



## HUMAN SECURITY AND MIGRATION: HUMAN RIGHT VIOLATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF ETHIOPIAN MIGRANTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST

*Seada Hassen Endris*

African studies and international relations program  
Istanbul Commerce University, Turkey

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### Abstract:

*Migration is currently considered as one of the foremost issues that the world is dealing with. According to UNDESA 2017 report there exist 258 million international migrants globally in the year 2017 (United Nations, 2017). When it comes to being a migrant destination, the Middle East region is one of the major spots especially for migrant workers. The region is also a popular destination for Ethiopian migrants. It is estimated that 44% of Ethiopian migrants globally is found in the Middle East region (Kuschminder, et al., 2013). Ethiopians migrate to this region because of breach and omission of their social, economic and political rights in their home country. Moreover, they face various types and degree of human right abuses and violations in their way and destination to the Middle East. This article looks deep and analyzes the concept of human security and its implication in migration studies. Moreover, it emphasizes on challenges and human right violations that Ethiopian migrants face in their home country, in their way and destination in the Middle East that jeopardizes their human security. The article is written by reviewing and analyzing various academic works on the area and surveys and reports of governmental and nongovernmental organizations.*

### Keywords:

Human right violations of migrants, Migration, Human security, Ethiopian migrants, Ethiopian migrants in the Middle East

### 1. Introduction

As the main theme of this article is human security and migration, the article will review, discuss and analyses previous works done on these areas, focusing on Ethiopia and the Middle East. Broadly used meaning and definitions of human security, migration and migrant will be discussed. And arguments on the use of human security concept on migration studies, points on the current trends of Ethiopian migrants to the middle east, driving human security factors for migration from Ethiopia to the middle east, challenges and human right violations that Ethiopian migrants encountered through migration journey and destinations to the middle east, legal and administrative frameworks that are related and contribute to the challenges faced by migrants in both Middle Eastern countries and in Ethiopia are going to be evaluated and discussed.

For a theoretical discussion and fact findings various articles and studies by academicians, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, reports and documents of international organizations and civil societies and news reports are reviewed and used in this article.

### 2. Migration and Migrant: Conceptual Discussion

Migration is an age-old trend as old as the existence of human being itself (International Organization for Migration, 2018). Currently it became a conventional and international agenda being part of political and policy issue of countries (International Organization for Migration, 2018) It touches each country in one way or another, as being a source of migrants, as a passageway to migrants or as a destination. (Global Migration Group, 2008) With estimated number of 258 million migrants worldwide in 2017 (United Nations, 2017), and with its profound social, political, economic and security issues coming with it, migration is for sure among the main present day global issues.

Nevertheless, it is cited in different writings that there is no definite and fixed worldwide meaning and definition for international Migration and Migrant (Global Migration Group, 2008), (International Organization for Migration, 2018) This is because, generally migration was seen from national level and the meaning has differences from nation to nation (Global Migration Group, 2008), it differs depending on the perception and outlook (Global Migration Group, 2008) or depending on the exact area that it is going to be used, like if it is for legal purpose, research purpose or statistical purpose (International Organization for Migration, 2018). However, there are some definitions that are widely accepted and used like the one constructed by UNDESA (International Organization for Migration, 2018)

According to UNDESA recommendations on statistics of international migration 1998 report, International Migrant means “any person who changes his or her country of usual residence.” (United Nations, 1998). It additionally clarifies place of residence as “...the geographical place where the enumerated person usually resides.” (United Nations, 1998) Likewise, according to a document prepared by global migration group, an immigrant is defined as “... a person belonging to, or owing an allegiance to, one state and moving into another state for the purpose of settlement.” (Global Migration Group, 2008).

