections with particular government agencies can obtain free visas. When the visas are secured, sponsors sell them to intermediaries who are linked to recruiters in sending countries. The migrants who arrive in the Kingdom with 'free visas' typically must find their own work with an employer and remit monthly payments to the Saudi sponsor named on their visas. According to Saudi-Arabian law, there is nothing called a 'free work visa'. It is undocumented. Workers in this category, if caught working with a person other than their sponsor, are deported back to their country. Many migrants describe this visa as "a bogus concept." Workers arriving on such visas are required to pay a monthly fee to the Saudi sponsors, who have already generated income from the sale of the visas to manpower recruiting agents, who also pass along the cost to the worker.

This is a lucrative business for some Saudi citizens. A corrupt Saudi businessman may arrange visas or work permits for more persons than needed in their facilities. If he needs five people to work for him, he may use his connections to obtain twenty five work permits. He sells each work permit for \$1,500 and thus makes \$30,000. Once all twenty-five workers arrive in the Kingdom, he will employ only the required five persons and he will allow the other twenty to work outside wherever they can get a job. He will transfer their visas individually to companies or persons that would recruit them. For each transfer, he will make at least an additional \$530, or \$10,660 for the twenty workers. Many migrants borrow money from relatives and friends or sell their properties such as a house or farm in their home countries in order to pay for these visas.

1.8.2.2 The business of marketing stolen *iqamah* (residency permit) and passports

Both terms are related to the *kafalah* system. An *iqamah* (residency permit) is the official identity card depicting an individual as a legal resident of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. Without an *iqamah*, a foreign expatriate or a visitor cannot open a bank account, buy a car, rent a dwelling place, or engage in regulated sectors of the country and its business. The sponsor (*kafeel*) is

responsible for obtaining *the iqamah* from the Saudi authorities, but usually it is the responsibility of the employee to ensure they have a valid *iqamah*, otherwise they are subject to a penalty that can culminate in deportation. Identity theft is common among undocumented migrants who use *iqamah* or residency numbers belonging to others in order to obtain fake work documentation. Very often stolen *iqamahs* or passports are sold to individuals in south Jeddah, who deal in this illegal business. Once an expatriate loses one of the above documents he may retrieve the original from these dealers for a price of approximately \$100-200.

1.8.2.3 The marketing of near-expired goods.

The discussion in this section will cover all those connected with this trade. A few African migrants work in this business, but the field is controlled mainly by the Yemeni community. Many Yemenis hold a Saudi passport and for this reason enjoy considerable flexibility and freedom of movement in the city and in the whole country. The Yemenis involved have proper documents and sell the near-expired goods (i.e., such as canned food, chocolate, etc.) to their fellow undocumented Yemeni migrants or to members of the Bangladeshi community, who then sell the goods on. Only a few older, undocumented African migrant women are involved in this type of business and usually they sell their products to fellow migrants of various nationalities, or Saudi nationals looking for cheap deals. This type of underground trade business provides cheap food for all the undocumented communities, as well for poor Saudis. It is an easy and cheap way for big supermarkets to get rid of their near-expired food and constitutes an excellent opportunity for those involved in this business to buy inventory for almost no cost and then to resell it in the poorer districts around the city.

In this case, whoever wants to trade in these goods has to have connections with his fellow Yemenis working in the business to be able to receive a daily load of supplies that fit into a hand-cart worth approximately \$80. These carts are built in the Senayah, a district south of Jeddah, where carpenters, mechanics and other workers carry out their trade. Selling and buying these goods provides a unique market for the poor while the very poor can buy cheap

food to survive as well as some household goods. This business is so remunerative that even the Jawazat often detain people involved in this business and deport them after confiscating their goods.

1.8.2.4 Sex trade, drugs, and begging.

As mentioned earlier, in the Musfah (Al-Karentina) district, according to many interviewees and the researcher's own field observation, there are many sex trade workers who work in semi-brothel(s), or homes, offering sex to undocumented and documented migrants from all communities. Furthermore, a few interviewees reported that Saudi *shurṭah* (police) also attend these places. Interviewee number 1 notes that "the priority of most of the government undercover agents, including undercover agents recruited by the police to assist in monitoring the various districts, is to control drugs and possible terrorist's activities, including recruitment by al-Qaida or others of these poor undocumented migrants who live in south Jeddah."

1.8.2.5 Remittances as an underground activity.

Since *ḥawālah* (money transfer) operates largely through cash transfers on the basis of trust and not the physical movement of cash, it is a difficult phenomenon to investigate. Undocumented migrants in Jeddah have no access to banks due to government restrictions. In order to transfer funds migrants make efficient use of multi-media facilities such as internet phone calls, email, mobile phones, fax etc. to facilitate the transfer of money to their families and relations.

In the world of the undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah, or other cities in the Gulf region, the word *ḥawālah* (Arabic for sending cash from one country to another) refers to a remittance done through unofficial channels. It operates largely through cash transfers on the basis of trust and not the physical movement of cash; it is hard to investigate by official authorities and is a successful method of sending cash to the home country of the individual undocumented migrant. For instance, if an undocumented migrant needs to send money to his/her family back home, they go to any local grocery store

where a native of their country receives the cash from them and at the same time calls his partner in the homeland to hand the same amount of money to a family member or trusted friend of the undocumented migrant. In these cases, there is an acceptable charge for all parties involved in this transaction, which is paid by the undocumented in Jeddah and/or someone at the other end. In this regard, in 2010 the US and Saudi Arabia were the top two originating locales of global remittances.⁴⁵ According to a World Bank study Nigeria is by far the top remittance recipient in Africa accounting for \$10 billion in 2010, a slight increase over the previous year (\$9.6 billion). Other top recipients include Sudan (\$3.2 billion) and Ethiopia (\$387 million). As a share of Gross Domestic Product, the top recipients in 2009 were Sudan (6%) and Nigeria (6%).⁴⁶

1.10 Division into chapters

Chapter Two will deal with the methodology used during the investigation. The researcher was aware of the challenges posed by choosing such a hidden group of migrants. One of the first challenges was that it was necessary to break their isolation and allay their fear. Most of the undocumented migrants had to be approached after the researcher gained the trust of the communities' gatekeepers or representatives. Their collaboration has been an invaluable help to the research. Due to this particular challenge, the researcher thought that it was important to apply the snowball technique, as will be explained more in detail in the methodology chapter.

The communities considered here will be analysed following eight themes:

- 1) Background information;
- 2) Migration process;
- 3) Familiar and social ties;
- 4) Medical needs and provision;

⁴⁵ <http://www.embassyofindonesia.org/news/2011/05/news015.htm>

⁴⁶ The World Bank (2010). *Remittances to Ethiopia*. Bendixen & Amandi International. Retrieved from <http://bendixenandamandi.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/World-Bank-Ethiopia-Presentation.pdf>

- 5) Issues related to work in native country;
- 6) The *kafalah nizam* (sponsorship system);
- 7) Legal issues, and
- 8) Future plans and objectives.

Chapter Three analyses the African community living in the city. The researcher thought it useful, in order to understand their lives, to mention the districts in which they are living and working. From the data gathered from the interviews and from a comparison with the Yemeni community analysed in Chapter Five, the African community faces different challenges. From the personal narratives it is obvious that the distress and danger of their crossing of the Red Sea has a significant impact on their lives. For many of them the journey to Saudi Arabia to flee from poverty and war can last years and most of the time it is a journey without returns. The chapter will show how their integration into Saudi society is hindered by their lack of knowledge of the language and of the local culture.

Chapter Four will analyse the Yemeni community. This community is interesting because it constitutes a good basis of comparison with the others. The geographical vicinity of Yemen to Saudi Arabia with a long and virtually uncontrolled land border, makes it easy for the Yemeni migrants to be smuggled into the Kingdom. From the personal narratives of the undocumented migrants it is clear that their familial and social ties with the home country are much stronger. This is due to the fact that most of them leave their families in Yemen. This contrasts hugely with the demography of the other communities because the Yemeni do not feel the pressure of reuniting with their wives and children. In addition, the Yemeni community share language and culture with Saudi Arabia, look like Saudis, and this allows them to move more freely in the country.

Chapter Five analyses the Filipino and the Indonesian communities in Jeddah. It is important to note that despite the similarities with the other communities regarding the life and work conditions in Jeddah and the reason(s) for migrating to the city of Jeddah, the Indonesian and Filipino undocumented migrants communities' countries of origin are geographically located very distant from

Saudi Arabia. Similar to any other undocumented migrant communities under study in this research, most of the undocumented migrants in this chapter have relatives or friends already living and working in the Kingdom. It is not a surprise that the great majority of these two communities have no difficulty in speaking Arabic. However, the Filipinos differ with other communities and study particularly in religion as all are Christian except a minority of Filipino Muslims.

Chapter Six will offer a cross-sectional analysis of the results obtained. This chapter aims at analysing the eight themes used during the investigation across all the communities under study. The purpose is to establish differences and similarities but, most importantly, to understand how these communities live and operate in the cities and how they deal with the challenges of their undocumented lives in Jeddah.

Chapter Seven, the conclusion, offers some recommendations for policy-makers and future researchers.

Chapter Two

Methodology

Not everything that can be counted counts and not everything that counts can be counted.

- Albert Einstein

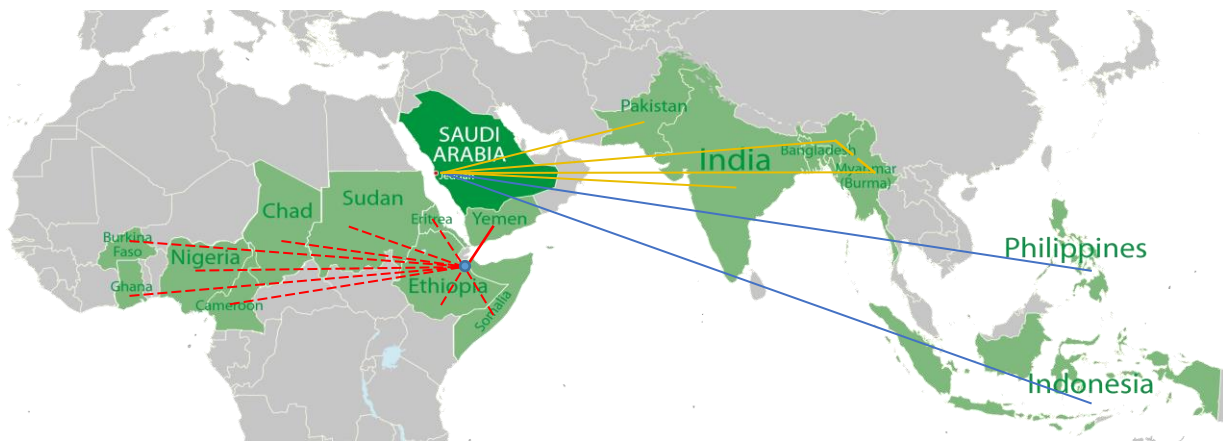
2.1 Introduction

This chapter analyses the social, economic and security issues concerning the presence in Saudi Arabia of undocumented foreign nationals. More specifically, it concerns eight issues that concern the lives of the 'hidden population' of undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah, the second largest city in the Kingdom. In this study, for reasons of simplicity, we have arbitrarily 'grouped' the undocumented migrants, who hail from 12 different countries (or communities),⁴⁷ into three major groups⁴⁸ with a common ethnic background, language, culture or geographic locations representing different continents. Group I comprises the African communities, Group II the Yemenis, Group III the Filipinos and Indonesians, as seen in the map below.

⁴⁷ Due to logistic and resource constraints, the number of undocumented migrant communities in Jeddah covered was limited to the 12 communities mentioned earlier. In fact, the number of communities by far exceeds the number we have considered.

⁴⁸ Originally this study included two more groups. One was group IV which included Egyptian and Syrian communities and the other (group V) included Pakistani, Indian, Bangladeshi and Burmese.

Figure 3: Map of migration flows to Jeddah



In support of the investigation, the researcher also interviewed important individuals⁴⁹ who have direct or indirect relation to the undocumented migrant community's work and living environment. These individuals varied in number and position from high officials within the government, local *Umdahs*, *mosque imams*, and leaders of various communities under study. Specifically, these additional interviews were conducted to broaden the overall interpretation and analysis of the data. These individuals have been a great asset and value to this study.

This chapter describes the research approach and the research design employed to collect the data necessary to address the research questions raised in the introduction. It consists of nine sections. The first provides a description of the research methods, focusing on the qualitative approach used and the choice of the interviewing techniques.

Section Two explains the research design and the research process, such as the use of the snowball technique to select the participants for the study. Section Three discusses the fieldwork. Section Four provides an overview of the particular challenges and obstacles encountered both within and outside the fieldwork while studying and collecting data. Section Five outlines the methodology followed in order to prepare a semi-structured questionnaire.

⁴⁹ Some of these individuals are not the official leaders of the communities, but they are well respected by its members.

Section six makes an attempt to estimate the number of undocumented people in the city. Section Seven discusses the questionnaire and its relation with the eight research questions. Section Eight concludes the chapter.

2.2 Qualitative approach

Due to difficulties associated with the study of hidden populations, the researcher has approached this subject mainly using qualitative methods, but also included a few elements of the quantitative approach. Of the three types of qualitative data, interviews, observation, and documents, this research mainly uses interviews, particularly semi-structured ones that include closed and open-ended questions. This method allowed the researcher to gather in-depth responses from the 12 communities, divided into the three main groups of undocumented migrants as mentioned earlier.⁵⁰ In this regard, the emphasis is placed on their experience, perceptions, opinions and feelings about their life and work in Jeddah.

Due to the low levels of education of the undocumented interviewed, the researcher had to provide close-ended probing questions in order to obtain reliable answers. The questions were organised following eight main themes aiming to gather information about their background. The questions the researcher asked included the respondent's age, marital status and the number of deportations they had experienced. In addition, the questions aimed to gather information about the migration route they had followed in order to reach the country, as well as their reasons for choosing Saudi Arabia and no other countries in the Gulf. Another question was the respondent's comprehension of the *kafalah* system, and, their plans for the future. The study also gathered information about their access to basic services such as the health system once living in Saudi Arabia.

⁵⁰ Prior to conducting the intensive semi-structured interviews with each group, the researcher managed to meet a few individuals from almost all the communities under study to conduct a semi-focus group. However for logistical difficulties he could not cover all the communities except the Africans, Yemenis, Filipinos and Indonesian.

The researcher also used secondary sources⁵¹ such as graduate unpublished theses and government statistics, facts, figures, and articles published in local Saudi newspapers by Saudis. These were used to supplement collected data by bringing in different perspectives, and were used for a deeper interpretation of the data gathered.

2.3 Research design and the research process

In order to obtain a valid sample for this particular research the researcher opted to use the snowball technique. This technique was useful as a means to make contact with the right people in order to gain access to the communities.

The snowball technique, also known as chain referral samplings, is considered a type of purposive sampling. In this method, participants or informants use their social networks to refer the researcher to other people who might potentially participate in, or contribute to, the study. Snowball sampling is often used to find and recruit hidden populations or groups not easily accessible to researchers through other sampling strategies. The snowball sampling technique is the most reliable tool to reach this type of hidden population. The challenge of the hidden, underground phenomena of this population is the inherent nature of undocumented labourers, not only in the Arab Gulf, but also in other countries around the world.

Atkinson and Flint summaries the snowball technique as follows:

In its simplest formulation snowball sampling consists of identifying respondents who are then used to refer researchers on to other respondents. Snowball sampling contradicts many of the assumptions underpinning conventional notions of sampling but has a number of advantages for sampling populations such as the deprived, the socially stigmatized and elite. Snowball sampling has advanced as a technique and the literature contains evidence of a trend toward more sophisticated methods of sampling frame and error estimation. Although they violate the principles of sampling, the use of snowball strategies

⁵¹ See chapter one for more details.

provides a means of accessing vulnerable and more impenetrable social groupings (Atkinson and Flint: 2001).⁵²

This strategy was used here by utilising the concept of ‘gatekeeper’⁵³ who played a central role in obtaining the sample for the study. In this case the use of the snowball technique along with the assistance of the gatekeepers from the various communities helped the researcher to overcome the problems associated with sampling the undocumented population under study.

There are some disadvantages inherent to the snowballing technique, such as selection bias. But, as noted by Van Meter (1990), increasing the sample size to include different age groups will limit the selection bias (Pollak and Schlitz, 1988). Following Van Meter’s advice, in our sample we included as many different age groups as possible within the time limits of the research.

According to March and Stoker (2002), the snowball technique presents some downsides. In particular, March and Stoker believe that “the issue of generating a sample from one network of people with particular characteristics because interviewees can nominate a set of interconnected people”,⁵⁴ thus limiting the scope of the study. In order to diversify the sample and avoid this risk, the researcher relied on the collaboration of different ‘gatekeepers’ in different districts in order to diversify the sample.

In favour of the snowball technique, Burnham and others (2004) contend that regardless of the weakness of snowball sampling:

... [I]t may be the only way of generating a sample of particular groups, such as homeless people, drug users [or the undocumented migrants in this study]. The information collected than can be used to generate hypotheses for further research or used to develop tentative

⁵² Rowland Atkinson and John Flint, Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Populations: Snowball Research Strategies. Issue 33, Summer 2001, *Social Research Update*, University of Surrey.

⁵³ Key informants or gatekeepers in this study are trusted and respected members of the different communities of undocumented migrants under study. They may be current or former undocumented migrants. The gatekeepers are utilised as advisors, guides and the basic connection to the people and districts under study.

⁵⁴ *Theory and methods in Political Science* (second edition) edited by David March and Gerry Stoker (2002). Palgrave Macmillan., p. 205.

generalizations which again would need to be confirmed by additional studies.⁵⁵

2.4 Fieldwork research

This section will provide a brief description of the pilot study done in Jeddah prior to the fieldwork. In addition it offers a detailed description of the sampling techniques, sample size, participants' characteristics, settings, description of instruments, and it also introduces the ethical questions relevant to the study.

2.4.1 Preliminary fieldwork (Pilot Study)

A pilot study was carried out in January 2009 in the city of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, among undocumented migrants in the city. Ten interviews were conducted in ten different undocumented migrant communities that live and work in different districts of the city. The pilot study had four objectives: first, to locate the major male and female 'gatekeepers' willing to assist the researcher in finding undocumented workers from the different communities under study. Second, the goal of the pilot study was to identify the most appropriate districts in which to conduct future fieldwork. Third, the study aimed to measure the time taken to cover all the "tentative" issues included in the interview. Fourth, it was intended to refine the questions in a way that would make them understandable by the participants. The above objectives were largely achieved and the shortcomings of specific probing questions have been identified.

2.4.2 Formal fieldwork

Due to the difficulty in conducting interviews with the undocumented migrants in Jeddah, the fieldwork took place over three different time periods. The first was during May, June and July 2009, the second in February, 2010, and the third in June 2011. The purpose of the last fieldwork was to evaluate and conduct more interviews with the undocumented migrants after the 2011 Arab Spring began in

⁵⁵ Peter Burnham, Karin Gilland, Wyn Grant and Zig Layton-Henry (2004), *Research Methods in Politics*, Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 91-92.

the region. The information gained from the pilot study provided a solid basis upon which to redesign the interview questionnaire, and helped to identify the most suitable districts in which to conduct the interviews.

The researcher managed to interview all the Filipinas, Indonesian and most African women himself; however, in order to approach Yemeni and some African women, in particular from Sudan, the researcher had to train two female researchers.⁵⁶ There were too many communities of undocumented migrants in the city to cover them all, and the number of districts in which they live and work is large. For this reason, the researcher opted to limit the study to the undocumented from 12 communities, representing the following 12 nationalities: Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somalian, Sudanese, Chadian, Nigerian, Burkina Faso, Ghanaian, Cameroonian, Yemeni, Filipino and Indonesian. These communities were approached in six districts where there was a reasonable concentration of the populations and divided into the three groups mentioned earlier. Additional interviews were conducted in different districts across the city.

In addition to interviewing the undocumented in these districts, the researcher conducted interviews with the local *umdas*⁵⁷ of nine districts, five mosque imams, and 12 different recognised 'unofficial' community leaders in order to discuss important issues relating to their lives in their respective communities. In addition, the researcher was fortunate to meet five senior officials from different government agencies. Due to the sensitivity of this study, everyone interviewed was granted full confidentiality. The above individuals, and also the 146 undocumented migrants who constituted the base of this study, were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

2.5 Challenges and difficulties in the fieldwork

It is important to highlight the main concerns facing the researcher during his fieldwork, in particular the ones he faced in approaching the undocumented

⁵⁶ Yemeni and Sudanese women due to their customs and traditions prohibit meeting with males. This is why many of them were reluctant to meet a male researcher.

⁵⁷ See Glossary.

communities. Indeed, the issue of trust and mistrust constitutes the major obstacle in the study of hidden populations. In the case of this research, as we will see below, the role of the gatekeepers was fundamental to gain the trust of the various communities. Specific obstacles faced within each community in Jeddah will be discussed later in the analysis of the data related to each of them

The undocumented migrants in Jeddah remain very cautious in not exposing themselves to any degree of communication or interaction with the outside world that is perceived as a potential threat. The exception is with matters that directly relate to their work life in Jeddah. This explains why few or no studies have been done on the undocumented migrants in the city. Hence, a major difficulty faced since the outset of the research, especially during the preliminary fieldwork, was to first identify respondents, and the specific communities to investigate. Some central questions of concern include who are the undocumented in the city of Jeddah? Which communities and how many should be studied? How and in which way(s) should the interviewees be approached? Out of the 135 districts in the city of Jeddah, how many districts should be covered? In response to these and other related logistical questions, the researcher, based on the pilot study's initial findings and after consultation with his advisor, determined a set of criteria to recognise who is undocumented (see Criteria section below). He chose six distinct districts in the city to be involved in the study (see Setting section), and identified the gatekeepers from different communities in order to gain access to the undocumented migrants.

The issue of trust and mistrust constituted a major challenge to overcome in order to conduct an investigation involving a difficult and hard to reach hidden population. As noted earlier in this chapter, the researcher used a “snowball technique”⁵⁸ in order to reach the higher amount of interviewees. For this reason, the gatekeepers played a vital role in the organisation of the research. The gatekeeper is usually a well-known and respected person in any hidden community who acts as intermediary between the community and the outside

⁵⁸ For further discussion see section 2.6.2.

world. This research would have been impossible without the fundamental role played by the various gatekeepers. In order to deal with the issue of trust and mistrust, the researcher, especially during the first phases of the fieldwork, needed to gain the trust of the communities through gaining the trust of the gatekeepers first. The researcher's seniority and his linkage to the Hashemite clan in the city assisted in lowering insecurity and suspicion towards the researcher, first by the gatekeepers and later by the interviewees themselves.

The key gatekeepers who introduced the researcher to the various undocumented migrants were of African origin. One was himself an undocumented migrant and had been in the country for over twenty years. He was a slim, energetic, and intelligent man from Darfur, Sudan, in his early sixties. The other major gatekeeper was his close friend, a Saudi national in his early forties whose slave ancestors were freed around the time of the unification of Saudi Arabia. Both became close friends with the researcher and were instrumental in introducing him to other gatekeepers from the various African communities in different districts of Jeddah. It was both the gatekeepers and the interviewer in tandem that facilitated further interviews. For example, after the conclusion of an interview, the interviewee was asked to locate another potential participant for the study, often with the assistance of the gatekeeper.

In addition, the researcher's willingness to listen and share in the life experiences of the interviewees, by spending time with them and meeting them in their own "comfort zones" under their own terms, constituted a major step in gaining their trust. In general, once a gatekeeper was identified, the researcher assured both the gatekeeper and the interviewees of the strict adherence to the terms of confidentiality and the purely academic purpose (and non-political nature) of the research. The researcher had to also become cognizant of the customs and traditions of a particular community during the fieldwork. This included being arranging appropriate times and places to meet. There is also the issue of attire and in this respect, it appeared that wearing western clothes eased the non-verbal interaction with an interviewee at the initial meeting, while Saudi traditional clothes thobe (*thawb*) raised feelings of insecurity in the potential interviewee, who feared of being arrested by a Saudi authorities. It

was often difficult to arrange suitable time and place to meet migrants, and the researcher had to become accustomed to accepting their schedules that did not meet my own. Consequently, most of the meetings took place in the interviewees' room after midnight or after Friday prayers. Compared to meeting with men interviewing women, especially those who worked as housemaids, was easier due to the fact that the majority of them lived and worked in Saudi homes. Otherwise, meeting and interviewing a non-relative female in Saudi society would have been an unsurmountable task.

Another important challenge regarding trust and mistrust was gaining access to Sudanese and Yemeni women in particular. In order to overcome this obstacle, the researcher had to train female personnel to carry out the interviews (see section 2.6.7).

The researcher also faced difficulties arising from the different Arabic accents in the different communities. During the first interviews, this was resolved by careful and active listening and using the assistance of the gatekeepers. In addition, spending time around local coffee shops and in the various African, Indonesian, Yemeni, Filipino and other foreign migrant restaurants, greatly helped to speed up the researcher's familiarity with all the migrant communities under study.

Violence that frequently exploded in the communities constituted another important obstacle for the researcher and his research. In addition to the violence internal to the districts, police raids were also frequent. When this happened, the researcher opted for postponing interviews in order to avoid being identified with the raids and thus hindering future fieldwork. In addition, convincing local *umdas*, community leaders, mosque *imams*, and government officials to help with the study, constituted a great challenge to overcome due to the sensitivity of their jobs. Despite these impediments, the researcher still managed to attain the desired data.

2.5.1 Issues relating to available secondary data

The first obstacle here is the difficulty in obtaining demographic data concerning the undocumented migrants in the city, whether from universities or governmental agencies. Even where some data is available within the government departments, it was almost impossible to gain access to it. The second obstacle was that, although data on undocumented migrants in Jeddah or elsewhere in Saudi Arabia does exist, it is considered secret because it deals with state security. Most of this data, according to interviews with high officials in the government, can be found only within specific government agencies within the Saudi Arabian Ministry of Interior, Prince Naif Arab University for Security Studies⁵⁹ and other Saudi government affiliated official agencies.

In this regard, there is no dissemination of data among scholars or research centres. This makes it very difficult for academic and research students to conduct any type of research in this area. Alkhraif (2010) points out that the Saudi state spends great sums of money through its ministries and various institutions on collecting data on population, economic, social and environmental variables to assist in formulating useful policies for the benefit of Saudi society. Unfortunately, he contends that the benefit of collecting the data is not commensurate with the costs.⁶⁰ Some of the field surveys remain in the possession of the agency, or administrating body, which then issues a booklet that contains a brief summary of tables providing only general indicators. Worse still, the official data becomes the “property” of the supervisor whose team has collected it. The prevailing sentiment among many government departments regarding data secrecy and the ownership of data, not only limits the usefulness of the data, but generates obstacles to a sound scientific investigation that can serve as the basis for new government policies.

⁵⁹ Unpublished MA theses, researched and written by military officers who study at Prince Naif Arab University for Security Studies. Most of these materials are not “easily” accessible to the public, researchers, or academics.

⁶⁰ Rashoud Alkhraif (Sept. 5, 2010) in an article published in the Al-Ektesadyah newspaper writes “It is about time to find a procedure for data and ways to deal with it”.

2.6 Description of research instrument

This section briefly describes the instrument used for this research followed by a list of the instrument's various sub-components, such as criteria, sampling technique, sample size, participants' characteristics, setting, and languages used in conducting the fieldwork. Both gatekeepers and interviewees were assured that their responses would be confidential and their identity concealed for their safety. The interviews were not tape-recorded due to the sensitivity of the issues for the interviewee. My female assistant and I relied on note-taking.

The instrument used for the research, as explained in an earlier section, was a semi-structured questionnaire containing eight major questions which constituted the basis for the analysis. Each theme contained a mixture of open- and close-ended questions. Wherever possible, short-answer questions were used, i.e. with the response being, yes, no, or, I do not know. It is important to note that most of the interviewees had a very basic educational background and had difficulties in understanding long and complicated questions. Thus, it was necessary to simplify the format and instead of asking one long question, the researcher divided the open question into many parts by using as many probing short questions⁶¹ as needed to cover a particular theme. The interview started with a personal introduction, a general overview of the research and some words that ensured confidentiality regarding the individual's responses. Due to the highly sensitive position of the respondents' legal status in the country, the researcher relied heavily on referrals of former interviewees.

⁶¹ The main purpose of the probing questions was to guide both the researcher and the interviewee through eight broad areas of interest, or themes, on the lives and experiences of the undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah. Each theme was covered by one open-ended, broad question, and broadened with affiliated probing questions.

2.6.1 Criteria for the category of undocumented migrants

The interviews were conducted with individual undocumented migrants falling into any of the following four criteria:

- Entered the country without obtaining an official visa, for example smuggled into the country by land or by sea;
- Entered the country legally with *umrah* or *hajj* visas but overstayed;
- Entered legally with a work permit visa, but left the Saudi employers Without consent, and
- Being born in the city as a result of marriage unions of undocumented parents.

The above four criteria are the focus of interest of this research. When an individual fitted any of the above criteria from within any particular migrant community, the researcher conducted the interview in a safe and secure environment for the interviewee. Communities and individuals were identified by the researcher, with assistance of the gatekeeper.

2.6.2 Sampling

As mentioned above, the researcher used snowball sampling. This method of sampling has been defined as: “a technique for finding research subjects. One subject gives the researcher the name of another subject, who in turn provides the name of a third, and so on” (Vogt, 1999). In order to identify the appropriate participants for the study the researcher has to gain the gatekeeper’s trust. This strategy addresses the challenges associated with a study of a hidden population.

2.6.3 Sample size

The sample size required to study any particular hidden population, according to Josselson and Lieblich (2003), can be defined according to the ‘saturation point’ of data collection:

[...] saturation—that is, stopping data collection when the results start to become redundant is the key determinant of sample size....Generally speaking, the longer, more detailed, and intensive the transcripts, the fewer the number of participants. In practice, this may mean specifying a range between 5 and 30 participants. (p. 37)

The following tables contain the total number of the sample size for this study including the country of origin and gender of participants.

Table 4: Composition of the African communities

Nationality	Frequency	Female	Male	Per cent
Ethiopian	10	6	4	16.4
Eritrean	9	3	6	14.8
Somali	13	2	11	21.3
Sudanese	5	0	5	9.8
Chadian	5	2	3	8.1
Nigerian	7	4	3	11.5
Burkinabe	4	0	4	6.6
Ghanaian	4	1	4	6.6
Cameroonian	3	0	3	4.9
Total	61	18 (30%)	43 (70%)	100.0

Table 5: Composition of the Yemeni community

Nationality	Frequency	Female	Male	Per cent
Yemeni	29	14	15	53.7
Total	29	14 (48%)	15 (52%)	100

Table 6: Composition of the Filipino and Indonesian communities

Nationality	Frequency	Female	Male	Per cent
Filipino	26	16	10	46
Indonesian	30	18	12	54
Total	56	34 (61%)	22 (39%)	100

The above tables show a sample size of 146, comprising 80 males and 66 females from 12 communities of undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah. At this point, following Josselson and Lieblich's protocol of saturation point, the researcher did not look for more participants. As mentioned earlier, in addition to the 146 undocumented migrants interviewed, and to assist in the analysis and interpretation of data, the researcher also interviewed various people who had direct or indirect involvement with the undocumented migrant community's environment. In particular, the researcher conducted interviews with the local *Umdah (umda)*⁶² of nine districts, interviewed five mosque *imams*, and met with 12 different community leaders (elders) to discuss important issues that related to the lives of the undocumented migrants in their respective communities. The researcher also was able to interview five senior officials from different government agencies. All the above individuals, including the 146 undocumented migrants who constituted the base of this study, stated that they wished to remain anonymous and were guaranteed confidentiality.

2.6.4 Participants

As noted above, the participants in this study came from twelve different nationalities and from three different continents. Each nationality has its unique community in Jeddah.⁶³ The research subjects arrived in Jeddah through different avenues or were born in the city with no documents (see Criteria of Undocumented below). Participants in the interviews belonged to both genders and lived and/or worked in the city of Jeddah undocumented. The majority of participants in the interviews were men 80 (54.7%), but there were 66 women (45.3%). Due to the restrictions of Saudi Arabian culture where it is not appropriate for men to communicate with women, the researcher was unable to approach as many women participants as men. Using the assistance of a female researcher increased the opportunity in some communities for more women to be interviewed.

⁶² *Umdah (Umda)* is a Saudi national appointed by the Ministry of the Interior to act as liaison between the government and the communities.

⁶³ Indeed the numbers of countries from which the various communities of undocumented migrants in Jeddah come from far exceed the twelve countries noted in this research.

2.6.5 Setting

The area of the fieldwork spanned six of 135 *hais* (or districts) in the southern and northern parts of the city. The southern one is where most of the undocumented migrants, with their undocumented or documented friends and relatives, live and work.⁶⁴ The research also included a few affluent districts in the north where there was evidence of a significant number of migrants in specific areas. In south Jeddah among the districts covered were the following poor *hais*: Al-Karantina, Al-Hindawiya, Al-Jamaa, Gholail, Al-Jamaa, and As-Sabeel.

In the northern part of the city, two districts were covered: Al-Rawda, and Al-Salamah. While the majority of the interviews were conducted in six districts located mostly in the south of the city, quite a number of interviews (around 40) were conducted in other districts that cannot be named due to the circumstances of the interviewees. For instance, an interviewee may live in a district in the south, but work in a district in the northern part of the city and prefer to meet in that particular district. As far as places and time of interviews are concerned this varied. It should be noted that most of the interviews with Yemeni migrants, for example, were in the home of the gatekeeper after midnight, due to the nature and schedules of their work. Other migrants were interviewed at different places and times. More specific information will be included in the data analysis chapters of the various undocumented groups.

2.6.6 Research ethics

Respondents were assured of confidentiality over the information they provided. Oral consent from each of the interviewees was sought, with the promise that all the information gathered during the interview would only be used for research purposes. This assurance of confidentiality was easy to deliver and was readily accepted by the interviewees. Interviews were not tape-recorded because of the sensitivity of the issues involved, and to put the interviewees at ease.

⁶⁴ See appendix number 2.

2.6.7 Female research assistant's training and qualifications

The researcher's two female assistants interviewed the majority of the women. They received suitable training from a female university professor in Educational Psychology on how to conduct proper interviews with the undocumented female migrants. The major open-ended question and specific probing questions were explained. Also, the interviewers were taught necessary communication skills to achieve a successful interview, and appropriate techniques in ascertaining the information needed. In addition, the researcher advised the female assistants to note down important observations made during the interview, like body language, surrounding environment, how many people live with the interviewee, etc.

2.6.8 Language(s) used in interviews

English was used to interview the Filipinos, and Arabic was used to interview the rest. In the case of Yemeni migrants, communication was easily done in Arabic with occasional difficulty in understanding a few words stemming from the researcher's lack of familiarity with the Taizzi *lahja* (dialect). These occasions were rare, and when they occurred it was easily resolved by the researcher asking for clarification of a word or sentence or by seeking help from the gatekeeper if present at the interview. To make sure the interviewee understood the items in the questionnaire, the researcher and his female assistants tried to make sure that a gatekeeper from the same community of the interviewee was present during the entire interview to assist in explaining questions and answers as needed.

2.7 Estimate of undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia

Estimating the number of undocumented in any country is a difficult task. Advanced industrial countries like the USA and the UK also experience great difficulty in this regard. A report published by the British House of Lords states:

As is the case in most immigration countries, we know very little about the scale of undocumented immigration and undocumented employment of immigrants in the UK. According to Home Office estimates, there were about 430,000 migrants residing undocumented in the UK in 2001. This estimate comes with a number of caveats. Describing the difficulties with measuring undocumented immigration, Professor John Salt of University College London told us that, “no country in the world knows how many people there are who are living or working undocumented, with the probable exception of Australia where they count everybody in and they count everybody out” (Q 599). Dr Bridget Anderson of Oxford University’s Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, pointed out that the Home Office estimate excludes immigrants who are residing in the UK legally but breaching the conditions.⁶⁵

There are quite a few statistically oriented methods that scholars use in estimating undocumented population in various countries. Among them are the “Residual” estimation technique, the “Multiplier” estimation technique, the capture-recapture method and the projection apprehension method. It is beyond the scope of this section to discuss them in detail, but this research uses the projection apprehension method as one of the factors in our estimate of the undocumented migrants as discussed below. The following section attempts to provide an estimate of the number of undocumented migrants in Jeddah based on government secondary data and feedback from the fieldwork.

The Saudi government publishes data on the number of people arrested while attempting to enter Saudi Arabia. This gave the researcher an idea of the number of migrants who were detained. Heckmann et al. (2000), according to Jandl, use the ratio of 1:2 border apprehensions to undocumented entry in the case of the EU. In Germany, Jandl notes, the ratio of Iraqis who managed to enter the country with no documents was as high as 1:5. According to our

⁶⁵ The Economic Impact of Immigration. Volume I: Report Ordered to be printed 18 March 2008 and published 1 April 2008. Published by the Authority of the House of Lords. London: The Stationery Office Limited, HL Paper 82-I.

study the ratio of the Yemeni undocumented migrants crossing the Saudi borders clandestinely was higher than 1:5. This means that for each of them caught by the migration police, five were able to enter the country illegally. This means that the number of undocumented migrants who managed to cross the Saudi borders from Yemen is several times more than the number of people arrested while attempting to cross the Saudi border without proper documents as shown in Table 6.

Information was obtained from interviews with community leaders of the documented/undocumented migrants as well as with *imams* of mosques, individuals who work and pray in mosques, local *umdas* and many Saudi and non-Saudi individuals who live or work in the same districts under study. The above individuals gave the researcher their own general estimate based on their local knowledge and experience of these communities. Senior government officials⁶⁶ gave clear estimates, but as with others involved in this study, they insisted on confidentiality and anonymity.

Useful information came from an interview that took place in 2010 on a Saudi public TV channel with Major General Dr Ali Al-Shahrani, the deputy head of postgraduate research at the Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, and Dr Mutliq Al-Mutairi, a journalist with *al-Riyadh* daily newspaper. A calculation based on the contradictory figures Dr al-Shehri proposed is presented later in this section.

The table below shows the figures suggested by the data on arrested migrants. The data reproduced here refers only to the countries considered in this study.

⁶⁶ Senior government officials such as members of *Al-Shura* (the Consultative Assembly), officials in various ministries.

Table 7: Number of migrants arrested while attempting to smuggle themselves into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia distributed according to nationality over a 24-year period (i) 1977-1990, (ii) 1994-1997, and (iii) 2002-2007).

Nationality	Sum or Total	Percent
Yemeni	3,419,207	98.69%
Eritrean	16,687	0.48%
Somalian	9,257	0.27%
Sudanese	9,014	0.26%
Ethiopian	8,723	0.25%
Indian	620	0.02%
Pakistani	601	0.02%
Bangladeshi	316	0.01%
Chadian	67	0.002%
Burkinabe	0	0.0%
Filipino	0	0.0%
Indonesian	0	0.0%
Total	3,464,492	100.00%

Source: Government of Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Interior annual Statistics books.

The above table indicates that over three million people from nine countries were arrested while attempting to gain entry into Saudi Arabia during a 24 year period. This reflects an average of 144,354 undocumented migrants apprehended per year over 24 years.

It is interesting to note that data concerning African undocumented migrants, in general, and Yemen, in particular, who crossed the border from Yemen to Saudi Arabia without being apprehended by the Saudi border guards, reflect a ratio of 1:6. This is according to many interviewees and high government officials interviewed. Recent statistics covering a different period are summarised in the table below:

Table 8: Number of people arrested while illegally entering the KSA between 2000 and 2009.

Year	Apprehension at the Saudi border
2000	378382
2001	337723
2002	474210
2003	652454
2004	650070
2005	659991
2006	344455
2007	428725
2008	514313
2009	804095
Total	5244418
Average	524442

Source: Ministry of Interior, Statistics Year Book, cited in Al-Muṭayrī (2012).

Saudi Arabia has a land border running thousands of kilometres.⁶⁷ This border is extremely difficult to control and despite the recent introduction of sophisticated surveillance equipment to guard the borders with Yemen and Iraq, one can still be smuggled in to the country. This is according to many of the interviewees who managed to enter in the city.

Some of the interviewees revealed that many of those who entered without documents stayed in Jeddah for many years and that most of them (both females and males) got married to other undocumented migrants then gave birth to undocumented children. It is impossible for the Saudi governmental agencies to monitor the number of those who were born in Jeddah or other cities of the country since most, if not all the children, are born in secrecy with the help of an experienced midwife from the same community.

Al-Shehri (2012) was able to collect a significant amount of important data from various governmental agencies as shown in the following table:

⁶⁷ According to an officer in the Ministry of the Interior, the land border with Yemen is around 5,000 kilometres. This figure is much higher than the 1,100 miles (1,600 kilometres) quoted in the official record. This difference is due to the inclusion of all different types of land terrains, such as mountains and valleys.

Table 9: Overview of illegal immigration

Year	Overstayers	Violators of residency permits	Illegal entry	Those arrested	Total number of violators	Percentage to legal guest workers	Total estimated income in hidden economy (M \$)
2000	163506	13457	342112	537997	1057072	23%	1014.79
2001	161260	12446	394060	635938	1203704	23%	1155.56
2002	230394	13487	357964	722536	1324381	27%	1271.41
2003	242403	18446	321427	695282	1277548	27%	1226.45
2004	265909	17370	291396	655653	1230328	26%	1181.11
2005	398532	18132	377433	830071	1624166	34%	1559.20
2006	351160	16037	352013	794276	1513486	33%	1452.95
2007	327052	18111	336389	772971	1454523	35%	1396.34
2008	254007	23667	257915	748599	1284188	30%	1232.82
2009	215360	42275	257915	583863	1099413	17%	1055.44
Total	2609583	193428	3288624	6977186	13068809	NA	12546.06
Average	260958	19343	328862	697719	1306881	28%	1255

Source: Adopted from unpublished statistical data from the General Bureau of Passport and Naturalization cited in Al-Mutairi (2012).⁶⁸

In addition, many individuals who entered the country for pilgrimage or *umrah* have stayed beyond the period allowed to practice these religious rituals. In many cases, according to the fieldwork, they have been in the city with no documents for an average period that ranges from a few months to many decades.⁶⁹ Accurate statistics on the number of pilgrims and *umrah* visitors who have overstayed their visa permits, and the number of people deported, do not exist.⁷⁰ The researcher conducted confidential interviews with senior Saudi government officials, and the interview results provided an estimate of six million undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia, with the greatest number concentrated in Jeddah, Makkah and Madinah.

Major General Dr Ali al Shahrani, in the interview mentioned above, revealed the “indirect” official statistical estimates on the number of undocumented in the country. He stated that “... 31% of the Saudi population are foreign expatriates with [valid] *Iqamah (Iqamah) [residency permits]*...perhaps they make [up to] 40% to 50% per cent [of the total population] ...” This remark indicates a

⁶⁸ It should be noted that Dr. Al-Mutairi is a Captain in the police department of Makkah.