Furthermore, different factors could oblige to construct different kind of definition of migration and migrants. As it is pointed out in World Migration Report 2008, “...Geographic, legal, political, methodological, temporal and other factors...” (International Organization for Migration, 2018) could determine this. Consequently, different documents put more detailed and classified meaning of migrants based on different factors. The UNDESA recommendations 1998, for instance, further classifies international migrants to long term migrants and short-term migrants based on the time span they spent in the destination country as follows: -

“Long term migrant - A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), So that, the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. From the perspective of the country of departure the person will be a long-term emigrant and from that of the country of arrival the person will be a long-term immigrant.” (United Nations, 1998)

“Short term migrant – A person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least 3 months but less than a year (12 months) except in cases where the movement to that country is for purposes of recreation, holiday, visits to friends and relatives, business, medical treatment or religious pilgrimage. (United Nations, 1998)

In other side, the UN convention which is enacted for the protection of migrants set a definition for workers, who are immigrant as follows,

“Migrant worker refers 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.” (UN general assembly resolution 45/158, 1990)

Other more documents classify migration itself into different types. The 2008 world migration report put irregular migration as a movement takes place without following the proper rules of countries in origin, transporting and destination. And it further elaborates it saying, “...From the perspective of a destination country, irregular migration may imply entry, stay or work in a country without the necessary authorization or documents required under immigration regulations. From the perspective of a sending country, irregularity implies not fulfilling the administrative requirements for leaving the country, or leaving such country without a valid passport or travel document.” (International Organization for Migration, 2018)

In other hand, the report made by global migration group on migration and human rights, put another 3 types of classifications of migrations. Forced migration is when the migration is caused by some artificial or natural threats. And these threats became danger for the existence of those people and oblige them to migrate. Natural disasters and political instability are among these threats. (Global Migration Group, 2008) Transit migration is a regular or irregular journey of a person to arrive to a destination country or return back to his original country (Global Migration Group, 2008) and Return migration as a coming back of a person to his origin country following a stay in another country for at least one year voluntarily or involuntarily (Global Migration Group, 2008).

This same document made by the global migration group set definitions for other types of migrants. Among these are irregular migrants and environmental migrants. The document put the definition for irregular migrant citing International organization for migration’s glossary as follows “An Irregular Migrant is every person who, owing to undocumented 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 a 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) (Global Migration Group, 2008).

“Environmental Migrant An environmental migrant is characterized as a person who, for compelling reasons of sudden or progressive change in the environment that adversely affects his/her life or living conditions, is forced to leave his/ her habitual home and cross a national border, or chooses to do so, either temporarily or permanently.” (Global Migration Group, 2008)

In general, it is evidenced from the above discussion that migration being one of the hottest issues of states internationally right now, it is hard to conclude in one definition of what migration and migrant is. The diversified cause, traveling method, types of people involving, field and purpose of study make the terms open for multiple meaning and definitions. However, mostly used common points can be picked to identify international migration and migrants. Migration being the process, to say a person international migrant, he/she should move to another state from his/her origin state for the purpose of work or settlement temporarily or permanently.

### 3. Human Security

While explaining migration in studies, human security concept became a preferred approach by connecting and showing the root cause, effect and the solution of and for migration. The Human security concept is relatively a recent phenomenon. The concept emerges as a point of discussion after the Second World War (Fukuda-Parr & Messineo, 2012). Moreover, it gains a broad popularity and attention when the United Nations gives emphasis to it and draws its human development report in 1994 in light of this concept. (Kaldor, 2006) Traditionally security was associated only with attack and violence against nation’s sovereignty and territory. The actual threats against citizens or human beings were not a focus of security concept (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

Human security concept came into being in defying the concept of Westphalia, which puts the security of the state as the main focus. Opposing to that, human security concept put human being at the center of security discussions. It expands the discussion of security in many levels, in type and size. It is inclusive of issues from personal to international, from social to political, from local governments to nongovernmental organizations (Fukuda-Parr & Messineo, 2012).

According to human security commission, the shift from state security to human security is needed at this time of era. Basically because the state, the security provider, is not only unsuccessful of providing security but also appear as a threat of security to its own people, human security (Commission on Human Security, 2003).