⁶⁹ The average range of time with no documents varies from one community to another as the study shows in Chapters 4, 5, and 6. For now, it ranges from a few months to over 60 years.

⁷⁰ It is fair to note, that with new fingerprint and other sophisticated tools, the government will be able to take a more scientific measure, with resultant reliable data.

difference in the percentage, from 31% to 40% or 50%, reflecting a difference of 9 or 19 per cent, respectively. This contradictory remark shows how difficult is to obtain reliable statistics from official sources. The researcher used this to calculate the number of undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia, in general, and Jeddah, in particular, proving that the estimates offered by the Saudi government underestimate the phenomena.

Saudi Arabia's population, according to the April 2010 census, was 27,136,977 Saudi nationals and 8,429,401 non-nationals, with an official percentage of 31% non-nationals. If the aforementioned estimate of 40% by Al-Shahrani is correct, then it would increase the number of non-nationals to 10,854,791. In this case, the difference between 40% and 31% is 9%, or 2,425,390, which the researcher argues is the lowest estimate for undocumented in the country as calculated from the Major General's statement and the 2010 census. If the above informal estimate of 50% by Maj. Gen. Al-Shahrani is correct, then the number of non-nationals would be 13,568,489. In this second estimate, the difference between 50% and 31% is 19%, or 5,139,080, which the researcher argues is the upper estimate for undocumented in the country as per the estimate of the Major General.

Thus, based on these assessments, one can argue that the number of undocumented migrants is somewhere between 2,425,390 and 5,139,080. The researcher thinks that their actual number is in fact greater than the higher figure as calculated. During his three years of fieldwork, and according to the information as discussed above, the researcher estimates that the number is probably over six million. Most of the undocumented live in the three cities in the western province, Jeddah, Makkah and Madinah, with the majority living in the city of Jeddah. Around two million are in Jeddah alone.

2.8 The questionnaire

The interview consists of eight themes that examine the lives and work of the undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah. Each of the major themes was supplemented with appropriate and relevant probing questions to assist both

the researcher and the interviewees through the course of the interview. In the eight sub-sections which follow, each of the eight major themes used contains a complete list of specific probing questions.

2.8.1 Theme one: background information

Theme one covers the demographic and personal data of the individual migrants. It has seven probing questions that covered:

- Nationality;
- Age;
- Gender;
- Marital status;
- Family size;
- Religious affiliation and
- Education

2.8.2 Theme two: the migration process

Theme two has eight probing questions:

- How did you arrive in Jeddah?
- Why did you choose Jeddah over other cities in the Gulf?
- How much did you pay to come to Jeddah?
- How old were you when you arrived in Jeddah?
- How many years did you spend in Jeddah as an “undocumented” migrant?
- How many times were you deported from Jeddah?
- If deported and later you re-entered the country, how and why you did you come back?
- Was returning to Jeddah worth the effort?

2.8.3 Theme three: familial and social ties among undocumented migrants

Theme three focuses on social ties and family. There are eleven probing questions:

- What is your spouse's type of work?
- How many people do you live with in Jeddah?
- Contact with family in your home country: how often in a month?
- How many relatives do you have in Jeddah?
- How many friends do you have in Jeddah?
- In general, what types of visa(s) do your relatives and friends have?
- Was it easy for them to find a job?
- Do you participate in social gatherings or activities with other communities and Saudis?
- Are you the only breadwinner?
- Do you remit some of your income home and how? What percentage of your monthly income do you remit to your home country?

2.8.4 Theme four: medical needs and provision

Theme four is concerned with medical issues. This theme includes the following three probing questions:

- In case of medical emergencies, what do you do?
- If there is no access to medical care (hospitals), what are your options?
- Have you ever used someone else's ID to gain entry for public/private medical treatment?

2.8.5 Theme five: issues related to work in native country

Theme five seeks information on issues relating to working in Saudi Arabia and quality of life. It has 11 probing questions:

- If you worked in your native country, what type of job(s) did you have?
- Why, if you were employed, did you leave your job to come to Jeddah?
- Why Jeddah and not a different city in the Gulf?
- If you currently work, what type of job do you have? Is this the job you were trained to do?
- How many times have you changed jobs and why?
- Is it easy to find a new job?
- In which district(s), do you think it is the easiest to find a job?
- How many hours do you work per day? And what type of shifts?
- How much is your income per month? And how do you receive your income?
- How much do you pay in rent monthly?
- Do you think your standard of living has improved, stayed the same, or deteriorated since you came to Jeddah?

2.8.6 Theme six: the kafalah *Nizam* (sponsorship system)

Theme six deals with issues that relate to the Saudi kafalah (sponsorship system). This theme aims at assessing the impact of the kafalah system on the various migrant communities in this study. This theme has the following probing questions:

- If you entered Saudi Arabia with a work permit, why did you leave your employer and break your contract?
- Do you think the kafalah system is fair?
- Do you think the kafalah system should be abolished?
- Do you think the Saudi government's frequent amnesty initiatives to reduce the number of undocumented in Jeddah are effective?
- Do you think the Saudi government's frequent amnesty initiatives to reduce the number of undocumented in Jeddah are biased towards specific nationalities?

2.8.7 Theme seven: legal issues facing undocumented labourers in Saudi Arabia

In particular these issues refer to:

- Deportation;
- Freedom of movement in the country;
- Dealing with the local authorities, and
- Dealing with the consulates of their countries of origin.

This theme has the following probing questions:

- Is it difficult to travel around the various districts in Jeddah to work or visit relatives and friends?
- How do you protect yourself from the authorities?
- If you are in trouble with any of the local authorities, can you ask your consulate for help?
- Does your consulate provide shelter for its expatriates regardless of their legal status in Saudi Arabia?
- Who gives you the most difficulties in terms of your legal status in Saudi Arabia?
- What kind of problems do you face in Jeddah?
- If you were pressured to leave Saudi Arabia for any reason, would you attempt to re-enter the country with a permit or without?

2.8.8 Theme eight: future plans and objectives

Theme eight provides information on the migrant's future hopes and expectations. The probing questions for this theme are the following:

- Are you satisfied/content with your living and your work in Jeddah?
- Does living in Jeddah with no documents bother you? Please give details.

- Over the next few years, if still living in Jeddah, what do you expect your standard of living to be?
- What are your long-range goals and objectives in terms of work and or living in Jeddah?
- How do you plan to achieve your expected goals?
- Are you going to take advantage of the most recent amnesty initiative offered by the Saudi government?

Chapter Three

Data Analysis of Interviews with the African Undocumented Migrants in Jeddah

3.1 Introduction

The domestic realities of the various countries of the undocumented migrants under study in this chapter (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Somalia, Sudan, Chad, Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon and Burkina Faso), as noted by Dr. Nakhleh, former Director of the CIA's Political Islam Strategic Analysis Program, are very similar. The chronic political instability and the unsustainable population growth⁷¹ with the consequent unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, Islamic radicalisation, and, in the case of Somalia, piracy, constitute the main reasons for the massive migration from Africa to Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, many of these countries are plagued by repeated environmental disasters such as desertification and floods which make the development of a sustainable agricultural system difficult. All these elements together significantly decrease the opportunity for the majority of their peoples to meet their basic needs for living in their native countries.

In order to enter Saudi Arabia, most of these immigrants follow a variety of routes through transit countries in the Horn of Africa or Sudan. Most of the migration happens through Yemen before reaching Saudi Arabia. Their journey could last for months or years and during all this time, in each country where they happen to reside temporarily, they are forced to live clandestinely, at the margins of the society. In this regard, Thiollet in her study (2007) notes that:

Sudan and Yemen, on the one hand, are countries of emigration, mainly to the Arabian Peninsula, as well as transit and immigration countries for African migrants. Saudi Arabia, on the other hand, is one of the greatest labour importers in the world. Saudi Arabia is a middle-income country whereas Yemen and Sudan [and all other African countries noted above

⁷¹ Nigeria is an exception on the economic variable due to oil wealth. Accessed: 21st June 2013.

with the exception of Nigeria] are among the least developed countries, heavily relying on foreign aid... (Thiollet: 2007).⁷²

The data gathered in Yemen by the Yemeni authorities, for example, show that for many years they detained mainly Ethiopians, Somalis, Eritreans and other Africans in their attempt to reach Saudi Arabia. Very often the arrests occur after the undocumented migrants' terrifying journeys across the Red Sea into Yemen. African migrants, especially Ethiopians and Somalis, generally reach southern Yemen by boat before heading north towards the Saudi border.

This chapter will analyse the African undocumented migrants' communities in Jeddah, and it will be organised in 6 sections. The first section will provide a brief general demographic background of the undocumented migrants' African countries of origin. Later, it will offer a general description of the various *ḥayys* (*hais*) or districts/neighbourhood in Jeddah focusing on the particular districts where the majority of the African undocumented migrants live and work. The second section provides an historical overview of the lives of undocumented migrants in the various districts of Jeddah during the last three decades. The third section deals with the particular difficulties and challenges the researcher had to overcome during his field research in order to gather the data necessary to the investigation.

The fourth section discusses the outcomes of the semi-focus group discussions conducted with the African communities in Jeddah as a general discussion on the comprehensive data analysis of the questionnaire presented in Section Five. The fifth section deals with the eight major themes in this study by devoting a separate section of data analysis for each of them. The sixth section deals with particular issues rose during the interviews and relates to the overall analysis and interpretation of the data collected. This section includes a discussion and analysis of important issues such as the "dispute settlement mechanisms" among the African undocumented migrants both within their own

⁷² Thiollet, Helen (2007) *Refugees and migrants from Eritrea to the Arab world: The case of Sudan, Yemen and Saudi Arabia 1991-2007* paper prepared for the Migration & Refugees Movements in the Middle East and North Africa. The Forced Migration & Refugee studies program. The American University in Cairo, Egypt. October 23-25, 2007, p. 4.

community, and with other communities in the same or other district(s). Other issues include the “Amnesty Initiative” by the Saudi government and the general reaction of African undocumented towards it, and examples of “underground economic activities” such as:

1. Marketing of near-expired goods;
2. Selling and buying of work permit visas in Saudi Arabia, and
3. Begging, the sex trade, and other unlawful activities.

The last section includes the summary and the conclusion.

3.2 Background

Prior to the analysis of data on the undocumented African migrant communities under study,⁷³ the researcher will provide a brief background on each country followed by a general description of particular districts in Jeddah where the great majority of the undocumented live and work. As for all the other communities considered in this study, it is important to provide basic information on the native countries and the districts in Jeddah in order to formulate a comparative overview on the backgrounds of the various communities under study. This, in the researcher’s views, will assist in the analysis of the data.

3.2.1 Demographic background: the African countries

Figure 2: Geographic proximity of the Horn of Africa and other African countries to Jeddah.

⁷³ Countries under study in this chapter include those in the Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Eretria, and Somalia) and other countries (i.e., Sudan, Chad, Nigeria, Cameroon, Burkina Faso and Ghana).



Source: Google Maps

The map shows how countries, within the Horn of Africa or outside it, are either very close or close enough to allow their citizens to venture on the dangerous journey across the Red Sea to Yemen to reach Jeddah in Saudi Arabia. In addition to Yemen, Sudan constitutes another transit country since for centuries it has been the main route for African pilgrims to reach Makkah for *hajj* and *umrah*. This religious migration traditionally came from countries such as Chad, Cameroon and as far in the west as Burkina Faso, Mauretania and Senegal.

As already mentioned, African countries compared with other countries considered in this study,⁷⁴ are at the bottom of the ladder for economic development, with the only exception being Nigeria due to its oil industry. In general, in African countries the average family size is large and this puts a great burden on the individual's resources and the countries' natural resources. The countries have a high unemployment rate and a very low annual per-capita income. The Gross National Income (GNI) in African countries is amongst the lowest in the world and it varies from \$110 in Somalia, to \$1,410 in Ghana. A middle range GNI is \$610 and it belongs to the Republic of Chad. These GNI statistics, as we will see for all the other countries considered in this study, are

⁷⁴Yemen, Egypt, Syria, Pakistan Bangladeshi, India, Burmese, Indonesia and Filipino.

much lower than that of Saudi Arabia's GNI of \$24,310 (BBC: 1995.⁷⁵ This is why the migrants consider Saudi Arabia as a land of opportunity.

3.2.2 Major reasons for African migration

Over the years, many migrants fled to Jeddah due to social and political reasons,⁷⁶ for example civil wars as in the case of Nigeria, or their inability to deal with famine and disease. For example, in the late 1990's Eritrea suffered the worst drought in decades and tens of thousands of people had to flee the area. Jeddah became one of their primary destinations, particular for the poorest section of the society, while the most educated and wealthy reached Europe and North America.

Figure 3: Hais or districts in Jeddah



Most Ethiopians in Jeddah live in one of the following districts: Ar-Roweis, Gholail, and Al-Amariya. Most Somalis live in: Al-Amariya, As-Saheifa, Ar-Roweis, Al-Kandra, Al-Thaalba, As-Sabeel, Bab Shareif, Al-Karantina, Bab Makkah, As-Sinaiya, and al-Bawadi districts. The Eritrean majority live in the following districts: Gholail, Al-Kuwait, Al-Bokhariya, Al-Goaid, and Bab Shareif. The Sudanese live in: Al-Amariya, Al-Hindawiya, Al-Mahjar, Al-Bokhariya,

⁷⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14094995>, <http://www.sudan.net/facts.php>, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13164687>, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-14094995>

<http://www.sudan.net/facts.php>, ⁷⁵ <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13164687> <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13146029>, <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13146031>. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13433790>, <http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/ghana/gni-per-capita>

⁷⁶ Ghana fell victim to corruption and mismanagement soon after independence in 1957.

Gholail, Bab-Shareif, Kilo 3, Kilo 6, and Kilo 8. The majority of Chadians live in Al-ziziya, Al-Hindawiya, Al-Faysaliya and Bani Malik, Ad-Dageeg, Al-Thaalba, As-Sabeel, An-Nozla Al-Yamaniya, Al-Nozla Ash-Sharqiya, and Kilo 7. These districts were created after the extension of Ash-Sharafiya fifty years ago. Most Nigerians live in the following districts: Al-Hindawiya, Al-Mahjar, Bab-Shareif, Gowieza, Al-Masfa, As-Sinaiya, Bawadi, Al-Bokhariya, Al-Kuwait, Ad-Dageeg, Kilo 7, and Al-Karantina. Most Cameroonians live in the following districts: Al-Bawadi, and Al-Hindawiya. Ghanaians live in Al-Karantina, Al-Sabeel and Ghulilhalil. The majority of migrants from Burkina Faso live in Ar-Roweis district.⁷⁷ Most of these immigrants live in the same areas where their first communities settled down.

As noted earlier, the great majority of undocumented African migrants live in the south districts of Jeddah, but for many African migrants, the Karantina district, in the south, is where most of them live and work. For centuries, until now, migrants were attracted to Jeddah because of its proximity to Makkah. The district of Karantina owes its name to the fact that it was where the pilgrims travelling to the Holy City were kept in quarantine. Currently, African migrants are attracted to this and other districts in the south of Jeddah not only because of the great numbers of Africans who live and work in these districts, but because of the degree of safety it provides from the intervention of the Saudi authorities compared to the northern districts. Historically, these migrants came for religious reasons and the opportunity to find a modest living near the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah. Nowadays, religious factors come after the economic prospects for migrants brought into the country after the discovery of oil.

⁷⁷ Many members of the above migrant's communities also live with other migrant communities in the following "Mixed districts" such as Al-Jamaa, Al-Harazat, Kilo 3, Kilo 6, and Kilo 8, Al-Qurayat, Al-Hindawiya Al-Aziziya, Gholail, As-Sabeel, Al-Thaalba, Al-Mahjar, and Gowieza. Furthermore, many undocumented migrants live in few affluent districts such as Alrowda, Alkhalidya, Alzahra, for example.

3.2.3 Life in the southern districts of Jeddah

Interviewee number one, an older undocumented migrant from Sudan living in the Al-Karantina district is emblematic of the lives of undocumented migrants in the various districts of Jeddah over the last three decades. His narration includes a description of living conditions and the difficulties faced by the undocumented migrants in the various districts of the city.⁷⁸ He shows a particular awareness of how life changed after the 1991 Gulf War. For example, prior to the Gulf War it was possible for an undocumented migrant to live in the various poor districts of Jeddah where he or she could find a suitable and honest job. Certainly there was some corruption, crime, and drug-related activities, but it was nothing compared to the current situation. The rate of unemployment among the undocumented was very low, the number of foreign migrants was very small, and the considerable majority were honest working people.

After the Gulf War of 1991, the situation changed. Life in the *hais* [districts] of Jeddah became very complicated. A deep psychological injury (*Jurh*) among the different Arab states occurred, affecting the various Arab communities of migrants in the city in many ways and raising many different problems and issues to the surface. For example, the spread of unemployment among the Arab migrant communities increased due to the Saudi government's decision to substitute Arab workers with south Asian workers whose wages were very low. This cheap labour attracted various private employers and affected the undocumented migrants born in the city the most.⁷⁹ Secondly, illegal drug prices, regardless of their type, prior to the Gulf War were extremely high. In the aftermath of the Gulf War, and without warning, the price of drugs collapsed and they became easily available on the black market.

The same interviewee put the blame on "those who have great hate not only for Islam, but also for Muslim youth in general and the Gulf States in particular."

⁷⁸ Responses of other communities under study differed to a great extent as we will discuss later in their respective data analysis chapters.

⁷⁹ As we already seen Saudi Authorities do not grant automatic citizenships to the children born in the country from foreign parents.

This statement sounds like a contradiction since the idea of Muslim youth from Iran wanting to compromise other Muslims is not real. However, these kinds of contradictory perceptions can explain a lot about the insecurities of the interviewees. He noted that those who hate Islam and Muslims assisted in bringing down the price of drugs so as to flood the poorest districts with all kinds of drugs. The drug dealers recruited poor unemployed fourteen year old children to sell and use these destructive goods. Third, the interviewee contends, “due to poverty and unemployment, the number of sex trade workers from various Arab and African communities increased sharply. As a consequence, crime also increased substantially, especially stealing.” In this regard, he said, the Bangladeshis were responsible for most of the unlawful activities followed by Chadians, Pakistanis, Somalis and then migrants from other communities. According to the interviewee, most of these crimes stemmed from the poverty caused by the rising unemployment among the migrant communities on the one hand and from the opportunities for easy money on the other.

As far as *iqamah* (legal residency) is concerned, he noted the following: “*iqamah* problems are too many.” For instance, the Yemenis do not want to stay for good in the city. Those who were born in the city with no documents cannot fix their legal status; then there are those who prefer to stay undocumented, which allows them a degree of freedom from any obligation towards any employer (*kafeel*). There are also those who do not have the money to pay for their residency renewal, or who have problems with their *kafeel*. Most of the victims of the above issues are children and families. They have no legal access to free medical care or education. “Only Allah knows about the destinies of these people.” He ended the interview by remarking that, regardless of these difficulties, there are many good people who live decently and with honour in these forgotten districts. People still care about each other and assist each other in times of need and difficulties. They join together in happy and sad times. There is a healthy and moderate religious awakening.

Migrants’ lives are unstable: they live in a state of continuous anxiety and terror from the local authorities and from a few Saudis who have no heart and treat

them appallingly, as a few interviewees noted. In addition to the above psychological and social pressures and threats, the individual African has to work hard in order to offer his children and wife, if married, or his immediate family, if he or she is single, the very basics such as food, clothes and shelter. As we will see in the section dedicated to the semi-structured interviews, some of them hope that the Saudi Arabian amnesty initiative would correct their miserable circumstances and perhaps give them access to a decent life, and hopefully, a continuous *iqamah*, or even Saudi nationality.

In support of the previous testimony, a number of interviewees from the above communities noted that “currently, it is the African community of undocumented migrants that suffers the most due to poverty and lack of safety in most of their respective countries.” A few added the Yemeni community to this, because the military activity of the Houthis on the Saudi/Yemeni borders has triggered alarm for Saudi security in the city. Furthermore, other interviewees noted that the Bangladeshi community also suffers indicating that part of the reason for this is due to the misbehaviour committed by a few of them towards their Saudi *kafeel* (i.e., cases of rapes). In addition, a number of interviewees accuse this community of having sex trade rings and brothels in Jeddah.

The deportation efforts made by the Saudi authorities, according to many interviewees, usually involve raids on only one community of undocumented migrants at time, depending on the particular internal or external circumstances the country is going through. Many added that their respective consulates in Jeddah never help their own citizens. It seems that they assume that the individuals are undocumented migrants who do not deserve help if they are subject to arrest. An important point to note here is that these consulates will nonetheless give passports to members of their own communities if a child is born to an undocumented migrant.

3.2.4 Particular challenges and difficulties faced by African communities

This section offers an overview of the challenges and obstacles encountered both within and outside the fieldwork while conducting interviews with members

of African undocumented migrants.⁸⁰ Thanks to the help of gatekeepers, the researcher was able to interview individuals from a variety of African communities. In total, with the help of female gatekeepers, he approached a total of 61 people in this category. One of the most helpful gatekeepers and also interviewee number 2 was an Ethiopian female who has been living and working in various Saudi homes in Jeddah as an undocumented migrant for over twenty years. This particular individual, due to her long experience and connections with other African migrants in the city, was instrumental in assisting the researcher to meet the other two female gatekeepers of other African communities, the Eritrean and Chadian, as well as other undocumented females and males from her own Ethiopian community.

Compared to other nationalities interviewed, the African communities hold a less secure position in Jeddah, due in part to their lack of ability to speak Arabic or their concentration in particular geographical areas in South Jeddah which are more subject to frequent police raids. However, certain African communities, such as the Sudanese and Somali ones, were more cooperative with the researcher's study - perhaps due to their ability to communicate in Arabic, their long community history that connects them to the city, and, unfortunately, to the old slavery trade. Most of the interviewees needed a mediator, someone they knew and trusted in order to meet a complete stranger for an interview that dealt with the very essence of their life in Jeddah. For instance, individual migrants from African communities such as the Nigerians, Chadians, Eritreans and migrants from Burkina Faso were more difficult to reach as compared to the Sudanese, Somali and Ethiopian undocumented migrants. It took the researcher a long time to establish social connections and personal relationships with the key members of African communities in order to prepare the necessary logistical arrangements to conduct the interviews.

Another obstacle the researcher had to face when conducting the interviews was being subject to intensive questioning by the Saudi government's authorities for taking photos of undocumented Nigerian women. These women

⁸⁰ Other chapters of data analysis and interpretation of other undocumented migrants, for instance the Yemeni migrants, will include the same section on challenges and difficulties faced.

were being held by the local police who had tried to disperse them using water from fire hydrants while the women were selling used clothing in the downtown part of the city. In addition, it was dangerous moving through the districts concerned without a gatekeeper, as fights among different communities could start at any minute without any police available for protection.

3.2.5 The semi-focus group: the case of African communities

Approaching the African community as a Saudi has not been easy and the researcher had to rely on the collaboration and support of gatekeepers and community leaders. Due to the importance of the district of Karantina, the researcher, with their help, was able to organise focus groups in the district. However, during the investigation, the opportunity arose for an unplanned meeting in the house of a Nigerian community leader. Many elderly leaders and young men from different communities of Africa were present. The older gatekeeper from Sudan introduced me to them as someone who is a social science researcher with no government association and who was interested in studying their attitudes, perceptions and views on the city of Jeddah, including the difficulties they face. There were many different African nationalities in that room. Many spoke clear Arabic with distinctive accents; quite a few had only a moderate ability to communicate in Arabic but could discuss their concerns through a friend or a relative present in the room. I also noticed that five of them did not say anything, but one could clearly see the hardship on their tired faces.

In that unplanned, spontaneous meeting with the African undocumented migrants, the majority seemed relaxed, and amused at the fact that a native Saudi was curious about important issues that surrounded their undocumented lives. I avoided asking personal questions concerning names, addresses and legal status. However, the researcher was fortunate enough to be able to solicit considerable information about their lives in Jeddah, their plans and their expectations of the Saudi authorities. All those presents in this gathering were anxious to tell their story. They spoke of the fact that many of them loved Jeddah either because it was close to the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, or

because they were born in Jeddah, spoke the language, and had spent all or most of their lives in the city.

Others mentioned that they had no chance of survival in their respective countries of origin if deported. They complained about the lack of government support in terms of free public health care, schooling for their children and the constant threat to their daily survival. In this regard, as undocumented migrants who do not have a residency permit, *iqamah*, they faced restricted access to medical care and other services. African migrants as well as other migrants' communities in this study noted that they had to pay more for medical treatment than Saudi citizens. This is because the law restricts access to these services except for people who can show valid identification papers. When the researcher enquired about their young children's education, they revealed that they had a small unregulated private school in Karantina that taught the Koran to local children.

Most of the people present wished to be legal. As holders of valid *iqamahs* they would be able to easily access government services, work, drive through the city with their family, and rent homes without violating the city laws. An older man in his late seventies from Chad, interviewee number 4, ended this unique gathering by saying:

I never thought of returning to Chad. We are devout Muslims. I have left that country for over five decades when I came for *hajj* a long time ago. All my three wives, 25 children and 70 grand children were born in *Karantina*. We just need to be treated fairly. There is a Quran verse in Islam that encourages Muslim to perform hajj and work. This has been done for centuries, and no one complained about visa or *iqamah* requirements.

This unplanned meeting was important for singling out the different themes that the researcher would later develop in the semi-structured interviews with the individual immigrants.

3.3 Analysis of data: the African migrants

This section contains eight sub-sections, each covering the eight major questions included in the interview questionnaire that was used in the fieldwork. The eight sub-sections included in the main questionnaire for this study are as follows:

- Theme one: Background information;
- Theme two: The migration process;
- Theme three: Familial and social ties;
- Theme four: Medical needs;
- Theme five: Issues related to work in native country and Saudi Arabia;
- Theme six: The kafalah system;
- Theme seven: Legal issues facing undocumented labourers in Saudi Arabia, and
- Theme eight: Plans for the future.

As has already been noted, the analysis of data of the above eight themes is based on over 120 probing questions used in the interview questionnaire. About 51 out of 120 results were easily converted to quantitative measures and analysed using simple descriptive techniques. Some of the questions in the interview are of a quantitative nature. They are useful to gather data about age, sex, marital status and other specific information relevant to the topic.

3.3.1 Theme one: demographic data

The first theme covers various demographic variables such as: nationality; age; gender; marital status; number of children (if applicable); religious affiliation, and level of education. It is important to note, on the contrary to what happens in the Yemeni case, the section devoted to the African migrants covered different countries of origin. For this reason the variables taken into consideration are different from the Yemeni case, a community that is characterised by a common language and culture that allows it to blend easier into Saudi society.

3.3.1.1 Nationality

The table below covers the number of interviewees from each of the nine African communities in this study.⁸¹

Table 3: Number of interviewees divided by country of origin

Nationality	Frequency	Female	Male	%
Ethiopian	10	6	4	16.4
Eritrean	9	3	6	14.8
Somalian	13	2	11	21.3
Sudanese	5	0	5	9.8
Chadian	5	2	3	8.1
Nigerian	7	4	3	11.5
Burkinabe	4	0	4	6.6
Ghanaian	5	1	4	6.6
Cameroonian	3	0	3	4.9
Total	61	18	43	100.0

The total number of interviewees from the nine African communities in Jeddah was sixty-one men and women. There were 18 females and 43 males representing 30% and 70%, respectively, of the total population of African migrant respondents. The interviewees came from different regions and cities in the African countries under study. Eleven interviewees were born in Jeddah by undocumented parents of African origin and in a few cases as a result of marriage between an African father or mother and another undocumented of non-African nationality.

3.3.1.2 Gender

There were eighteen females (29.5%) and forty-three males (70.5 %). The number of women from each community varied from one community to the next,

⁸¹ The term “percent” in the above table stands for the percentage of a particular African community compared to the total interviewees from the African countries in this study.

but the majority of these women were from the Horn of Africa.

3.3.1.3 Age

The age of the African interviewees ranged between the youngest, at eighteen years old, and the oldest at seventy eight. The mean age for all the African communities under study is around thirty-six (36, 4098), and the median age was thirty-five. The mode, the most repeated age, was thirty-five years old.

3.3.1.4 Marital status

As far as marital status is concerned, there were twenty seven married men and women, or 44.3%. The number of single respondents⁸² was twenty three, or about 37.7%. Ten of the sixty-one interviewees (16.4%) were divorced. There was only one widow, representing 1.6% of the sample. About 60% of the migrants' marriages occurred in their respective countries, and 40% took place in Jeddah. It should be noted that few of these marriages were registered in the migrants' respective country consulates in Jeddah. The great majority were done in a private setting that included a Muslim sheikh from within a particular migrant community trained in conducting Islamic marriage contracts, and two adult male witnesses. Many women who came with *umrah* or *hajj* visas, or were smuggled into the country, were single or were married women who were separated or who had requested a divorce from their husband in their native countries within a certain period of time of their arrival in Jeddah.

Many married men with children (in their native country) from these communities confessed to having another wife or more after spending a few years as bachelors in the city of Jeddah. None of these married individuals could bring their wives via *umrah/hajj* visa or smuggle them into the country. Most of the marriages that occurred in Jeddah among the various undocumented African communities happened first within the same community. Marriage between different African communities came second. A few marriages

⁸² The number of single men is much higher than the married ones.

occur with individuals outside the African communities. It is not rare for an African woman, particularly those who were born in Jeddah, to marry a Saudi national, especially those of African origin or elderly men. For instance, an interviewee number 3 from Ethiopia had been married to an older Saudi who promised her family a *kafalah*, but he divorced her two years later and disappeared. The children born with no documents either in a private hospital or in a house with the help of a traditional mid-wife do not have right to Saudi citizenship. It can be assumed that these children, similar many others from this community or other groups, will have a bleak future just like their parents since they do not have the right to Saudi nationality. Some of these new-born infants are abandoned in mosques or near Saudi homes. The paradox is that once a child is found it may prosper more than the parents; he or she is taken to the only orphanage home in Jeddah where they are raised and taken care of until they become adults.⁸³ Then they may gain Saudi citizenship.

Saudi laws and regulation forbid any of its citizens to marry a non-Saudi national without government official approval. Many Saudis violate this rule due to the difficulty associated with obtaining government permission. In these cases, they proceed to marry the individual of their choice without the authorities' consent thus contributing to the identity crises of their children, if married to an undocumented male or female and if separation occurs for any reason without providing legal status for the born children. Their offspring have no legal or social avenues to correct their residency status in the country. As a result of this, these children grow up subject to arrest, jail and deportation by the Saudi authorities. Based on years of observation and this field study in Jeddah, the researcher contends that the majority of undocumented African migrants in Jeddah, male and female, whether formerly married in their respective countries

⁸³ More specifically, according to an interview with one of the directors of orphanages in Jeddah, the interviewee noted that most of the resident orphans under his care were a product of some type of union of an African mother or father with other nationalities. These orphans pass through different levels of care depending on their age. For instance, from infancy to age eleven they are under the care of female supervision. Once the males pass eleven years of age, their supervision transfers to male supervisors until they finish high school, technical education or college degree. Once they finish their education they are given Saudi citizenship with "Jeddahwi" as their last name. The interviewee continues: " They also can gain a last name of any Saudi family that adopts them ... all of them get a car, a particular sum of cash and a job..."

or still single, plan to marry someone in the future, or to have a second wife, in the case of married men. Information gathered from the interviewees on this issue reflects a great concern about being a 'good' Muslim who seeks sexual conduct through *halal*/legitimate marriage which they claim is part of life and the natural thing to do.

In response to a probing question on the possibility of the extreme hardship that will be faced by their children in the future due to lack of proper papers, the great majority of those who intend to get married, or are married, contended that "God will take care of them." One may deduce from these interviews that this attitude is common in all the communities of undocumented migrants.

3.3.1.5 Family size

The family size of those interviewed varied from no children to twenty children. Thirty interviewees (49.2%) had no children and only one interviewee (1.6%) had twenty children. This individual interviewee with twenty children was from Chad and had most of his children, seventeen, in Jeddah from three wives he married in the city. Only three of his children were born in Chad from his older Chadian wife who still resides there with them. The average mean is 3.245 or three children. Seven interviewees had six children which constituted the mode.⁸⁴

3.3.1.6 Religious affiliation and sects

As far as religious affiliation is concerned, 95.1% (fifty-eight of the sixty-one) of interviewees were Muslims and only 4.9% (three interviewees) were Christians. The great majority were Sunnis⁸⁵ and only three were Shia'a Muslims. Only three were of the Coptic Christian faith and all of these were from Eritrea. One of the interviewees from Eritrea converted to Islam to marry a Muslim woman from Ethiopia. Most of the Eritreans in Jeddah are Muslims, Christians who

⁸⁴ The mode in statistics is the most repeated number. In this case, most families have six children.

⁸⁵ i.e., Shafii, Malki, Hanafi and Hanbali *mazhabs* (Sunni Muslim sects).

converted to Islam, or Christians who conceal their faith in order to avoid prejudice and find work. It is impossible to guess the number of Eritreans and it was very difficult to arrange a meeting with them since most of them as many of their fellow Muslim countrymen reached Jeddah through Yemen according to a “migration process” that will be analysed later.

Interviewee number 5 from Eritrea told his family history: his father was a Yemeni Muslim who divorced his mother when he was still young. She then remarried to a Christian and he was raised as a Christian. Later, he claims that he discovered the “truth” and became a Muslim after marrying a Muslim from Somalia. His wife came with three of his children on an *umrah* visa, and all became undocumented. He has two other children from a previous girlfriend in Eritrea. Interviewee number 6 was a Christian from Eritrea who converted to Islam after reading the book of Ahmad Dedat’s (a Muslim scholar from South Africa). He got married in Jeddah to a Muslim from Ethiopia and has three children. Back home he had six girlfriends and he had six children with them. In this regard, many interviewees noted that a good number of the undocumented migrants from Eritrea convert to Islam before or after arriving in Jeddah to find jobs.

3.3.1.7 Level of education

As far as education is concerned, as in the other cases, in order to measure the education level of the interviewees from the Yemeni undocumented migrants as well as other communities under study, and for simplicity, the researcher used the American school system level of education. In this regard, the secondary/high school is divided in 12 grades, where grade 0 (zero) stands for no formal indication, Grade 1 stands for the first year in school for their child at age five – six years old. Grade 12 denotes the final year in high school that allows its graduate to enter university. The university degree, for our analysis, is given as grade 16 which is the extra 4 years to finish a university degree in the USA and most other countries.

Similar to the majority of the interviewees in this study, a great number of the male and female interviewees from the above communities not only had to leave school for financial reasons, mostly in order to help their parents to support their families, or because due to the tough economic or political conditions in their country of origin they were forced to migrate. The level of education ranged between no formal education to a college degree. Twenty-three interviewees had never had access to education, nine of them reached Grade 12 and the rest varied from Grade 1 to 11.⁸⁶ The average mean of education for all the individuals interviewed was 4.8 or fifth grade. The mode was Grade 9. The majority of those who were born in Jeddah obtained, when possible, their education in one of the foreign schools affiliated to particular consulates. Access to Saudi public schools is forbidden to undocumented migrants.

3.3.2 Theme two: the migration process

This section is particularly important because it clearly shows how Saudi Arabia and the city of Jeddah in particular entered into the lives of the undocumented migrant respondents. This section, besides offering good data about the ways in which the migrants enter the country and arrive in the city, provides information about a common phenomenon in the African community, the existence of immigrants who were born in the city and who were never entitled to the Saudi citizenship. This phenomenon of being born in the city is common to most of the communities. The African faces another challenge, and that is in comparison to the Yemenis, they cannot return home readily for visits. The result of this is widespread trend of undocumented marrying workers other undocumented migrants.

As an introduction to theme two, it is useful to offer a brief background of the area under consideration. In the Horn of Africa, Ethiopia is the largest in terms of population, 84.9 million, with a geographical area of 437,794 sq. miles. Somalia is 246,201 sq. miles in area, its population, the ethnic group known as

⁸⁶ On a scale of zero for no education, Grade 12 for high school graduate and Grade 16 for a college or university degree.

Somalis, consist of around 15-17 million who live mainly in Somalia.⁸⁷ Eritrea has six million inhabitants in 45,300 sq. miles. Sudan is the largest country on the continent (2,505,813 sq. km), with the Red Sea taking up approximately 853 km of its north-eastern border and a population of 41,980,182 (July 2010 est.). Chad's area is 495,800 sq. miles with a population of 11.5 million (UN, 2010), Nigeria, known as "the Giant of Africa," has a total area of 356,669 sq. miles and a population of around 158.2 million (UN, 2010),⁸⁸ Cameroon has an area of 183,568 sq. miles and a population of 19.9 million (UN, 2010). Ghana has an area of 238,533 sq. km and a population of 25.5 million. Burkina Faso has a population of 14,326,203 million and an area of 105,870 sq. miles.

GNI (Gross National Income)

Ethiopia, Somalia, and Eritrea form the main countries of the Horn of Africa. Their gross national per capita income (GNI)⁸⁹ is \$330, \$110, and \$300 respectively. The GNI per capita of other African countries in this study is as follows: Sudan \$1,220, Chad \$610, Nigeria \$1,140, Cameroon \$1,170,⁹⁰ Ghana \$1410,⁹¹ Burkina Faso \$580.00.

3.3.2.1 How did you get to Jeddah?

Historically, the close geographical proximity of Jeddah to the Horn of Africa, and the relatively cheap cost of the journey, has always constituted a great

⁸⁷ According to UN statistics in 2010, around 9.3 millions live in Ethiopia, 4.6 million in Yemen, under one million in Kenya, 900,000 in Djibouti.

⁸⁸The official population count of each of Nigeria's ethnicities has always remained controversial and disputed as members of different ethnic groups believe the census is rigged to give a particular group (usually believed to be northern groups) numerical superiority

⁸⁹Per capita income: total resources/total population.

Per capita income is often used as average income, a measure of the wealth of the population of a nation, particularly in comparison to other nations. Per capita income is often used to measure a country's standard of living. It is usually expressed in terms of a commonly used international currency such as the Euro or United States dollar, and is useful because it is widely known, easily calculated from readily-available GDP and population estimates, and produces a useful statistic for comparison of wealth between sovereign territories. This helps the country to know their development status.http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Per_capita_income

⁹⁰<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13146029>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13146031>

⁹¹<http://www.indexmundi.com/facts/ghana/gni-per-capita>

opportunity for Muslims as well as for Christians wishing to travel the route. All undocumented immigrants entered through one of the following ways:

- Undocumented entry;
- Overstaying a religious visa;
- Breaking a work contract, and
- ‘Immigrants’ born in the city.

Table 4: Way of entry for African undocumented migrants

Nationality /community	Smuggling	Overstaying	Breaking contract	Immigrant born in the city with no documents	Total
African	21 (34%)	23 (38%)	6 (10%)	11 (18%)	61 (100%)

Each of these groups told the researcher his or her own personal experience.

The following table adapted from Chapter Two illustrates the statistical data of the number of people from the various African countries under study who were arrested on the Saudi borders while attempting to enter the country over the last thirty years (1978-91, 1995-98, and 2003-08).

Table 5: Numbers of African migrants who were arrested while attempting to smuggle their way into KSA, distributed according to nationality (1978-91, 1995-98, and 2003-08)

Nationality	Sum or Total	% of migrants per nationality	Time Scale
Yemeni	3,419,207	98.69%	1978-91, 1995-98 and 2003-08
Eritrean	16,687	0.48%	
Somali	9,257	0.27%	
Sudanese	9,014	0.26%	
Ethiopian	8,723	0.25%	
Indian	620	0.02%	
Pakistani	601	0.02%	
Bangladeshi	316	0.01%	
Chadian	67	0.002%	

Filipino	0.0	0,0%	
Indonesian	0.0	0,0%	
Egyptian	0.0	0,0%	
Total	3,464,492	100.00%	

Source: Saudi Arabia, Ministry of Interior statistic books.

From these statistics it seems that Eritrean migrants, around 0.48%, constitute the highest percentage of the African communities who tried to smuggle themselves into Saudi Arabia. They are followed by the Somalis at 0.21%, the Sudanese at 0.20%, and the Ethiopians at 0.19%. Chadians represented the lowest percentage arrested with around 0.02%. Data gathered in the field from the African undocumented migrants suggest that compared to other undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah (except Yemenis), the great majority, 21 females and males, 34.4% of the undocumented African migrants, were smuggled from their native countries to Jeddah via the Red Sea from the Horn of Africa to Yemen, and from Yemen as a transit destination, they were smuggled across the Saudi-Yemeni borders to the Saudi city of Jizan. From Jizan or any other nearby city or town, they paid a Saudi or a Yemeni smuggler to transport them to Jeddah.

The information available about the phenomenon of people smuggling is scattered and incomplete. As such, verifiable or even reliable figures are difficult, if not impossible, to come by and the data on the number of smuggled individuals is tenuous at best. As noted in the analysis of Table 3, it is impossible to estimate the number of undocumented migrants who were smuggled into Saudi Arabia without being noticed.

3.3.2.1.1 Undocumented entry

Out of the 61 respondents from the African communities who were interviewed, 21 (34%) were smuggled to Jeddah. The following are few examples of their journeys to Jeddah:

Interviewee number 7, a woman from Eritrea, told me how she entered as an undocumented:

I was smuggled from Eritrea to Yemen after my mother gave me an injection under the skin to avoid pregnancy in case I was raped. I was raped in Yemeni and also at the Saudi border, by border guards. In both cases, they left me to continue my journey to Jeddah. When I arrived in Jizan⁹² my mother's relatives in Jeddah arranged for my transportation with a Saudi to Jeddah. They paid him \$300 upon my arrival in the city. I was married at age 14 in my native country and was divorced a year later. My parents thought it is a good idea to come to Jeddah to help them back home.

Interviewee number 8 from Somalia said that she was smuggled into Jeddah during the Gulf War when Saddam occupied Kuwait by crossing the Red Sea to Yemen. This is her story, in her own words:

I woke up at 7:00 am and prepared my travel bag to begin the trip. We were around 70 men and women. We were walking between mountains on the way that leads to the Red Sea. We suffered from the heat, shortage of water and food supplies and from the wilderness of the desert, I almost got bitten by a black snake. We also suffered from shifting sands and we kept pulling each other to get out of it. We kept walking day and night for five days with few stops. We had to leave one woman behind because she was exhausted and could not walk anymore, and we were not able to help her. On the fifth day, we reached the Red Sea. There was a small boat waiting for us which I and the 69 other female and males from different nationalities boarded. The trip lasted three days. Sea water kept pouring into the boat and all of us were using cans to throw the water back in the sea. We were afraid that if we stopped we would drown. We faced very high waves that frightened us all, and we were all praying for God to save us. Men, I noticed, were more afraid than the women. We arrived on Saturday; we were very thirsty and the first thing we did was drink water. We found a small farm, and we asked them for help, and they were kind to help us. We stayed there two days but some stayed longer. Once in Jizan I found a job as a house maid for two years. After that a Saudi with a bus smuggled me and others for \$ 267 to Jeddah in a six-hour trip. This is where I met some cousins of mine who arranged for the payment until I reached Jeddah.

Interviewee number 9, an Ethiopian previously deported for overstaying a religious visa, told the following story: "The first time I came to Jeddah was with an *umrah* visa. Later, I was arrested and deported to Ethiopia. The second time

⁹² Many Yemeni and African migrants often start their dangerous trip from the Yemeni village of Tawwal, about 100 meters from the border and 80 km from Jizan, according to a number of interviewees.

I came to Jeddah was through being smuggled. I travelled by sea to reach Yemen, then by land to reach Jeddah.”

A similar story was told by interviewee number 11 from Ethiopia who remembered that the first time she came to Jeddah was with an *umrah* visa when she was nineteen years old. She worked in Riyadh for four years without documents. She was arrested by the *Jawāzāt* and deported to Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) after she spent eight months in jail. She decided to come back to Jeddah. This time she was smuggled.

She narrates the following example of smuggling:

I woke up at noon on a Friday, put on my cloths and took some stuff like water and biscuits. I went to a meeting place near a mountain where I met 10 men. There were wild animals and the men had knives for defence. We walked through the mountains until dawn. We slept in the open all morning until sunset and then we continued walking. We had a leader from Djibouti to guide us.

We were tired and at times we had short rides on cars and after four days we reached Djibouti. We arrived there very early in the morning. I wore men’s clothing, and I entered the mosque with the other men. My brother and cousin and the other men prayed in the mosque and stayed there until the next morning to avoid thieves. We stayed in a small hotel, and after we ran out of money we asked our parents to send us some. We paid the money to the captain of a big boat. We were about 170 men and women from different nationalities. After 10 hours, we met a huge storm and many drowned, and we stopped at an island.

We stayed two days there without food and water. Two days later another boat arrived in the island. One hundred and eighty of us went on board. We stayed on the sea for 32 hours and reached Yemen. Once we reached the shore everyone left the boat except me because I had problems moving my legs because I had been tied to the boat for many hours in order to avoid falling overboard because of the high waves. My brother and cousin helped me. I almost drowned. We went to a Yemeni farm that had a tent and we stayed there two days after paying for food and water. Each of us later paid a Yemeni man \$100 to drive us to the Saudi border near Samta.

It was night time when we arrived in Samta; we walked and dragged ourselves on our stomachs on the ground for four hours to avoid border guards. After 4 hours, we met a Saudi smuggler who took \$160 from each of us to transport us to Jizan. On the road, the Saudi man gave me and the other men an abaya, a niqap and gloves to hide ourselves from the police. We arrived in our cousin’s flat in Jizan. He is a

documented car driver. We stayed there for seven days. We went to a private hospital for medical treatment. My cousin found me a job as a house maid for \$267. I stayed at this job for 2 months.

A few months later, I paid a Saudi man \$427 to take me to Jeddah. He used his family identification and I pretended to be his wife. I arrived in Jeddah to my brother's home, who has documents as driver. I lived with him and worked as a house maid. I have worked for years and from my savings I bought land back home and plan to save more money to build a house.

The following are another two examples of smuggling. Interviewees number 12 and 13 are from Nigeria. Five years ago they were deported from Jeddah. The authorities in Nigeria did not accept them back and they had to go to Sudan with their parents. Later, their parents helped them to travel to Yemen. In Yemen they tried to pass through the borders to Saudi Arabia with the help of Yemeni smugglers. They were raped and had to work as sex trade workers for nine months until they saved enough money to pay a Saudi smuggler to take them to Jeddah. They lived with some relatives for a few months and at the same time worked as house maids. They chose to become sex trade workers and work with a Nigerian pimp to make more money for their parents. They made enough money in a short time to bring the parents and young brother to Jeddah. In this case, the parents used Sudanese passports to enter Saudi Arabia. Originally their father and mother came to Jeddah as hajjis over 23 years ago and overstayed their visa status.

Interviewee number 14 was smuggled from Eritrea (from Bossaso) to Yemen by boat. The journey lasted 36 hours. The boat had 90 passengers from different African nationalities, the majority from Somali, Eritrea and Ethiopia. A few others were from Sudan and Chad. The interviewee noted that the boat carried 30 women and 60 men. As they approached the Yemeni shore, the Yemenis began shooting at them. They had to jump into the water, and the ones who could not swim died.

3.3.2.1.2 Overstaying a religious visa

Out of the sixty one interviewed from the African communities, 23 (38%) overstayed their *hajj* or *umrah* visas. For instance, Interviewee number 15 from Eritrea told the following story:

Twenty-nine years ago his father came with an *umrah* visa and later found a *kafeel* who allowed him to bring his wife on an *umrah* visa and to bring the interviewee when he was two years old, together with his older brother and sister. While living in Jeddah, his parents had four more boys and two more girls. His father lost his job and became undocumented. He was arrested and deported 18 years ago. This individual's father lives in Eritrea, he remarried and never tried to come back. The interviewee and his siblings were able to attend school in the past because no one asked for documents, but his younger brothers and sisters could not go to school. They all began working at a young age as beggars. When they became older, the males worked in manual jobs and the females, including the mother, worked as housemaids.

Another example of using *umrah* visas to enter and stay in Jeddah, is Interviewee number 16 from Ethiopia, who said:

In order to obtain an *umrah* visa to enter Saudi Arabia. I needed to pay someone to pose as my *Mahram* (a close male relative such as husband, father, brother, son or uncle). Once we arrived in Jeddah, I was supposed to accompany the group to Makkah and Madinah as part of the condition for the *umrah* visa, but instead I went to my sister's home after she picked me up at the airport. After a few days I found a job as a housemaid.

Another example is offered by the following testimony. Interviewee number 18 is a Nigerian. He came to Jeddah for *hajj* 63 years ago when he was one year old. He came with his parents from Sudan with British papers for *hajj* and lived with his parents near Makkah and Madinah. Interviewee number 19 is from Eritrea. He was smuggled from his country to Yemen with 210 other migrants from different nationalities. Forty were women and 170 were men. They travelled 36 hours in a fishing boat. Once on the Yemeni sea shore all of them went in different directions. He and two other couples tried to reach the Saudi border. He walked for two days without water. He decided to leave the group but lost his way. After two days, he saw two bodies of his earlier

companions who had died in the desert. He managed to reach the border and walked all the way to Jeddah.

3.3.2.1.3 Breaking a work contract

Only six (10%) migrants came with a work visa. Interviewee number 22, an educated undocumented Chadian migrant said:

Most uneducated immigrants from Chad work as car washers or are in some other form of manual labour. Smart and educated Chadians do not smuggle themselves into Jeddah, instead they save or borrow enough money to pay for a *hajj* visa or, if possible, a work visa in order to reach Jeddah. Once in Jeddah, a job as a car washer is a good way to earn money to pay back debts and save money to travel to Paris or the United States.

3.3.2.1.4 Undocumented 'migrants' born in Jeddah

Out of the sixty-one interviewees from the African communities, 11 (18%) interviewees were born in the city with no right to Saudi citizenship or the possession of proper documents (*iqamah*) to stay in the city legally.

This fourth group of undocumented 'immigrants' has to be treated separately. They are the ones who did not physically migrate to the city but who were born in it from undocumented immigrants. Unfortunately, Saudi immigration law does not grant automatic citizenship to the children of undocumented immigrants. Their situation is in some way more difficult than for other immigrants because their identity and loyalty is divided between a country of origin completely unknown to them and a country, or a city, which has not completely adopted them. As for any of the other migrant communities, the issue of identity is very important.

Interviewee number 24, a young man from Nigeria called Murad, spoke about this. Murad is "stuck" in Jeddah by birth. He is one of twenty brothers and sisters who were born in Jeddah from an undocumented father, mother, and has two-step mothers. He notes that he feels a "sort" of loyalty to the city where he was born and no attachment to his parents' native country, Nigeria. He did

not mention the importance of living near the holy cities of Makah and Madinah, which a few other Africans noted. As far as his future plans are concerned, it seems he has a limited vision. After a few probing questions about this, he said that he dreamt of migrating to Germany or Lebanon to study because he has relatives there who migrated from Sudan.

The dilemma of this young man, in the researcher’s view, is the great confusion of having African roots and being born in Jeddah with no proper documents. He has been rejected by Saudi society and become a victim of the established rules and regulations of the city which are very often contradictory or inconsistent. He managed to study in private schools but was not able to continue to college. He plans to marry another undocumented migrant. When the researcher asked how he can marry an undocumented migrant and raise children, he answered: “everyone in our community and others has been doing it for years.”

It is important to note that his statements very much reflect the facts that surround migrants’ lives in the city. Over the last few decades, many undocumented have been born in the city, married, had children and even died as “untouchable.” Clearly, there is a “generational” dilemma, especially for the young undocumented in Jeddah and other cities as well. Based on the previous facts and in connection with the data analysis and interpretation in the following section, it is possible to suggest that the African community in the city of Jeddah is in search of its identity.

3.3.2.2 Why did you choose Jeddah over other cities in the Gulf countries?

Table 6: Main reasons for migration from Africa

Nationality	Economic reasons	Social ties family/friends	Civil war and famine	Born in the city
African communities	30 (49%)	7 (12%)	13 (21%)	11 (18%)

Eleven of the interviewees (18%) could not respond to this question due to the fact that they were born with no documents in Jeddah from undocumented parents. Thirty interviewees (49%), said that they came for economic reasons caused by the poor economic policies adopted in their country of origin. Thirteen interviewees (21%) mentioned civil war and famine as the reasons that “pushed” them to migrate to Jeddah. Only seven (12%) said that they were joining a family member as the main reason for their migration to the city. From the above testimonies, one contends that it fits the classic economic model for why people migrate. Most of them migrated to Jeddah for better wages. However only 12% said that the main reason was the presence of relatives in the city. Only a few of them said that a secondary reason for their migration was due to the fact that they wanted to live near the holy cities.

Table 7: Main reasons for choosing Jeddah.

Friends and relatives	Easier to get an <i>umrah</i> , <i>hajj</i> , or work visa	Making a better income in Jeddah	Easy to be smuggled into	Born in the city
20 (33%)	10 (16%)	7 (12%)	13 (21%)	11 (18%)

In response to the probing question, why they choose the city of Jeddah over other cities in the Gulf countries, it is interesting to note that 20 of the interviewees (33%) were attracted to Jeddah over other cities because they had friends and relatives who encouraged them to come by providing financial and other logistical support. Ten (16%) migrants noted it was easier to get an *umrah*, *hajj*, or work visa. Seven (12%) interviewees were attracted by the hope of making a better income in Jeddah. Thirteen (21%) interviewees noted that the main reason was that it was easy to be smuggled into the city. From the above responses, one can contend that a combination of macroeconomic plus social networking reasons compelled many African migrants to migrate to the city of Jeddah in order to make a better living and to live and work in close proximity to the Muslim holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.

3.3.2.3 How much, if anything did it cost you to come to Jeddah?

In response to the probing question regarding the cost of smuggling to the individual interviewee, it seems that “smugglers' fees” vary according to the start point, but overall, they have risen dramatically over recent years. For border crossings such as from Yemen into the KSA, Yemeni-Saudi human smugglers can charge the individual migrant between \$160 and \$533. Crossing the Red Sea from the Horn of Africa to Yemen may cost between \$5 and \$80. Other African migrants from more distant countries have to pay a fee to reach the Red Sea, or simply walk their way there. For a Sudanese migrant with the need to cross the Red Sea to Saudi Arabia, the cost would be between \$235 and \$613. Data on the costs of smuggling indicate an increase over time, depending on the number of migrants to be smuggled, the number of smugglers, the international circumstances such as famine, wars etc., and the intensity of Saudi border guard operations. Our interviews reflected an average mean of around \$533 for an entire trip which is often paid by the individual, his or her family or friends resident in Jeddah. Regarding the issue of border control by the Saudis, Nafie quotes a Saudi border officer as saying: “There are human traffickers who know the area extremely well. They know routes that are difficult for the Saudi Border Guard to discover” (Nafie: 2011).⁹³ Many interviewees noted that the smugglers were knowledgeable about different routes so they could avoid Saudi border guards.

3.3.2.4 How old were you when you arrived in Jeddah?

The age of the undocumented when he or she arrived in Jeddah ranged from 17 to 49 years old. The mean age at arrival is an estimated 25.34, or around 25 years old. Five interviewees entered Jeddah at age 30 which constituted the mode age. However, if we include those who were born in the city with no documents, as a result of a marriage between undocumented migrants, the mean would drop to around 14 years.

⁹³ Ibrahim Nafie| ARAB NEWS. Published: Jun 10, 2011 00:43 Updated: Jun 10, 2011 01:03

3.3.2.5 How many years have you spent in Jeddah as an “undocumented” migrant?

The periods of time spent in Jeddah as an undocumented migrant from the African communities under study, varied between a few months to 72 years. One of the oldest interviewees was 72 years old, another was 63 years old. However, the average mean years for all the interviewees were an estimated 13.6897 or around 14 years and the mode stands at 10 years.

3.3.2.6 How many times have you been deported from Jeddah?

Since it was very difficult to rely on official figures, the researcher had to rely on the interviews with migrants in order to estimate the numbers involved. The number of times an individual was deported varied from no deportation to being deported five times. Forty-two interviewees had never been subject to deportation. Ahmed, interviewee number 30, is in his fifth year as an undocumented migrant from Chad. He came to Jeddah to live and make some money to send back home. He works as a porter near one of the large malls in north Jeddah. He has never been deported, but the idea of possible deportation haunts him day and night. He noted: "Life has got harder the past few years, we are constantly under the threat of deportation..." he complains. Although he misses his native country, family and friends, he plans and hopes to stay in Jeddah for at least 10 more years.

From the interviews four interviewees were deported twice, two interviewees were deported three times and one interviewee was deported five times. If we decided to take this unofficial data as valid, the mean is 0.5574 or one deportation for each two undocumented migrants. Eleven interviewees were deported only once, which constituted the mode for the number of times deported. As far as deportation is concerned, the Saudi security authorities for many years rounded up thousands of undocumented migrants for deportation. A Nigerian, interviewee number 32, from the Al-Musfah district of southern Jeddah describes frequent raids of his district by the Saudi *Jawāzāt* (Passport Department) as follows:

The *Jawāzāt* or *al-baladiyyah* often monitor the district for a period of time before they determine the best minute to raid us in order to arrest as many of us as possible. They arrive almost every week depending on the tips they receive from local Saudi residents or their undercover agents. We noticed that they target only one community of undocumented migrants at a time...for example, only Asians or Africans.

It should be noted that 10 of the undocumented who were stopped by the police had never been deported. In this case, they noted that the police just confiscated their goods, if they were selling any, or just let them go without arrest. They said this was due to “The Saudi good heart.”

3.3.2.7 If you were deported and later re-entered the country, how and why did you come back?

Forty-three (70.5%) of the interviewees have never been deported; therefore the question does not apply. Seventeen interviewees who have experienced deportation had come back to Jeddah. Ten were smuggled back by sea and land and seven came back via an *umrah* or *hajj* visa. In the past they managed to come back to Jeddah by using a different name in a different passport. While one interviewee did not respond to the above question, the great majority of those deported and smuggled back to the country did it for economic reasons. Few did it because they have families in Jeddah.⁹⁴

3.3.2.8 Was it worth it?

This question is important because it offered the migrants the opportunity to evaluate their presence in Jeddah and to analyse the reasons for their being there. The answers varied: some of them had family and relatives in the city, while for others, Jeddah constitutes a good business opportunity. Some others consider the city their home. It is interesting to note that the testimonies below reflect the division into the fourth group of migrants introduced previously in the

⁹⁴ It should be noted that recently the Saudi government applied a new technology, finger printing. This technology will limit any violator of the residency visa in the past from re-entering the country through any Saudi airport or seaport.

chapter. When the interviewees were asked, “Is migrating to Jeddah worth the effort, money, or danger of death through being smuggling into the country?”, their responses were as followed: 49 (80%) interviewees responded, yes, it was worth it. Only one (2%) individual said it was not worth it and she regretted coming to the city. This probing question did not apply to the eleven (18%) interviewees who were born in the city.

Eleven interviewees did not think they had an option since they were born in the city. For example, Interviewee number 33 was born in Jeddah to Somali parents. His father was employed by ARAMCO, the Arabian American Oil Company. His mother was smuggled into Jeddah before marrying his father. His father had *iqamah* which is why the interviewee was able to go to school up to Grade nine. His father later worked for the Islamic Bank of Jeddah but was accused of forgery, put in jail for six years and, after that, deported from the country. The family was left in Jeddah with no breadwinner, and the son had to stop school to take care of his family. His mother worked as a housemaid. He noted that his father had a third wife after marrying his mother in Jeddah in addition to his first wife in Somalia. From his father’s different marriages, he had 14 brothers and sisters living in Jeddah or in Somalia. He currently lives with his mother, two sisters, and four brothers. All are undocumented.

Interviewee number 34 is from Sudan and tells his story stressing how important the possibility of living near Makkah was for him. For this immigrant the religious motivation was strong enough to endure all the difficulties posed by living as an undocumented in the city of Jeddah.

I came with an old woman [grandmother] in 1954 for *hajj*, I was sixteen years old. The main purpose for me at that time was to make a better income and have a good life and that was why after *hajj* I stayed in Makkah playing football with a local team. This allowed me, later, to gain *iqamah* and stay in the country. I kept renewing my passport at the Sudanese consulate. In the 1970s I left for Sudan where I got married and had three children. I came back with a work permit in the 1970s through my connections and stayed in Jeddah after I brought my wife with an *umrah* visa. We had three more children. Ten years ago I decided to go back and officially got an exit arrangement. My wife and five children left for Sudan, but I stayed here with my oldest son who refused to leave Jeddah. Because I did not leave I became

undocumented in the country. Because of my old age, I am not afraid of deportation. I just want to live near Makkah. I could not find a *kafeel* at my age...

The following interviewee, number 35, was particularly interesting, as his case was very similar to many others in this fieldwork. It was conducted in this young man's parents' home in the Musfah district with his father, mother and two of his brothers. The interviewee was born in Jeddah from a Sudanese father who is now 64 years old, and a mother from Cameroon, who is 58 years old. He has seven brothers and sisters who were all born in Jeddah. At present, all of them are undocumented. His father came 34 years ago to work in Jeddah with a Saudi *kafeel*. After 24 years of working with the *kafeel* he was arrested and deported due to an accusation of theft, however, he maintains his innocence. His father came back with an *umrah* visa using a Chadian passport. His mother who entered the country 30 years ago with an *umrah* visa overstayed her visa all this time. She was married in Cameroon and had six children with her first husband and remarried the interviewee's father and had eight children with him. She was deported a few years ago and returned with an *umrah* visa after she changed her passport from a Cameroon to a Chadian one. The interviewee's father teaches Quran in a local mosque and his mother is in the begging "business." All the family members said that if they got deported, they would come back. The interviewee said that very often the *Jawāzāt* attacked their neighbourhood, but they did not usually arrest everybody. The undercover agents (*mabahith*) are stricter due to the nature of their anti-crime work. Terrorist groups attempted to recruit people in the poor districts but they had not been successful. The people here are simple and most have a lot of children and prefer to play it safe.

Interviewee number 37 is from Sudan and told me his experience after breaking a work contract.

I bought a work visa in 1998 worked for two years and left my employer because he was paying me almost nothing. I stayed as an undocumented for three years and I was deported. I came back in 2000 with my wife and my son with an *umrah* visa and overstayed our visa since that time. We also had two additional children in Jeddah.

Interviewee number 39 from Chad said that he came for *hajj* when he was five years old. His parents did not need a visa when they came, over 50 years ago. He travelled with his family using primitive transportation, a combination of walking and lifts on big trucks directed from Chad to Sudan, Egypt and Jerusalem to Jeddah.

According to many interviewees, the majority of African undocumented migrants once they arrive in Yemen are exploited by security officials for huge sums of money. Further, they pay \$100 each to the police after reporting to the police stations. This is on top of the amount of money each of them has to pay for the Red Sea crossing to Yemen. A few women were raped. Many of the females wore men's clothes to hide their gender. The exploitation does not stop there but continued until they reached their destinations in Jeddah. Despite the hard work Saudi border authorities have invested in trying to fight undocumented migration, creative ways are employed by players in the smuggling business that constitute a great challenge. It should be noted that the length of the land border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia exceeds the measured internationally recognized distance by five times because it includes all land trails through terrain such as mountains and valleys.

3.3.3 Theme three: familial and social ties

As for the other communities, this section offers a good idea of the living conditions of the immigrants in the city as well as an insight into their lives in their respective countries of origin. This section addresses family ties in Jeddah and back in their home countries, and aims at gaining knowledge of how the population under study struggles between the nostalgia of a country they have left for ever, and the harsh reality of life in the Saudi city.

3.3.3.1 What is your spouse's type of work?

This question brought up a lot of different issues related to marriage and the difficult of forming a stable family for the undocumented immigrants. It was not the purpose of this study to offer a detailed analysis of the problem, but it is

obvious from the answers to this question that this constitutes a major social problem. One of the interviewee said that “Saudi females have difficulties in marrying a foreigner due not only to finance but social and economic status according to Saudi standards.”

Due to the displacement suffered by the interviewees, intermarriage among the different communities is very common despite the various statements that prove the lack of shared social life. However, interviewee number 43 commented on the topic of intermarriage among the different communities:

There is no real connection between the various communities in the district except by going to the mosque for prayers. There were many statements concerning social activities that resemble the following: Those of us (undocumented) who seek marriage in this city, for example, do it for different reasons. Some marry to “complete” his or her half of religious duties; in this case, marriage is considered a fundamental part of Islam for those who can afford it. Others are those who get married because it is the natural thing to do regardless of your legal status in the city.

It is also inevitable that the cultural displacement caused by being undocumented immigrants, in some cases caused a change in their customs and tradition regarding marriage. In this regard, interviewee number 44 from Eritrea gives an example of the marriage process in Jeddah as follows:

In Eritrea women pay men the dowry, but in Jeddah a man will pay \$ 267 to \$544 as *mahr* (dowry). A virgin is more expensive. All this is determined by the specific tradition of the tribe.

In most of the districts, according to an interviewee, girls and boys whether documented or undocumented do not marry someone from the same district, but prefer to find a marriage partner from other districts. In this regard, they consider everyone who lives in the same district as a sister or a brother. It was observed from the interviews conducted in the various districts in south Jeddah that many would prefer marrying a woman with lighter skin, e.g. from Pakistan or Indonesia. Some Saudis marry young Chadian girls and when they introduce them to their family, they tell their families that the wives are maids. This causes

very deep social problems, because when these women have children they are abandoned after the women are forced to leave them behind.

Keeping in mind all these variables, the answers to these questions were very different. Six worked in begging (9.8%). Two washed cars (3.3%). Seventeen were housemaids (27.9%). Two were housewives (3.3%). Other spouses' jobs included private taxis, recycling, selling used clothing, selling near-expired goods, sex trade, etc. Finally, twenty-nine were single (47.5%). All this information has been very useful in order to find out how much financial support a spouse can provide for the family. The simple statistics shown above do not provide a real insight into the problems affecting the entire idea of family in the community. Due to the instability of marriage relationships, their support is not constant and the whole idea of a stable nuclear family does not apply in this social reality.

3.3.3.2 How many people do you live with in Jeddah?

The interviewees live in quite a range of different districts in Jeddah, but the majority seems to prefer certain districts where they feel more secure. Most of the African migrants interviewed live, or lived at one time or another, in one of the following districts: Al-Hindawiya; Al-Karentina; Al-Musfah; Hai Aljamaa (King Abdul-Aziz university district); Al-Salamah, and Al-Bawadi. It should be noted that, unlike the Yemeni undocumented migrants, many members of the undocumented African migrants did not mind living in one of the few well known "under bridges" settlements in the city, if they did not have a friend or a relative in the city upon their arrival. Most of the interviewees lived in a rented room in a shabby flat (very low income houses usually owned by a Saudi) with two or more other undocumented African migrants from the same home country. The number of people sharing the accommodation ranges between one and twenty-five. In this study the mean for the number of people living together is 8.393, or eight people. Most of them live with four people, which constitute the mode. For all the undocumented communities of migrants under study, it seems that living with fellow countrymen eases their feeling of estrangement in the city and

provides, along with their visits to other members of their communities, an alternative family support. Interviewee number 46 puts it as follows:

Meeting with friends and family members at least once a week helps us to feel comfortable that there is someone who cares about us and assists in resolving some of the personal problems that may arise between some of us... very often we discuss important issues such as what we should do towards the amnesty initiatives offered by the Saudi government.

3.3.3.3 Contact with family at home country: how often in a month?

When asked about their ties with family while living and working in Jeddah, all interviewees said that they call their relatives on a weekly basis by mobile phone. The average mean is 2.4, or twice a month, and most of them call their relatives at least four times a month. Modern technology, and the mobile phone, seems to play a big part in the interviewees' lives in terms of communicating with their family members and fellow friends inside and outside the city of Jeddah. This communication helps them avoid homesickness on the one side, and the possibility of arrests or deportation on the other.

3.3.3.4 How many relatives do you have in Jeddah?

The number of relatives living and working in the city ranged between no relatives (only three interviewees) to 80 (only one interviewee). The mean average for the number of relatives in Jeddah was twelve relatives, the median number is eight, and the mode is fifteen. If we consider only the mean of 12 relatives for each of the 61 interviewees in this study then one may conclude that there are 732 undocumented relatives in the city. If we consider the median of eight, then the number will be 484. But if we go for the mode, the number will be 915 undocumented relatives in the city. An analysis of these figures suggests that the presence of African migrants in Jeddah is much higher than in the official statistics.

3.3.3.5 How many friends do you have in Jeddah?

Most of the interviewees' friends and acquaintances are undocumented and live in the same area: Al-Karantina, Al-Hindawiya, Al-Musfah and other districts in south Jeddah. The number of friends in the city ranged between no friends (only one interviewee) to over 100 friends (only one interviewee). The mean for the number of friends is 31, or an average of 31 friends. Many interviewees noted that they have around 20 friends which constituted the mode for the African communities. This totals 1,891 undocumented friends in the city. The median range between 0 (no friends) and 100 (only one interviewee) is 50 undocumented migrants.

Table 8: Average for undocumented African friends and family

African	Mean	Total
Relatives	12	732
Friends	31	1891
		2623

3.3.3.6 In general, what types of visa(s) do your relatives and friends have?

According to the interviewees, very few of these "relatives, close friends and acquaintances" possess valid documents to stay in Saudi Arabia legally. The great majority are undocumented. Twenty nine interviewees (47.5%) noted that they were sure that the great majority of all their friends and relatives were definitely undocumented migrants in the city. The remaining 52.58%, or 32 interviewees, indicated that they really do not know or preferred to refuse to answer this question. The significance of the above numbers contributed indirectly to our effort to estimate the number of undocumented in the city of Jeddah as discussed in the chapter on methodology.

3.3.3.7 Was it easy for them to find a job?

When asked about the “ease” of finding a job in Jeddah, most interviewees noted that it was easy to find a job in Jeddah not only because there is plenty of work in construction and other types of simple jobs, but due to the social network they have in the community. In this case, 47 interviewees (77.0%) noted that it was easy for their respective relatives and friends to find a job in Jeddah. Fourteen interviewees (23%) said that it was very difficult for their relatives and friend to find a job. This shows how the Saudi economy depends on the underground labour market covered by the undocumented immigrants.

3.3.3.8 Do you participate in social gatherings or activities with other communities and Saudis?

Most of their socialisation is done within their own communities. Many of them noted that they are open to socialising with other communities but admit that the bulk of their social gatherings or “hanging out” is within their close circle of African friends and relatives. Forty-seven (77.0%) of the interviewees from the African communities said they only participate in social life with their own particular communities. Thirteen (21.3%) of the interviewees indicated that they participate socially with all other African communities. Only one interviewee (1.6%) noted that he participates with all the communities in Jeddah.

Social relationships among members of the same community are exceptionally strong but I should note that the intensity of these relationships varies from one community to another. Most single migrants call their relatives at least once a month. On the other hand, migrants with wives and children tend to call their family or friends at least four times a month with few of them calling more than twice per week. For the Asian communities, e.g., the Filipino, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, and Indonesian, family and social ties are much stronger than in the African communities. They are more organised, especially the Filipinos as we shall discuss in depth later. Members of the Filipino community in Jeddah strongly believe that their stay in the city is temporary, and that after saving some money they will return to their native countries. On the other hand, most

of the African migrants do not want to leave the city because, compared to their native countries, Jeddah provides them with better jobs, more income, and a “safer” place in which to live.

3.3.3.9 Are you the only breadwinner?

Twenty-two (36.1%) noted that they are the only breadwinner for their family in their respective home country. The majority of interviewees, 39 (63.9%), noted that other family members assist in this matter. These figures show that the family unit is an extended one and that in this context all members have to contribute financially. Sometimes this constitutes a burden for the individuals especially when unemployment is high.

3.3.3.10 Do you remit some of your income home and how?

Thirty-nine (63.9%) of the interviewees noted that they regularly, usually on a monthly basis, remit part of their income to relatives in their native countries while 22 (36.1%) of the interviewees said they do not remit any percentage of their income back home. The great majority of the African migrants as other undocumented migrants remit funds by giving it to someone of their own nationality who has connections where the money is sent to. Interviewee number 47 explains how it works:

He calls someone in my town and my parents receive the money at the same time I am paying it here. The person in charge of the transaction charges us reasonable amount money. I give the money to a middleman while he talks to another man in our town. The other man arranges a meeting and at the right time I use the mobile phone to make sure he gave my family the money. He charges \$2.60 for this service.

3.3.3.11 What percentage of your monthly income do you remit to your home country?

Table 9: Income remitted by African undocumented migrants

African migrants	% Income remitted	%
33	15%	54.1%
17	20-30%	27.9%
4	36-50%	6.6%
6	60%	10%
1	No answer	1.6%

Thirty-three (54%) of the African interviewees remit 15% or less of their income to their home country. While 17 (28%) remit between 20% and 30%. Four (7%) remit between 36% and 50%. Six interviewees (10%) remit about 60% and one interviewee refused to respond to the above question. The above table reflects an average mean of around 23.6% of remittance for all migrants. The mode for remittance is 15% (33 interviewees remit this percentage) of their income, which we think is the most accurate in this case.

One cannot help but notice the love and devotion of the majority of those interviewed towards their families and friends, those with them and those in their home countries. It is important to stress the close network of cooperation among members of the undocumented migrants' communities in Jeddah and their families in their respective countries. Many interviewees' plan not only to help their families financially, but also assist those who helped them in the past to come to Jeddah by providing or lending them money to achieve this.

3.3.4 Theme four: medical needs

Theme Four is concerned with medical issues. This topic is very important because it shows the lack of support and sense of belonging that the migrants experience when they are denied basic social services such as health. This causes a very big strain in their lives as well as serious social problems for Saudi society as a whole.

Farah Wayne in her book, *Access to Health Care for Undocumented Migrants in Europe* (2007), states that:

The exclusion of vulnerable groups from health care brings along major risks like individual suffering and exploitation, a risk for public health in general, demand for emergency services which are far more expensive, the creation of backstreets services, ethical dilemmas, problems for the administration and discrimination against the concerned migrants.⁹⁵

Undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia face serious problems in gaining access to health care services. For them, the worsening of their physical and mental health is likely to occur as a result of poor access to health care services and/or the continual fear of being discovered and deported. Before providing an overview of the situation concerning access to health care for the undocumented migrants in the City of Jeddah, it is necessary to first elaborate on international human rights standards regarding the right to health care. The situation of the undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia should be weighed against these international standards rather whatever happens in other Arab Gulf states, for example. According the UN article 12 (1): “[It is] [t]he right of every one to enjoy the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health” (UNESRC: 2000).⁹⁶

More specifically the UN Economic, Social, and Rights Committee, General Comment No. 14 (2000), gives the following clarification of the above provision:

States are under the obligation to respect the right to health by, inter alia, reframing from denying or limiting equal access for all persons, including prisoners, detainees, minorities, asylum, seekers and undocumented migrants, to preventive, curative and palliative health services; abstaining from endorsing discriminatory practices as state policy. (UNESRC: 2000).⁹⁷

It is beyond the scope of this dissertation to compare Shari’a law (The Saudi legal system) to other legal systems in the West or Arab World, but it is important to note that the Islamic Shari’a law does not contradict international law in its understanding of, and dealing with, human rights law as described above. On the contrary, many verses in the Qu’ran protects these rights.

⁹⁵ Farah Wayne, *Access to Health Care for Undocumented Migrants in Europe* (2007).

⁹⁶ The UN Economic, Social, and Rights Committee, General Comment No. 14 (2000), *Access to Health Care for Undocumented Migrants in Europe* Published by PICUM (platform for international cooperation on undocumented migrants) ISBN number: 9789080781399 (2007).

⁹⁷ Ibid.

However, government officials in the Ministry of Interior in Saudi Arabia do not adhere strictly to these rights. Most officials justify the restriction of health care to the undocumented as necessary for state security due to the fear of terrorism. In other words, direct state regulations effectively forbid all public and private health care providers from caring medically for any individual under any circumstances without patient providing proper documents.

3.3.4.1 In case of emergency, what do you do?

All the interviewees (100%) noted that in case of a medical emergency they have no access to public hospitals in Jeddah, and that their only possible option, if they can afford it, is to go to private hospital or clinic.

3.3.4.2 If there is no access to medical care (hospitals) or you cannot afford it, what are your options?

The great majority noted that they will seek and consult with the nearest pharmacist, or see one of the local *Attar* (traditional medical/herbal practitioners) for medical advice.

3.3.4.3 Have you ever used someone else's ID to gain entry for public/private medical treatment?

Due to their exclusion from the health service sometimes undocumented immigrants have to borrow ID cards in order to access to it. This tendency shows the gravity of the problem. Nineteen (31.1%) noted that, yes; they have used the ID of others (*Iqāmah* documents) to gain access to medical care in Saudi public/private hospitals. Forty two interviewees (68.95%) indicated that they never have done this because it is dangerous. Interviewee number 48, an Eritrean, said:

We can go to private hospitals even if we use other special hospitals where there are Egyptian doctors. They understand and do not charge us a lot. We use other Eritreans' documented papers to go to private hospitals.

Interviewee number 49, a Somalian, confirmed this:

We can go to private hospitals even if we do not use other people papers especially hospitals where there are Egyptian doctors. They understand and do not charge us a lot for medical examination.

However, for undocumented migrants the access to hospitals is normally forbidden by law.

3.3.5 Theme five: issues related to working conditions

Even if the working conditions of undocumented immigrants are never ideal, there are some differences between the communities in the difficulties they face in their daily lives. For example, in comparison to the Yemenis, the Africans have to overcome a language barrier that in many cases prevents them from taking full advantage of the job opportunities that Saudi Arabia can offer an undocumented immigrant.

3.3.5.1 If you worked in your native country, what type of job(s) did you have?

Twenty (32.8%) were unemployed. This question was irrelevant for eleven (18%) interviewees who were born in Jeddah. The remaining 30 (49%) interviewees had a diverse employment background that ranged from being a farmer, a carpenter, a mechanic, a blacksmith, and other manual jobs.

3.3.5.2 Why, if you were employed, did you leave your job to come to Jeddah? Why Jeddah and not a different city in the Gulf?

The main reason for the great majority to leave their jobs, if employed, was to seek a better economic life in Jeddah. High unemployment and encouragement by friends or a family member who was already in Jeddah was a major stimulus to migrate. As mentioned earlier, Jeddah's close geographic proximity to the African continent and the relatively lower cost of being smuggled, the availability of relatives and friends who lived in the city for many years and who are willing to pay for the trip's cost, as well as the ease of obtaining an *umrah* or *hajj* visa

makes it easy to overstay in the city. These and many other reasons make Jeddah a better choice for the individual migrant compared to other cities in the Gulf area. The answers to this question support the reason offered at the beginning of this chapter in explaining the phenomenon of migration from African countries.

3.3.5.3 If you currently work, what type of job do you have? Is this the job you were trained to do?

It is a difficult task to list all the types of work that the undocumented migrants from the African communities are engaged in while living in Jeddah. One of the reasons, perhaps, is their continuous change of jobs. Interviewee number 50 from Ghana reports the following about employment during the *hajj* season:

I leave my job as a house maid which pays \$400 per month to travel to Makah where I work as a cook for pilgrims from Africa. This pays around \$800 for just 10 days.

In general, the interviewees were involved in the following: 10 females work as housemaids, 12 of the males are car washers, and four females are beggars, four of them work as private taxi drivers. Others work as carpenters, mechanics, porters, hairdressers, barbershops, sex trade workers, etc. An example of work opportunities available for Chadian undocumented migrants in Jeddah is explained by interviewee number 4 who noted that:

... Work in Jeddah for Chadians is limited to washing cars. In the past we used to work with airport cargo. However, things changed after the airport authorities decided to bring Asian migrants to do the job. We lost ours. We left our lands in Chad when the Christians were ruling the country. And we could not go back. In 1977 King Khalid allowed us the opportunity to obtain *iqamah*. However, later the government stopped renewing our *iqamah*. Many of us became undocumented again with the new shift in Saudi policy towards Chadians.

3.3.5.4 How many times per year have you changed jobs and why?

The number of times the individual interviewee changed his or her job varied from no change to 50 times. Eleven (18.0%) interviewees changed their jobs

twice, which is the mode. The average mean for job change is 5.8, or changing jobs six times per individual migrant. It should be noted that the rate of change is related to the number of years spent in Jeddah. Migrants change jobs for many reasons but the majority, 55 (90.2%) of the interviewees, indicated that they did so for better pay. Very few women noted sexual harassment or bad treatment. This is an important observation and will be dealt with in detail in the analysis of the Filipino migrant community in chapter five.

Interviewee number 4, added:

It was easy to get jobs with the Saudi government's economic plans for development in the past, but today we and our children who were born in Jeddah, and regardless of having a lot of Saudi friends, face great difficulties in making a living and are under constant threat of deportation at any time...that is why many of us change jobs frequently... the older people, in my age, socialise only with Chadians in the mosque or have coffees together in one of the small and affordable coffee shops in our district. I plan to go back with my family in five years. Our children are having problems finding jobs and if the authority arrests any of them they could deport the whole family.

3.3.5.5 Is it easy to find a new job?

Forty seven interviewees (77.0%) noted it was difficult to find a new job, whether the same or a different type of employment. However, the majority admitted that within a few weeks they usually find a job. Twelve (20.0%) noted that they had no problem finding a job. Two (3.0%) did not answer this question.

3.3.5.6 In which district(s), do you think it is the easiest to find a job?

Twenty-six (42.6%) of the interviewees said in south Jeddah, and eight (13.1%) in north Jeddah.

3.3.5.7 How many hours you work a day? And what type of shifts do you do?

The number of hours varied according to an individual's type of work. For instance, those involved in begging or the sex trade averaged four to five hours

per day while those washing cars, selling nearly-expired goods, and porters worked over 13 hours. The mean is 11 hours.

3.3.5.8 How much is your monthly income? How do you receive your income?

At the time of the interviews, two of the interviewees were unemployed. The income of the remaining 59 migrants varied from \$190 to \$4,000 per month depending on the nature or type of job and number of hours worked. In this case, the total salaries for the 59 African migrants who work amounted to \$31,000 per month combined. This total income of all the migrants who work (including the two women who work in a brothel made \$4,000 and \$3,200 per month respectively) reflects a \$525 mean or average income per month. It should be noted that the two women who work in a brothel made \$7,200 between them. In this case, if we exclude them from the calculation of the average mean of all the African migrants in this study, we arrive at an average mean income per month of \$418. This is close to the calculated mode of \$400 per month for this community.

3.3.5.9 What is the amount of rent you pay per month?

The amount of rent ranged from paying no rent (only four interviewees living with a friend or parents) to \$267 per month, with the majority paying between \$27 and \$53 per month. The southern part of Jeddah is where the poorest districts are. The accommodations are very poor and they do not have running water, electricity or any kind of sewage system. In addition, these accommodations are under usually targeted by the local authorities. This is the reason why many of the undocumented immigrants are changing living place so often.

3.3.5.10 Do you think your standard of living has improved, stayed the same or has not improved since you came to Jeddah?

Fifty (82.0%) of the interviewees noted that their standard of living had improved since they arrived in Jeddah. This question was not relevant to 11 (18.0%) of

the interviewees, as they were born in the city. The issue of income and salary among the undocumented migrants in the city seems to depend on a normal curve of supply and demand. For example, in the case of house cleaners, when there are many raids by the local authority, the supply of female maids from Africa, Indonesia and the Philippines goes down. This pushes the demand for their services up and as a result increases their average monthly salaries. Another example of wage fluctuations among Africans, Filipino and Indonesian housemaids is subject to the difficulties that go through the negotiations of their respective countries and the Saudi ministry of labour regarding contract details, i.e., salary and living conditions in other countries. During these extended periods of labour negotiation, the salary of available undocumented Filipino and Indonesian maids becomes higher due to their scarcity. If the sending countries refuse to send their female expatriates to fulfil the demand of the Saudi market for this service, this creates an opportunity for other undocumented African females who rush to fill the gap of this shortage and receive much higher wages compared to their previous salaries. The decrease in the supply of other female housemaids makes it possible for housemaids from the Horn of Africa who live in Jeddah not only to find jobs quite easily, but also to demand higher salaries. For example, instead of the usual \$214 they can ask up to \$533 or more. Furthermore, it increases the number of undocumented female migrants to smuggle from the Horn of Africa to the city. Many African female housemaids would leave their employer in Jeddah at the time of *hajj* for the opportunity to generate more income by working in Makkah for 10 days and to earn \$1334. This situation makes the sex trade a very remunerative activity.

3.3.6 Theme six: the *Kafālah nizam* (sponsorship system)

Theme six deals with the issues of Saudi *Kafālah* (*kafalah*) with the aim at assessing the impact, if any, of the *kafalah* system on the various communities under study in this research. It is important to note that this problem, in comparison with other communities, is not very strong in the African community.

3.3.6.1 If you entered Saudi Arabia with a work permit and later broke your employment contract, why did you leave your employer? Which of the following applies to your situation best?

3.3.6.1.1 Did you break your work contract to find a better paying job?

In the African group only six entered the country with a work contract. In this case, all said they broke their contracts to find better paying jobs.

3.3.6.1.2 Did you break your work contract to stay away from sexual harassment?

Not applicable.

3.3.6.1.3 Did you break your work contract to avoid working long hours?

The overwhelming majority, 55 (90.2%) of the interviewees did not respond to this question because it was not applicable. In other words, in the African case in this study, the majority were smuggled in, were born in the city with no documents, or overstayed their *haji* or *umrah* visa.