UNDP cited that ‘the concept of human security stresses that people should be able to take care of themselves: all people should have the opportunity to meet their most essential needs and to earn their own living’ (United Nations Development Program, 1994). Human security is not about safeguarding a territory from weapon attacks anymore; rather it is securing human beings from danger and fear of hunger, disease, poverty, losing jobs, climate change and violence (United Nations Development Program, 1994). It emphasizes that the meaning of security should be diverted from its old meaning to people’s imminent issues. Security must focus on safeguarding humans through sustainable development rather than securing boundaries and border of nations through weapons (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

It further explains it saying, “... Human security can be said to have two main aspects. It means, first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And second, it means protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life-whether in homes, in jobs or in communities (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

The 1994 united nation’s development report underline that the concept of security should be interpreted broadly. Security should also be defined focusing on the real threats of humans rather than the bold image of war and weapons against nation states. The tangible insecurities of human beings encounter in a daily basis should be given the proper attention. Food insecurities, job insecurities, insecurities against gender, ethnic and religion based violence are the issues that are threaten humans’ life (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

Similarly, commission on human security defines human security as safeguarding the fundamental element of human lives to develop free and fulfilled humanity. It illustrates it as follows, “... Human security means protecting fundamental freedoms- freedoms that are the essence of life. It means protecting people from critical (severe) and pervasive (widespread) threats and situations. It means using processes that build on people’s strengths and

aspirations. It means creating political, social, environmental, economic, military and cultural systems that together give people the building blocks of survival, livelihood and dignity.” (Commission on Human Security, 2003).

Moreover, it stressed that human security’s definition should be dynamic, and open to broad interpretation, because what constitute a fundamental element of life in one place is different from the other. The definition should not be put in a way to strict and list those elements. (Commission on Human Security, 2003) Similar to this line, Shahrbanou and Tadjbakhsh argue that, there is no one definite meaning to human security. However, it is one fact that in this center the general center of discussion is changed from the state centered approach to people centered approach. (Shahrbanou, 2005)

The commission on human security put human security as a complement to state security. A concept that fills the gaps which state security concept doesn’t address and focus. It listed out four main areas that how human security complement state security. By making the individual and the community its focal point unlike state security, by including threats that weren’t consider as a threat in state security like environmental problems and HIV in its sphere, by broaden the variety of actors from only the state to multiple participants like regional and international organizations, nongovernmental organizations and civil societies and by not only protecting people but also enabling people to protect themselves, the human security concept complement the state security concept to coup up to the new created threats and challenges (Commission on Human Security, 2003).

In defining human security, the UNDP in its 1994 report pin point four major character of human security as well. Human security is not confined by territory. It is a worldwide issue. The degree and the type might differ, but it affects all countries irrespective of their economic condition. Its elements are also connected to each other. The rise of one human security in one nation will cause another one in other nation. Its effect is not stoppable in certain boundary. It is suggested that avoidance of human security threats before they happen is better than trying to stop it after. Moreover, the core of human security concept is the human being. It focuses on people’s livelihood, safety and opportunities (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

Even though security dangers and threats against citizens have a lot diversified aspects, the UNDP 1994 report grouped them in seven major classifications. The report sorted out human security threats as economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security and political security (United Nations Development Program, 1994). As a major document and start up point for human security concept it is important to discuss these classifications on UNDP 1994 report.

The document defines economic security as having a guaranteed income either from a useful and payable work or other social security programs. Economic insecurity is not only derived from not having a job and income but also from fear of losing a job in case of temporary jobs. In urban areas unemployment and under employment while in rural areas small share of land are identified as sources of income and economic insecurities of people (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

According to the UNDP 1994, Food security is when people can afford a necessary amount of food with a chance to physically access it. The fact that there is enough amount of food available in a country doesn’t necessarily mean there is a security of food; the people have to have the guarantee to access that food in a regular basis. So, both availability and accessibility should exist to say that there is food security. This ability to access food is only achievable with a sufficient financial revenues or benefits. Consequently, having a stable financial income is a prerequisite for a security of food as per the report (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

The report discusses Health insecurity in terms of what the major causes for it to happen are rather than defining it. Accordingly, the report cites that in developing countries, mostly health insecurity is related to infectious and parasitic diseases which are emanated from lower diet and hazardous environment. While in developed countries major health insecurities are usually associated with unhealthy diet and way of life. According to the report the poorest people are more vulnerable to the risk of health insecurities and also have less access for a medical help, in both developed and developing countries (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

Regarding Environmental security, the report refers that the environment is becoming more and more unsafe to live due to different environmental threats. Water scarcity and deforestation in developing countries and air pollution in developed countries are becoming a source for continuing environmental threats. As a result, draught and other natural disasters are endangering the human life (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

As per the document, Personal security includes hostilities that are really a danger for human life physically. These are the actions that threaten human body and life directly. These threats can come from the state itself, from other states in form of war, from other groups through ethnic and other conflicts, from other individuals to vulnerable

groups like women and children or it can be self-inflict danger from oneself in a form of suicide and drug use. Crimes and accidents are also the major risks which are included in this category (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

In explaining Community security, the report point out that there are times that families, groups or community could turn to a threat against its own individual members or to some group of its members. Traditional practices like female genital mutilation can be threats to women in a certain ethnic group which practice such activity. Attacks and clashes based on community groups are also among threats against society. Ethnic group clashes and conflicts on limited resources are one of the main threats of such kind (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

In defining Political security, the document state that “one of the most important aspects of human security is that people should be able to live in a society that honors their basic human rights” (United Nations Development Program, 1994). Human rights violations often committed by governments against their own citizens in forms of torture, ill treatment, imprisonment and oppression of freedom of press. These violations tend to happen more in time of conflict and even though police and the military are meant to be protect the people, they are among the main perpetrators of human rights violations as per the document (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

The document also points out that these human security threats are related to each other and one human security issue can cause the other one and can be a reason and a result at the same time. Furthermore, human security issues are not only confined in one nation, mostly they are cross-nationals. A human security issue that is a major problem in one country would be a cause to a rise of another country’s human security problem and became a global human security concern. This might happen in two ways; some become global human security concern because by its nature they are transnational issues like environmental problems. The effect of emission or deforestation that happened in one country doesn’t stay in the same particular country rather it will travel to all other boundaries which makes it a global human security threat. Other threats become global one when they cross country to country through people inter boundary movements. Immigration for better life or to escape conflict and prosecution fall under this (United Nations Development Program, 1994).

The UN works to develop a better meaning to human security with contribution of ideas from member states. In its 2005 world summit its general assembly decides the same. Consequently, series of discussions and informal deliberations within the general assembly were held in attempting for a more developed and workable definition of human security concept (UN General Assembly, 2012).

After all the deliberations and input of member states, the UN general assembly in its sixty sixth session came up with a standard meaning of the human security concept. This explanation tends to help members states to have a common understanding of the human security concept for implementation. According to this UN resolution, the core focus of human security is people and their right to reside in a world which is free of neediness and desperation. Create a status which enables people to have same chance without discrimination to exercise their rights and use their ability to improve themselves. Human security needs a complete and a variety of beforehand actions to enable all citizens and societies to build up and develop their safety. It also explains that human security is not about state security and it does not involve a forceful action to take. Human security might differ as per the nation’s distinct economic, social and political status and the period it happened, as a result, the solution could vary as pursuant to those specific situations. Furthermore, in identifying whose responsibility is keeping human security the resolution set some points as well. Even though, the main obligation in maintaining people’s rights to live in safety and freedom goes to governments, however, partnership and help with and between international organizations and governments is important in working on human security. Moreover, the resolution state that the application of human security should be in line with the charter of UN and should respect sovereignty of a nation in its internal matters (UN General Assembly, 2012).