3.3.6.2 Do you think the *kafalah* system is fair?

Ten interviewees (16.4%) thought it was fair and they were trying to save enough money in order to have a *Kafeel*, if they could.

3.3.6.3 Do you think the *kafalah* system should be abolished?

Twenty-two (36.15) thought it should be abolished. Twenty-nine (47.5%) of the interviewees responded that they do not know.

Thirty-four (55.7%) of the interviewees responded that it is slavery while 27 (44.35) said they don't know and that they never had a *Kafeel*. From this answers it is easy to deduce that some of the immigrants find themselves

trapped in the kafalah system which jeopardises any possibility of getting a better, independent life.

Regarding the two issues discussed above, the researcher reckons that the system is not fair and should be abolished because it is a source of exploitation. In section 1.7.1 the researcher explains how the kafalah system emerged historically and how it is used by many Saudis to apply for visas in order to sell them to the migrants for inexistent jobs. This factor makes of the *kafalah* a modern slavery system.

3.3.6.4 Do you think the Saudi government's frequent amnesty initiatives to reduce the number of undocumented in Jeddah is effective?

30 (49%) of the interviewees said it was effective and 31 (51%) said it was not effective.

3.3.6.5 Do you think the Saudi government's frequent amnesty initiatives to reduce the number of undocumented in Jeddah is biased towards specific nationalities?

Twelve (19.7%) of the interviewees said the system is biased towards non-African migrants favouring Lebanese, Egyptians and other Arab nationals. Nine interviewees (14.8%) responded that it was a fair system. Forty (65.6%) did not know.

As expected, research conducted using semi-structured interviews has the advantage of raising more issues. In this case, for example, it was unavoidable to ask what the immigrants thought about the idea of an Amnesty proposed by the Saudi government.

3.3.7 Theme seven: legal Issues Facing Undocumented Labourers in Saudi Arabia

In particular these issues refer to:

- Deportation;
- Freedom of movement in the country;
- Dealing with the local authorities, and
- Dealing with the consulates of their countries of origin.

All undocumented migrants face legal issues related to their status. As for the other cases, the Africans face arrest and deportation. In their case, as well as for the immigrants from Asia, for example, the threat of deportation sometimes involves a very difficult journey back in case they want to try to re-enter Saudi Arabia. This is in contrast with the situation of the Yemeni case, for example, where the immigrants rely on the easiness with which they can cross the long land border dividing the two countries.

3.3.7.1 Is it difficult to travel around the various districts in Jeddah to work or visit relatives and friends?

Twenty seven (44.3%) of the interviewees said that they had problems in moving around the city, while 34 (55.7%), especially women, indicated no difficulties. This is because Saudi authorities, because of the Saudi tradition, do not stop cars with women in Saudi traditional dresses.

3.3.7.2 How do you protect yourself from the authorities?

The typical and consistent answer to this question by the undocumented migrants from Africa, as well as members of other communities in this study, involved the practice of avoiding, as much as possible, the various Saudi authorities in Jeddah by staying away from trouble. For example, trouble might consist of arguments or fights with Saudis, and non-Saudis including their own community members in public or private places, and by living in a district where there are many people from the same native country. In the cases of married men who have wives in Jeddah, they travel as a family. In these cases, Saudi authorities usually avoid stopping a car where there is a woman or children, due to Saudi culture.

3.3.7.3 If you are in trouble with any of the local authorities, can you ask your consulate for help?

None of the African undocumented migrants considered their respective consulates as a point of reference. The majority contended that their consulates in Jeddah were not supportive and did not offer assistance when needed.

3.3.7.4 Does your consulate provide shelter for its expatriate regardless of their legal status in Saudi Arabia?

Fifty nine of the interviewees said that their consulate in Jeddah does not have such a shelter, while the rest of the interviewees indicated that either they did not know or simply they did not answer this question.

3.3.7.5 Who gives you the most difficulties in terms of your legal status in Saudi Arabia?

Probing alternative responses elucidated examples such as: the police, the employer, Saudis, non-Saudis, or a combination of the above. The majority, 49 interviewees noted that the Jawazat (office of passport and naturalisation) was their worst nightmare, while five choose the Baladiyyah (Municipality) as the most threatening government agency. Three interviews found police traffic officers to be the most “dangerous” and very few interviewees noted all government agencies constitute a threat to their very lives in the city.

3.3.7.6 What kind of problems do you face in Jeddah?

In addition to persecution by government authorities, all the 61 interviewees indicated that they are mostly concerned with the threat of deportation.

3.3.7.7 If you were pressured to leave Saudi Arabia for any reason, would you attempt to re-enter the country with permit or without?

Despite all these difficulties, the great majority, 51 (83.6%) of the interviewees said that if they were pressured to leave Jeddah, they would definitely try to come back. Five (8.25%) said they would not come back. Five (8.25%) of the interviewees said they didn't know if they would return.

3.3.8 Theme eight: plans for the future

This set of questions reflects the respondents' future hopes and plans.

3.3.8.1 Are you satisfied with living and working in Jeddah?

Regardless of the difficult lives of these undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah, the great majority, almost 97.0%, said that the life they have in Jeddah is preferable to the one they had or would have in their home countries.

3.3.8.2 Does living in Jeddah with no documents bother you?

When the interviewees were asked about their state of mind while living and working in Jeddah with no documents, 48 (78.68%) said that it bothered them living in Jeddah as undocumented workers. Only 13 interviewees (21.31%) noted that having no documents did not bother them. The majority agreed that the city provided them the opportunity to make a living as well as sending money to loved ones back home, but that happiness is not a permanent condition. The majority admitted that the harsh conditions of work, the long hours they spend every day at work, and the continuous threat of deportation does not favour a normal life. Many of the Muslim interviewees noted that living close to the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah and the possibility to have a chance to perform *hajj* and *umrah* gives them a very pleasant feeling of religious comfort and assists many of them in easing their difficulties. Other problems according to Interviewee number 1 from Sudan include the impossibility of having a bank account and even travelling for *umrah*, in addition not having a valid *iqamah*, which made it impossible for him to travel to Sudan

to visit his daughters. He wanted to migrate to Europe and ask for political asylum in order to have the opportunity to oppose the Sudanese government. He also hoped to publish a few stories about living in Jeddah as an undocumented in addition to another book on Darfur.

3.3.8.3 Are you going to use the amnesty issued by the Saudi government?

Three (4.9%) noted that they will use the amnesty to leave the country, but the overwhelming majority of fifty seven (93.4%) of the interviewees said no and only one (1.6%) of the interviewees said he had not decided yet. The justifications the interviewees gave for not using the amnesty initiative to correct their legal status in the city varied. First, they mentioned the economic incentive which allowed them to avoid paying a penalty for violating the *iqamah* law. Second, they are worried about the social factors affecting them, for example, they are afraid of being separated from their family members and friends. Finally, they talked about the threat of being detained, imprisoned or deported for violating the laws of the country if they went to the Saudi authorities. Interviewee number 53 from Burkina Faso answered:

I do not know... I am happy about being undocumented and not using the amnesty pardon because I am frightened, that they [the Saudi authority] will arrest me or after taking my fingerprints will deport me, and I will not be able to come back.

Other interviewees, who thought along the same lines, gained this advice from their respective communities, including friends from other African undocumented migrants. In the case of amnesty initiatives, it seems that from the point of view of most undocumented African housemaids in Jeddah, they are very aware of their undocumented status. According to interviewee number 54, from Cameroon, "amnesty is not important and it does not affect my life in Jeddah." This individual, as many others in this study, have been in the city for a long time. Some cases have been there for over 30 years and have witnessed first-hand many of the government amnesty solutions aimed to reduce the number of undocumented in the city. These programs have achieved limited success. Furthermore, the Ethiopian interviewed was able to connect the recent

vigour for deportation to issues related to the Arab Spring. It is important to note that, from the interviewees' statements regarding deportation, they can avoid being fingerprinted by paying someone who has connection with the immigration police working at Jawazat airport for a price that may range between \$500 and \$1300, depending on the pressure of the authorities, the availability of a few corrupt officers, and the legal situation of the migrants. An individual can leave the country without being fingerprinted. In this case, the individual does not have to go through the fingerprinting procedure at the airport.

Many African migrants, especially women, know that it would be impossible for them to come back to the country again. Saudi efforts to deport the undocumented through casual raids on particular districts become intense through the first few weeks immediately following amnesty deadlines. In these cases, the undocumented, regardless of their type of work, stop working and stay home with their family, or cautiously hang around friends or other relatives in districts witnessing much less intensive inspection campaigns. Interviews with local *umdas*, community leaders, and a number of Saudi nationals, and personal observation in the fieldwork, regarding the economic and social outcomes that arise immediately as the government begins the arresting and deportation of many undocumented, show that the beginning of the inspection campaign on undocumented migrants has led to a noticeable slowdown in the local businesses sector. For instance, many shops, grocery stores, restaurants, etc., had to close down their businesses for lack of attainable cheap "undocumented labour to run the business." Saudi nationals, if available, accept the low end types of jobs, and will not be able to substitute for the undocumented migrants. In this regard, the average Saudi, non-skilled labourer, demands much higher wages (four times more, on average) to do the same job as the foreign labourer. The issue becomes more problematic, for example, in the auto repair industry, non-government hospitals, laundries, and slaughterhouses, workers at farms, and Saudi homes, to name a few. In the case of the latter, with the need for housemaids, the impact is devastating for many families. The average waiting list for a housemaid from the Philippines is six months, with an average cost of \$4000 recruitment office fees, according to

importing labour importing agencies. In many cases, working Saudi women had to quit their jobs to stay home and take their young children to school, a job usually performed by a housemaid.

3.3.8.4 Over the next few years, if still living in Jeddah, what do you expect your standard of living to be?

Forty-five (73.8%) of the interviewees believe that their standard of living will improve. The rest, 16 interviewees, believe it will stay the same.

3.3.8.5 What are your long-range goals and objectives in terms of work and or living in Jeddah? How do you plan to achieve your expected goals?

Most of those interviewed from the “born in Jeddah” category strongly believed that they deserve a better life. Their conditions and circumstances should, they believe, be considered by Saudi decision makers. They think it is reasonable for them to receive permanent *iqamah* (residency permit) or even citizenship if possible. In this regard, however, they admit that it is just a dream and an impossible idea to materialise. They think that at least they should be allowed access to education and public medical facilities. Those who were born in Jeddah constitute a special case. They could be children born from parents of the same African community, or of parents from two different African communities, or of one African community and one non-African community one such as Yemeni, Bangladeshi, Indian, or Saudis.

The major concern of most of the migrants is to save money in order to build a small business in their respective countries and leave Jeddah. However, for most of them, life in the city is very hard and often this affects their attachment to their home countries. The fieldwork revealed that out of all the undocumented African communities of migrants, a greater number of the Sudanese are still strongly attached to their homeland compared to other African nationalities who in their majority dream of staying in Jeddah. As an interviewee from Sudan said, many of the other African communities feel hopeless about any future in their respective native countries. Interviewee number 16 from Ethiopia said:

I want to save money and go back to see my mother. If my luck is good and I can make a living there, that will be great, otherwise I will buy an airline ticket from Ethiopia to Yemen to avoid the dangerous crossing the Red Sea. Once in Yemen, I will definitely try to be smuggled back to Jeddah. I would love to spend my life here in Jeddah even to die here near Makkah and Madinah.

The following is an example of a simple plan of a young undocumented female migrant from Ethiopia, interviewee number 11:

I plan to stay working and saving money for two more years then go back to my country by surrendering myself to the *jawazat* (Passport Department) who will deport me for free, I hope. With my savings I wish to open a small mini-market in my country and pray that I will find a good man to marry.

Interviewee number 54 from Cameroon notes that he has already bought a small home back in his native country and currently is saving money to buy an *iqamah* by finding a willing *kafeel* (sponsor). On the other hand, an older interviewee from Nigeria, number 48, said that he hopes that the Saudi government solve the problem of his children's and grandchildren's residency problems. "All were born in Jeddah...We cannot go back to Nigeria." In this case, he and his family were born in Jeddah and they never lived in Nigeria.

Interviewee number 14, a Somali said:

I plan to stay in Jeddah. I have no other place to go to, I have no choice. War and economic problems prevent me from taking my family back to Somalia. I plan to work hard, save money and buy *iqamah* from a Saudi for myself and family...you should know that there are many Somalis in Jeddah like us. I am not worried about my children in Jeddah. They have food and a place to sleep. If we leave or get deported, it will be a disaster.

As normal in every migrants' community, the attitude towards their conditions is always very ambiguous and problematic, torn as they are between two worlds.

3.4 Summary and conclusion

The great majority of migrants live in a legally indeterminate state, very often for generations. The Al-Karantina district, for example, is a magnet for most newly

arrived undocumented migrants. According to many interviewees, Al-Karantina is a safe haven for those who have no official papers to stay as undocumented in Jeddah because government supervision is rare and many governmental agents are afraid to enter the area. Most of the residents live on the margin of city life with no government services and, as interviewee number 53 from Burkina Faso puts it, “outside of the law.” According to e interviewee number 34 from Sudan, this is the reason why the media depict them as criminal, a source of disease, and also accuses them of providing support to terrorist groups based in the city.

Most African migrants interviewed for this study were Muslims. It was observed that the great majority attend daily prayers in the local mosques and it seems that they are devoted Muslims regardless of the difficult life they lead. Similar to the Yemeni migrants, as we shall see, most of the African migrants are “content”⁹⁸ with living in Jeddah without documents, for they have no other option. In the interviews many of them demonstrate great awareness of their circumstances and plan accordingly, regardless of their lack of education. It seems that the majority of the African undocumented migrants, regardless of their nationalities, are stuck in Jeddah waiting for something to happen to change their situation and improve their lives. No one wishes to go back to his or her native country, especially those who came a long time ago or who were born in Jeddah or who were smuggled into Jeddah. They are stuck in Jeddah because of their birth or the economic and political circumstances of their homeland. Whether they were born here and have no rights, or came as little children with their parents for *hajj* or *umrah* and overstayed their visa, they suffer a great deal. It should be noted that there are many undocumented who live in Jeddah and who are the grandchildren of migrants who came even before the Saudi state. Quite a few were not aware of, or did not care to get, the Saudi national identification card (*Biṭāqat al-aḥwāl*) years ago, and for this reason there are many generations of undocumented. However, the researcher observed that many of the migrants’ lives are not stable and that they live in a

⁹⁸ “Content” is actually the translation from Arabic of a word that indicates the lower level of satisfaction. It means that they are aware that this is the best deal they can get.

state of continuous anxiety and terror from the local authorities and from the few Saudis that have no heart and treat them appallingly.

Regardless of the above psychological and social pressures and threats, the migrant has to work hard in order to offer his children and wife the very basic life necessities such as food, clothes, and a place in which to live. Migration from the various countries under study seems to be out of control despite the risks it involves. Those young men and women who risk their lives to reach Jeddah, have vowed to make life meaningful for themselves and their families and will do everything to get into Saudi Arabia and elsewhere to work and make their dreams come true. There is a strong belief among the numerous migrants that those who die at sea and in the desert have been destined to have their lives end that way. Predestination with the old concept of *hijra* (migration in Islam) is therefore one of the cardinal principles of their belief as they attempt to get to Saudi Arabia. Very often, the reason behind the deportations of undocumented labour force is to create an opportunity for more jobs for Saudis. However, the majority of the undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah are unskilled labourers, domestic workers, construction workers, and in other jobs that are generally rejected by Saudi nationals.

It is clear that for most of the undocumented migrants, life in Jeddah is really very difficult. They are under the constant threat of deportation while they struggle to make a decent living. At the same time the possibility of returning to their home country is barred for most of them due to the economic and political situation back home.

In addition, one may add that over hundreds of years many African migrants in the past travelled by foot to Makkah to perform pilgrimage (*hajj*). Very often they worked in many places and countries during these long trips. Furthermore, some of these families were enslaved by landlords on their way and some families even sold their children in order to survive the trip that in many cases could last over 15 years.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis of Interviews with the Yemeni Undocumented Migrants in Jeddah

4.1 Introduction

As part of the overall analysis of all the communities of undocumented migrants under study in the city of Jeddah, this chapter will analyse the Yemeni undocumented migrant communities living in the city, and it will be organised into six sections. The first section will provide a brief general demographic background of the Yemeni undocumented migrants' country of origin, followed by a general description of the various *Hais* (neighbourhood), or districts, in Jeddah focusing on particular districts where the majority of the Yemeni undocumented migrants live and work.

The second section provides a historical overview of the lives of undocumented migrants in the various districts of Jeddah during the last three decades. The third section deals with the particular difficulties and challenges associated with the interviews of the Yemeni community in the fieldwork and the methods followed to overcome these difficulties. The fourth section discusses the outcomes of the semi-focus group conducted with the Yemeni communities in Jeddah as a general introduction to the comprehensive data analysis of the questionnaire presented in Section Five. The fifth section deals with the eight major themes included in the interview questionnaire used in the fieldwork to obtain data from the undocumented migrants in Jeddah.

The sixth section deals with particular issues rose during the interviews and relate to the overall analysis and interpretation of the data collected. This section includes a discussion and analysis of important issues such as the "dispute settlement mechanisms" among the Yemeni undocumented migrants within their own community and with other communities in the same or other

district(s), the “Amnesty Initiative” by the Saudi government and the general reaction towards it by the Yemeni undocumented. Examples of “underground economic activities” are included in this section. These include: marketing of near-expired goods, selling and buying of work permit visas in Saudi Arabia, begging, the sex trade, and other unlawful activities. The last section includes the summary and the conclusion.

Yemen also suffers from problems and difficulties similar to the African countries under study. It includes unstable governments, civil strife, unsustainable population growth, unemployment and Islamic radicalisation. These combined elements significantly decrease the opportunities for the majority of Yemeni people to meet their basic needs for living in their native country and force many of them to migrate to other countries such as Saudi Arabia where they can find jobs and save some money to send to their families back home.

It is important to note that despite the similarities with the other communities regarding the reason for migrating to the city Jeddah, the Yemeni outnumber all other communities. One of the main reasons, understandably, is the geographical and cultural proximity to Saudi Arabia. As we will see in more detail later in the chapter, most of the undocumented Yemeni have relatives or friends already living in the Kingdom and, due to the lack of any language barrier, they can circulate more easily in the country. This allows them to enjoy relative freedom in comparison to the members of the other communities.

4.2 Background

4.2.1 Demographic background

Figure 10: Proximity of Yemen to Saudi Arabia



The Republic of Yemen is administratively divided into 21 *muhafazat* or governorates. All the *muhafazats* are divided into 333 districts. These districts branch out into 22,000 sub-districts. These sub-districts contain around 36,986 villages or towns. According to Bell Heenan and Dr Natalie, former director of the CIA's Political Islam Strategic Analysis Program Norton, in Yemen:

Domestic realities include an unstable government, an insurrection in the North and secession in the South, unsustainable population growth, poverty, unemployment, illiteracy, and Islamic radicalisation. In addition, Yemen is burdened with undocumented immigration as well as piracy from the horn of Africa. Pollution of the environment and widespread addiction to the expensive narcotic plant qāt [Ghat] exacerbate the situation.⁹⁹

It is important to note that Yemen is a demographic time bomb, as is evident from the statistics covering high population growth of 3.45%, which is one of the world's highest. It is important to note that nearly 50% of its population of 24 million is under the age of 16. In addition, the average family size of 7.4 members puts stress on personal and natural resources of the country. The poor economy is the result of a 35% unemployment rate, the highest in the

⁹⁹ <http://www.examiner.com-east-affairs-in-national/saving-Yemen-from-failed-statehood>.

region. The individual average GNI is under \$1000. The education system is disastrous with more than half of the Yemenis being illiterate. In addition, it continuously suffers from unstable political regimes.

In order to analyse the immigration from Yemen, we find that the land border is very difficult to guard because of its mountains, whose passages cannot be checked at all times. This facilitates people-smugglers who know the easiest routes into the country and can operate almost unchallenged by the immigration police. This is why, as already seen in the previous chapter dedicated to the African community, Yemen is also considered a transit country for many undocumented immigrants.

4.2.2 Major reasons for migration

Yemen, similar to most African countries covered in this study, faces domestic and external problems. Over the years, many migrants from Yemen¹⁰⁰ have fled to Jeddah to seek better income that allows them to save money to invest in a better future once they return to Yemen. In addition, due to the historical links between the two countries, Jeddah has always been the primary destination for Yemeni migrants due also to the presence of many Saudi national who are of Yemeni origin.

4.2.3 Hais or districts in Jeddah and the Yemeni undocumented migrants

Most Yemenis in Jeddah live in one of the following districts: Al-Hindawiya; Al-Mahjar; Al-Bokhariya; Gholail; Bab Shareif; Kilo 3; Kilo 6, and Kilo 8. As noted earlier, the great majority of undocumented Yemeni migrants live in the south districts of Jeddah, mainly in the Hindawiya district. In the case of Yemenis, this is even more important because after 9/11 they are considered a threat to Saudi international security.

¹⁰⁰ During 2014 we witnessed major political developments in Yemen, as the *Houthi* Movement—also referred to as *Ansar Allah*—solidified control of the capital, San'a, and Yemen's central government collapsed. This, in our opinion, will trigger more migrants to seek safety and economic stability in Saudi Arabia.

4.2.4 Particular challenges and difficulties faced in approaching the Yemeni community

In this section, the focus will be on issues related to the difficulties and challenges the researcher faced in conducting field research of the undocumented Yemeni migrants in Jeddah. The process of gaining access to this community was to a certain degree much easier than the one for the other communities. This was mainly due to the lack of a language barrier which favoured dialogue with them, and also to the cultural similarities between Saudi Arabia and Yemen. However, locating and arranging an opportunity to interview an undocumented Yemeni migrant is not easy due to the fear and mistrust they have towards Saudi authorities and the constant threat of deportation.

It took the researcher a long time to establish social connections and personal rapport with the subjects, in particular with a few key members of this community, in order to manage to prepare for the necessary logistical arrangements to conduct the interviews.¹⁰¹ With the help of one Yemeni female and three male gatekeepers, the researcher conducted a total of 29 interviews with females and males in this community. As a hidden population plagued by the threat of arrest or deportation, the Yemeni migrants in Jeddah remain very cautious in not exposing themselves to any degree of communication or interaction with the outside world that is perceived as a potential threat, except in matters that relate to their work in Jeddah. Compared to other nationalities interviewed, the Yemenis enjoy a more secure position in Jeddah, due to the size of their community, their ability to speak the language, and their physical resemblance to the native population. It would have been impossible to approach them without spending long periods of time in different areas in a constant search for a community gatekeeper or friends that know or live close to these communities.

Most of the interviewees needed a mediator, someone they knew and trusted in order to meet a complete stranger for an interview that deals with the very

¹⁰¹ Other chapters of data analysis and interpretation of other undocumented migrant's communities will include the same section on challenges and difficulties faced.

essence of their life in Jeddah. As noted above, the majority of the interviews were arranged through at least four gatekeepers from various districts where the Yemeni undocumented migrants' community live and work. In this regard, the mediator, or gatekeeper, was the key point of access for the researcher with the first few interviewees and further attempts to find new interviewees took off through the utilisation of referrals. After an interview was concluded with the Yemeni migrant, the researcher asked that individual help to locate another potential interviewee. The request included a plea, if a kind of friendly rapport was established with the interviewee, of not only recommending another person, but to actually help in arranging the meeting.

Another challenge was conducting interviews with females from the Yemeni community. This obstacle was resolved by the assistance of a female Yemeni gatekeeper that has a college degree, who worked in Jeddah and was married to a Yemeni national who has been working in the city for over 35 years with a *kafeel*. This particular female gatekeeper worked with the researcher and helped to interview eight undocumented Yemeni females after receiving a short training session on the interview technique to adopt.¹⁰² Since the researcher was not able to be present at the interviews, he had to discuss and train the female gatekeeper as to how to conduct the interviews with the undocumented Yemeni female migrants. In this specific case, due to the religious and cultural restrictions, a thorough explanation of each major open-ended question and the specific probing questions it contains took place while the husband was present. There were other issues that the researcher had to take into consideration.

First how he should dress; his unfamiliarity with a few individuals' Yemeni *Lahja* (accent); and the difficulty of arranging the time and place to meet. In this respect it seems that wearing western style dress was important to ease the non-verbal interaction with the interviewee at the initial meeting. Second, the researcher's moderate lack of ability to understand clearly some of the Yemeni accents was resolved by careful and active listening, and was definitely helped

¹⁰² The researcher got the help of two women who agreed to work as research assistants and conducted a number of interview on his behalf after receiving "proper training." Perhaps more specific information on this will be included in the methodology chapter later.

with the aid of the gatekeepers in the first two interviews with the Yemenis. Third, habituating local coffee shops and Yemeni restaurants greatly helped to speed the researcher's familiarity with not only the Yemeni community but with all other communities of migrants under study. Fourth, the time and place of the meeting to conduct the interviews was the most difficult to arrange, and needed the researcher to seriously adjust his lifestyle in order to match the unusual time schedule of those interviewed. Consequently a meeting in the interviewee's own room after midnight was the only way to conduct research due to their long working hours.

The interviews had the purpose of compensating for the absence of demographic data on the undocumented migrant, whether in universities or all government agencies. It is almost impossible to persuade any government agency to allow you to have access to any sort of data on the demography of any community. Even in the eventuality that this data exists, they cannot be accessed by researchers and for this reason they cannot be used in support of any serious investigation. In this regard, Al Khuraifi (2010) noted that regardless of the great sums of money the Saudi state spends on the collection of data on population, economic, social and environmental indicators, academic researchers and others cannot benefit from them. Most of this data stays in the private hands of the agency that collected them. This secrecy makes the research process very difficult because the researcher is left alone facing the logistic and financial burden of the investigation.

Without this data from governmental agencies, research will continue to be only part of universities' faculty member's publications, used for academic promotion. Al-Khuraif suggests that there is a need to change government employees' obsession of keeping data to themselves and not to disseminate it to researchers. He calls for the distinguishing of public general data and data that is concerned with state security. We should establish rules and method to differentiate between the two data sets, argues al-Khuraif.¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Al-Khuraifi.(2010), *Okaz* newspaper (2010), no. 6173. September 5, 2010.

4.2.5 The semi-focus group: the case of the Yemeni community

The researcher was able to conduct semi-focus group interviews with six male undocumented migrants in the *Al-Hindawiya* district. The meeting took place in the house of a 45 year old documented Yemeni who has been working in the city of Jeddah for the last 25 years with the help of a Saudi *kafeel* who is originally from Yemen. The meeting took place after midnight and was arranged by one of my African gatekeepers.

The six Yemeni migrants began to arrive at the home of our host. Their ages ranged from 18 to 30. They were young and healthy and all of them were smuggled to Jeddah from Yemen. They spoke about the various reasons that brought them to Jeddah indicating that the major reason was economic. In this regard, they noted that the unemployment rate in Yemen was very high and it was very difficult for them to find a job there. Jeddah offered them the opportunity to make enough money to go back to their country and set up a business, for most of them a small mini-market.

Most of them were encouraged by their relatives and friends already living in Jeddah. One of the interviewee's jobs in Jeddah was selling near-expired goods using a push trolley. They work mainly in the southern part of the city because it is near where they live. Only occasionally they ventured to the northern part of the city to sell their goods at higher prices. These young Yemenis live together in one room and share their food and other expenses. They work an average of 14 hours every day from 10 am to midnight. They discussed how they arrived in Jeddah and the great role that some of their friends played in assisting them. They indicated that they frequently smuggled back to Yemen to see their friends and family. According to a fisherman Yemeni, many of their friends died on their way to Jeddah.

The great majority of undocumented Yemeni migrants plan to live in the city of Jeddah for a specific period of time in order to save money and return to Yemen to open their own businesses. While in Jeddah, their lives are marked by continuous threat of being deported. The *Al-Hindawiya* district attracts most

newly arrived undocumented Yemeni migrants due to the existence of many Yemeni migrants in this particular. Similar to the African migrants, according to many interviewees, this district is a place of safety for those who have no official papers with which to remain legally in Jeddah.

4.3 Analysis of data: the Yemeni migrants

This section contains eight separate sub-sections, each referring to the eight major questions included in the interview questionnaire that was used in the fieldwork. The eight sub-sections included in the main questionnaire for this study are as follows:

- Theme one: Background information;
- Theme two: The migration process;
- Theme three: Familial and social ties;
- Theme four: Medical needs;
- Theme five: Issues related to work in native country and Saudi Arabia;
- Theme six: Legal issues facing undocumented labourers in Saudi Arabia, and
- Theme seven: Legal issues facing undocumented labourers in Saudi Arabia, and
- Theme eight: plans for the future.

As it has already been noted, the analysis of data of the above eight themes is based on over 120 probing questions used in the interview questionnaire. About 51 out of 120 results were easily converted to quantitative data and analysed using simple descriptive techniques. Some of the questions in the interview are of a quantitative nature. They are useful to gather data about age, sex, marital status and other specific information relevant to the topic.

4.3.1 Theme one: background information

The demographic data showed that, in comparison to other communities, the Yemeni one is constituted mainly of single men. This is due to the vicinity of Yemen to Saudi Arabia and, as we will see later, the nature of the land border between the two countries. However, the researcher, thanks to the help of a female colleague, was able to gather data from Yemeni undocumented women as well. The data collected shows that, contrary to what happens in other communities, the Yemeni one keeps very strict links with its own country and integrates more easily into Saudi life due to the absence of a language barrier and to the cultural similarities between the two countries.

The following table shows the sample used by the researcher to collect the data for his investigation. As stated in the introduction, it was very important to introduce quantitative elements into the investigation. This is because they offer the opportunity to have an overview of the phenomenon.

Table 11: Sample of Yemenis migrants

Frequency	Female	Male	%
29	14	15	100%
29	48%	52%	100%

4.3.1.1 Nationality

All the 29 interviewees in this chapter are Yemenis.

4.3.1.2 Gender

Out of the 29 interviews conducted with the undocumented Yemeni migrants in Jeddah, 15 were male and 14 were female representing respectively 52% and 48% of the total population of Yemeni migrants interviewed.

4.3.1.3 Age

The age of the interviewees ranged from 9 to 55 years old. More specifically, the age of the males varied from 9 to 55 years old, and the females varied from 10 to 40. Approximately, the average age, or mean, for both men and women was 28 years old, the mode 33 and the median was 30.

4.3.1.4 Marital status

Fifteen of the interviewees are single (52%), one is a widow (3%) and 13 (45%) are married (i.e., seven of them male and six are female). Most of these marriages occurred in Yemen. Seven male interviewees were single, who plan to get married as soon as they save enough money. This data is particularly interesting because it offers a unique insight into Yemeni culture as well as an interesting opportunity for comparison with the other undocumented communities. The cost of marriage in Yemen is very high, according to all the interviewees. That is why it takes years for an individual Yemeni migrant to save enough money to get married, according to the response of most of the interviewees. Based on years of observation and this field study in Jeddah, the researcher contends that the majority of undocumented Yemeni migrants in Jeddah are male and without family; they live in Jeddah as bachelors even though many of them have wives in Yemen. This means that most of the immigrants are men and that they came without their families with the purpose of making enough money to get married in Yemen. On the other hand married men often leave their families back in Yemen. This is due to the fact that travelling from Yemen into Saudi Arabia is relatively easy. One of the consequences of this trend is that it is very rare for a Yemeni man to marry out of his own community.

4.3.1.5 Family size

The family size of those interviewed varied from no children to seven children. In this regard, the mean average number of children of those interviewed was four.

4.3.1.6 Religious affiliation

Of the 29 interviewees, 24 were Sunni Muslims.¹⁰⁴ The remaining five were *Zaidi* (a *Shia* sect in Yemen). In this regard, South of Yemen is 99% Sunni Muslims which includes Governorates such as *Hadramut* and *Aden*. North Yemen has a majority of the *Zaidis* like Governorates of *Haja*, *Sana*, and *Dhmar*. Although the majority, around 60 percent, are Sunni Muslims, there is a 40 percent population of *Zaidi Shias* in Yemen.¹⁰⁵ This data reflects the composition of Yemeni society.

4.3.1.7 Level of education

The level of education of the Yemeni community ranged from having no formal education (there are nine of them) to a university degree. Only one of the interviewees finished grade 4, five finished grade 6, one finished grade 8, four finished grade 9, one completed grade 10, and one completed grade 11. Only five interviewees completed grade 12. There was only one individual with a university degree, a very unusual case.

In short, the average mean of education for all the Yemeni interviewees was 5.4 which equals the years of school between grade five and grade six. The above numbers reflect a majority of illiterates with fewer individuals with literacy in written Arabic. Only two males have studied some English. Two of them, two females age 17 and 14, constitute a rare case since they were still studying and could read and write Arabic. In the interview both of them stated that they were not interested in marriage but wanted to finish high school to be able to access university. One of them wanted to become a doctor and the other a teacher. Many of the male interviewees had to leave school for financial reasons in order to assist their parents with their living expenses.

¹⁰⁴ In other words, following one the four Sunni schools of law: Shafi, Malki, Hanafi, and Hanbali.

¹⁰⁵ *Zaidi* Imamate ruled Yemen until 1962.

4.3.2 Theme two: The migration process

As anticipated earlier, the land border that separates the two countries is very difficult to guard. In a recent article, Robert Worth (28, October 2010) noted that Saudi border guards are continuously patrolling the border with Yemen near the Saudi city of *Jizan*. The Saudis look for refugees, smugglers and insurgents entering from the South. He indicated that:

This remote 1100 mile frontier, once a casual crossing point for Bedouins and goats, has become an emblem of the increasingly global threats emanating from Yemen... , drugs and arms smuggling and, well under the world's radar, one of the largest flows of economic refugees on earth. Every day hundreds of undocumented migrants are caught and sent back to Yemen, Saudi officials say, including many who have come from Africa and across Yemen's deserts fleeing war and hunger.¹⁰⁶

Lt. Muhammad Qahtani said that "they adapt very quickly to every strategy we have." A seven year veteran of the border patrol, he reported that "the migrants wear their shoes backward to confuse trackers, or strap sponges to their soles to leave no footprints at all." They trek through arid mountains where the border is loosely patrolled. In this regard, Nafie (2011), a Saudi border guard, explains the difficulties of controlling the border between the two countries as saying:

We have dug trenches, fixed barbed wire, planted thermal cameras, introduced the system of fingerprinting (for immigrants) and intensified surveillance by security patrols in a bid to prevent infiltration... The difficult terrain of the border areas makes it difficult for the two sides to tightly control smuggling operations. There are human traffickers who know the area extremely well. They know routes that are difficult for the Saudi border guards to discover, he said.¹⁰⁷

In many ways, one can contend that there is a remarkable resemblance between the United States and its borders with Mexico, on the one hand, and Saudi Arabia with its borders with Yemen, on the other hand specifically in terms of a dangerous desert barrier between a rich US and poor Mexico, and an oil rich Gulf state and its poor Yemeni neighbour. In both cases it is a barrier

¹⁰⁶ Saudi-Yemeni border inviting for criminals, refugees Robert F. Worth / New York Times News Service *Published Oct 27, 2010 at 05:00AM / Updated Nov 19, 2013 at 12:31AM.*

¹⁰⁷ Source: Ibrahim Nafie, Arab news: published: June 10, 2011 00:43 updated: June 10, 2011 01:03.

that separates two rich countries from two poor ones (in each case it is a barrier that separates a rich country from a poor one). The border with Mexico excludes Mexicans from the rich United States; in the Gulf this land border separates an oil rich Gulf state from a poor neighbour.

4.3.2.1 How did you arrive in Jeddah?

The close geographical proximity of Jeddah to the Yemen and the relatively cheap cost of the journey, regardless of the difficulty of the journey, has always been a great opportunity for Yemenis. All undocumented Yemeni immigrants entered through one of the following ways:

- Undocumented entry;
- Overstaying a religious visa;
- Breaking a work contract, and
- 'Immigrants' born in the city.

Yemenis from each of these groups told the researcher his or her own personal experience.

4.3.2.1.1 Undocumented entry

13 of the 29 Yemeni migrants were smuggled to Jeddah simply crossing the 1,100 mile long borders¹⁰⁸ that separate Yemen from Saudi Arabia by foot, or by getting a lift from a Yemeni or Saudi smuggler to guide them, or actually engage in transporting them for a fee, as we shall discuss in detail below. The great majority, thirteen of the 29 undocumented Yemeni migrants, were smuggled to Jeddah via different routes from Yemen to reach the Saudi city of Jeddah.

In the Yemeni case, 13 (45%) of the interviewees were smuggled into Jeddah. In this regard, many Yemeni interviewees noted that there are a great number of individuals who could not afford the fees for being smuggled to Jeddah. In

¹⁰⁸ 5,000 kilometres.

this case, they smuggle themselves all the way to Jeddah by foot and many of them are subject to arrest once they cross the border, or die in the desert. It should be noted that there are no exact data on the number of those who died while trying to cross the borders.

The following table shows an example of the number of people from Yemen who were arrested on the Saudi borders while attempting to enter the country in three time periods over 30 years (1978-91: 1995-98: 2003-08), which far exceeds the number of any other nationality in this study, a trend that can be easily observed in the following table.

Table 12: Numbers of African migrants, Yemenis and other migrants' nationalities who were arrested while attempting to smuggle their way into KSA distributed according to nationality (1978-91, 1995-98 and 2003-08).

Nationality	Sum or Total	Percent of migrants per nationality	Time Scale
Yemeni	3,419,207	98.69%	1978-91, 1995-98 and 2003-08
Eritrean	16,687	0.48%	
Somali	9,257	0.27%	
Sudanese	9,014	0.26%	
Ethiopian	8,723	0.25%	
Indian	620	0.02%	
Pakistani	601	0.02%	
Bangladeshi	316	0.01%	
Chadian	67	0.002%	
Filipino	0.0	0,0%	
Indonesian	0.0	0,0%	
Egyptian	0.0	0,0%	
Total	3,464,492	100.00%	

Source: Adopted from the statistics year books of the Ministry of the Interior in Saudi Arabia. For the years (1978 to 1991, 1995 to 1998 and 2003 to 2008).

The above statistics show that the great majority of undocumented migrants that were arrested in this 30 year period were Yemenis. This represents 98.69% of the number of migrants from various nationalities who attempted to be smuggled into Saudi Arabia during these three different periods. As noted in the African chapter, the information available about the phenomenon of people smuggling is scattered and incomplete. As such, verifiable or even reliable figures are not easy to come by and the data on the number of smuggled individuals is questionable at best. Many Yemenis who tried to cross the borders between Saudi Arabia and Yemen alone (i.e., without the help of professional smugglers), have died in the attempt, according to all of the Yemeni interviewees.

The interviews offer a unique insight into the phenomenon. The following example shows the persistence of the Yemeni migrants in making a living in Jeddah regardless of the dangers. However, it also proves the extreme permeability of the land border. Interviewee number 7, who is a male and 19 years old, entered Jeddah undocumented when he was 17 and stayed for one year and two months. Then he decided to cross back to see his family in Yemen, but before he could do it he was arrested and deported. Five months later he was already back in Jeddah. Interviewee number 1 is a 32 year old male. The first time he entered Jeddah was in 2000. He stayed in Jeddah six months and was deported. He stayed in Yemen two years and re-entered (smuggled back to Jeddah) in 2002. After 18 months in Jeddah he decided to get married. This is where he surrendered himself to the Jawazat (Saudi authority) where he was deported (for free) to Yemen.

After one year in Yemen he came back to Jeddah and stayed nine months, and again left for Yemen where he stayed four months to visit with his family, and later re-entered Saudi Arabia through an *umrah* visa and overstayed his visa for eight months after which he was deported to Yemen. After a few weeks he smuggled back to Saudi Arabia. At the time of the interview he was saving money to buy a visa for himself and his wife from a Saudi.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ Selling and buying visas is a very prosperous business in Saudi Arabia.

Interviewee number 9 smuggled himself to upper Saudi Arabia, where he worked with a tribe herding animals for \$110 per month. He used to go back to the Yemen every three months. When he was 18 he married his first cousin, aged 15 at the time. He has two boys and one girl. He moved from Abha to Jeddah where he makes more money.

4.3.2.1.2 Overstaying a religious visa

Eleven of the 29 Yemeni migrants used *umrah* visas to get to Jeddah and overstayed their visa periods. Some Yemeni migrants entered Saudi Arabia by simply applying for an *umrah* visa and later they overstayed their visa period which is usually one month. In this study, 11 (38%) of the undocumented migrants came to Jeddah this way.¹¹⁰ From the interviews, it is evident that most of those who arrived into Jeddah using *umrah* visa were female relatives of a documented Yemeni migrant who worked in the city. In this case, they obtained *umrah* visas to enter the country by using their husband's proper iqamah (residency permit) and then overstayed their visa period in violation of Saudi migration laws. In this regard, they are called *mutakhalifeen* (overstayers) due to abusing their visa stay. If they are caught by the authority they are subject to immediate deportation. The following are two examples of such experiences with *umrah* visas:

Interviewee number 2 was a 31 year old married man born in Jeddah. Despite his parents moving to Jeddah 70 years ago, and spending all his life in the city, he needed a kafeel. He has a 20 year old wife who reached from Yemen on an *umrah* visa and who has been living undocumented in Saudi Arabia for the last five years. In this case, both are from Dhmar and have two children who live with them in Jeddah. The husband was educated to Grade 6 and his wife has no formal education.

Interviewee number 3 was an undocumented wife who overstayed her *umrah* visa over the previous eight months. Her husband, interviewee number 4, was 34 years old and had a kafeel. The undocumented wife has one girl from her

¹¹⁰ It should be noted that three out of the five born in Jeddah and nowhere kicked out/deported upon the Gulf War came back with levies.

present husband and at the time of interview she was pregnant. She was formerly married and got divorced. She has two girls from her previous marriage who live in Yemen with her grandparents. She was brought to Jeddah by her husband who noted:

I had to bring my wife here to Jeddah even if I have to smuggle her through the border...I was born in Jeddah and I feel I am more a Saudi than a Yemeni why can't I get an Iqamah (a residency permit) for my wife? I am afraid to drive around Jeddah or even take her to Makkah for *umrah* because if I was stopped by the police for a minor traffic violation or a road block, they might ask for my wife's Iqamah. In this case both of us will be subject to arrest and deportation.

He also wonders if he remains in Jeddah, and he plans to stay, how his children will receive an education without proper documents. He is trying to save money to buy his wife a visa.

4.3.2.1.3 Breaking a Work Contract

None of the Yemeni interviewed belonged to this group of immigrants.