In recent times the concept of human security gain attention and discussion among academicians and policy makers more and more. On a guidance note written by Oscar Gomez and Des Gasper, states that after the UN general assembly gave a regular definition for human security on 2012 countries’ human development reports became more inclusive of the human security concept. The fact that after 2012, around 45 countries prepared their development reports by referring directly or indirectly to the human security concept shows the same truth. (Gomez & Des Gasper, 2013) Ethiopian human development report of the year 2018 is also evident that this approach has been taking in reporting developmental reports in the country (United Nation Development Program Ethiopia, 2018).

#### 4. Human Security Approach in Migration Studies

Studies show that, human security approach in migration studies is better in explaining and examining migration. Des gasper and Giulia Sinatti argue that commonly the usual migration research approaches are focused on the problems immigrant host countries encounter because of migration. The insecurities the immigrants faced and their personal story and feelings are not touched usually. Human security approach is more human focused and can deeply show not only the bigger picture of economic insecurities and nation focused problems but the social and psychological difficulties and insecurities of migrants. “The human security approach combines the person-focus with a systematic way of investigating the opportunities and vulnerabilities of complex persons, and a worldwide frame in explanation as well as evaluation”. (Gasper & Giulia Sinatti, 2016) Thus human security approach can analyze and explain better in migration study (Gasper & Giulia Sinatti, 2016).

Similarly, Francesca Vietti and Todd Scribner argues that the traditional state security model deals with migration by securing borders, under human security approach securing borders is less focused and the emphasis is on the sources that led people to migration. State centered approach deal with migration at the final stage of migration while human security approach looks for the root causes for it and how to eliminate the problem. Working to eliminate on human security issues will lead to a reduced international migration. Consequently, they conclude that, human security gives better workable directions than the old state security approach in migration studies (Vietti & Todd , 2013).

They also acknowledge that, however, the traditional state centered approach is still important in finding out that which organ or country should take accountability and work towards curbing immigration’s societal, economical and humanitarian problems. Principle of sovereignty stay intact and usually the state will be accountable for working towards eliminating the humanitarian and societal problems, provided that international and regional help when needed (Vietti & Todd , 2013).

Additionally, Anuar H. stated that Migration studies conducted with human security perspective demand to examine social, political and economic aspects that led to migration and migrants’ situations in host countries. Migrants mostly considered and treated as dangers for host countries in terms of social, economic and cultural aspects. Human security perspective, by focusing on individual persons rather than the state, will help to examine and find out what the social, economic and political challenges that migrants encounter starting from their origin country, in course of their journey and destinations (Tsega, 2016).

Huysmans & Squire Put both state security and human security approaches of migration studies as problematic. They argue that both approaches tend to conceptualize migration as a threat. Both approaches work to secure either the security of state or security of humans, or sometimes security of both the state and humans. By doing so, they tend to add free movement of humans into a field of security and migration to be seen as a ‘security threat’. This in turn will result into justifying marginalization and different treatment of migrants as being shown now in Europe, North America and Australia (Huysmans & Squire, 2009).

As a result, they argue that, state and human security approaches have restraints in addressing all the sociological, political and normative relation of security and migration. Moreover, the state security approach completely ignores to analyze the normative aspect of migration, it doesn’t touch effects of securitizing migration as to marginalization, violence and inequities. Additionally, it restricts the social and political issues into national security of states and as an issue of state relations (Huysmans & Squire, 2009).

In other side they acknowledge that in contrary to state security approach human security approach give an emphasis on normative aspects of migration and be able to see and analyze migration further than only nation’s security aspect, however, even this approach doesn’t go further to find a middle place in between the two different arguments of security in migration, state security and human security (Huysmans & Squire, 2009).