4.3.2.1.4 Undocumented 'migrants' born in the city

Another important group was constituted by those undocumented migrants born in the city. In the Yemeni case, five (17%) of the interviewees were born in Jeddah by undocumented parents who either entered the country with proper documents to work for a *kafeel* or smuggled through the borders. For example, two of the females interviewed, aged 14 and 17 were born in Jeddah from an undocumented father and mother from Yemen and Burma respectively. In this regard, the older female, interviewee number 27, noted:

We were born in Jeddah with no proper document which is a disaster in our life. I don't understand why my parents married in this country without being documented migrants first. This kind of marriage made it difficult for my sister and I to live a normal life like other children and have an opportunity for proper education. How we are going to get married. Should we get smuggled back to Yemen? We do not even know where our father or his family address in Yemen is. Or should we marry another undocumented migrant? We live in secrecy all of our lives and we do not know what to do. Our parents got divorced 10 years ago

when we were little children....we live with our mother and work as beggars...

Individuals who were born in Jeddah but do not have proper residency or Saudi nationality cannot enrol their children in public school or university. This particular group are the victims of their parents' circumstances. There are possibly thousands of them across the Makkah region especially in its three major cities: Makkah, Madinah, and Jeddah. These individuals who were born in Jeddah or other Saudi cities with no documents have no chance of applying for Saudi citizenship, according to government regulations, as noted by interviewee number.

4.3.2.2 Why did you choose Jeddah over other cities in the Gulf countries?

In response to the above question, the majority, 20 interviewees (69%), said that they came to Jeddah because of the very poor economic conditions and the unavailability of jobs compared to Jeddah. Four interviewees (14%) said that they were joining a family member as the main reason for their migration to the city. Five of the interviewees (17%) could not respond to this question due to the fact that they were born in Jeddah with no documents from undocumented parents. From the above testimonies in this study, one contends that it is a very similar situation to the African undocumented migrants' and fits the neoclassical economic model for why people migrate. Most of them migrated to Jeddah for better wages. None noted that the main reason was the presence of friends in the city or that they wanted to live near the holy cities. In response to the above probing question, it is interesting to note that 19 of the interviewees (66%) were attracted to Jeddah over other cities because they had friends and relatives who encouraged them to come by providing financial and other logistical support, and that it was easier to be smuggled into the city. Five interviewees (17%) noted that it was easier to get an *umrah* or *hajj*. Finally, five interviewees were born in the city. In this particular case, they do not have a response. In the final analysis, the majority thought that Jeddah provided them with a safer place to live, a better income and it the city to which it was easier to be smuggled into.

In response to the above question interviewee number 5 said:

I came to Jeddah because I did not have any income. I heard I can make more money in Jeddah and it is kind of easy to come here.

Interviewee number 6 noted:

Water wells dried. We could not farm the lands. I came to Jeddah because I have friends and relatives in the city and it is easy to cross the border.

Interviewee number 8 added: “No money in Yemen. Friends told me Jeddah is the best and that they will help me get a job, they did.”¹¹¹

Most of the Yemeni migrants seem to favour Jeddah over other cities in the Gulf countries as their main destination due to its close geographical proximity to Yemen and the existence of many of their friends or relatives in the city. All of the Yemeni migrants interviewed escaped the economic conditions in Yemen. The majority noted that the cost of living in Yemen is very high compared to actual and potential income of working in the Yemeni market. For instance, income generated at the low-skill job level pays around \$150 per month. Perhaps it is a coincidence, but many of those interviewed for this research from the Yemeni migrants community work in the *Ghat* farms where they claim it is easy to find a job. They also noted that the salary was very low and there was no way to make a living from that income, let alone save money for marriage and a better life when one gets older. Most interviewees consumed and worked in the *Ghat* business, which didn't pay enough to have as a career, according to most interviewees.

The majority decided to stop because it wasted their time and money. They did not consider it a drug, but rather a luxury that they could not afford. According to all individuals interviewed from the Yemeni community, 80% to 90% of Yemenis chew *Ghat* leaves. Jeddah, for the Yemeni interviewees, is an opportunity for a better future life. A 50 year old veteran undocumented Yemeni migrant, interviewee number 10, noted:

¹¹¹ None of the interviewees, whether men or women, mentioned the importance of being near the holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.

The majority of us came to Jeddah because we believe we can make better money, have a chance to help our families, and a prospect to even save money to open a small business of our own, a mini market, for example... Even a university graduate rarely exceeds \$300 per month.

From the above responses, one can contend that a combination of macroeconomic plus religious reasons compelled many Yemeni migrants to migrate to the city of Jeddah in order to make a better living and to live and work in close proximity to the Muslim holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.

4.3.2.3 How much, if anything did it cost you to come to Jeddah? (i.e., if smuggled, did you buy a work contract visa or arrange for a *hajj/umrah* visa).

In response to the probing question regarding the cost of smuggling to the individual interviewee, the mean average is \$650. In this regard, the majority of interviewees noted that the both Saudi and Yemeni nationalities are involved in the smuggling of undocumented migrants of many different nationalities into Saudi Arabia. The average cost of this trip for all the interviewees varied across the years but, most recently, it is between \$507 and \$614. A typical example of this smuggling experience is described by many of those interviewees who went through it. In this regard, interviewee number 11 noted, "I paid a Saudi or a Yemeni national approximately \$26 from *Tazz* to *Harad* (also known as *Hardh*, *Wadi Suleiman*) and from *Harad* we were smuggled to Jeddah for around \$500."¹¹²

The majority of those who entered Saudi Arabia by being smuggled noted that they did not pay the smuggler if they did not know him, but rather arranged with one of their relatives or friends who lived in Jeddah to arrange the payment in Jeddah once the migrant arrived safely in Jeddah. This is a kind of prearranged mutual agreement between the smuggler and the migrant. In this regard, many interviewees noted that many smugglers would take the money, if paid cash,

¹¹² Many Yemenis noted that the great number of individuals who could not afford the fees for being smuggled to Jeddah in this case, smuggle themselves all the way to Jeddah by foot and many of them were subject to arrest once they cross the border or that in the desert.

and would not deliver the migrant to Jeddah. Usually, the undocumented migrant in the cases of those having to borrow money from people in Jeddah or through other family sources in Yemen, would pay it back in instalments, and they always do. Interviewee number 11 noted that:

We honour this arrangement not because it is a good thing to do, but any one of us might need help in the future in case he was deported. Not paying this debt will jeopardise trust within our community especially those who want to help their fellow Yemenis.

Many Yemenis who tried to cross the borders between Saudi Arabia and Yemen alone, for example, without the help of professional smugglers, would have died in the attempt, as we saw in the examples provided earlier.

4.3.2.4 How old were you when you arrived in Jeddah?

The age of the undocumented Yemeni when he or she arrived in Jeddah ranged between 15 years and 36 years old. The majority entered Jeddah in their early 20s. The mean age at arrival is 20.5 years (around 21 years old). Nine interviewees entered Jeddah at age 23 which constituted the mode age. The researcher did not include those who were born in the city with no documents in the calculation of the mean age.

4.3.2.5 How many years have you spent in Jeddah as an “undocumented” migrant?

The time spent in Jeddah as an undocumented migrant for people from the Yemeni community varied between one year (only one migrant) and 20 years (there were three migrants). The mean average time spent in Jeddah without documents is approximately three years. It should be noted at this juncture that we did not include five interviewees who were born in Jeddah in the calculation of the mean average of time spent in Jeddah with no documents. The mode (the most repeated numbers of years) was 12 years. In this case there were five migrants.

4.3.2.6 How many times have you been deported from Jeddah?

The number of times an individual was deported varied from no deportation to being deported four times. In general, the 29 interviewees experienced 23 deportations among them. Twenty of the interviewees had never been subject to deportation. In this case, all the 14 female interviewees noted that they never experienced deportation compared to only six male migrants were not deported (it included the five migrants who were born in Jeddah). Three interviewees were deported only once. Two of the interviewees were deported twice, three of the interviewees were deported three times, and one of the interviewees was deported four times. The average mean for the number of times being deported in the Yemeni community was 0.7 or at least one time of deportation. It is worth noting that the average number of deportation among the above nine interviewees who experienced deportation was at least three times for each migrant.

4.3.2.7 If you were deported and later re-entered the country, how and why did you come back?

In response to the above question, it seems that the following response from interviewee number 28 reflected most of the opinions of others for this particular question by noting, "I re-entered Saudi Arabia the same way always, smuggling through the same route from my town in Yemen to the Saudi borders (Jazan) then to Jeddah."

4.3.2.8 Was it worth it?

Twenty-four of the interviewees said it was worth it. Five migrants did not respond to this question because they were born in the city by undocumented parents. The interviewees were asked if it was worth the effort and danger to cross the dangerous terrain of the Saudi Yemeni borders to reach Jeddah, violate Saudi law by overstaying the visa duration or breaking a work contract

by overstaying its legal period. In response, all the nine (31%) migrants who experienced deportation responded, “yes, it was worth it.”¹¹³ Many added that compared with the option of staying in Yemen with no financial resources and no jobs, it is better to take the chance, through any means possible (i.e., smuggling, overstaying, and *hajj* visa and or breaking a work contract) to come to Jeddah in order to have the opportunity to work and save enough income for a better future in Yemen.

Those who arrived in Jeddah illegally felt compelled to cross the Saudi Yemeni borders for a more promising life regardless of the danger that usually accompanies such a trip. In this regard, one of the Saudi border officers puts it this way: “Some of them say, if you give me something to eat, I will go back. You can only feel pity for these men.”¹¹⁴

It seemed clear that most of those Yemeni interviewed had no hope for living and working in Yemen. They felt compelled to cross to the Saudi border for a more promising life regardless of the danger that usually accompanies such a trip. In addition, some of them had family and relatives in the city, while for others Jeddah constitutes a good business opportunity. Some others consider the city their home.

4.3.3 Theme three: on family and social ties

The analysis of the social ties within a particular community is always very important because they show the level of integration within the host country. Usually they are very strong because they provide a safety net for the immigrants when dealing with the Saudi authorities and the danger of deportation. Many undocumented, especially males, share one room between four to six people. This is because they arrive and, in the Yemeni case, most of them live without their families, the interviewees reflected the average of the undocumented which is for both men and women. As far as friends are concerned, the mean is 17 (they have 17 friends). For 21 interviewees the

¹¹³ Five of the interviewees did not think they had an option since they were born in the city.

¹¹⁴ <http://www.saudiinfocus.com/en/news/117/ARTICLE/2656/2010-10-28.html>. Accessed 2011.

calculation led to an estimated number of 482 friends, most of whom, as we will see, are undocumented. Only 24 are documented. This means that 95% of their friends come from the undocumented community. This data is important, because, in particular in the Yemen case, they show that the government is underestimating the number of Yemeni undocumented migrants currently present in Saudi Arabia.

4.3.3.1 What is your spouse's type of work?

Most of the males' spouses who live in Yemen are housewives or work in farms. Based on years of observation and this field study in Jeddah, the researcher contends that the majority of undocumented Yemeni migrants in Jeddah are male and without family. They live in Jeddah as bachelors even though many of them have wives in Yemen.

4.3.3.2 How many people do you live with in Jeddah?

Interviewee number 14 said:

Our little room is a home away from home. This is where we find more safety to discuss our problems for the day and exploring different ways to improve our chances against the possibilities of getting arrested and deported. As noted by Interviewee number eight.

Most of the single interviewees live with four to five other Yemeni undocumented migrants in one room. They usually live in a Shabi flat (very low income houses usually owned by a Saudi). These flats usually have three bedrooms and are rented to different groups of undocumented. Usually they would be from the same community of undocumented migrants. Because undocumented migrants do not have a proof of residency paper (iqamah), these flats are rented by a Saudi or a migrant with proper documents who then sublets to those with no proper documents. It seems that living with other fellow Yemenis under the continuous threat of deportation eases their feeling of estrangement in the city and provides, along with their visits to members of the Yemeni community, an alternative family support system in the city of Jeddah.

Most of the interviewees' friends and acquaintances are undocumented and live in the same area, in south Jeddah. Most of their socialisation is within their own community. Many of them noted that they do not refuse the idea of socialising with other communities but admit that the bulk of their social gathering or hanging out is only within their close circle of Yemeni friends and relatives. As noted earlier, the interviewees live in quite a range of different districts in Jeddah, but the majority seem to prefer certain districts in south Jeddah such as Al Hindawiya where they feel more secure.

It should be noted that unlike some other members of the undocumented migrants in Jeddah such as Africans, Indonesians and Bangladeshi, none of the Yemeni have ever lived, or think to live, under one of the few well known bridges in the city. Interviewee number 23 noted:

Even those of us who arrived in Jeddah recently, they know they can rely on either on a relative, or a friend who already live in the in Jeddah or simply go to places where fellow Yemenis work for temporarily accommodation.

4.3.3.3 Contact with family in your home country: how often in a month?

Modern technology, like the mobile phone, seems to play a big part in the interviewees' lives in terms of communicating with their family members and fellow friends inside and outside the city of Jeddah. This communication medium helps them to avoid feeling far away from their families. Most of the interviewees socialise mainly with their own community with few exceptions. This socialisation pattern with their own communities also runs across all the communities under study.

When asked about the number of times they call their families while living and working in Jeddah, the number of times varied between two times a week to once a month. The mean average of contact per month is four times. Many interviewees actually sneak back to Yemen to visit their family. For instance, seven of the male subjects interviewed were married and all noted that they, like many other married Yemeni, migrate across the borders from Saudi Arabia

to Yemen regularly to visit their wives and children and come back, undocumented as usual.

4.3.3.4 How many relatives do you have in Jeddah?

Total number of relatives for the female migrants is 70. The mean average of relatives for the females is five relatives. Total number of relatives for the male migrants is 74. The mean average of relatives for the male respondents is 4.9, or, 5 relatives. The total number of relatives for both female and male migrants is 147. The mean average for female and male migrants is six relatives. As mentioned before, this data shows the strong presence of Yemeni undocumented immigrants in the country, far more than the number suggested by untrustworthy official figures.

4.3.3.5 How many friends do you have in Jeddah?

The total number of friends for both males and females is 482. The average mean of friends is around 17. The total number of friends for females is 82. This is an average of around six friends for each female migrant. The total number of friends for the male is 400. This is an average of around 27 friends for each male. The number of friends for both female and male Yemeni migrants ranged between 2 and 50.

4.3.3.6 In general, what types of visa(s) do your relatives and friends have?

According to the interviewees, very few of these “relatives, close friends and acquaintances” possess valid documents to stay in Saudi Arabia legally. The great majority are undocumented (95%) while only 5% are legally residing in the country.

4.3.3.7 Was it easy for them to find a job?

When asked about the “ease” of finding a job in Jeddah, most interviewees noted that it was easy to find a job in Jeddah not only because there is plenty of work in construction and other types of manual labour, but due to the social

network they have in the community. In this case, 23 interviewees (80%) noted that it was easy for their respective relatives and friends to find a job in Jeddah. Only six interviewees (20%) said that it was very difficult for their relatives and friends to find a job.

4.3.3.8 Do you participate in social gatherings or activities with other communities and Saudis?

Most of their socialisation is within their own community. Many of them noted that they are open to socialising with other communities but admit that the bulk of their social gatherings or “hanging out” is within their close circle of Yemeni friends and relatives. In this regard, 20 interviewees (68.9%) said they only participate in social life with their own Yemeni community. Nine (31%) of the interviewees indicated that they participate socially with all other communities.

4.3.3.9 Are you the only breadwinner?

Fourteen (48%) of the interviewees noted that they were the only breadwinner for their families. Fifteen (52%) indicated that they were not the only breadwinner for their family. Only two females (7%) indicated that they were the only breadwinner for their families. This data has to take into account that, as mentioned earlier, most of the Yemeni migrants are men who are not married or, if married, men who came without their families. This constitutes a substantial difference between their community and the other ones.

4.3.3.10 Do you remit some of your income home and how?

Twenty three of the interviewees (79%) noted that they regularly, usually on a monthly basis, remit part of their income to relatives in their native countries. Six interviewees noted that they don't remit money.

4.3.3.11 What percentage of your monthly income do you remit to your home country?

The range of remittance varied from 0% to 70%. As far as remittance from females is concerned, the average mean percentage of 16% of their income was remitted, while the males' average mean percentage of remittances is 52%. The average percentage of remittances for both female and male interviewees is 40%. Most of their remittances are for paying a previous debt or to assist their families. The great majority of the Yemeni migrants, as other undocumented migrants, remit funds by giving it to someone of their own nationality who has connections where the money is sent to. The method adopted for remitting money resembles the one used by the other communities and constitutes a way of keeping strong ties with their home country.

4.3.4 Theme four: medical needs

Undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia face serious problems in gaining access to health care services.

4.3.4.1 In case of emergency, what do you do?

All the interviewees (100%) noted that in case of a medical emergency, they have no access to public hospitals in Jeddah and that their only possible option, if they can afford it, is to go to private hospital or clinic. However, as far as medical needs for those interviewed from the Yemeni community is concerned, very often they receive it in the various districts in which they live. For example, early in morning in the *Al-Hindawya* district where some of them live, there is a small clinic where minor illness and injuries are treated.¹¹⁵ The cost is around eight dollars.

4.3.4.2 If there is no access to medical care (hospitals) or you cannot afford it, what are your options?

The great majority noted that they would seek a consultation with the nearest pharmacist, or see one of the local *Attar* (traditional medical/herbal practitioners) for medical advice. In the case of pharmacies, pharmacists will

¹¹⁵ All the doctors and nurses are foreign professionals from India and Pakistan.

provide all types of medical advice and can sell any type of medication, except those that are usually prescribed by psychiatrists. In case of emergencies, according to the interviewees, private hospitals are accessible because they do not ask for identification cards.

4.3.4.3 Have you ever used someone else's ID to gain entry for public/private medical treatment?

Out of the 29 interviewees, only four females admitted that they have used the ID of others (*iqamah* documents) to gain access to medical care in Saudi public/private hospitals. The rest, 25, indicated that they never have done this because it is dangerous. It should be noted that the Ministry of the Interior has issued a warning to all types of hospitals not to allow any patient without a proper identification card to receive any kind of medical treatment. This is something that distinguishes this community from the others: the capacity of organising themselves to overcome the difficulties posed by their undocumented status.

4.3.5 Theme five: issues related to working conditions

Most of the Yemeni undocumented migrants used to work in *Ghat* farms in their own country and most of the time, since they were heavy consumers of this drug, the majority of their salaries went to pay for it. Coming to Jeddah for most of them means that they can be employed in other, better paid, jobs and they can save money to send home to their families. Due to the fact that they can blend more easily into Saudi society, they change jobs more frequently than the members of other communities especially in the South of the city. Their average pay is \$328 a month in exchange for 12 hour long working days. As the data will show, the majority of them consider that their standard of living is higher in Jeddah than in their own country.

4.3.5.1 If you worked in your native country, what type of job(s) did you have?

Nineteen of the interviewees were working in Ghat farms where they claim it was easy to find a job. They also noted that the salary was very low and there was no way to make a living from that income, let alone save money for marriage and a better life when one gets older. In these jobs, many interviewees noted that they consume Ghat while working in these files thus they could not save any money. Five of the interviewees found it not applicable to their situation because they were born in Jeddah. Four interviewees worked as a mechanic, a blacksmith, and carpenter and at other manual jobs.

4.3.5.2 Why, if you were employed, did you leave your job to come to Jeddah? Why Jeddah and not a different city in the gulf?

The main reason for the great majority leaving their jobs, if they were employed, was to seek a better economic life in Jeddah. High unemployment and encouragement by friends or a family member who were already in Jeddah was a major stimulus for the Yemeni migrates.

4.3.5.3 If you currently work, what type of job do you have? Is this the job you were trained to do?

It is difficult to list all the types of work that the undocumented migrants from the Yemeni community experienced while living in Jeddah. In general, the Yemeni migrant works in minimum wage jobs, but quite a few worked in more complex construction related jobs. They also work in interior decoration, car mechanics, car bodywork (panel beating in the U.K.), and painting, and tailoring. Many worked selling near-expired goods, as house painters, cooks in restaurants, porters, begging... etc. Interviewee number 17 offers an insight into the job market in Jeddah:

I sell near-expired products such as canned food, candies and other goods to the people who live in or close to the district where I live. I use a wheelbarrow to market my goods in the media and other districts. Another interviewee sells Ballilah (garbanzo bean salad) and French fries near shopping malls in the south and northern districts of Jeddah. Another interviewee uses a friend's car as a private taxi to transport various undocumented migrants to their jobs and back.

In addition, many members of the Yemeni community, as well as other communities under study in this research, were observed in the industrial district of Al-Sinaiya where they work as students labouring under an apprenticeship to learn skills. For example, an undocumented Yemeni, or any other nationality, has the opportunity to work and learn from a master car mechanic for some time, and accepts a place to sleep in the work place with very low wages as a helper. Once they graduate or master the skills they are learning they begin to make lots of money. Most of these teachers are documented migrants, but there are quite a few numbers of migrants who are undocumented migrants of various nationalities.

4.3.5.4 How many times per year do you change jobs and why?

The total number of changes in type of work for the Yemeni population is 98. The change varied from one type of work to 12 different types of work. The average mean of changing types of work for all the Yemeni interviewees is three. Men change their type of work more frequently than females. However, the Yemeni migrants, if compared to other communities of migrants, changed their jobs less frequently. They seem to stick to the same job for longer periods of time.

4.3.5.5 Is it easy to find a new job?

Twenty interviewees (80%) noted that it was easy to find a new job. Six interviewees (20%) admitted that it was very difficult for them to find a new job.

4.3.5.6 In which district(s) do you think it is easiest to find a job?

Twenty interviewees (69%) said south Jeddah, and nine (31%) reported that north Jeddah was the easiest district in which to find a job.

4.3.5.7 How many hours do you work a day? And what type of shifts do you do?

Unlike other undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah, the Yemeni migrant works long hours and multiple shifts. Most of the interviewees work an average of eight to twelve hours per day. The average mean is 11 hours. They worked in different shifts with the majority working during daylight.

4.3.5.8 How much is your income per month?

The range of income of all the interviewees from Yemen was from \$0.0 to \$1200. The average income for female migrants from Yemen is \$224. The average income for male migrants from Yemen is \$425. The average income of all the interviewees from Yemen is \$328. Similar to other undocumented migrants in Jeddah, the Yemeni migrants receive their salaries in cash.

4.3.5.9 Amount of rent you pay per month?

Five of the male interviewees did not have to pay rent, they live with their parents. The amount of rent paid ranged from \$40 to \$200 per month. The average mean for the rent for all the Yemeni migrants is \$62.

4.3.5.10 Do you think your standard of living has improved, stayed the same, or not improved since you came to Jeddah?

The great majority of the undocumented Yemeni migrants, 25 interviewees, noted that their standard of living has improved. Four interviewees did not respond to this question.

4.3.6 Theme six: the *kafalah nizam* (sponsorship system)

Theme six deals with the issues of Saudi *kafalah nizam* (sponsorship system) with the aim of assessing the impact, if any, of the *kafalah* system on the Yemeni migrant community under study in this chapter.

4.3.6.1 If you entered Saudi Arabia with a work permit and later broke your employment contract, why did you leave your employer? Which of the following applies to your situation best?

4.3.6.1.1 Did you break a work contract to find a better paying job?

None of the Yemenis had this experience.

4.3.6.1.2 Did you break a work contract to stay away from sexual harassment?

None of the Yemenis had this experience.

4.3.6.1.3 Did you break work contract to avoid working long hours?

None of the Yemenis had this experience.

4.3.6.2 Do you think the *kafalah* system is fair?

Even though the majority of interviewees in this chapter did not have an actual *kafeel* and their opinions are based on what they have heard from others, they have their own views and attitudes towards the *kafalah* system. In this case, the great majority, 22 (76%), of the interviewees believe that the *kafalah* system is unfair because it resembles a modern form of slavery. Furthermore, a majority noted that they do not need a *kafeel* even if they were provided with one. They strongly believe that they can make more money working undocumented because they do not have to deal with the Saudi *kafeel* who will control their life and pay them less money. The system should be transferred to the government. It costs the employee prohibitive sums of money to renew their visa every two years. Interviewee number 25 said:

I think it is not fair. The *kafeel* (sponsor) always takes advantage of you. When my father was alive, he was always complaining. And yes, it is like modern slavery. Many Saudis get so many visas and sell it to anyone who pays more. And always ask for more money when it is time to renew the iqamah (residency permit).

Another interviewee, number 26, noted: “Some kafeels (sponsors) ask for monthly payments if they allow you to work for yourself.” In general, the interviewees noted that they do not need a kafeel to enter Saudi Arabia. In this case, because they have sneaked into the country, they do not have to renew their income or be obliged to pay a Saudi kafeel part of their earnings. On the same note, interviewee number 15 zealously revealed:

I am freer to work or not.... The kafeel tides and control your life and very often pay me little money compared to what I earn from my job now. The problem that most of us face without a kafeel is the threat of the *Baladiyyah* (a local police authority)... Also, without legal documents, we are subject to raids by the *jawazat* authority (Office of Passports and Naturalisation) here in Al-Hindawiya.

This shows that most of the immigrants consider this system to be a social problem that should be abolished and that a more understanding approach by the Saudi authorities would help to abolish it.

4.3.6.3 Do you think the *kafalah* system should be abolished?

Twenty one (73%) of the interviewees said yes it should be abolished, while eight (27%) interviewees did not respond to this question.

4.3.6.4 Do you think the Saudi government’s frequent amnesty initiatives to reduce the number of undocumented in Jeddah are effective?

Ten interviewees said it is effective. Nine said it is not effective in reducing the undocumented migrants. Ten migrants did not have an opinion on this issue.

4.3.6.5 Do you think the Saudi government's frequent amnesty initiatives to reduce the number of undocumented in Jeddah are biased towards specific nationalities?

The majority, 21 (72%) interviewees, could not answer this question. However, some of them, five (17%) interviewees think that the Saudi authorities favoured the Arab immigrants.

4.3.6.6 Are you going to take advantage of the most recent amnesty initiative by the Saudi government? Please explain.

As expected, a research conducted using semi-structured interviews has the advantage of raising more issues. In this case, for example, it was unavoidable to ask what the immigrants thought about the idea of an amnesty proposed by the Saudi government. The overwhelming majority, 23 (79%) said they would not use the amnesty to leave the country, and only three (10%) said they were going to use it.

4.3.7 Theme seven: legal issues facing undocumented labourers in Saudi Arabia

In particular these issues refer to:

Theme seven has seven probing questions that deal with legal issues facing the undocumented migrants. In particular they refer to:

- Deportation;
- Freedom of movement in the country;
- Dealing with the local authorities, and
- Dealing with the consulates of their countries of origin.

It was important to ask about the concerns about their legal status because each community, despite the similarities with other communities, has a different

way of relating to the Saudi authorities or to their own representatives in the country. For most of the Yemeni, in contrast with the undocumented migrants of other communities, the fear of deportation is compensated by the fact that most of them know they can easily re-enter the country

4.3.7.1 Is it difficult to travel around the various districts in Jeddah to work or visit relatives and friends?

Twenty-four (83%) of the interviewees said that they found it difficult to move around the city. Five (17%) of them, all women, said that they do not encounter any difficulty because the Saudi authorities do not stop women wearing the veil.

According to all subjects interviewed, mobility of movement in connection with avoiding arrest by the police is easy and safe. The majority of the interviewees can travel through the various districts of Jeddah by foot or by car with no problems. Interviewee number six noted that if he sensed or saw the *sharta* (police), he would not run away. The rest of the interviewees admitted that once they felt or sighted the *sharta* (police) in the area, they would flee. All of them directly or indirectly stressed the fact that they look like most of the Saudis who live in Jeddah and that they speak Arabic.

A typical response on the question related to travelling in the city is as follows:

It is not that difficult to travel inside the city of Jeddah. You have to be careful and walk or use public transportation. It is very dangerous to travel outside Jeddah to other cities because of police road blocks looking for the undocumented.

The best way to protect themselves from being arrested or deported, according to the interviewees, is to avoid any possible conflicts not only with Saudis, but with all others, including their fellow countrymen. Interviewee number 24 added:

Always walk and use public transportation to get to any distant locations. If I see the *Jawazat* or the *Baladiyyah* authorities, I leave whatever I have and run. I always can make up for the loss of my push trolley if I'm not deported.

4.3.7.2 How do you protect yourself from the authorities?

The typical and consistent answer for this probing question by the Yemeni undocumented migrants, as well as members of other communities in this study, involved the practice of avoiding, as much as possible, the various Saudi authorities in Jeddah by staying away from trouble. In the cases of married men who have wives in Jeddah, they always try to travel as a family. In these cases, Saudi authorities usually avoid stopping a car in which there is a woman or children. Interviewee number 26 noted:

I always walk and use public transportation such as buses to reach places that are far away. If I see the Jawazat or the Baladiyyah authorities, I leave all my goods and run.

4.3.7.3 If you are in trouble with any of the local authorities, can you ask your consulate for help?

All the interviewees noted that if an individual from their community has any type of trouble with the local Saudi authority, their consulate in Jeddah would not get involved with it. It seems that is the typical response of most of the other communities, with the exception of the Filipino migrants. Their consulate is the most active in terms of protecting and assisting its people as we shall discuss later when we deal with the data analysis of the migrants from the Philippines.

All the interviewees agreed that those they fear most are the Baladiyyah and Jazawat. Those who are married and have a car are concerned with police road blocks. They were asked if, as an undocumented migrant in Jeddah, any person or agency (Saudi or non-Saudi) tried to assist them or their family to resolve their legal status in Saudi Arabia. The response to this particular question was that the majority responded, “no”, with many saying “I don’t know.” In this regard, some Saudi charitable organisations do exist and will help the poor and the needy regardless of their legal status. It was observed by the other communities under study that during the holy month of Ramadan and hajj, they received alms from ordinary Saudis or large charitable organisations.

4.3.7.4 Does your consulate provide shelter for its expatriates regardless of their legal status in Saudi Arabia?

Twenty (69%) of the interviewees said that their consulate in Jeddah does not have such a shelter, while nine (31%) of the interviewees indicated that either they did not know of a shelter, or they simply did not answer this question.

4.3.7.5 Who gives you the most difficulties in terms of your legal status in Saudi Arabia?

The majority, 24 (83%) interviewees noted that the *Jawazat* (Office of Passport and Naturalisation) was their worst nightmare while five (17%) choose the *Baladiyyah* (Municipality) as the most threatening government agency.

4.3.7.6 What kind of problems do you face in Jeddah?

The threat of deportation is the major concern of the majority of the interviewees.

4.3.7.7 If you were pressured to leave Saudi Arabia for any reason, would you attempt to re-enter the country with permit or without?

In response to the above question, many interviewees' responses resembled the following in one way or another:

I was deported three times from Jeddah and came back twice in the same week of being deported and at the third time I stayed with family for a whole month. I was caught by the *Jawazat* (police) at the work site twice and at the place where I lived once. I was deported because I have no permit to work in Saudi Arabia.

The great majority, 25 (86%) said that if pressured to leave Jeddah they would definitely try to come back. Four of them (14%), mostly women said they would not come back.

One can safely assume that the undocumented migrants (those from Yemen and Horn of Africa as will be discussed later) in Jeddah have calculated all the

risks involved in being smuggled to Saudi Arabia, taking into account variables such as the possibility of being arrested, deported, etc. and have balanced this against the benefit that they can gain if they live and work in Jeddah.

4.3.8 Theme eight: plans for the future

This set of questions reflects the respondents' future hopes and plans.

This theme provides five probing questions on information about future plans. The answers provided reflect the deep uneasiness of the interviewees regarding their future as well as their search for a more stable life.

4.3.8.1 Are you satisfied with your living and working in Jeddah?

Regardless of the difficult lives of these undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah, the great majority, almost 26 (90%) are content with their lives in the city and only 3 (10%) are not happy.

4.3.8.2 Does living in Jeddah with no documents bother you? Please give details.

Only 10 interviewees (34%) admitted that it bothers them to be in the city as undocumented. 17 (59%) interviewees noted that having no documents did not bother them. Two (7%) did not answer. The majority agreed that the city provided them with the opportunity to make a living as well as sending money to loved ones back home, but that happiness is not a permanent condition. The majority admitted that the harsh conditions of work, the long hours they spend every day at work, and the continuous threat of deportation does not favour a normal life. Many of the Muslim interviewees noted that living close to the two holy cities of Makah and Madinah, and the possibility of performing *hajj* and *umrah* gives them a very pleasant feeling of religious comfort. This assists many of them in easing their difficulties.

4.3.8.3 Are you going to use the amnesty issued by the Saudi government?

When asked about whether they will take advantage of the most recent amnesty initiative by the Saudi government which allows any undocumented migrant safe exit from Saudi Arabia to his or her home country with no penalty, Most of the interviewees, 25 (86%), said they will not take advantage of the amnesty. They need to stay to make more money, or they are afraid of being arrested and fined, or simply, that they have been born in the city and have no country to go to.

More specifically, in the Yemeni case, the majority will not take advantage of the government amnesty initiative because they want to stay and make more money. The majority of the males noted that they do not need it to go back to Yemen, as they can smuggle easily between the two countries.

4.3.8.4 Over the next few years, if still living in Jeddah, what do you expect your standard of living to be (i.e., it will improve, stay the same, or decline)?

Eighteen (62%) of the interviewees believe that their standard of living will improve. Eleven (38%) believe it will stay the same.

5.3.8.5 What are your long-range goals and objectives in terms of work and or living in Jeddah? How do you plan to achieve your expected goals?

Ninety percent said that their objective, in contrast with the Yemenis, is to stay in Jeddah to save as much money they can in case they are deported. In particular, the youngest ones hope that they can regularise their status.

4.4 Summary and conclusion

The average age of 28 of the Yemeni undocumented migrant reflects that the majority are young and able to smuggle themselves into Saudi Arabia regardless of the harsh conditions of journey. Around half of the interviewees (52%) were single, while the married men had an average of four children who lived primarily in Yemen. Despite the fact that the way they became undocumented resembles other communities' experiences, it is important to

note that most of them are aware of the fact that they can come and go from the country numerous times. This is an important point that distinguishes them from the other undocumented. In addition, the fact that they can blend with the Saudi community better than the others provides them with more opportunities and flexibility in terms of jobs.

A study of the Ministry of Interior in Saudi Arabia shows that for a 30 year period 3,419,207 Yemenis were arrested while entering Saudi Arabia. This is the highest number compared to any other undocumented migrants who were smuggled into the country, for example, the African community. As mentioned earlier, the land border with Yemen contributes to the massive presence of undocumented Yemeni in the country.

It should be noted, that while none of the female interviewees from the Yemeni undocumented migrants have ever experienced being smuggling into Saudi Arabia, or being deported from Jeddah, many interviewees noted that there are women and even children who were able to be smuggled into Jeddah in the past and many of them were subject to deportation by the Saudi authorities as well.

One may deduce from many of those interviewed above that Jeddah is a sort of new heaven to them, a promised land of prosperity. It is a city where their dreams might come true, a place with an opportunity to build a new life. Most Yemeni migrants interviewed for this study were Muslim. It was observed that the great majority attend daily prayers in the local mosques and it seems that they are devoted Muslims regardless of the difficult life they lead. Similar to the African migrants, most of the Yemeni migrants are “content”¹¹⁶ with living in Jeddah without documents, for they have no other option. In the interviews many of them demonstrate a great awareness of their circumstances and plan accordingly, regardless of their lack of education. It seems that the majority of the Yemeni undocumented migrants, regardless of their background, are stuck in Jeddah waiting for something to happen to change their situation and improve their lives. None of them wish to go back to Yemen except to visit their

¹¹⁶ “Content” is actually the translation from Arabic of a word that indicates the lower level of satisfaction. It means that they are aware that this is the best deal they can get.

wives and families, if they were able to sneak back and forth from Jeddah through Yemen. Those who were born in Jeddah or who were smuggled into Jeddah when they were children are stuck in Jeddah as a product of their birth or the economic and political circumstances of their parents. In this regard, those who were born in Jeddah with no proper documents, or who came as little children with their parents for *hajj* or *umrah* and overstayed their visa, suffer the most.

Similar to the African migrants, there are many undocumented Yemenis who live in Jeddah and who are the grandchildren of migrants who came even before the Saudi state. However, the researcher observed that many of the migrants' lives are unstable and that they live in a state of continuous anxiety and terror from the local authorities and from the few Saudis that have no heart and treat them appallingly. Regardless of the above psychological and social pressures and threat, the migrant has to work hard in order to offer his children and wife the very basic necessities such as food, clothes and a place to live in. Migration from the various countries under study seems to be out of control despite the risks it involves.

Those young men and women who risk their lives to reach Jeddah, have vowed to make life meaningful for themselves and their families and will do everything to get into Saudi Arabia and elsewhere to work and make their dreams come true. There is a strong belief among the numerous migrants that those who die at sea and in the desert have been destined to have their lives end that way. Predestination with the old concept of *hijra* (migration in Islam) is therefore one of the cardinal tenets of their belief as they attempt to get to Saudi Arabia. Very often, the reason behind the deportations of the undocumented labour force is to create an opportunity for more jobs for Saudis. However, the majority of the undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah are unskilled labourers, domestic workers, construction workers jobs that are generally rejected by Saudi nationals.

It is clear that for most of the undocumented migrants life in Jeddah is really very difficult. They are under the constant threat of deportation while they

struggle to make a decent living. At the same time the possibility of returning to their home country is barred for most of them due to the economic and political situation back home.

All of the married interviewees, in one way or another, support their wives and children. The unmarried interviewees mostly take care of their ageing parents or siblings. All of this is done through sending monthly remittances, as noted above, to cover each respective family's basic needs in Yemen. The interviewees think it is worth borrowing money to be smuggled into Saudi Arabia. In this case, one can see the strong indicators of a process of cost benefit analysis going through the mind of many undocumented migrants in Jeddah regardless of their nationality or ethnic background.

All this suggests that in the Yemeni case many variables contribute to their presence in Jeddah. As for the other cases, it is very difficult, though, to apply one single theory to explain the phenomenon, including the fact that as we have seen, it is very easy for them to find a job in Saudi Arabia and in particular in Jeddah. The main reason is the economic one, but surely the presence of family and friends in the city contributes greatly to their migration as well as the easiness offered by the land border to smuggle to and from the two countries. Apparently, in contrast with other communities, the religious one is not a major factor contributing to their presence in the city.

Chapter Five

Data Analysis of Interviews with the Filipino and Indonesian Undocumented Migrants in Jeddah

5.1 Introduction

The analysis of the undocumented migrants from the Philippines and Indonesia is particularly interesting in comparison to the other communities in the study because it presents different, important variables which make this investigation even more complete. The chronic unemployment and the political instability, along with the peculiar geographical position of these areas in relation to Saudi Arabia, constitute the major reasons for the migration to Jeddah. As it will be explained later, the distance from Saudi Arabia and the different socio-cultural realities have a great impact on these migrants, beginning with the way they enter the country to the way they organise their lives in their own communities. The researcher thought that, despite the difference in their culture and religion, these migrants had to be included in the study because their experience shares commonalities with the other communities under study.

One of the main commonalities is that this community comes from an archipelago and live in islands which sometimes have very little to offer them in terms of job opportunities. However, it is fair to say, that in comparison to the African migrants their situation in their home countries is not as dramatic and that, in particular with regard to the Filipino ones, they are fairly well educated and for this reason they can get better jobs in Saudi Arabia. It is very important to note that there are two main reasons for these communities to be analysed together. The first one is that they both belong to the same geographical area, and the second one is that both of them, due to the distance from Saudi Arabia, enter the country legally predominantly as housemaids, drivers, or nurses through employment agencies and then become undocumented through breaking their work contracts.

5.2 Background

5.2.1 Philippines and Indonesia

Philippines

The case of the Philippines is a little bit different. On one hand the migrants share the same variables as the Indonesians. Being so far away from Saudi Arabia does not allow them to be easily smuggled into the country and, as with the Indonesians; they usually enter the country with a work contract. The main reasons for Filipinos to migrate are economic. The Philippines has a population of 8.7 million and a GNI of \$2,200 per capita. On the contrary to what happened to the Indonesians, who are in great majority Muslims, the Filipinos are mostly Catholic. This prevents them from applying for a religious visa and, as we will see more in detail, it causes problems in their daily life in a strict Muslim country like Saudi Arabia.

The only way the Filipinos can enter the country legally is through employment agencies and usually they become undocumented for the same reasons as the Indonesians. However, there is a big difference between the two communities especially in terms of organisations. As it will be explained more in detail later in the chapter, the Filipinos bring into the country a rich set of skills that they share with the rest of the community. For example, they teach each other crafts that can be used in their daily life to produce goods for selling.

Indonesia

With a population of 248.8 million, Indonesia is one of the most populated countries in the world with a population destined to increase to over 300 million by 2035.¹¹⁷ Its GNI is estimated around \$5,200 per capita in 2013. The population growth, along with the consequent lack of job opportunities,

¹¹⁷ The statistics released by the http://www.bps.go.id/eng/tab_sub/view.php?kat=1&tabel=1&daftar=1&id_subyek=34¬ab=6 Basad Pusak Statistik [Accessed: 15 December, 2014].

constitutes the main reason for the massive migration to Saudi Arabia. Being a mainly Muslim country, it is relatively natural for Indonesians to enter Saudi Arabia on religious and work visas. In this regard, however, the main reason for their arrival and for their staying is economic. These agencies act as mediator between the employer and the migrant who has a three months visa to start. In theory, if the employer is happy with his or her performance, a visa extension can be renewed or rejected.

It is remarkable, especially keeping in mind the dramatic migration experiences of the other communities that migrants coming in with a regular work permit end up as undocumented. Despite the accusations of rape and mistreatment put forward by some of the housemaids as a reason for breaking a work contract before the three months granted by the authorities, the number of undocumented Indonesian migrants does not support this evidence. The real reason is that breaking the work contract allows them to enter into an underground economy which enables them to earn more money than in a household. In addition, they can move more freely in the country and change jobs more frequently.

6.2 Background

Indonesian and Filipino undocumented migrants' countries of origin do not suffer from the same problems and difficulties that the African countries and Yemen face in this study except unsustainable population growth, and high unemployment. Quite to the contrary, both countries enjoy stable governments, if compared to Yemen and the African countries in this study.¹¹⁸

5.2.1 Background information

The following map of Indonesia and the Philippines provides a visual snapshot of their distant geographic locations from Saudi Arabia.

¹¹⁸ There is, however, a radical Islamic movement in a small section of the Philippines but this does not constitute a major issue at least at present time.



Figure 13: Map of the Filipinos and Indonesian migration to Jeddah

In order to enter Saudi Arabia, Indonesians and Filipinos have three routes: Hajj and *umrah* for the Indonesians and very few Filipino Muslims (Muslim in the Philippines consists of 5% of the majority Christian), work contracts, and in rare cases, some are born in the city with no documents.

It is important to note that despite the similarities with the other communities regarding the living and working conditions in Jeddah and the reason(s) for migrating to the city of Jeddah, the Indonesian and Filipino undocumented migrants' countries of origin are geographically located very far from Saudi Arabia. Similar to any other undocumented migrant communities under study in this research, most of the undocumented migrants in this chapter have relatives or friends already living and working in the Kingdom. The great majority of these two communities have no difficulty in speaking Arabic. However, the Filipinos part company with other communities studied, specifically in religion, as all are Christian except a few who are Muslim.

5.2.2 Major reasons for migration

Indonesia and the Philippines share many characteristics of other countries under study in this research. For example, issues related to population growth,

unemployment, poverty, illiteracy, Islamic radicalization especially in the Philippines. The above economic conditions constitute the main reasons for great number of economic migration to Jeddah.

5.2.3 *Hais* or districts in Jeddah that are home to the Filipino and Indonesian undocumented migrants

Most Indonesians and Filipino migrants in Jeddah live in one of the following districts in the north: Al-Bawadi and al-Rawdah. In other words, the great majority of the above communities live mainly in the northern parts of the city. This is perhaps due to the nature of their jobs whether they are housemaids or private drivers, as this area is where Saudi and affluent non-Saudis can afford to employ this type of worker. It is now considered to be prestigious to have a Filipino or Indonesian housekeeper or nanny.

5.2.4 Particular challenges and difficulties approaching the Indonesian and Filipino community

This section offers an overview of the challenges and obstacles encountered during the fieldwork in meeting and interviewing the members of the Filipino and Indonesian community. Thanks to the help of two gatekeepers, one for each community, the researcher was able to interview individuals from both the communities. Compared to other nationalities interviewed, both communities were easier to approach because they live in areas in the north of the city which are less subject to police raids. There were no language barriers because most of them spoke very good Arabic. This facilitated the semi-focus interviews. However, the Filipinos were more apt to meet the researcher in comparison to the Indonesians. This is probably due the fact that the Filipinos are on average more educated and more open to the outside world because many of them have worked in other countries before arriving in Jeddah.

5.2.5 The semi-focus group: the case of the Filipino in Al-Salama district

The researcher was able to conduct semi-focus group interviews with only the Filipino migrants. In this regard, attempts to meet with the Indonesians in a small semi-focus group were not successful. At the outset of the meeting I shared with them the objective of my research and assured them confidentiality. The meeting was conducted in English since all of them spoke it fluently. The semi-focus group included three females and four males from the undocumented Filipino migrants in the city of Jeddah. The meeting took place in an apartment rented by one of the male interviewees who was a documented migrant and was 38 years old. The meeting took place on Sunday afternoon and was arranged by a Filipino gatekeeper.

The seven undocumented migrants arrived at the apartment almost at the same time. Their ages ranged from 19 to 40. All were Christian Catholics except a 19 year old female who was the only Muslim in this group. All of them arrived in Jeddah with a work contract, but left their kafeel (sponsor) for various reasons. They spoke about the various reasons that brought them to Jeddah indicating that the major reason was an economic one. In this regard, they noted that the wages they receive in Jeddah is much higher than that they could obtain in the Philippines. Jeddah offered them the opportunity to make enough money to go back to their country, set up a business, and establish a family. Two of the three females came to Jeddah with a contract to work as housemaids and the third came to work in a hospital as a janitor. Three of the male migrants used to work as private drivers for Saudi families and complained of the long working hours and the harsh treatment by different members of their employers' families. All used to work in the northern part of the city and still are working in the same, or close, districts as their previous work.

These young Filipinos live together in one room and sharing their food and other expenses. They worked an average of 14 hours every day from 10 am to midnight. They discussed how they arrived in Jeddah and the great role that some of their friends played in assisting them. Interviewee number 1, a 47 years old male Filipino sums his community's experience in Jeddah as follows:

The poor economic condition in our country with its high unemployment pushes millions of males and females to seek employment overseas. Once they arrive at the destination country they look forward to obtaining a contract with their *kafeels*. Very often the *kafeel* pay no salary, demands long hours and I heard of a few cases of sexual harassment...many of us had to break the contract and seek the help of relatives or friends who live in the city. Regarding finding a better job.....many of us learn new skills. For example, when I first came to Jeddah, at 24, I was supposed to work as a driver, but after I left my employer I went to the industrial area (al-senaya) where I learnt to paint cars with the help of some Filipino friends who are skilled in this profession. Some house maid females learn new skills as hair-dresser and find a job in women beauty saloons in the city.

5.3 Analysis of data: Filipino and Indonesian undocumented migrants

5.3.1 Theme one: demographic data

5.3.1.1 Nationality

Table 14: Filipino and Indonesian communities

Nationality	Frequency	Percent
Filipino	26	46
Indonesian	30	54
Total	56	100

The total number of interviewees from the Filipino and Indonesian communities in Jeddah was 56 men and women. The interviewees came from different regions and cities in the Philippines and Indonesian regions. None of the interviewees were born in Jeddah.

5.3.1.2 Gender

Table 15: Chart of the gender distribution of Filipinos and Indonesians

Nationality	Frequency	Female	Male	Percent
Filipino	26	16	10	46
Indonesian	30	18	12	54
Total	56	34 (61%)	22 (39%)	100

The interviewees included 34 females and 22 males representing 61% and 39%, respectively, of the total population of these two communities of migrants. There were 16 females and 10 males from the Filipino community and 18 females and 12 males from the Indonesian communities.

5.3.1.3 Age

The age of the interviewees from the Filipino community ranged between 19 and 57 years of age. The mean age for the whole Filipino community is around 32, and the median age was 33. The mode, the most repeated age, was 31 years. The age of the interviewees from the Indonesian community ranged between 22 (the youngest) and 59 years old (the oldest). The mean age for the Indonesians is around 29 and the mode, the most repeated age, was 30 years.

5.3.1.4 Marital Status

As far as marital status is concerned for the Filipino community, there were six married females and four married males. As far as single persons in the Filipino interviewees, there were ten single females and six single males. It should be noted that few of these marriages were registered in the migrants' respective country consulates in Jeddah. Three of the Indonesian males were married and nine were single. Ten of the Indonesian females were married and eight were single. The great majority of marriages as reported in the interviews from the Indonesian community were done in a private setting that included a *mazoon* (a Muslim sheikh) from within the Indonesian community, and with a simple form

from the Indonesian embassy. Most of the marriages that occurred in Jeddah among the Indonesian community occurred within the same community. But few of them, four marriages, involved marriage with Pakistanis or Bangladeshis. In many cases, an Indonesian woman marries more than one man. One of the cases involved a 27 year old Indonesian woman who was married to two men, one from her native country and another Pakistani undocumented in Jeddah.

Many married men or women with children (in their native country) from the Indonesian community confessed to having another wife or husband or a girlfriend or boyfriend once in Jeddah. The great majority of married Filipino males and females admitted to having a boyfriend or a girlfriend while working and living in Jeddah. Almost all the single male or female Filipinos noted they have a partner while living in Jeddah and many of them noted that they were looking forward to getting married once back in the Philippines.

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5.3.1.5 Family size

Thirty-two interviewees had no children. The family size of those interviewed from the above two communities varied from no children to four children. The mean average is 2.2, or two children, for both communities. Two children constituted the mode.

5.3.1.6 Religious affiliation and sects

The great majority of 23 interviewees (88.4%) from the Philippines were Christian Catholic. Only two males and one female were Muslim (11.5%). In comparison, all the Indonesians interviewed were Muslims (100%). It should be noted that Saudi Arabia does not allow any non-Muslim to practice his or her religion in a group or in public in the country. This was not an important issue for the Muslims migrants in the city, but for Christians from the Philippines or elsewhere, this raised a great concern.

5.3.1.7 Level of Education

The level of education ranged between no formal education and a college degree. More specifically, the range of education varied from 0 grade (only one interviewee) and grade 16 which is a college degree as defined in this research earlier. The mean average of all the Filipino interviewees was grade 11. Three have two years of college study or vocational training and two have the equivalent of a college degree. The Filipino migrants compared to all migrants' communities in this study enjoy more skills and more education than the rest of the communities.

The education levels of Indonesian respondents ranged from Grade 0 (no education) to Grade 12. In this regard, their score was much less than the Filipinos' average education level of Grade 11. In this case, the mean average for education levels in the Indonesian community of respondents was Grade 6. Similar to the majority of the interviewees in this study, a great number of the male and female interviewees from the above two communities were unemployed in their home countries and needed to help their parents or spouse. The hard economic conditions in their country of origin pushed them to emigrate.

5.3.2 Theme two: the migration process

5.3.2.1 How did you arrive in Jeddah?

In this regard, 24 of the Filipino migrants arrived in Jeddah via a work contract which they later broke for a variety of reasons as we will discuss in a later section. Only two Filipinos were Muslim and entered Saudi Arabia with an *umrah* visa and overstayed their visa duration. In the Indonesian case, 25 (83%) of the interviewees arrived in Jeddah through a work contract while only five (17%) of them came through a *hajj* visa and overstayed their visa period. The Filipino and Indonesian undocumented migrants arrived in Jeddah in one of the following ways:

- Undocumented entry;
- Overstaying a religious visa;
- Breaking a work contract, and
- ‘Migrants’ born in Jeddah.

Table 16: Chart for the ways of entry for Filipinos and Indonesians

Nationality/ community	Smuggling	Overstaying	Breaking contract	Immigrant born in the city with no documents	Total
Filipino	0,0%	2 (7%)	24 (97%)	0,0%	26 (100%)
Indonesian	0,0%	5 (17%)	25 (83%)	0,0%	30 (100%)

5.3.2.1.1 Undocumented entry

In the Filipino and Indonesian case none of them entered the country illegally as illustrated in the chart below. All of them entered the country with a work contract or overstayed a religious visa. In this regard, compared to other communities, the Indonesian and Filipino homeland are geographically very far from Saudi Arabia, as showed in the above map.

Table 17: Chart of the migration figures by country of illegal migrants to Jeddah in the following periods: 1978-91, 1995-98 and 2003-08.

Nationality	Sum or Total	Per cent of migrants per nationality	Time Scale
Yemeni	3,419,207	98.69%	1978-91, 1995-98 and 2003-08
Eritrean	16,687	0.48%	
Somali	9,257	0.27%	
Sudanese	9,014	0.26%	
Ethiopian	8,723	0.25%	
Indian	620	0.02%	
Pakistan	601	0.02%	

Bangladeshi	316	0.01%	
Chadian	67	0.002%	
Filipino	0.0	0,0%	
Indonesian	0.0	0,0%	
Egyptian	0.0	0,0%	
Total	3,464,492	100.00%	

5.3.2.1.2 Overstaying a religious visa

From table number 17 above, we can deduce that only five (17%) of the Indonesian interviewees came for hajj or umrah and overstayed their visa duration, and only 2 (7%) of the Filipinos came for religious reasons. In this regard, interviewee number three, a 35 years old female from Indonesia noted:

Fifteen years ago I could not obtain a work contract to come to Saudi Arabia to work as a nurse in Jeddah where my husband was already working as a driver. This is why I applied for an *umrah* visa and once in Saudi Arabia, I found a job as a house maid. The salary was much better than in Indonesia and within one year I was able to save money and cover all the expenses that I paid for it.

5.3.2.1.3 Breaking a work contract

None of the Indonesians broke their original work contract.

An Indonesian 33 years old female, interviewee number 17, broke her work contract with her *kafeel* (a non-Saudi family) only after three months. She notes:

This family forced me to work long hours, gave me a low salary compared to other Indonesians who worked in other Saudi homes as house maids and did not allow me a day off each week as written in the contract.

5.3.2.1.4 Undocumented 'migrants' born in the city

Although none of the interviewees from the two communities was born in the city at the time of the interviews, a young 27 years old Filipino female, interviewee number seven, was pregnant and very concerned:

I don't know what to do. I am a good religious Catholic and want to keep my baby; however, I'm aware that I will not be allowed it to give birth in any private or public hospital without proper documents. Because of this I will seek the help of Filipino nurses who have experience as midwives to deliver my baby. I can get my child proper documents from the Filipino consulate in Jeddah. I understand that these documents does not make my child legally in the eyes of the Saudi authority, but I can use them in case of deportation or when I decide to go back to the Philippine using one of their future Saudi amnesty initiatives.

5.3.2.2 Why did you choose Jeddah over other cities in the Gulf countries?

For both communities, the overwhelming reason was economic, and that it was easier to get a job in Saudi Arabia, in general, compared to other Gulf States.

5.3.2.3 How much, if any, did it cost you to come to Jeddah (i.e., if smuggled, bought a work contract visa or arranged for *hajj* or *umrah* visa)?

The Filipino and Indonesian communities' native countries being very far from Saudi makes it almost impossible for them to be smuggled into Saudi territory via land or sea. The cost for them was much less than any other community interviewed due to the fact that there is a great demand on their skills in the Saudi private sector that is willing to pay for their services. Very few of them admitted to paying the recruitment agency any money to select them instead of others.

5.3.2.4 How old were you when you arrived in Jeddah?

The ages of the undocumented migrants from the Philippines ranged between 22 and 30. The mean average age for arrival in Jeddah for all the Filipinos was 25 years old. The mode was 27. The age of Indonesians upon arrival ranged

between 18 and 45 years old. The mean average was 24 years old and the mode was 23 years old.

5.3.2.5 How many years have you spent in Jeddah as an undocumented migrant?

The number of years spent in Jeddah with no proper documents for both communities ranged from only three months to 15 years. The mean average amount of time for the Filipinos was four years, and for the Indonesians was six years.

5.3.2.6 How many times have you been deported from Jeddah?

Only two males from the Filipino community experienced one deportation each from Jeddah. The Indonesians experienced more deportation. In this regard, six females and four males from the Indonesian community (33%) experienced deportation that varied between one and two deportations. The mean average number was close to two deportations each.

5.3.2.7 If deported and later re-entered the country, how and why did you come back?

In response to the above question, two from the Philippines community noted they came back because of social ties, for example, one has a wife that was still living in Jeddah, and the other noted that he came back because he used to live in Jeddah. Eight (80%) of the 10 interviewees from the Indonesian community came back with a new work contract after changing their names, and the other two (20%) came back to Jeddah via a *hajj* visa. The majority (90%) noted they came back for economic reasons while only one (10%) indicated she came back to re-join her husband.

5.3.2.8 Was it worth it?

All the interviewees said that it was worth it. One of the Indonesian, interviewee number eight, a 50 years married female who used to work as a nurse ten years

ago, before becoming and hair dresser for Saudi women, explained the worthiness of working undocumented in the city:

Regardless of the threat of deportation and possible jail, many of us [Indonesians] find better economic opportunity to stay and work in this city. There are many of us in Indonesia [over 160 million] and jobs are rare [unemployment rate is high] and salaries low.

5.3.3 Theme three: family and social ties

5.3.3.1 What is your spouse's type of work?

As far as spouses' type of work is concerned for the Filipino community, there were six married females whose husbands' work ranged from selling cloths in shops for men to teaching hairdressing to other undocumented females. The other four worked as cleaners in private hospitals. All four of the wives of the male Filipinos worked as housemaids. The three married male Indonesians all have wives working as housemaids and of the 10 married female Indonesians five of the husbands worked as private drivers and the other five worked as a painter, tailors and cooks in Indonesian restaurants, or cleaners.

5.3.3.2 How many people do you live with in Jeddah?

Most of the Filipino males and females live in rented apartments in northern districts in Jeddah. Generally, the individuals live in, or share, a room with one to three other individuals. The mean average is two individuals. The mode is three people sharing one room, very often at the weekends. In general, eight females and males live in one apartment that has three bedrooms. Most of them are boyfriends and girlfriends, or husbands and wives. For the Indonesians, it was noticed that the majority of females prefer to live with other females in a rented room of one of the apartments that was rented to undocumented migrants by a Saudi or a non-Saudi national. The mean average is six females or males sharing one room. It was also noticed that many couples from the Indonesian community will arrange to share an apartment with other married Indonesian couples.

5.3.3.3 Contact with family in your home country: how often per month?

The mean average amount of contact with family members from the Filipino migrants' community is very high compared to other communities in this study. It ranges from 30 to 45 contacts per month with a mean average of 40 per month. In this regard, due to the higher education level of the Filipinos compared to other nationalities, their knowledge of English, and higher income, they use, in addition to mobile phones, a number of free communication media such as Skype, lines, Tango, etc. Members of the Indonesian community on the other hand have contact with family members in their home country in a range of between eight and 25 telephone calls per month, with a mean average of 20 social calls.

5.3.3.4 How many relatives do you have in Jeddah?

Twenty of the 26 Filipinos interviewed said they had no relatives in Jeddah and only six individuals admitted to having relatives in Jeddah. The mean average number for the six individuals from the Filipino community who have relatives in Jeddah is only one relative. The mode is also one relative. In the Indonesian case, 25 of the 30 interviewed said they have no relatives while the remaining five interviewees indicated they have relatives. The mean average is 1.6 or almost two relatives each. The mode was one relative.

5.3.3.5 How many friends do you have in Jeddah?

All the members interviewed from the Filipino and Indonesian communities noted that they have friends in Jeddah. The number ranges from four to eight friends. The mean average of friends for the Filipino migrants in Jeddah is around six. The mode is six friends. In the Indonesian case, the number of friends ranged between 2 and 12. The mean average for friends was nine, and the mode was seven.

5.3.3.6 In general, what types of visa(s) do your relatives and friends have?

Unlike the African, Yemeni and Indonesian communities, 21 of the 26 interviewees from the Filipino community noted that if they had relatives and friends in Jeddah, they all had proper documents. In this regard only five interviewees noted that their friends or relatives had no documents. In the case of the Indonesian interviewees, 25 of the 30 indicated that most of their relatives and friends in the city have no proper documents.

5.3.3.7 Was it easy for them to find a job?

All the female interviewees from both communities noted that it was very easy for the female migrants from the above two communities to find a job as a housemaid due to the great demand of Saudi families for their service in their homes. It was much harder for the males from both communities to find new jobs.

5.3.3.8 Do you participate in social gatherings or activities with other communities and with Saudis?

Most of the socialisation among the Filipino and Indonesian communities is within their own community. Many of them noted that they are open to socialising with other communities but admit that the bulk of their social gatherings or “hanging out” is within their close circle of Filipino or Indonesian friends and relatives. Twenty-two (84.6%) of the interviewees from the Filipino community said they only participate in social life with their own particular community. Four (15.4%) of the interviewees indicated that they participate socially with all other communities. Twenty (66%) of the interviewees from the Indonesian community said they only participate in social life with their own particular community. Ten (34%) of the interviewees indicated that they participate socially with all other communities.

5.3.3.9 Are you the only breadwinner?

Ten (38.4%) of the Filipino interviewees noted that they are the only breadwinners for their families, whereas sixteen (61.5%) indicated that they were not the only breadwinners for their family. Twenty-three (76.6%) of the Indonesian interviewees noted that they were the only breadwinners for their families. The remaining seven (23.4%) indicated that they were not the only breadwinner for their family.

5.3.3.10 Do you remit some of your income home?

Twenty three of the interviewees (88%) from the Filipino community noted that they regularly, usually on a monthly basis, remit part of their income to relatives in their native country. Three (12%) interviewees noted that they don't remit money. Twenty seven (90%) of the Indonesian interviewees noted that, usually remit part of their income to relatives back home on a monthly basis. Only three (10%) indicated that they do not remit for their family.

5.3.3.11 What percentage of your monthly income do you remit to your home country?

Table 18: Chart of the monthly income of Filipino and Indonesian migrants

Nationality	Females	Males
Filipino	50%	55%
Indonesian	75%	65%.

The range of remittance of income for the Filipino migrants varied from 0% to 55%. As far as remittance from Filipinas is concerned, the mean average percentage was 50% of their income, while the Filipino males' mean average percentage of remittance is 55%. The average percentage of remittances for both female and male interviewees is 50%. Most of their remittances are for paying a previous debt or to assist their families. The range of remittance for the Indonesian migrants varied from 0% to 80%. As far as remittances from Indonesian females are concerned, the mean average percentage is 75% of their income, while the Indonesian males' mean average percentage of remittances is 65%. The average percentage of remittances for both female and

male interviewees is around 67%. As with the Filipinos, most of their remittances are for paying a previous debt or to assist their families.

The great majority of the Filipino and Indonesian migrants, as with other undocumented migrants in this study, remit funds by giving it to someone of their own nationality who has connections where the money is sent. The method adopted for remitting money resembles the one used by the other communities and constitutes a way to keep strong ties with their home country.

5.3.4 Theme four: medical needs

Undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia face serious problems in gaining access to healthcare services. The Filipinos, and to a certain extent the Indonesian, communities seem to have much better access to medical care in the city of Jeddah compared to all other communities in this study. In this regard, the great majority of females and males from both communities, especially the Filipinos, work in private and public hospitals and in private clinics as medical staff such as nurses and other related medical jobs. This includes the technician who supervises the maintenance of medical equipment. Both communities use the influence of their documented friends in hospitals and private clinics to gain access to free and safe medical treatment.

5.3.4.1 In case of medical emergencies, what do you do?

Eighteen (69.2%) of the Filipinos interviewees noted that in case of a medical emergency, they have access to private hospitals and or medical clinics in Jeddah. In this regard, interviewee number 32, a 28 years old female Filipino hair-dresser said:

I have many female and male Filipino friends who work in private hospitals or clinics who help me receive medical treatment without asking me to provide a valid *iqamah*...sometimes free of charge.

Eight (30.8%) said they do not have access and they would seek the advice of a pharmacist. However, as far as medical needs for those interviewed from the

Indonesian community is concerned, seven (23.3) indicated they have friends in the private hospitals who can help them receive medical care. The remaining 23 Indonesians would seek help either from the small medical clinic in south Jeddah al Hindawiya district or see a pharmacist.

5.3.4.2 If there is no access to medical care (hospitals), what are your options?

The great majority in both communities, who cannot access medical care for some reason, noted that they would consult with the nearest pharmacist. In the case of pharmacies, pharmacists will provide all types of medical advice and can sell any type of medication, except those that are usually prescribed by psychiatrists. In case of emergencies, according to the interviewees, private hospitals are not accessible because they ask for identification cards.

5.3.4.3 Have you ever used someone else's ID to gain entry for public/private medical treatment?

Out of the 26 interviewees from the Filipino community, only eight (30.7%), five female and three male, admitted that they have used the ID of others (*iqamah* documents) to gain access to medical care in Saudi public/private hospitals. The other 18 (69.2%), indicated that they had never done this because it is dangerous. For the Indonesian community, 30 (100%) interviewees noted they never used the ID of others to gain access to medical care. As noted earlier, the Ministry of Interior has issued a warning to all types of hospitals not to allow any patient without a proper identification card to receive any kind of medical treatment.

5.3.5 Theme five: issues related to working conditions

Compared to all other communities, except the Yemeni and the Indonesian females, the Filipina undocumented migrants in Jeddah never find difficulty in finding a job in the city due to the ever increasing demands on their service on one hand, and their high skills as housemaids, nurses, etc. on the other hand.

5.3.5.1 If you worked in your native country, what type of job(s) did you have?

Twenty two (84.6%) of the Filipinos were unemployed. Only four (15.3%) worked in their country, two females worked in a hospital, one male worked as a medical technician, and the fourth was a hairdresser. All 30 (100%) of the Indonesians interviewees were unemployed. Their past employment histories were diverse and many of them worked in one of the other Gulf States.

5.3.5.2 Why, if you were employed, did you leave your job to come to Jeddah? Why Jeddah and not a different city in the Gulf?

The main reason for the great majority leaving their jobs, if employed, was to seek a better economic life in Jeddah. High unemployment rates both in Indonesia and the Philippines, and encouragement by friends or family members who were already in Jeddah, was a major stimulus to migrate. Also, many interviewees from both communities who worked in the past in other Gulf States noted that while salaries in other Gulf States were much higher than in Jeddah, the living cost in Jeddah is much lower which increases the amount of money they can save or remit to their families.

5.3.5.3 If you currently work, what type of job do you have? Is this the job you were trained to do?

Fourteen or 87.5% of the 16 Filipino interviewees worked as housemaids or nannies for Saudi or non-Saudi families. They all said to have been trained for this type of jobs. Two (12.5%) of the females were unemployed at the time of the interview but noted that they were receiving training in women's cosmetics and hair-styling from an undocumented Filipina hairdresser in the city. Eight (80%) of the 10 Filipino males worked in different jobs which varied from a tailor, private taxi driver, waiters or cook in oriental restaurants, medical technicians, electricians, painting cars (detailing), mechanics and as a nurse in a private clinic. Two (20%) of the male Filipinos were unemployed at the time of interview but noted they would find a job soon as car mechanics.

Fifteen or 83.3% of the 18 Indonesian female interviewees worked as a housemaid or a nanny for Saudi or non–Saudi national (foreign expatriates) family. They all reported that they have been trained for this type of job. Three (16.7%) of the females were unemployed at the time of the interview.

Ten (83.3%) of the 12 male Indonesians worked in different jobs that varied from private taxi driver, waiters or cooks in oriental restaurants, janitors, car painting (detailing), and mechanics. Two (16.7%) of the male Indonesians were unemployed at the time of interview but noted they would find a job soon as a car painter and an electrician.

5.3.5.4 How many times per year do you change jobs and why?

The number of times the individual interviewees from the Filipino and Indonesian communities changes his or her job varied from no change to six times. Sixteen (28.5%) of the interviewees from both communities changed their jobs three times, which is the mode. The mean average for job change is 3.3 or changing jobs three times per individual migrant. As noted in the previous chapter, the rate of change is related to the number of years spent in Jeddah. Migrants change jobs for many reasons, in the case of the Filipinas and Indonesian communities the majority, thirty (88.2%), of the interviewees, indicated that they did so for better pay.

Only four females (12%) reported sexual harassment or bad treatment. This is an important observation because most of the studies that have interviewed female migrants from these two communities upon their arrival back home in their native countries indicated that the major reason for breaking their work contracts with Saudi families was due to sexual abuse or harassment. Indeed the response of all the females from the above two communities, as well as other female communities, does not indicate that the major, or the only, reason for breaking their work was due to sexual harassment as many of these previous studies claim. In short, based on the interviewees in this study, it appears that for jobs are changed for economic reasons based on finding a

better wage and/or easier responsibilities. In this regard, interviewee number five, a 27 years old Filipino female noted:

It was easy to get jobs as a housemaid in Jeddah. There is a great demand for Filipinas to work with Saudi families because of our skills. In the holy month of Ramadan the demands for housemaids increases tremendously and we find it a great opportunity to find a new job with a higher salary.

The Filipino and Indonesian males change jobs less frequently than the females. It ranges from one to three changes. The majority, 17 or 77.2%, changed jobs only once which constitute the mode for the males from the two communities. The men average is 1.18 changes, or slightly more than one job change per year.

5.3.5.5 Is it easy to find a new job?

Only six (10.7%) of all the interviewees from the two communities noted it was difficult to find a new job. On the other side, 50 (89.2%) claimed that within a few days or weeks they usually find a job.

5.3.5.6 In which district(s), do you think it is easiest to find a job?

All 56 (100%) interviewees from the Filipino and Indonesian communities reported that it is easiest to find a job in north Jeddah, and none (0.0%) reported south Jeddah.

5.3.5.7 How many hours do you work a day? And what type of shifts do you do?

Articles in Arab News, among others, claim that female housemaids in Saudi Arabia work from 14 to 18 hours per day. This is not true according to the responses of the interviewees from both communities. In this regard, our interviews show that females from both communities who work as housemaids worked an average of 8 to 10 hours per day. In general the mean average of work hours for both communities is 9.5 or between 9 and 10 hours depending on the individual's type of work and desire for over-time payment. In short, the

mean average of number of work hours for the Filipino is nine and the Indonesians' is 10.

5.3.5.8 How much is your income per month? And how do you receive your income?

The income of the 56 interviewees from both communities varied from \$400 to \$2000 per month depending on the nature or type of job and number of hours worked. For example the monthly income of a Filipina housemaid is around \$500 compared to \$400 for an Indonesian female working in the same profession. Those who work in healthcare related areas make an average \$1000; a hairdresser for example would make \$1300. Males from both communities who work as a private taxi driver for other undocumented or documented migrants from their communities earn up to \$2000 per month. The mean average income for the Filipino community is more than the Indonesian community: \$700 for the Filipinos and \$450 for the Indonesians. The mode for the Filipinos is \$500 and for the Indonesians \$400. Both communities make more money than other communities covered in this study. The only exception, as noted in the African communities, is those females who work in the sex trade.

5.3.5.9 Amount of rent you pay per month?

The amount of rent per month for the Filipino and the Indonesian depends upon how many people are sharing the apartment and how many rooms it includes, in addition to its location. It ranges from \$35 per month if sharing the room with others, to \$266.6 if one lives alone. The mean average is \$40 and the mode is \$35 per month for both communities. In this regard, interviewee number thirteen, a forty four years old Indonesian female who works as a house maid, noted:

Most of undocumented Indonesian females who work in Jeddah get together and rent a room in one of the poorer district in south Jeddah and share rent, food and other living expenses while waiting to find a job.

5.3.5.10 Do you think your standard of living has improved, stayed the same, or declined since you came to Jeddah?

Fifty three (94.6%) of the interviewees noted that their standard of living had improved since they arrived in Jeddah. This question was not relevant to three (5.3%) of the interviewees, they were new in the city, having been in Jeddah for just a few months. The issue of income and salary among the undocumented migrants in the city seems to depend on a normal curve of supply and demand. For example, in the case of housemaid or cooks in the holy month of Ramadan, the supply of female maids from Indonesia and the Philippines goes down. This pushes the demand for their services up and as a result increases their average monthly salaries. Another example of wage fluctuations among Filipinos and Indonesian housemaids is that they are subject to the difficulties of going through negotiations of their respective countries and the Saudi Ministry of Labour regarding their contract details, i.e. salary and living conditions in other countries. During these extended periods of labour negotiations, the salary of available undocumented Filipina and Indonesian maids becomes higher due to their scarcity. If the home countries refuse to send their female expatriates to fulfil the demand of the Saudi market for these services, this creates an opportunity for the Filipina and Indonesian housemaids already living in Jeddah, for example, to fill in the gap of this shortage and receive much higher wages compared to their previous salaries as noted earlier.

The following question(s) aim at assessing the impact of the kafalah system in the Filipino and Indonesian communities.

5.3.6 Theme six: the *kafalah nizam* (sponsorship system)

Theme six deals with the issues of the Saudi *kafalah nizam* (sponsorship system) with the aim of assessing the impact, if any, of the kafalah system on both the Filipino and Indonesian communities under study in this chapter.

The majority of 51 (91%) interviewees from both the Philippines and the Indonesian communities noted that working independently from the kafeel

allows them to earn more income. Five (9%) interviewees from Indonesia did not respond to this question.

5.3.6.1 If you entered Saudi Arabia with a work permit and later broke your employment contract, why did you leave your employer? Which of the following applies to your situation best?

Most of the women claim that they left their employers because they were sexually harassed. However, the statistics show that the real reason is economic. In most cases being an undocumented migrant provides the possibility of being more flexible in the choice of a new job.

5.3.6.1.1 Did you break work contract to find a better paying job?

Seventy per cent of them break the contract for economic reasons.

5.3.6.1.2 Did you break a work contract to stay away from sexual harassment?

None of the interviewee indicated that this as the reason they broke their work contract.

5.3.6.1.3 Did you break a work contract in order to avoid working long hours?

Many of them working as undocumented can bargain for better working hours.

5.3.6.2 Do you think the *kafalah* system is fair?

An interviewee, number 5, a 22 years old single Filipino male puts it this way: "I think it is not fair. The *kafeel* (sponsor) always take advantage of you."

Another interviewee, number 7, a 23 years old single Filipino male notes: "some kafeels (sponsors) ask for a monthly payment if they allow you to work for yourself."

5.3.6.3 Do you think the *kafalah* system should be abolished?

The majority of them think it should be abolished.

5.3.6.4 Do you think the Saudi government's frequent amnesty initiatives to reduce the number of undocumented in Jeddah are effective?

Most of the interviewees think that they are not effective and that the initiatives are just an instrument to control immigration. They also noticed that due to the inefficiency of the migration police, it is easy for them to avoid being detained and deported.

5.3.6.5 Do you think the Saudi government's frequent amnesty initiatives to reduce the number of undocumented in Jeddah are biased towards specific nationalities?

Both the Filipino and Indonesian communities had difficulties with this particular question. The researcher reckons that they do not feel that the system is discriminating against them in favour of other communities.

5.3.6.6 Are you going to take advantage of the most recent amnesty initiative by the Saudi government?

The overwhelming majority, 23 (89%) interviewees from the Philippines said they will not use the amnesty to leave the country, and only three (11%) interviewees said they were going to use it. All three were over 50 years old and they did not plan to come back to the city because they were retiring. All the Indonesians (100%) interviewees said they would not use it.

The justifications the interviewees from both communities gave were very similar to those of the African and the Yemeni communities. In this regard, interviewee number nineteen, a 37 years old male from Indonesia, noted:

I am not going to use the amnesty program because I have a lot of debts to pay back in my native village. I need to stay at least five years to improve my chances to live a decent life with my family back home. If I use the amnesty initiative then I will not be able to come back for ten years. It is worth not to use the amnesty.

5.3.7 Theme seven: legal issues facing undocumented labourers in Saudi Arabia. In particular these issues refer to:

- Deportation;
- Freedom of movement in the country;
- Dealing with the local authorities, and
- Dealing with the consulates of their countries of origin.

5.3.7.1 Is it difficult to travel around the various districts in Jeddah to work or visit relatives and friends?

Twenty (76.9%) of the interviewees from the Philippines said that they had problems in moving around the city, while six (23%) indicated no difficulties. Twenty four (80%) of the Indonesian interviewees indicated they don't face problems. Only six (20%) interviewees said they had problems.

5.3.7.2 How do you protect yourself from the authorities?

Similar to other undocumented migrants in this study, the typical answer for this question by the undocumented migrants from the Filipino and Indonesian communities, involved the practice of avoiding the various Saudi authorities in Jeddah, as much as possible, and by staying away from trouble.

5.3.7.3 If you are in trouble with any of the local authorities can you ask your consulate for help?

All the 26 (100%) interviewees from the Filipino community said they could ask their consulate for help. In the case of the Indonesian community, only eight (26.6%) noted they could ask their consulate for help. Thirteen (43.3%) of the Indonesian interviewees said they could not ask their consulate for help

because they had broken their work contract. The rest of the Indonesians interviewed, nine (30.1%), said they did not know, or did not respond to this question.

5.3.7.4 Does your consulate provide shelter for its expatriates regardless of their legal status in Saudi Arabia?

All the Filipino interviewees, 26 (100%), said the Filipino consulate in Jeddah provided a shelter for its citizen regardless of their legal status in the country. For the Indonesian migrants, 18 (60%) said they did not know and 12 (40%) noted that the consulate provided shelter.

5.3.7.5 Who gives you the most difficulties in terms of your legal status in Saudi Arabia?

The majority of the Filipino and Indonesian interviewees, 45 (80.3%), noted that the *Jawazat* (the Office of Passport and Naturalisation) was their worst nightmare while 11 (19.7%) indicated that they found traffic officers to be the most threatening.

5.3.7.6 What kind of problems do you face in Jeddah?

In addition to persecution by government authorities, 32 (57.1%) interviewees from both communities indicated that they are mostly concerned with the threat of deportation. The rest, 24 (42.9%), indicated being arrested, jailed and paying fines for violating their work contracts constituted their problems.

5.3.7.7 If you were pressured to leave Saudi Arabia for any reason, will you attempt to re-enter the country with a permit or without?

The great majority of the Filipino migrants, 24 (92.3%), said they would not attempt to re-enter Saudi Arabia. In this case, they noted that fingerprinting would stop them from entering the country. Only one (7.7%) said she would try to re-enter the country using a *hajj* or *umrah* visa, if she could. Twenty (66.6%)

of the Indonesian community noted they would try coming back through an *umrah* or *hajj* visa, if they could. Ten (33.4%) said they would try to find jobs in other countries in the Gulf States.

5.3.8 Theme eight: plans for the future

This set of questions reflects the respondents' future hopes and plans.

This theme provides five probing questions about future plans.

5.3.8.1 Are you satisfied with your living and working in Jeddah?

Fifteen (57.6%) of the Filipino interviewees (eight males and seven females) said they were satisfied. Eleven (42.4%) of the interviewees (two males and nine females), said they were not satisfied.

Twenty five (83.3%) of the Indonesian interviewees (10 males and 15 females) said they were satisfied. Only five (16.7%) of the Indonesian interviewees (two males and three females) said they were not satisfied.

5.3.8.2 Does living in Jeddah with no documents bother you?

All (100%) of the females and males from the Filipino community noted that it bothered them not to have proper documents. This was different for the Indonesian community. Twenty six (86.6%) of the Indonesians (16 females and 10 males) said that it did not bother them to live in Jeddah with no proper documents. Only four (13.4%) of the Indonesian interviewees (two females and two males) noted that having no documents did bother them.

5.3.8.3 Are you going to use the amnesty issued by the Saudi government?

None of them expressed the will to make use of it.

5.3.8.4 Over the next few years, if still living in Jeddah, what do you expect your standard of living to be (i.e., it will improve, stay the same or decline)?

Twenty (76.9%) of the Filipino migrants (14 females and six males) believe that their standard of living will improve. The rest, six interviewees (two females and four males), believe it will stay the same.

5.3.8.5 What are your long-range goals and objectives in terms of work and or living in Jeddah? How do you plan to achieve your expected goals?

The major concern for the Filipino migrants is to save enough money to allow them to go back and get married, if they were single, or to buy a home or a small business, if married. Many of the females want to go back with enough money to go to a nursing school or get a university degree. Many of the males will attempt to stay as long as possible in Jeddah in order to save money so that they can open small businesses in various industries such as mechanics shops. Interviewee number 7, a 26 years old single female from the Philippines said in this regard:

I want to save money and go back to study nursing in a university. Working as a housemaid is hard. A university degree will improve my chances to find a good job in one of the private hospitals in United Arab Emirates.

Most of the Indonesian migrants plan to stay and work in the city as long as possible to save more money for a variety of reasons such as: getting married if single, sending their children to college, buying a small business. Interviewee number 9, a fifty years old male from Indonesia noted:

I plan to stay in Jeddah and save money to retire. I have no other choice. The unemployment is very high in Jakarta and it is very hard to find a job. There are so many of us...the completion are very high even to find a job in Saudi Arabia or other Gulf states. It is easier for women to find a job as a housemaid but for older men like me it is hard to keep working in the city as I grow older...

5.4 Summary and conclusion

The last two communities that were analysed present very differently from the previous ones considered. Their personal narratives sound less dramatic than

those of the African migrants, for example. This is due to the fact that both the Filipinos and the Indonesians enter the country with a work visa and, at least at the beginning of their life in the city, they can enjoy a legal status. However, their working contracts sometimes require them to work too long a working day and for many of them the option of clandestine work is attractive because of the higher wages they can aspire to as such. This explains the high rate of Filipinos and Indonesians breaking their work contracts.

In addition, these two groups arrive in Saudi Arabia better prepared to work in more skilful jobs. Compared with the members of the other communities they are more educated, and most of them, in particular the Indonesians, work in the health services mainly as nurses. This give them the possibility of living in more organised and integrated communities even if they share with the other groups of migrants the status of being undocumented. Their internal organisation, in particular among the Filipinos, is also evident by the way they teach each other the skills they need for their jobs, for example, hairdressing and others.

Obviously, this situation, one that is *almost* privileged, has an impact in the way the members of these two communities lead their lives in the city and their expectations for the future. For example, most of them are aware that in case of a forced deportation, due to the geographical distance from their home countries, they could not return so easily. This is why their hopes are to save a sufficient amount of money in order to open a business back home. This way of living as undocumented migrants makes them more flexible and less vulnerable to the many challenges it poses. As it will explained later in the chapter devoted to the cross-sectional analysis of the different communities considered, it is evident that the Filipinos and the Indonesians have a better relationship with the city and, together with the Yemenis, manage to construct a better live for themselves and their families back home. This can be deduced from the high remittance they send to their home countries in comparison with the Africans, for example.

One of the main challenges that distinguish the Filipino community from any other community considered is religion. Being mostly Catholic, the Filipinos, find

living in Jeddah very difficult because they are not allowed to profess their faith. Sometimes this leads to conversions to Islam in order to find a job, or simply to integrate more easily in the country, creating a sense of lack of identity at the same time. This does not happen in the Indonesian community in which most of them are already Muslim.

Chapter Six

Cross-Sectional Analysis of the Eight Themes and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The main question¹¹⁹ that this thesis addresses is: what are the major consequences (social, economic, and security) of the presence in Saudi Arabia of many foreign nationals working and residing in the country, with no legal permit to do so?¹²⁰ In order to better deal with the various aspects of this phenomena, and other important issues related to the above question, the researcher used the following questions to develop the eight themes for a semi-intensive questionnaire for this study as discussed below. These questions include:

- Who are the undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah, how did they arrive in the city and why did they choose Jeddah in particular?
- Is there a relationship between the *hajj* and *umrah* and the phenomena of undocumented migrants?
- What kind of life do the undocumented migrants have, how do they overcome issues related to shelter, work, the possibility of arrest and deportation, their medical needs and education?
- Do they have children in the city?
- What types of covert or overt economic activities are the undocumented migrants in Jeddah engaged in?
- Is the *kafalah* system for foreign expatriates or guest workers a fair and effective mechanism to deal with guest worker issues?

¹¹⁹ The main question and its sub-questions were the basis for constructing the semi-intensive questionnaire discussed in detail below.

¹²⁰ Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somali, Sudanese, Chadian, Nigerian, Burkinabe, Ghanaian, Cameroonian, Yemeni, Filipino, and Indonesian.

- What did the government do, tactically, to influence and 'persuade' the undocumented to leave?
- What are the future plans and objectives of the undocumented?
- What is the long-term effect of this phenomenon on Jeddah?

The above questions relate to the overall objective of the research at the macro and micro-levels of analysis. In this regard, at the macro-level, the research objectives are as follows:

- To analyse the history of the problem of undocumented migrants in Jeddah and its relation to the historical religious visits and the growth of oil revenues;
- To analyse the ethnic composition of the different communities and their geographical distribution within the city of Jeddah, and to predict the likely long-term consequences of current Saudi government migration policies in Saudi Arabia and the city of Jeddah in particular.

At the micro-level of analysis, the objectives of the study are as follows:

- To analyse the social and economic situation of the various communities of undocumented migrants in the city of Jeddah;
- To describe the demographic composition of the undocumented under study;
- To analyse their migration process;
- To determine their medical and educational needs;
- To analyse their working conditions, including their reaction to the *kafalah* system and amnesty, and
- To ascertain the individuals' life plans and goals in the long term, both with regard to the city and their attitudes towards government amnesty initiatives.

As anticipated earlier, Saudi Arabia, and in particular the city of Jeddah, offer researchers in the field of human migration a unique research environment.

There are two main reasons: the first one is that they offer the researcher the opportunity to enter the communities of undocumented migrants and interview in a space and time in which, as normal in other similar studies, they are not subjected to the authorities. The second is that very few cities in the world offer such a variety of migrant communities as Jeddah. Coming from three different continents, the undocumented migrants considered here, even if sharing the same concerns, find themselves dealing with vastly different types of challenges imposed by a new language, a new culture, in some cases, a new religion, and certainly for most of them a new, unwelcoming society.

This chapter aims at analysing the eight themes (which covers the main and sub-questions raised above) used during the investigation across all the communities under study. The purpose is to establish differences and similarities but most importantly, to understand how these communities live and operate in the cities and how they deal with the challenges of their undocumented lives in Jeddah.

6.1.1 Theme one: background information (personal data)

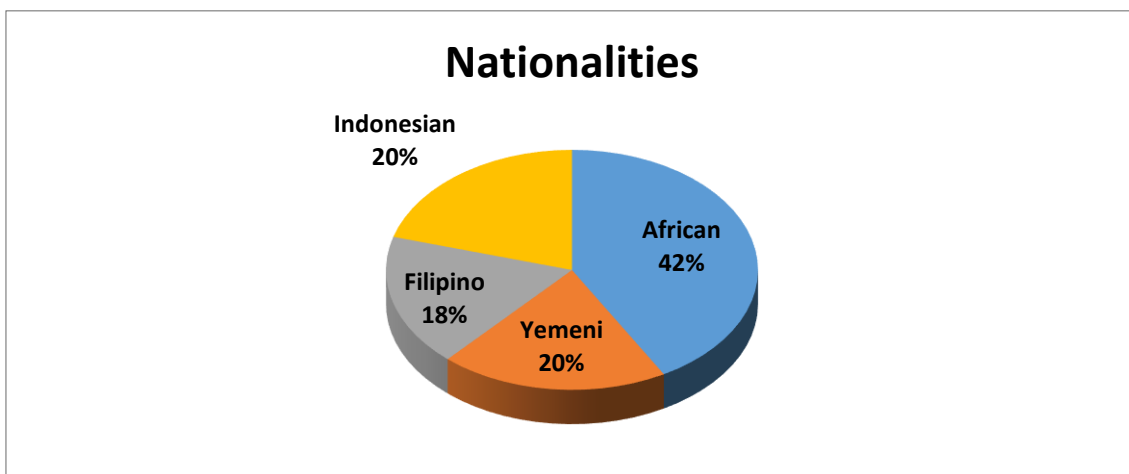
Nationalities and gender

Table 19: Demographic Background

Nationality	Total	%	Gender		Age - Average	Marital Status				Number of Children - Average	Religion		Education level - Average
			Female	Male		Married	Single	Divorced	Widows		Muslim	Christian	
African	61	42%	18	43	36	27	23	10	1	3	58	3	3.6
Yemeni	29	20%	14	15	28	13	15	0	1	4	29	0	5.6
Filipino	26	18%	16	10	32	10	16	0	0	2	2	24	11
Indonesian	30	21%	18	12	29	13	17	0	0	2.4	30	0	6
Total/Ave	146	100%	66	80	32.3	63	71	10	2	2.9	119	27	4.6

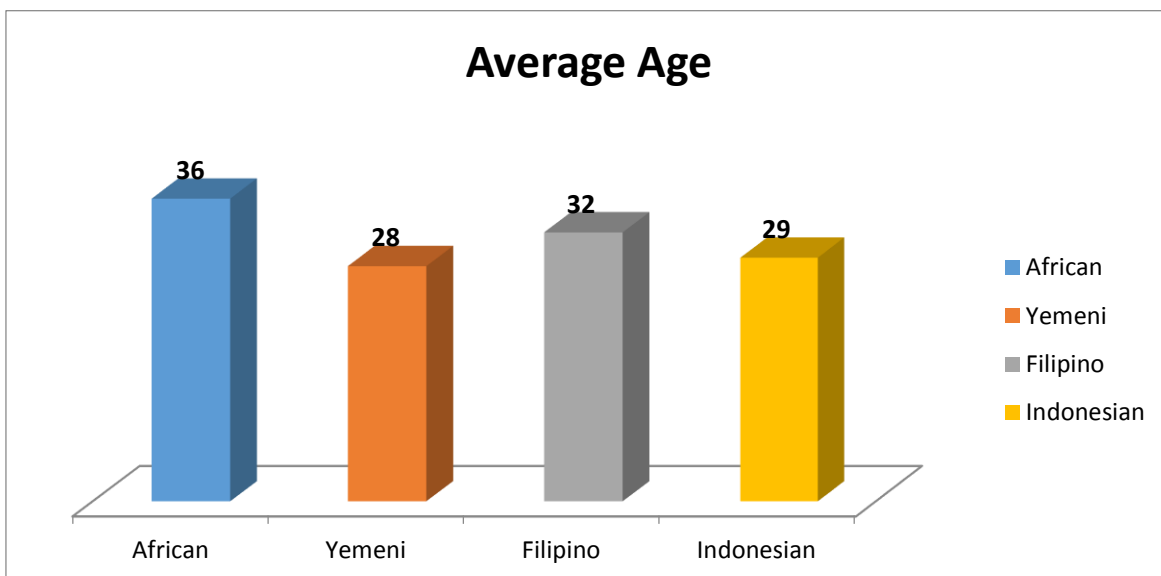
In the following graph, a cross-sectional analysis of this theme illustrates the distribution of nationality in this study:

Figure 21: Graph showing immigrant nationalities by percentiles.



The total number of interviewees was 146, with 66 females and 80 males. The total number of African interviewees was 61 migrants, with 18 females and forty-three males with an average age of 36 which constitutes the highest age among the interviewees. The second community, the Yemeni, of a total number of 29, 14 were females and 15 males. Their average age is 28 which makes them the youngest among the migrants under study as reflected on the graph below:

Figure 22: Graph showing immigrant nationalities by percentiles.



From Africa most of the migrants are males. This is because of both geographical and cultural reasons. There was a balance in the number of females and males in the Yemeni case. African and Yemeni males tend to migrate alone leaving their families behind in the first instance with the idea of bringing their families over, with the goal of reconstituting their original family links. However, due to the difficulties of the journey sometimes this is not possible resulting in the fact that many of them have two families, one back in their home country and a new one in Jeddah. This distinguishes these two communities from the Filipino and Indonesian migrants, who are predominantly females.

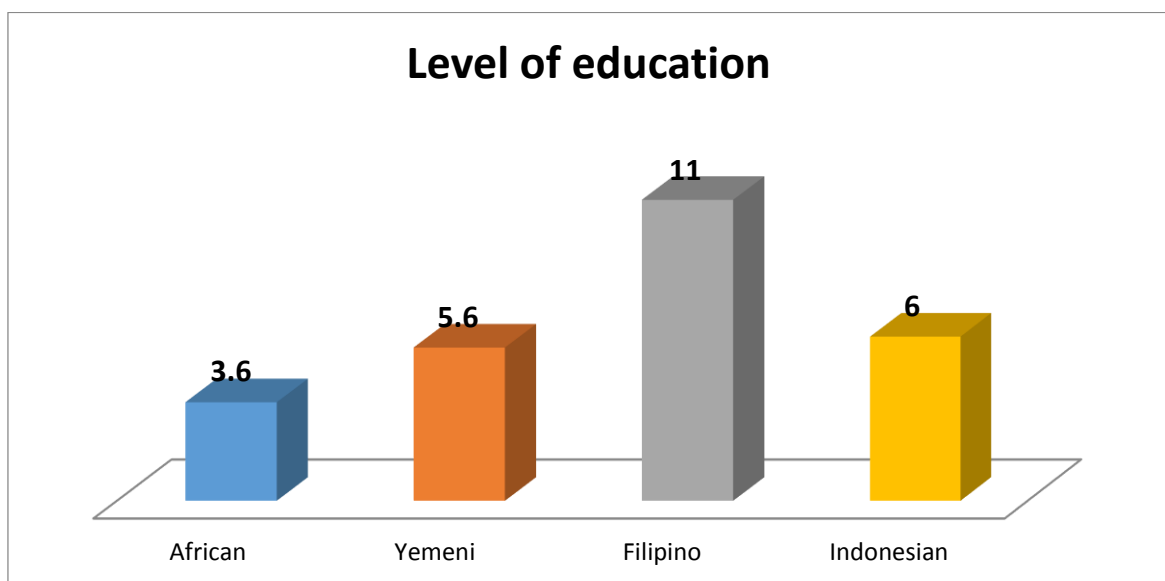
The Yemeni case is different. As commented earlier, the land border between Yemen and Saudi Arabia provides a porous barrier that is very difficult to monitor and very easy to cross for the undocumented migrants. This allows the Yemeni undocumented migrants to come and go from Saudi Arabia into Yemen and back with regularity. This represents a change in the demography with respect to other undocumented migrants' communities. Most of the Yemenis are males and constitute a community of mainly single men. This situation has strong repercussions in their lives because, due to the fact that they are alone, they can move more freely between one place and the other. To facilitate their mobility there is also the fact that, contrary to the other communities, they speak Arabic and their understanding of Saudi society and culture is good. As testified by many migrants, their familiarity with the environment and the ease with which they manage businesses such as the selling of goods among communities, make them a unique case. Another important element that distinguishes the Africans migrants from the Yemeni ones, but that makes them more similar to the migrants from Asia, is that they belong to different many countries and don't necessarily share the same customs, beliefs, and culture between themselves. It is very unusual, from a research point of view, to be able to observe them in the same environment.

There is a very important element that has transpired from the interviews: the religious factor. Religion and Islam in particular, plays an important role in the lives of the immigrants. Being Saudi Arabia, a Muslim country with no tolerance

for other faiths, and being Jeddah, the gate of entrance to the Holy Cities, many of the undocumented migrants are Muslims who entered the country on a religious visa. However, this is not every migrant's reality. Some of the immigrants from Eritrea, for example, and most of those from the Philippines, are Christians, and as such they are not allowed to have their own places of worship.

Regarding education, the Africans tend to be less educated than members of the other communities and this make them more vulnerable in Saudi Arabia when looking for jobs. Education levels of migrants are illustrated in the following graph:

Figure 23: Graph showing immigrant nationalities by percentiles.



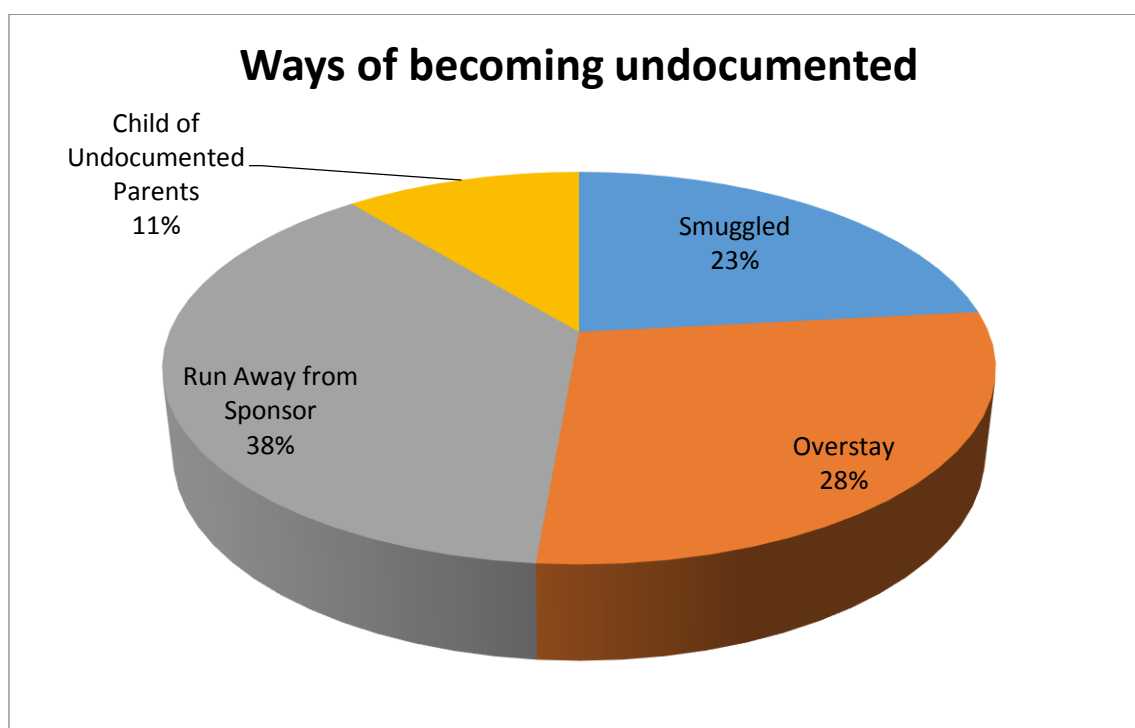
6.1.2 Theme two: the migration process

Figure 24: Migration process

Nationality	Total	Way of Becoming Undocumented				Reasons for Immigration					Cost of Immig. \$	Age at Arrival	# of Years as Undoc.	# of Deport	Worthiness of Immigration		
		Smug .	Over-stay	Run Away from Sponsor	Child of Undoc. Parents	Econ	Social	Relig	Born	War & Famine					Y	N	Born
African	61	21	23	6	11	30	7	0	11	13	533	25	14	1.0	49	1	11
Yemeni	29	13	11	0	5	20	4	0	5	0	560	20	3	1.0	24	0	5
Filipino	26	0	2	24	0	26	0	0	0	0	0	25	4	0.1	26	0	0
Indonesian	30	0	5	25	0	30	0	0	0	0	0	24	6	0.3	30	0	0
Total/Ave	146	34	41	55	16	106	11	0	16	13	333.9	23.1	9.6	0.3	129	1	16

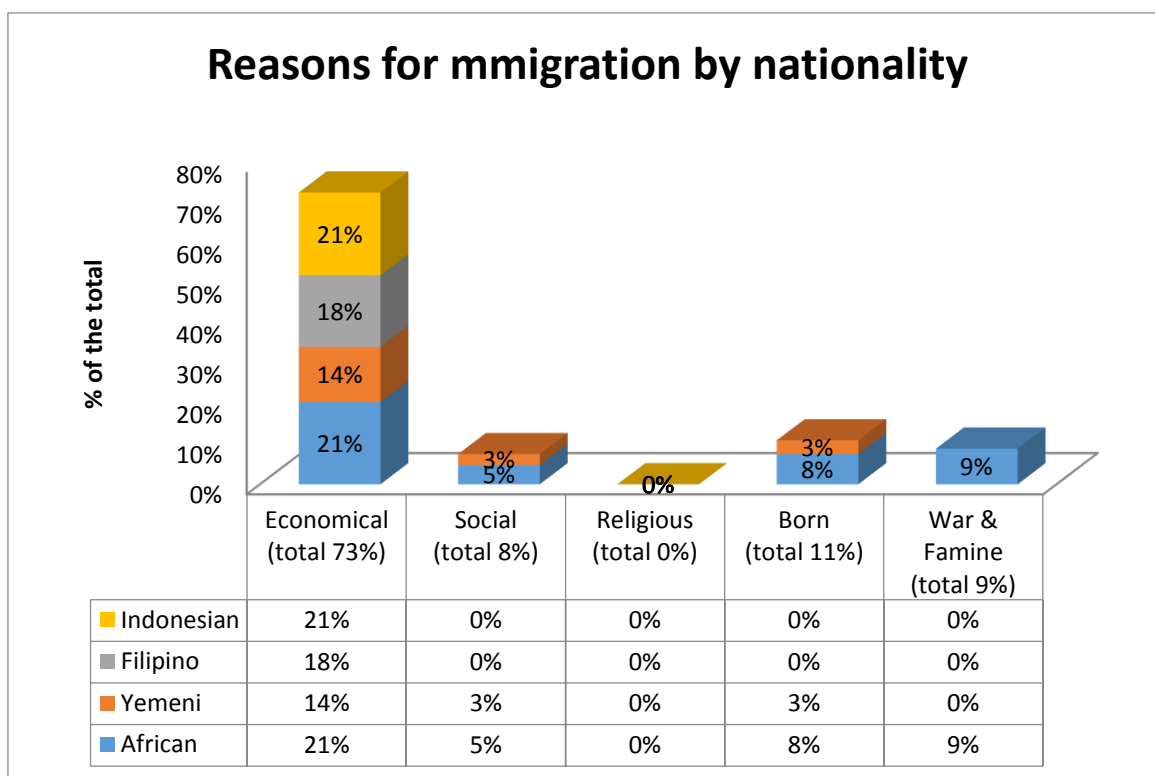
Theme two seeks background information on arrival, type of visa and other related issues. Examples of probing questions used are: What was the main reason for coming to Saudi Arabia; when and how did you enter the country, and at what age; If not smuggled into the country, what type of visa do you have, and where and how did you enter Saudi Arabia?

Figure 25: Graph showing reasons for immigrants becoming undocumented.



A cross-section analysis of this theme and information derived from the above graph reveals the different ways undocumented migrants enter Saudi Arabia and arrive in Jeddah. A great number of them take advantage of their right to apply for a religious visa, either for *hajj* or *umrah*. However, the religious issue at this stage has to be analysed as a tool for immigration and not as a reason for it. This is an important difference because in the interviews most of the migrants do stress that the reasons for their migration is economic and not religious as reflected in the following graph:

Figure 26: Graph showing immigrants' reasons for immigration, by nationality.



It is important to stress at this point that among all the factors causing the migration to Jeddah, the economic factor, even if not the only one, is certainly the most powerful reason to migrate among the undocumented migrants in this study.

However, it is true that being a Muslim in a Muslim country has some advantages in terms of integration. The migrants can profess their religion and, most importantly, as we have seen previously, they can more easily use their

own laws (*Sharia*) and traditions that then provides more cohesiveness to their communities in the absence of the state. On the contrary, Christians have to conceal their faith and cannot rely on religious and community laws.

The cross-section analysis of this theme is also very interesting because it provided an opportunity to compare the personal narratives of the migrants relating to the journey to the city of Jeddah. The case of the African migrants appears to be the more dramatic one. This is not only because the journey through various African countries and the crossing of the Red Sea present obvious dangers, but also because the immigrants sometimes have to live undocumented in transit countries before reaching their final destination, a process that could last for years. The consequences of this at a personal and community level are that they sometimes experience a strong detachment with their own country of origin as individuals. This is in comparison to the Yemeni, for example, whose links with their families of origin are very strong due to the reasons explained above. Interviewed about their lives in Jeddah, the African migrants provide mixed answers which reflect their ambiguity towards their new situation in the city. They admit that their lives are better in Jeddah in comparison to their home countries; however some of them still have the hope that going back is an option.

In addition, the fact that their children, born in Jeddah, are condemned by the Saudi immigration laws to clandestine lives makes them more aware of their rights, or lack thereof. Another reason that contributes towards their staying is that it is relatively easy for Africans and Yemenis alike to find a job in the city. However, comparing the two situations it is evident that the Yemenis, for the reasons explained earlier, enjoy a wider freedom of movement and therefore can engage in commercial, even if underground, activities.

The Filipinos and Indonesians enter the country with a work permit and for this reason they do not start their lives as undocumented. This makes a huge difference in the personal narratives of the migration process.

Regarding the undocumented migrants born in Jeddah, there are more in the African communities than in the other two. This is due to the fact that the Africans are the ones who on average spent more years as undocumented in Jeddah in comparison to other communities considered.

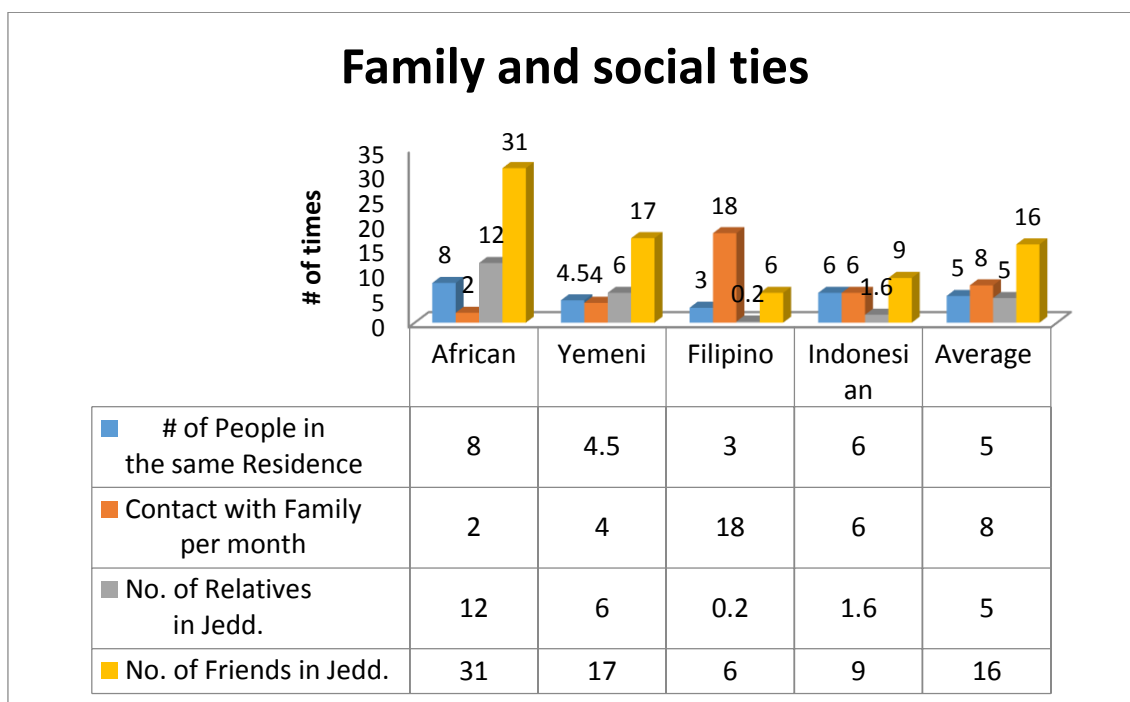
6.1.3 Theme three: familial and social ties

Figure 20: Family and social ties.

Nationality	# of People in the Same Residence - Average	Contact with Family /month - Average	Num. of Relatives in Jeddah - Average	Num. of Friends in Jeddah - Average	Are you the only breadwinner?		Do you remit?		% of Remit
					Yes	No	Yes	No	
African	8	2	12	31	22	39	39	22	23%
Yemeni	4.5	4	6	17	14	15	23	6	40%
Filipino	3	18	0.23	6	10	16	23	3	50%
Indonesian	6	6	1.6	9	23	7	27	3	67%
Total/Ave.	5	8	5	16	69	77	112	34	40%

From a cross-sectional analysis it is also evident that all the communities' ties are very strong and that in different measures all of them have reached some kind of organisation that allows them to lead their lives in the city. In this regard, the average number of relatives for all the communities is five and the average number of friends is 16. The following graph depicts different statics on family and social ties:

Figure 21: Graph showing immigrants' social ties.

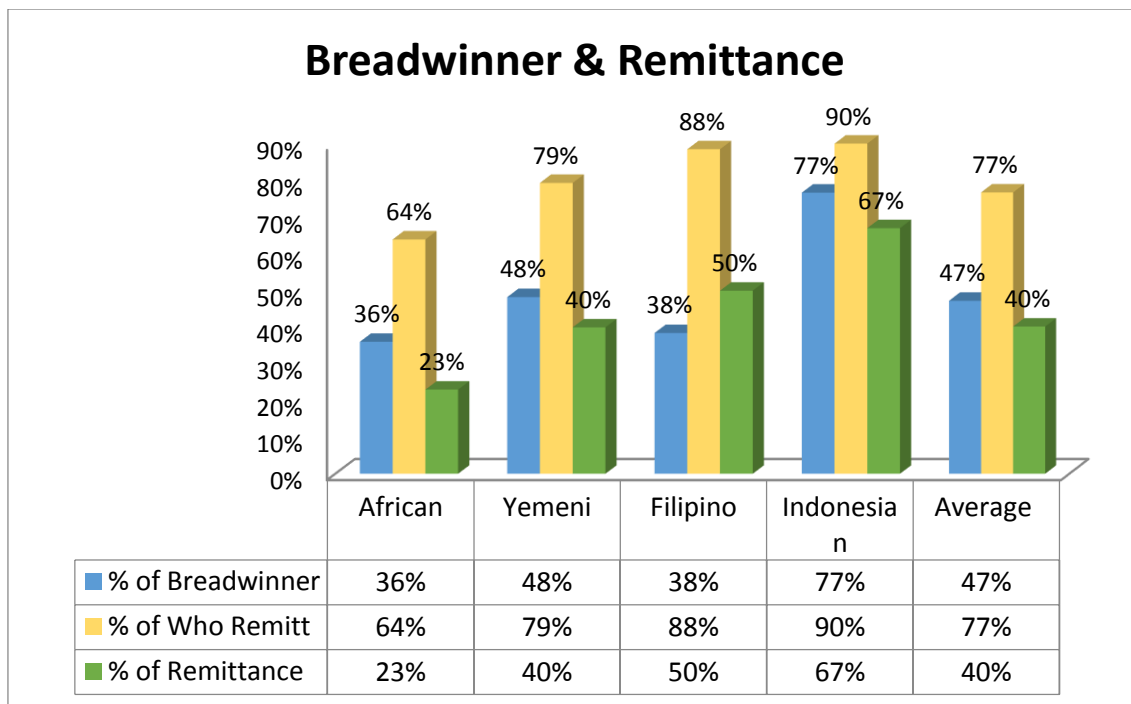


The cross-sectional analysis of the familial and social ties confirmed some of the issues raised in the previous themes, while opening some room for further considerations. In the first place, all migrants appear to have enough contact with their family of origin. This is also thanks to modern communication technology. The fact that they are in touch helps all of them maintain some kind of sense of identity in a society which does not recognise their rights. However, the attitude is different in the different communities. Most of the Africans, probably due to the difficulties presented by their journey through the African continent to reach Saudi Arabia, and also due to the fact that they flee very harsh conditions in their home countries, such as war and famine, have sometimes an ambiguous attitude towards their lives in Jeddah.

However, sometimes families, and especially children, suffer from the instability of their financial and legal status. In each community along with strong family ties there are many broken families with the social and financial consequences imaginable in an environment of undocumented. For example, most of them have to remit money to their families back home and this causes a big financial strain on their lives in Jeddah. For this reason, both men and women have to

contribute to the family income. The following graph illustrates the percentages of remittances compared to income:

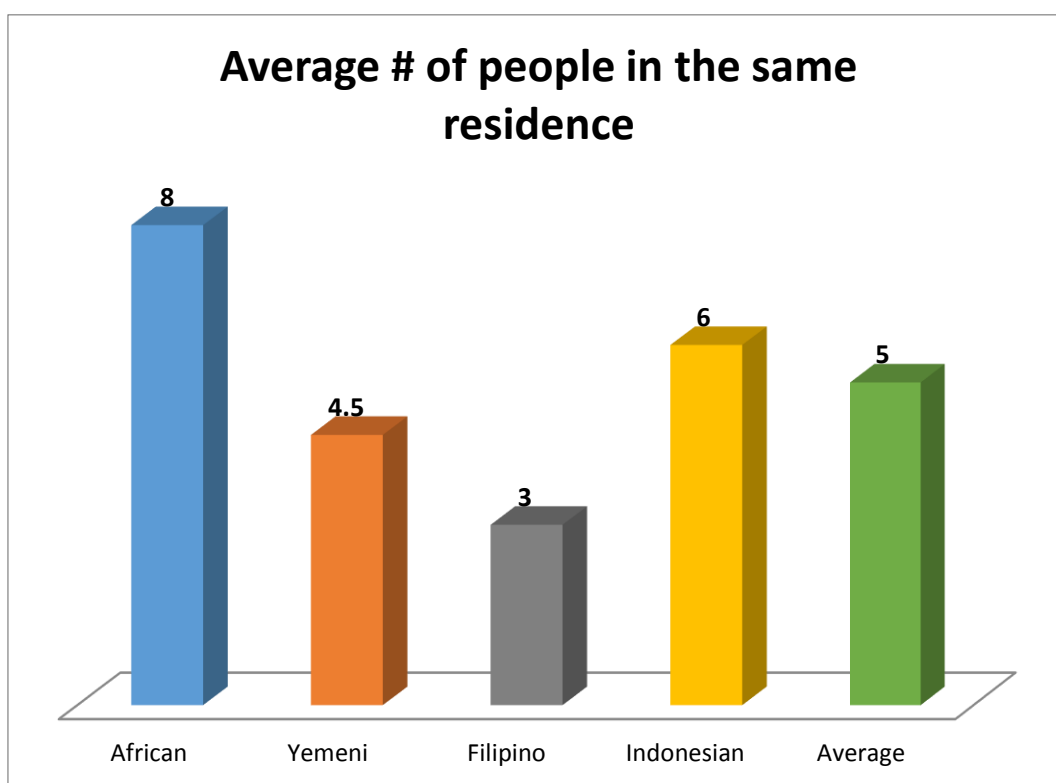
Figure 22: Graph showing immigrant remittances.



Marriage is another topic that came out in this part of the investigation. As explained earlier, in the case of the Africans, for example, marriage is almost never made outside of the community even if there are some exceptions to this. This is due to the fact that, according to Saudi laws, no Saudi citizen is allowed to marry a non-Saudi without previous consent from the Ministry of Interior. However, the undocumented migrants organised their own communities following the Islamic law regarding marriages, or their own customs creating a kind of parallel community to the Saudi one. As a result their children are recognised within the community thus providing a sort of legitimacy and sense of identity to their lives. This is particularly important for the African and Asian communities that are so far away from their home culture and society and do not recognise as theirs as being akin to Saudi culture, as the Yemenis can. Their answer to the second theme provided an introduction to a more detailed analysis of their familial and social ties in the communities.

Most of this population realise that there is no way back home for them and they know that they have to build a life for themselves as undocumented. However, communication technologies allow them to keep in constant contact with their countries of origins with positive and negative consequences: from the point of view of an undocumented immigrant, keeping in touch with the reality left back home can be positive. However, this constant communication could have the destabilising effect of not allowing their integration into their new reality with detrimental consequences for them because it prevents them from integrating into the society. Finally as depicted from the following graph, the migrants do not enjoy comfortable lives and many of them have to share close quarters:

Figure 23: Graph showing immigrant average room sharing.



6.1.4 Theme four: medical needs and provision

The cross-sectional analysis of this theme reveals the difficulty that all the undocumented migrants face when dealing with health issues. As said before, the Saudi Ministry of Interior forbids any non-Saudi citizens to be treated in public healthcare facilities. However, sometimes, depending on the

communities, they can have access to healthcare by using the system through family and friends working in the healthcare system. Some of the communities also have some kind of organisation, in particular the Filipinos and Indonesians, because some of them work in the healthcare system.

6.1.5 Theme five: issues related to work conditions

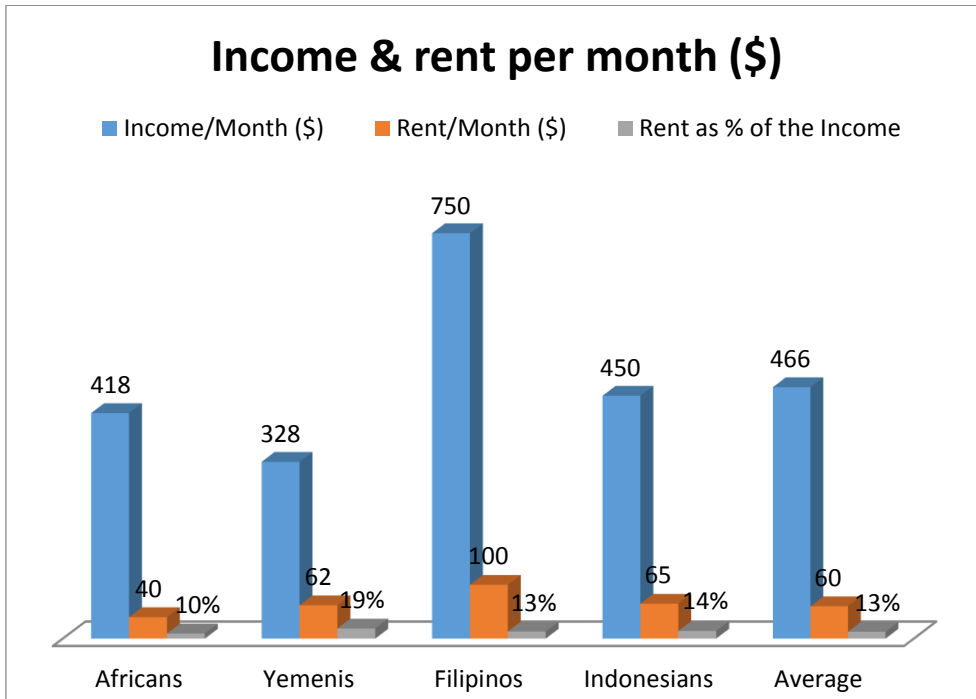
Figure 24: Issues related to work.

Nationality	# of jobs per yr - Average	Is it Easy to Find a Job?		# of Working Hours/Day Average	Income/Month \$	Rent/Month \$	Standard of living		
		Ye s	No				Improved	Same	Declined
African	6	47	14	11	418	40	50	0	0
Yemeni	3	23	6	11	328	62	25	0	0
Filipino	3.3	23	3	9	750	100	24	2	0
Indonesian	6.7	27	3	10	450	65	29	1	0
<i>Average</i>	<i>5.1</i>	<i>120</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>10.4</i>	<i>466</i>	<i>60</i>	<i>128</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>0</i>

Regarding jobs, most of the interviewees in the African community said that it was relatively easy to find one, usually in the space of a few weeks. However, most of them do not have the same job they used to have in their home country. Most of the men work as car washers or mechanics while most women work as housemaids. In comparison with the Yemeni community, it is evident that the majority of activities they are employed in limit them to living in their districts without any mobility out of them. This hinders their opportunities of contact with the Saudi society and makes them an easier target of police raids. On the contrary, the Yemeni are more dedicated to commercial activity. As said before, most of them are males, and their knowledge of the culture and the language provides them with more flexibility and makes them less subject to the arbitrariness of the Saudi authorities.

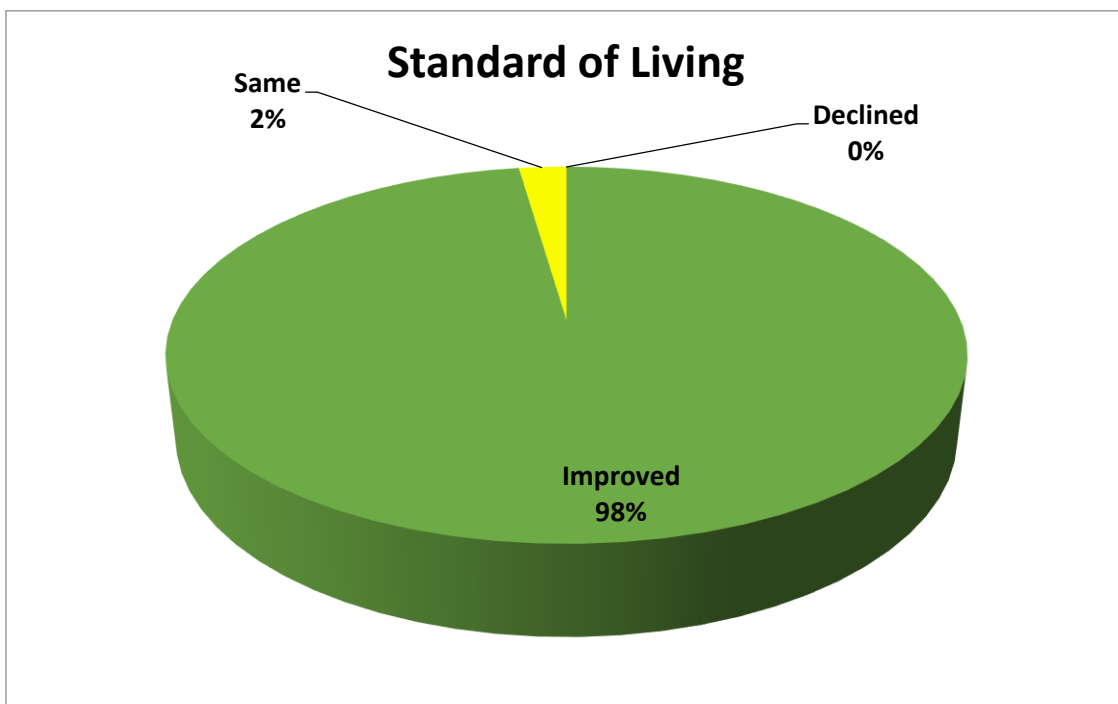
As far as income and rent per month is concerned, the Filipinos earn the highest income followed by the Indonesians and Africans. The Yemeni earns the least as depicted in the following graph:

Figure 25: Graph showing immigrant income and rent.



The cross-sectional analysis of the migrants' views toward their standard of living since their arrival in the city is reflected in the following graph:

Figure 26: Graph showing immigrants' perception of standard of living.



As for standard of living, ninety-eight percent of all the interviewees noted that their standard of living increased “improved” since their arrival in the city. Only two percent said it declined. This response coincides with the economic factor as the major reason for migration.

6.1.6 Theme six: the *kafalah* system

Figure 27: the *Kafalah* System

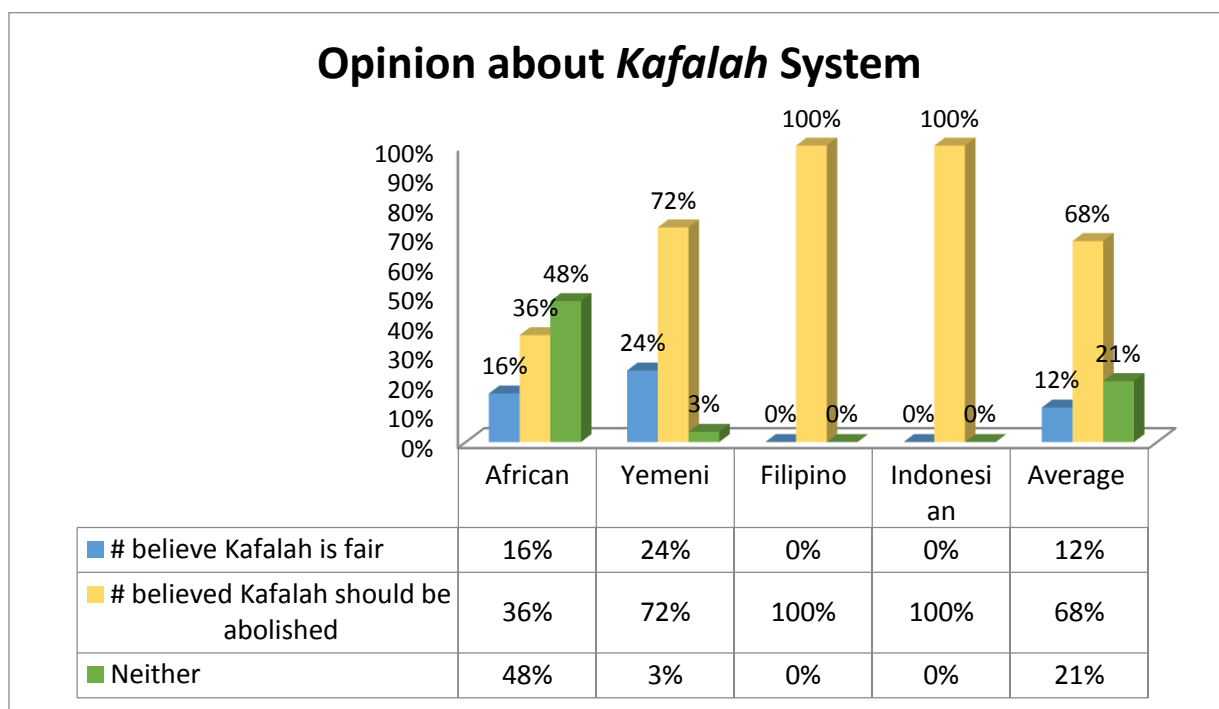
Nationality	Left for a Better Job	Avoided Sexual Harassment	Left Because of Long Working Hours	# Believe <i>Kafalah</i> is Fair	# Believe <i>Kafalah</i> Should be Abolished
African	6	0	0	10	22
Yemeni	0	0	0	7	21
Filipino	16	2	8	0	26
Indonesian	22	2	6	0	30
Total	44	4	14	17	99

As discussed in detail in Chapter One, the *kafalah nizam* (sponsorship system) is commonly known and referred to as the primary method for the Saudi government as well as other Gulf States to recruit, control and manage guest workers in their respective countries. The sponsorship system was the result of structural shift in Saudi Arabia from the pre-oil economy that generated most of state income from *hajj* and *umrah*, to the oil economy which required greater number of skilled and unskilled labour. As the city of Jeddah grew in size, the population and number of industrial sectors and number of businesses in the private sector, as well the increased in governmental institutions such as public hospitals, saw a sharp increase in the number of guest workers at all levels of the economy. Foreign labour during the last four decades has had a direct impact on the nature of the city in population size, and has added more variety to its already cosmopolitan culture, and has presented many complex issues for policy makers. The *kafalah* system became vulnerable to ever-increasing criticism, both from the guest workers, and from increasing scrutiny and

criticism for its consequences for labour and human rights from the international community.

According to the study, all of the Filipino and Indonesians interviewees who came into the country with a *kafeel*, believe it should be abolished as seen from the following graph:

Figure 28: Graph showing immigrant opinion about *Kafalah* system.

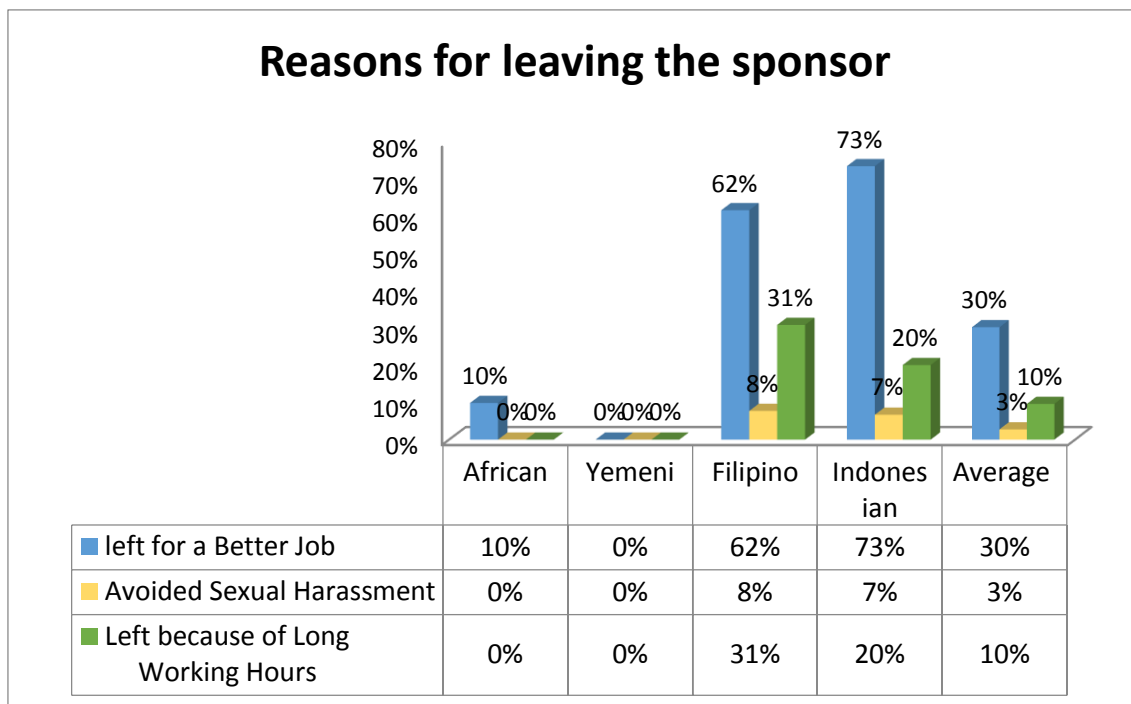


However, for the African and Yemeni interviewees who were predominantly smuggled into the city, in their view, and from other peoples' experience, they think it should be abolished. Very few of them think that it is a fair system.

In all communities, despite this, most of them stated that they would not take advantage of the periodic amnesties issued by the Saudi government because they perceive it as an attempt to get rid of migrants. In addition, the state intervention is neither consistent nor timely, and in the end it does not affect their lives. It is interesting to notice that the Filipinos and Indonesians who enter with a work permit prefer, after a short period of time, to live as undocumented because this gives them more flexibility in terms of which jobs they can obtain

with a consistent increase of their income. In regard to the reason(s) for those who broke their contract with their *kafeel*, the following graph illustrates the real motive:

Figure 29: Graph showing immigrant reason for leaving sponsors.



The above graph indicates the main reason for the Filipinos and Indonesians to leaving their sponsored work are to seek a different job as undocumented which provides a much better income. Leaving their jobs with sponsorship because of long hours comes second. The issue of sexual harassment as the main reason for breaking the work contract with a sponsor is not evident in this study. In the final analysis the data confirms that it is economic incentive that compels these migrants to violate their *kafalah* agreement.

6.1.7 Theme seven: legal issues facing undocumented labourers in Saudi Arabia.

In particular these issues refer to:

- Deportation;

- Freedom of movement in the country;
- Dealing with the local authorities, and
- Dealing with the consulates of their countries of origin.

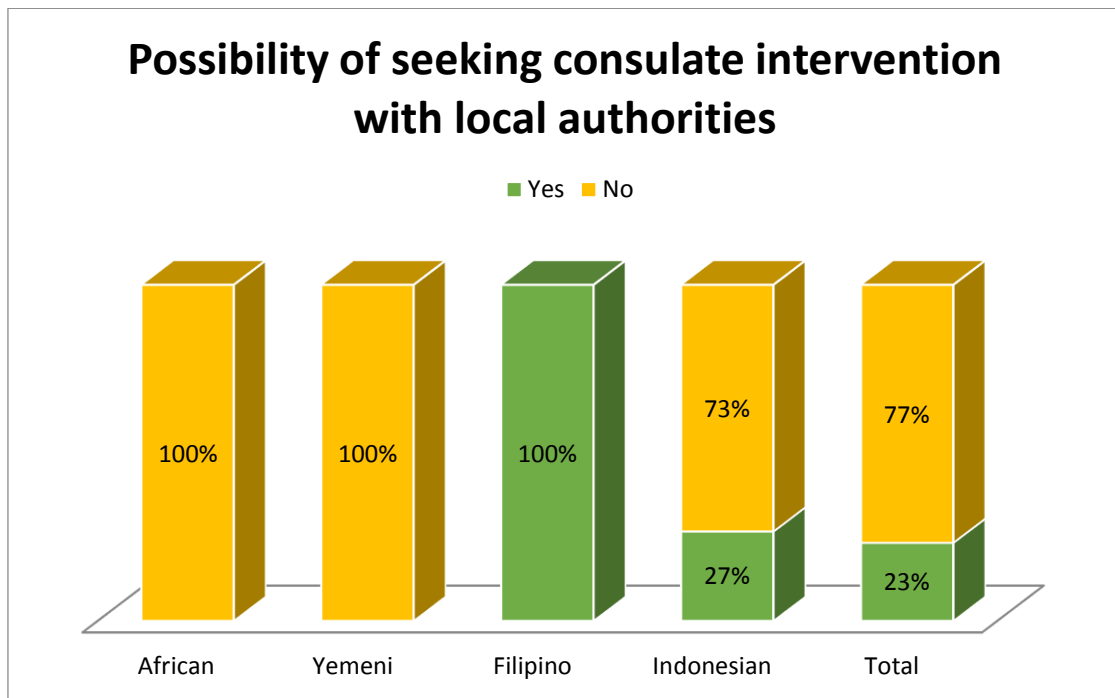
Figure 30: Legal issues facing undocumented labourers in Saudi Arabia.

Nationality	Is it difficult to move around in Jeddah?		Can you seek your consulate help with local authorities?		Does your consulate provide shelter regardless of legal status?		Would you try to re-enter if you forced to leave?	
	Problems	No problems	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
African	27	34	0	61	0	61	51	10
Yemeni	24	5	0	29	0	29	25	4
Filipino	20	6	26	0	26	0	2	24
Indonesian	6	24	8	22	12	18	20	10
<i>Total</i>	<i>77</i>	<i>69</i>	<i>34</i>	<i>112</i>	<i>38</i>	<i>108</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>48</i>

All the communities interviewed have to face the threat of arrest and deportation. However, the consequences of this would be different for the different communities. For the reason explained above, a deportation suffered by a Yemeni is not as dramatic as the one for an African or Asian. However, the threat of deportation makes all of the migrants try to avoid any contact with the Saudi authorities. Most of the Africans attempt to re-enter the country, as well as the Yemenis who, as we have mentioned earlier, can cross the border illegally very easily. Most of the Filipinos would not come back because it would be impossible to avoid the Saudi migration police without bribing them.

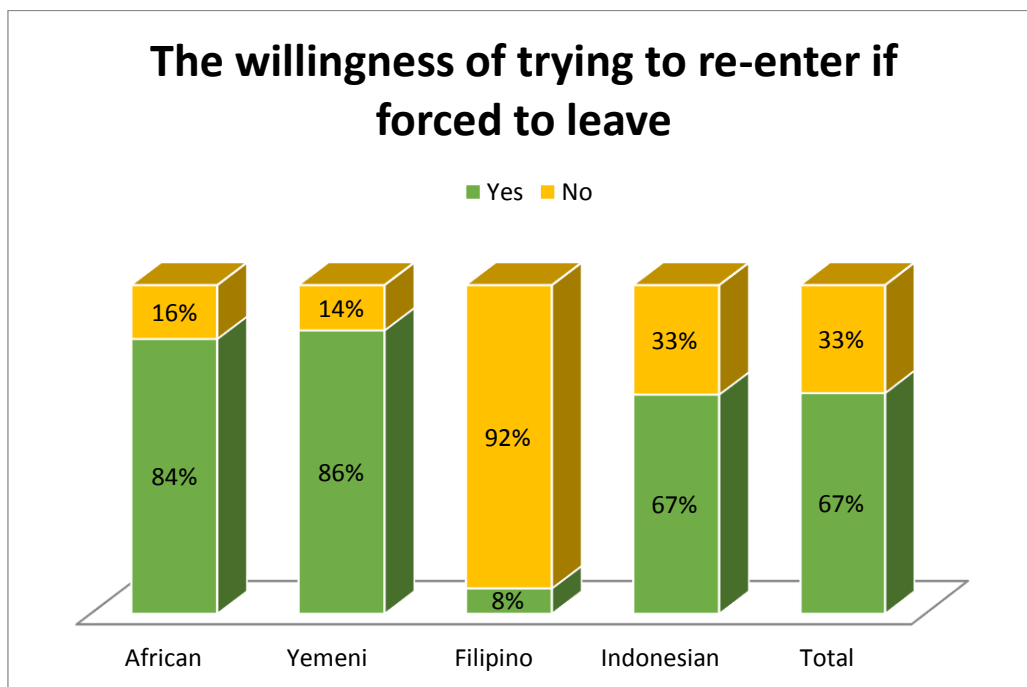
For the various undocumented migrants in this study, only the Filipino undocumented migrants are backed 100% by their consulate in Jeddah. The consulate provides, if necessary, full shelter. In the Indonesian case, consulate support exists, but is very limited. The African and the Yemeni migrants receive no support as seen in the following graph:

Figure 31: Graph showing immigrant chances of getting consulate intervention.



The willingness to trying to re-enter the country if forced to leave (e.g., deported) varies from one community to another as depicted in the graph below.

Figure 32: Graph showing immigrant willingness to re-enter.



The above graph shows that both, the African and the Yemeni migrants will try to re-enter the country if deported. In the case of Africans, they have nowhere to go if born in the Jeddah with no documents, also those African women and men who spent most of their lives in the city. The Indonesian to a certain extent will attempt to return through *umrah* or *hajj* after changing their names. The Filipinos, perhaps due to great demand on their skills in the GCC, opt not to re-enter the country.

6.1.8 Theme eight: future plans and objectives

Table 33: Future Plans

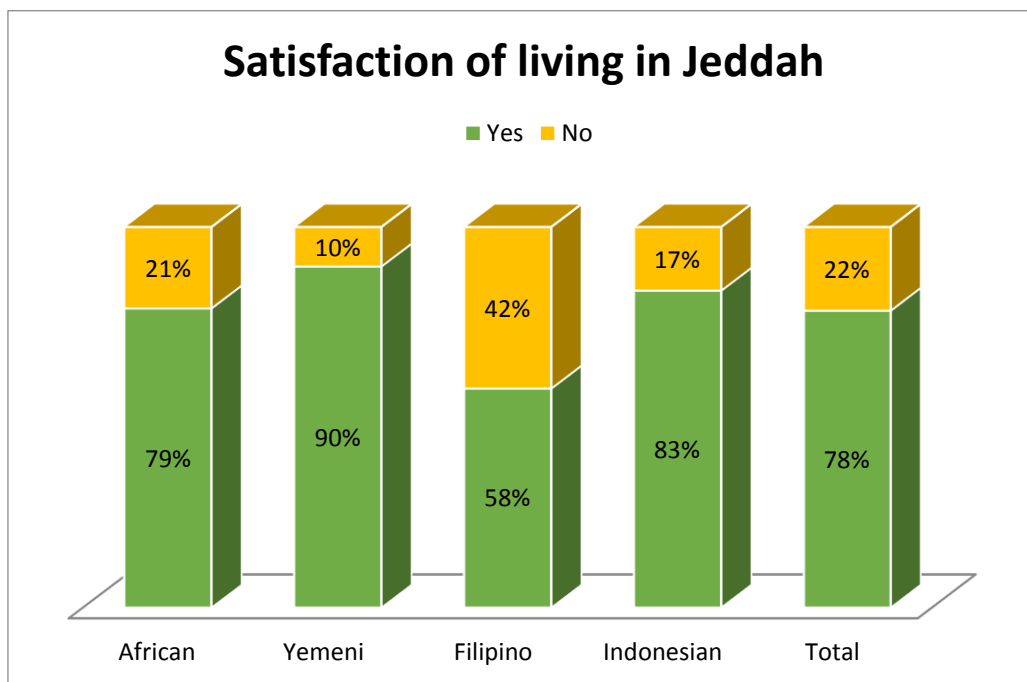
Nationality	Are you satisfied in living in Jeddah?		Does living in Jeddah with no documents bother you?		Are you going to use the amnesty issued by the Saudi government?	
	Yes	N	Yes	No	Yes	No
Africa	48	13	61	0	0	61
Yemeni	26	3	10	19	4	26
Filipino	15	11	26	0	3	23
Indonesian	25	5	4	26	0	30
<i>Total</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>32</i>	<i>101</i>	<i>45</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>140</i>

Comparing the future hopes and expectations, it is clear that there is a gap between the various communities. As seen earlier, the Africans are more prone to staying and claiming rights for themselves and their children to integrate fully into Saudi society. It is different for the Yemenis who, on the contrary, hope to save enough money to be able to go back to their country and open a business. The Indonesian women want to save money to open their own businesses or to provide education for their children back home. The Filipinos aim at saving money to finance their education in order to obtain a better job in their own country.

The Filipinos constitute a very interesting community because they are very creative in finding ways of using their skills and share these skills with others.

For example, they teach each how to become hairdressers, giving other women the opportunity to open their own businesses either in Saudi Arabia or back in their own country.

Figure 34: Graph showing immigrant satisfaction

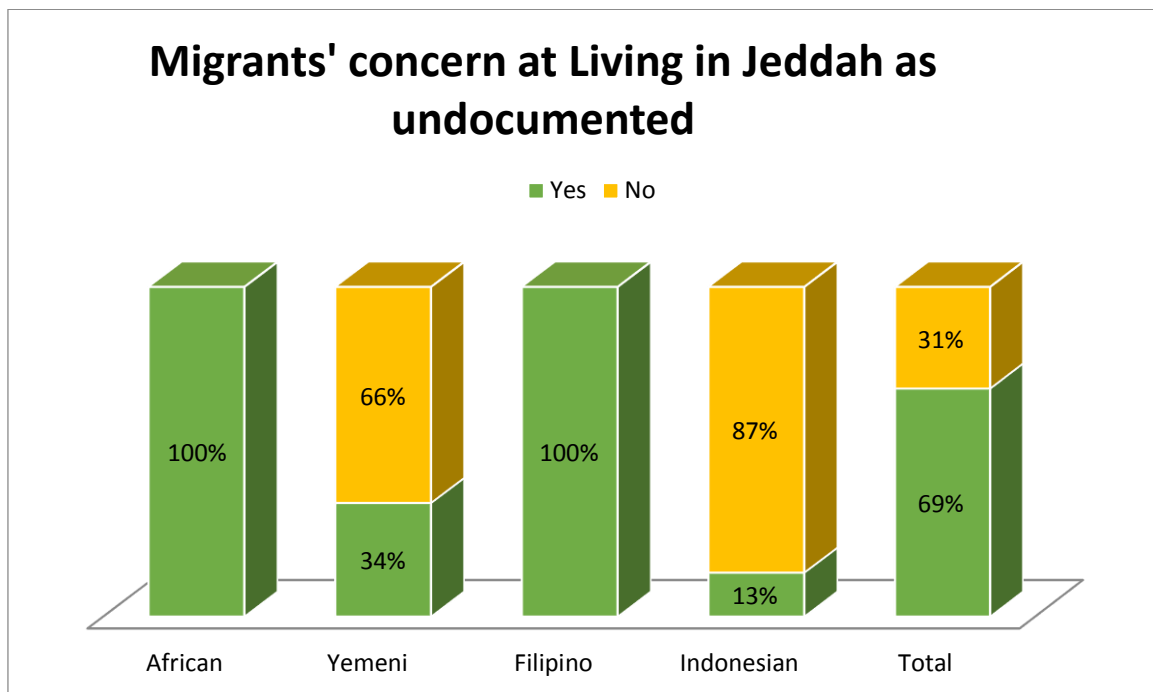


Seventy-nine percent of the African, 90% of the Yemeni, and 83% of the Indonesian migrants are satisfied with living in Jeddah. Forty-two of the Filipino migrants are unsatisfied as depicted in the graph above.

It is interesting to note, as depicted from the following graph, that 100% of the African and the Filipinos are bothered by living in Jeddah as undocumented migrants. In the case of African migrants especially those born in the city or who have been living in it for a long time, have great hopes that the Saudi authorities will grant them citizenship or at least permanent residency. For the more educated Filipino migrants, they are bothered by the possibility of being arrested and deported. Thirty-four percent of the Yemeni, and a much lower rate of Indonesians, 13%, are bothered by living in the city with no documents. For the Yemeni, it is always easy to sneak back and forth across the long Saudi-Yemeni borders to visit family and friends. Even if they were deported,

the majority feel it is easy to sneak back to the city of Jeddah as reflected in the next graph.

Figure 35: Graph showing migrants' concerns for being undocumented.



From the above analysis of various themes and in connection to the different theories of migration discussed in chapter one, we contend that the economic factor comes first as the major reason for pushing many of the undocumented in this study to seek better life in Jeddah. Social networking theory comes a close second in the decision to migrate. The religious factor comes last; while still important it was not evident in the communities that were studied here. Although my initial assumption was that emigrating to Jeddah in order to be close to the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah would be a prominent factor among the theories discussed at the outset, it turns out that it is less significant for the groups studied here. The results vary when looking at other immigrant communities but presenting these here is beyond the scope of the present research and will be taken up in a later work.

Recommendations

There is no magic or quick-fix remedy that will totally eliminate the phenomena of the undocumented migrant community in Saudi Arabia, not now, or in the future as will be discussed in the conclusion. For the government, and the Saudi people, to bury their heads in the sand will only exacerbate a problem that already exists. The researcher firmly believes that if the issue of the undocumented is not resolved creatively, especially for those born in the city and who have no access to Saudi documentation, then the country, in general, and the city of Jeddah, more specifically, is sitting on a ticking time bomb about to explode. The undocumented who have no rights such as access to good education and to healthcare will continue to live in the underground, unregulated economy, which can only lead to future problems. The following are a set of recommendations that the researcher hopes will be used to guide those Saudi governmental bodies concerned with the plight of the undocumented, and help them determine reasonable steps to solve this serious problem:

1. There is a need to expose those who are involved in illegal, underground activities such as selling work visas to poor foreign workers.
2. Providing undocumented migrants with residency permits and granting them the necessary vocational training, which will prevent the further importation of guest workers at a time when there is already an abundance of migrants with the necessary language skills and cultural understanding to fulfill these roles.
3. To grant the children of undocumented migrants Saudi nationality, or failing that, permanent residency. This should coincide with providing previously inaccessible healthcare and education, in accordance to both global and Islamic human rights conventions.
4. The abolition of the *kafalah* system due to its role in encouraging Saudi citizens to abuse the system by applying for worker permits that they do not

need and subsequently selling them or renting them to citizens of African and Asian countries who have the false hope of achieving massive financial gain by working in the Kingdom. Abolishing the *kafalah* system is perhaps the most ambitious of these proposals but the researcher cannot conceive a proper solution to the quagmire unless the underlying base issue is not confronted.

5. Examining the problems and complaints that foreign workers have with their sponsors and working to solve these issues and safeguard their rights. This will be done while also dealing with the phenomenon of the selling and rental of work visas, and studying the circumstances in which this phenomenon is concentrated in order to understand the motives and methods for it.

6. Selection of foreign workers applying for work in the Kingdom on the basis of their qualifications before providing comprehensive training courses to introduce them to the systems and rulings of *Sharia* Law relating to work and contracts. Moreover, administering suitable examinations for their selection and benefiting from the experience of the Center for the Measures and Evaluation in this area.

7. Imposing monetary fines on recruitment agencies and *Haji & Umrah* travel agencies for each individual who violates the requirement of departure after the *Haji* and *Umrah* season, or who overstays their residency permit. This will be done with the aim of obliging those companies to cooperate in handling the problem of violation that causes increased underground activity.

8. The establishment of Economic Free Zones straddling the Saudi-Yemeni border and encouraging Saudi companies to construct factories that will employ both Saudis and Yemenis and provide them with the appropriate training. This will serve two purposes, reducing the flow of Yemeni migration to Saudi Arabia as well as rural-urban migration within Saudi Arabia. Constructing infrastructure such as schools, hospitals and vocational training facilities within these zones will benefit both communities and will grant greater opportunities for Yemenis and Saudis in their respective countries. This will also serve to create more sedentary migration patterns rather than the widespread temporary migration as is seen today.

9. Gathering information regarding experiences of developed countries along with governmental and non-governmental organizations in the area of combatting the underground economy. This specifically involves OECD nations, Singapore, Taiwan and Japan.

10. The difficulties of forming stable family units for the undocumented migrants should be a subject for future study.

11. Different government authorities in the Saudi government should encourage researchers and academicians to collaborate and establish robust databases that collect important data on the undocumented migrants in all cities in Saudi Arabia.

12. Furthermore, the government should establish a think tank that properly tracks and documents the numbers and demographics of migrants as well as analysing this data in a manner that is conducive to policy makers and other stakeholders.

13. Following on front point 12, all research on the subject should be consolidated and disseminated to relevant bodies.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to analyse the lives of undocumented migrants in Saudi Arabia and in particular in the city of Jeddah in the last few decades. The researcher chose this city for two main reasons. One of the main ones is that, from a historical point of view, Jeddah offers the opportunity to link this phenomenon with the traditional multicultural trait of the city. The second one is that the fieldwork carried out offered the opportunity, for the first time, to meet the undocumented migrants in their own environment, while in the past most of the interviews took place through questionnaires when the migrants were under detention, a condition that strongly influenced the outcomes of the research. In addition, for the first time, this study analyses some communities of undocumented migrants living in Jeddah from different countries and continents. This approach presented many difficulties because the researcher had, with the help of gatekeepers, to gain the confidence of the communities and their people, a difficult task being a national Saudi. On the other hand it turns out that it was a very efficient way to proceed and to gather the personal narratives necessary for the qualitative analysis. In this regard, the eight themes chosen had the advantage of shedding light on different, important aspects of the migrants' past, present, and future lives. At the same time, they constituted an invaluable source of information that the researcher would have not been able to gather otherwise.

The researcher chose only some of the communities, including the African, Yemeni, Filipino and Indonesian, being aware that this would limit the research. However, the analysis of these communities has granted enough material to allow a comparison among them that offers enough elements to re-think the migration policy Saudi Arabia has been following until now. In addition, the outcomes of the research are extremely useful for a wide variety of policy makers to researchers who want to investigate the subject further.

For example, it is clear from the cross-sectional analysis that migrants have different degrees of integration in the country despite sharing a status as

undocumented. From the research, it is obvious that migrants from Africa bring with them very dramatic personal narratives because of the chronic political and economic instability of their countries of origin. In addition, their migration to Saudi Arabia and to Jeddah is in itself a very distressing experience because it involved a very long a dangerous journey through the Horn of Africa that forces them to live as undocumented in different countries before reaching their final destination. This is not the case for the Yemenis who, thanks to the proximity of the two countries have the possibility to cross the border back and forth in many occasions. The Filipino and Indonesian community shares in part the African experience, however, all of them are not smuggled into the country in the first place, but they come in with a work contract that they then break for personal or economic reasons.

It is obvious that the way the migrants arrived, and the links they already have or do not have in the city, inevitably affect their different degrees of integration into the Saudi society. Most of the African migrants share religion with the Saudis; however, for most of them not speaking Arabic constitutes a big disadvantage second only to the different cultures they come from. At this regard, the undocumented migrants from Yemen can move and live more freely since they speak the language and know the culture, while Filipinos and Indonesians, being on average more educated, can find better jobs and make more money. On the other hand, in particular the Filipinos live with the great challenge that their Christian faith is forbidden in the Kingdom. Of course, all this has a very deep impact in the way the various communities see their staying in the city and their attitude towards Saudi Arabian migration policies.

What it is evident following this analysis is that the Saudi authorities failed in recognizing the exact extent of the problem. The clandestine lives these migrants are living had consistently and considerably changed the demography of the city, a reality that cannot be ignored for much longer. The recommendations offered in this study constitute an attempt to deal with the challenges posed by the ever-increasing influence of undocumented migrant communities on the city's daily life. In addition, this study and the methodology it used to gather information can be transferred to other constituencies in Saudi

Arabia as well as other Gulf States contributing to the development of the study of migration in the area.

In the final analysis, it should be noted that *hajj* and *umrah* religious visits to Makkah and Madinah are fundamental to all Muslims; though in reality, only for those who can financially afford them, or who are healthy. As such, in the many generations to come, many Muslims will seek to perform *hajj* or come to the country for *umrah* visits. Many of those religious visitors, we contend, will probably overstay their visa's duration and thus become undocumented. Those who stay will probably find different types of assistance from their fellow countrymen and women who are already living in Jeddah with or without proper documentation. This is, therefore, a never-ending story of "the undocumented" in this city and will last as long as there are the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah.

Another issue is the long borders between Saudi Arabia and Yemen which stretch over 5000 kilometers and includes various terrains, such as mountains valleys as noted earlier in this study. Regardless of the advanced technological surveillance equipment that the Saudi authorities use, the border cannot be fully watched, or protected. This issue of border control and the seemingly everlasting unrest and probable future civil wars in Yemen, will keep pushing the Yemenis, for example, to seek a safer life and better economic conditions in which to live and work. These will likely be near the holy cities, or Jeddah, and perhaps other cities.

But the researcher is ultimately optimistic and convinced that these future migrants will not be terrorists, but rather that they are just simple people who want to survive. The researcher also hopes that the above recommendations, and other researchers' contributions to the field, will bring the issue of undocumented to be reasonably managed, and resolved.

Appendix 1

The city of Jeddah is divided into 134 districts. The following table constitutes just a small sample of them.

Names of districts and migrant communities living in them.

Name of district	Nationality	Name of district	Nationality	Name of district	Nationality
Al-Bawadi	Filipinos Indonesian and others	Al-Aziziya	Chadians and others	Ash-Sharafiya	Chadians, Burkina Faso
Al-Faysaliya	Egyptians, Filipinos, Indonesians &Chadians	Ar-Roweis	Somalis, Ethiopian, Pakistanis and Burkinabe	Bani Malik	Sudanese and Chadians
Al-Amariya	Somalis, Ethiopian, Sudanese	Al-Hindawiya	Nigerian, Sudanese, Niger Chadian, Yemenis, Bangladeshis & and others	As-Saheifa	Somalis, Filipinos and others
Al-Kandra	Somalis	Al-Thaalba	Al-Thaalba	Al-Thaalba	Chadians, Somalis and others
Al-Qurayat	Few, mixed	Gholail	Eritrean, Ethiopians, Sudanese and others	As-Sabeel	Chadians, Somalis and others
An-Nozla Al-Yamaniya	Chadian	Al-Jamaa	Mixed	Al-Mahjar	Nigerians, Chadians, Sudanese and others
Al-Nozla Ash- Sharqiya	Chadian	Al-Harazat	Mixed	Gowieza	Nigerians and others
Al-Gozain	Mix	Al-Kuwait	Eritreans and others	Al-Bokhariya	Sudanese Somalis and Eritreans
Al-Masfa	Nigerian	Bab Shareif	Sudanese, Somalis, Eritrean and Nigerians	Bab Makkah	Somalis
Al-Goaid	Eritrean	Ad-Dageeg	Chadians and others	As-Sinaiya (Bawadi)	Pakistanis, Indians, Yemenis, Somalis and others
Al-Karantina	Somalis, Nigerians, Chadians, Sudanese	Kilo 7	Chadians, Sudanese and others	Kilo 3, Kilo 6, and Kilo 8	Mixed
Al-Zahra	Filipinos, Indonesian, Pakistanis	Al-Rawda,	Indonesians, Filipinos, Egyptians, Syrians	Al-Salamah	Filipinos, Indonesians, Egyptians, Indians
Al-Shati	Bangladeshi				

Source: Fieldwork

Appendix 2

Comparative snapshot of important indicators on African countries.

Name of country and its capital city	Population	Area	Major languages	Major religions	Main exports	GNI ¹²¹	Ethnic groups
Ethiopia Addis Ababa	84.9 million (UN, 2010)	437,794 sq. miles 84.9 million	Amharic, Oromo, Tigrinya, Somali	Christianity, Islam	Coffee, hides, oilseeds, beeswax, sugarcane	US \$330 (World Bank, 2009)	Oromo 32.1%, Amhara 30.1%, Tigraway 6.2%, Somali 5.9%,
Somalia Mogadishu	9.3 million (UN, 2010)	246,201 sq. miles	Somali, Arabic, Italian, English	Islam	Livestock, bananas, hides, fish	Us \$110	Ethnic Somalis
Eritrea Asmara	5.2 million (UN, 2010)	45,300 sq. miles	Tigrinya, Tigre, Arabic, English	Islam, Christianity	Livestock, hides, sorghum, textiles, salt, light manufactures	US \$300)	Among these communities, the <u>Tigrinya</u> make up about 55% of the population, with the <u>Tigre</u> constituting around 30% of inhabitants
Sudan Khartoum	43.2 million (UN, 2010)	966,757 sq. miles	Arabic, English (official), others	Islam, Christianity, Animism	Oil, cotton, sesame, livestock and hides, gum...	US \$1,220 (World Bank, 2009)	The ethnic groups of Sudan are Arabs 70%, others being Arabized ethnic groups.
Chad N'Djamena	11.5 million (UN, 2010)	495,800 sq. miles	French, Arabic	Islam, Christianity	Cotton, oil, livestock, textiles	US \$610 (World Bank, 2009)	Main Chadian ethnic groups are: Sara 7.7%, Arab
Nigeria Abuja	158.2 million (UN, 2010).	356,669 sq. miles	English (official), Yoruba, Ibo, Hausa	Islam, Christianity, indigenous beliefs	Petroleum, petroleum products, cocoa, rubber	US \$1,140 (World Bank, 2009)	Nigeria is composed of more than 250 ethnic groups.
Cameroon Yaoundé	19.9 million (UN, 2010)	183,568 sq. miles	English, and over 210 languages	Christianity, Islam, indigenous beliefs	Crude oil and petroleum products, timber, cocoa, aluminium, coffee, cotton	US \$1,170 (World Bank, 2009)	Has an extremely heterogeneous population, consisting of approximately 250 ethnic groups.
Burkina Faso Ouagadougou	14,326,203 million	105,870 sq. miles	French, indigenous languages	Indigenous beliefs, Islam, Christianity	Cotton, animal products, gold	US \$580	There are numerous ethnic groups in Burkina Faso.
Ghana Accra	25.5 million (UN, 2012)	238,533 sq. km (92,098 sq. miles)	English African languages including Akan, Ewe	Christianity, indigenous beliefs, Islam	Gold, cocoa, timber, tuna, bauxite, aluminium, manganese ore, diamonds	\$1,410	Akan 45.3%, Mole-Dagbon 15.2%, Ewe 11.7%, Ga-Dangme 7.3%, Guan 4%, census

¹²¹ GNI stands for gross national income per capita.

In order to obtain the above tables the researcher had to access the following web pages:

http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1042937.stm
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/country_profiles/784383.stm
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1068700.stm
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/country_profiles/1072164.stm
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-13349399>
<http://www.joshuaproject.net/countries.php?rog3=CD>

Appendix 3

This appendix contains brief details of each individual interviewed including nationality, age, gender, marital status, occupation, date of interview and comments, if any. Listed here in the order in which they appear in the text.

Interviewees' number	Country	Age	Gender	Marital status	Occupation	Date of interview	Place of interview	Comments
1	Sudan	60	Male	Divorced	Freelance researcher	May 5, 2009	Al-Karantina	This migrant, thanks to his friendly relationship with almost all the undocumented migrant communities in Jeddah, played a vital role in resolving the issue of trust and mistrust discussed in the chapter on methodology.
2	Ethiopia	33	Female	Single	Housemaid	May 6, 2009	Al-Salamah	This interviewee arranges work for many undocumented females from her own community to work as Housemaid for Saudi & non-Saudi families in Jeddah.
4	Chad	78	Male	Married	Retired	May 6, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	The oldest interviewee met in the fieldwork for this study. Met him in an old coffee shop in one of the districts in South Jeddah. He is a devout Muslim and one of the most influential leaders of his community.
3	Ethiopia	40	Female	Divorced	Housemaid	May 7, 2009	Hindawiya	Was married to a Saudi citizen. A victim of Kafalah false promises and mother of undocumented born in the city children with no documents.
5	Eretria	47	Male	Married	Driver	May 7, 2009	As-Sabeel	Met in the African semi-focus group & later, conducted a full interview in his little room in As-Sabeel district.
6	Eretria	45	male	Married	Villa guard	May 8, 2009	Al-Bawadi	Born in Eretria and discovered later, that his real father was a Yemeni. Converted to Islam and migrated to Jeddah.
7	Eretria	24	Female	Single	Housemaid	May 5, 2009	Al-Bawadi	No comment.
8	Somal	46	Female	Married	Beggar	May 7, 2009	Al-Kandra	No comment.
9	Ethiopia	27	Male	Single	Car washer	May 5, 2009	Bab Shareif	Participated in the African focus group.
11	Ethiopia	29	Female	Single	Prostitute	May 5, 2009	Al-Salamah	This particular interview was conducted by my female research assistant. She noted, "The life story of this individual interviewee is tragic. Regardless of her bad experiences, she is the most honest and persistent person I have ever met."
12	Nigeria	27	Female	Single	Prostitute		Al-Karantina	Interview was conducted by my female research assistant.
13	Nigeria	27	Female	Single	Prostitute			Interview was conducted by my female research assistant.
14	Somal	24	male	single	Construction			No comment

15	Eretria	32	Male	Single	Private driver	May 5, 2009	Al-Bawadi	This interviewee arrived to in Jeddah with an <i>umrah</i> visa at age 2. His father deported 18 years ago when he was 14 leaving all members of his family with no documents.
16	Ethiopia	35	Female	Single	Housemaid	June 2, 2009	Bab Shareif	Arrived with an <i>umrah</i> visa at age 19
18	Nigeria	64	Male	Married	Retired	June 2, 2009	Bab Shareif	Met with this interviewee, an influential leader in his community, in a <i>qahwa</i> (coffee shop). Our conversation included the issue of conflicts and ways to overcome it among members of his community. Has many children and grandchildren born in the city with no documents. His family supports him.
19	Eretria	21	Male	Single	Herder	June 2, 2009	Bab Shareif	No comment
22	Chad	28	Male	Single	Car washer	June 3, 2009	Ash-Sharafiya	Sells illegal homemade alcohol in poor districts in south Jeddah.
24	Born in Jeddah	23	Male	Single	Unemployed	June 4, 2009	Al-Karantina	His parents are undocumented migrants from Nigeria. At the time of interview, he was receiving training in metal welding in the industrial sector by one of his older friends.
30	Chad	27	male	single	Porter			No comment.
32	Nigeria	29	male	married			Al-Musfah	No comment.
33	Born in Jeddah	23	Male	Single	Car washer			His parents are undocumented migrants from Somal.
34	Sudan	77	Male	Married	retired			One of the oldest Sudanese met and an influential undocumented leader not only in his Sudanese community but also in other African communities, including the Yemeni community. We discussed how the various communities settle conflicts in their own community and with other communities as well. The only undocumented migrant interviewed who state that his migration to Jeddah was for religious reasons.
35	Born in Jeddah	30	Male	Single	Construction worker	June 8, 2009	Al-Karantina	This interview was conducted in his parents' home in south Jeddah. All members of his family are undocumented (his father from Sudan and mother from Cameroon and the rest of his seven sisters and brothers were born in Jeddah with no documents) All are waiting, with great hopes, for Saudi government to solve their undocumented status.
37	Sudan	45	Male	Married	Salesman			No comment
39	Chad	55	Male	Married	Mosque cleaner	June 10, 2009	Ash-Sharafiya	No comment
43	Ethiopia	52	Male	Married	Electrician	July 1,	Al-Kandra	Commented on the importance of

	a					2009		marriage in his community.
44	Eretria	24	Male	Single	Car washer		Al-Karantina	Met in the African semi-focus group. He was instrumental in introducing me to members of his community to conduct full interview.
45	Nigeria	55	Male	Married	House decorator	June 2, 2009	Al-Karantina	Participated in the semi-focused group and assisted in referring the researcher to other members of his community.
46	Somal	24	Male	Single	Sells used cloth	June 15, 2009	Al-Kandra	No comment
47	Somal	36	Male	married	Construction worker	July 10, 2009	Al-Kandra	Participated in the semi-focused group and assisted in referring the researcher to other members of his community.
48	Eretria	22	Male	Single	Garbage remover	June 13, 2009	Al-Salamah	No comment
49	Somal	34	Female	Single	housemaid	June 14, 2009	Al-Salamah	Interviewed by research assistant
50	Ghana	36	female	married	housemaid	June 7, 2009	Al-Karantina	No comment.
53	Burkina Faso	47	Male	Married	Collects scraps such as glass and re-sell it		Al-Hindawiya	No comment
54	Cameroon	55	Male	Single	Part of the selling and buying stolen documents network	June 9, 2009	Ash-Sharafiya	No comment
7	Yemen	19	Male	Single	Sells near-expired goods	July 13, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	No comment
1	Yemen	32	Male	Married	Home decorator	July 14, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	No comment
9	Yemen	23	Male	Married	Herding animals	July 15, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	No comment
2	Yemen	31	Male	Married	Running small hotel reception	July 18, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	No comment
3	Yemen	27	Female	Married	Unemployed	July 19, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	Interviewed by the researcher's assistant.
4	Yemen	34	Male	Married	Unemployed	July 20, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	No comment
27	Born in Jeddah	17	Female	Single	Beggar	Feb. 5, 2010	Al-Jamaa	Both of this interviewee's parents were undocumented. Father from Yemen & mother from Burma. A living case of the agony of being born in Jeddah with no documents.
5	Yemen	21	Female	Single	Beggar	Feb. 6,	Al-Jamaa	No comment

			e			2010		
6	Yemen	25	Male	Married	Sells near-expired goods	Feb. 7, 2010	Al-Hindawiya	No comment
8	Yemen	31	Male	Married	Construction	Feb. 8, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	No comment
10	Yemen	30	Male	Married	Car painter	MAY 7, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	Learned car painting in Jeddah from an older Yamani and a Sudanese.
11	Yemen	44	Male	Married	Sales person	MAY 8, 2009	Al-Hindawiya	No comment
28	Yemen	26	Male	Married	Construction worker	June 9, 2009	As-Sinaiya (Bawadi)	No comment
14	Yemen	23	Male	Single	Printing office	Feb. 2, 2010	As-Sinaiya (Bawadi)	No comment
23	Yemen	19	Male	Single	Unemployed	Feb. 2, 2010	As-Sinaiya (Bawadi)	Participated in the semi-focused group and assisted in referring the researcher to other members of his community.
17	Yemen	32	Male	Single	Electrician	Feb. 3, 2010	Al-Jamaa	No comment
25	Yemen	27	Male	Married	Sells food products near shopping malls	Feb. 5, 2010	Al-Jamaa	No comment
26	Yemen	26	Male	Single	Sells vegetables	Feb. 6, 2010	Al-Jamaa	No comment
15	Yemen	24	Male	Single	Sells near-expired goods	Feb. 8, 2010	Al-Jamaa	No comment
24	Yemen	26	Male	Single	Carpenter	Feb. 10, 2010	Al-Jamaa	No comment
1	Philippines	47	Male	Married	Car painter	Feb. 10, 2010	Al-Bawadi	No comment
3	Philippines	35	Female	Married	Housemaid	Feb. 11, 2010	Al-Faysaliya	In addition to working as a Housemaid she recruits other Filipino females to work as housemaids. She charges around \$30 per individual & never deal with prospective Saudi families direct, but through phone only to avoid possible arrest.
17	Indonesia	33	Female	Married	Housemaid	MAY 12, 2009	Al-Zahra	No comment
7	Philippines	27	Female	Single	Housemaid /used to be a nurse	July 5, 2011	Al-Bawadi	Met in the semi-focused Filipino group and, later conducted a full interview with her and another Filipino female in a small Filipino restaurant in ASalamah district.
8	Indonesia	50	Female	Married	Hairdresser	July 6, 2011	Al-Bawadi	This interviewee also trains other Indonesian females to become professional hairdressers. She conducts a workshop/training in her own rented room.
32	Philipp	28	Femal	Single	Hair-	July 7,	Al-Bawadi	Participated in the semi-focused

	ines		e		dresser	2011		group and assisted in referring the researcher to other members of his community.
5	Philippines	27	Female	Single	House maid	July 8, 2011	Al-Faysaliya	No comment
13	Indonesia	44	Female	Single	House maid	July 9, 2011	Al-Zahra	Participated in the semi-focused group and assisted in referring the researcher to other members of his community.
5	Philippines	22	Male	Single	Computer technician	July 9, 2011	Al-Jamaa	Most of his customers are students and businessmen.
7	Philippines	23	Male	Single	Computer software technician	July 10, 2011	Al-Jamaa	Mostly advise students at nearby university resolves software's issues.
19	Indonesia	37	Male	Married	Tailor	July 10, 2011	Al-Zahra	No comment
	Philippines	26	Female	Single	House maid	July 12, 2011	Al-Bawadi	Aspires to study nursing once saved enough money.
9	Indonesia	50	Male	Married	Driver	July 13, 2011	Al-Faysaliya	No comment.

Glossary

Words in Arabic	Short definition
°Abāyah	Black dress used by Muslim women in the Middle East and North Africa.
Al-Baladiyyah	Local government authority supervising different districts in a city.
Biṭāqat al-aḥwāl	Saudi national identification card
Ḥayy	District or neighborhood.
Ḥajj	Annual pilgrimage to Makkah for Muslims who can physically and financially do it at least one time in their life, performed in a specific date in the Arabic calendar.
Ḥijāz	Literally means the barrier. It is also the name of a region in the West of present Saudi Arabia bordered on the West by the Red Sea, on the North by Jordan, on the East by Najd and on the South by Asir.
Ḥawālah	Arab word for transfer of money.
Imām	The Muslim prayer leader.
Iqamah	Residence permit issued to expatriates in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.
Jawāzāt	General Directorate of Passport responsible for the issue of iqamah.
Jurḥ	Arabic word for injury or emotional insult.
Kafālah	Arabic word for sponsorship system.
Kafīl	Arabic word for sponsor.
Lahja	Dialect or accent
Mabāhith	Secret police.
Madinah	Literally city in Arabic. Also name of the second holy city in Islam that Muslims visiting for Hajj or Umrah should visit after Makkah. It is the city to which the Prophet migrated to and where he was buried.
Mahr	Dowry
Makkah	The most ancient holy city in Islam located 70 km from Jeddah where the house of God was built by Ibrahim. Both Hajj and Umrah have to start in Makkah.
Makfūl	Individual sponsored by the kafeel.
Mutakhallif	Mutakhallif is an individual who comes for Hajj and Umrah and overstay their visa. Mutakhallifeen is the plural.
Niṭāqāt	Arabic word for area of zone. In this study indicates the programme implemented by the government for the saudisation of the labour force.
Qāt	qāt (Ghat) is an evergreen shrub native of the Horn of Africa and Yemen used by the local population for thousands of years but considered an illegal drug in Saudi Arabia and other countries.
Sharia law	The divine will of God that determines how Muslims should live their lives. Often (reductively) translated as Islamic law.
Shurṭah	Arabic word for police.
Thawb	Thobe is the traditional white gown for Saudi men.
°Umdah	A Saudi national appointed in each district of Jeddah by the Ministry of the Interior to act as a liaison between the government and the communities.
°Umrah	Minor Pilgrimage to Makkah that can be undertaken any time of the year, in contrast to Hajj which must be performed at a specific time (and has extra rites).

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