In summary, the human security approach to migration study is better in explaining migration from the root and in finding a solution for it. From the review discussion it is understandable that the human security concept is important in studying migration deep and helpful in connecting the causes and results of migration.

#### 5. Human Security Threats as a Reason for Migration and Human Right Violations; Ethiopian Case

Various push factors are responsible for migrants to migrate to the Middle East countries from Ethiopia. Migrating in search of a job and a better life being the major cause, as a root factor studies shows other environmental, social and political reasons as causes of migration. Mohammed in his study on the cause and consequences of illegal

migration in Kutaber Wereda, a place which is one of the major sources of migrants to Middle East from Ethiopia, find out that, the main reason for women in the area to migrate to the region is the absence of job opportunity in the country. He indicates that from this area 60% of illegal migration is attributed to economic reasons and the rest of 40% to non-economic reasons. (Mohammed, 2016). Additionally, a study on Migration Routes in the East and Horn of Africa by Maastricht graduate school of governance (MGSOG) puts the social, economic and political condition in the country as a driver to migration. Among the social factors the high number of population, the spread of 'culture of migration' and bad attitude against the returnee migrants in to the society are pointed out in the study. (Maastricht graduate school of governance, 2017). Similarly, ILO also pinpoint that even if Ethiopia's economy is in the process of growing but the fact that it is not bringing much change on the poverty of the people and in creating enough job opportunities became a push factor for migration. Furthermore, regular drought and environmental problems are revealed as reasons for people to migrate for a better life as well (International Labour Organization, 2017) consequently, having unsecured economic status coupled with social, environmental and political factors push Ethiopians to migrate to the middle east. Moreover, these human security factors that drives the citizens from home will continue in different forms through their migration processes.

Migrants encounter lot of challenges and human right abuses in trying to travel to migration destinations and upon arrival, by brokers, smugglers, agencies, in detention centers and by employers. These challenges are of many kinds including physical and physiological abuses. Studies show that most Ethiopian migrants to the Middle East choose the irregular route of migration for different reasons. As per a study conducted by Mohammed the lengthy process and the near unavailability of legal migration organs make a lot of migrants to choose irregular ways (Mohammed, 2016). Similarly, according to human rights watch, of the estimated 10 million migrant workers in Saudi Arabia, up to 500,000 are Ethiopian nationals, many of whom travel irregularly to Saudi Arabia via Yemen (Human Rights Watch, 2018). The illegal routes expose migrants for different human right abuses. According to Maastricht university study, Ethiopian migrants who use the irregular route through Yemen to get to the Middle East are most vulnerable to different types of violations. "Many cases of abductions, robberies, extortion, physical and sexual assault have been reported to have happened during the sea crossings from Djibouti and Somalia to Yemen as well as upon arrival in Yemen." (Maastricht graduate school of governance, 2017) Moreover, migrants even face dangers like death and murder. According to ILO report the crossing of the sea is taking place by boats, lot of them die in the process due to harsh weather and overcrowding (International Labour Organization, 2017).

Human rights watch reports that migrants and refugees from Ethiopia and horn of Africa encounter lot of abuses in Yemen detention center. Authorities in Yemen forced the migrants arriving in Yemen to return back to the risky sea which endanger migrants' life. Additionally beating, stealing belongings, sexual abuse and assault on women, girls and boys, fatal shootings, killings and starvation were some of the violations on migrants performed by the guards in detention center in Yemen, reported by human rights watch. (Human Rights Watch, 2018)

News and reports about sinking of boats, which carry whole lot of Ethiopian migrants in the red sea, are regular. BBC report on June 06, 2018 that out of 100 Ethiopian migrants that was on a smugglers' boat trying to cross from Bosaso, Somalia to Yemen 46 of them died due to drowning and 16 of them missing. (BBC, 2018) Similarly, on another BBC news on December 7, 2014 70 migrants, mostly Ethiopian nationals, reported killed when a boat sunk due to a bad weather, trying to cross to Yemen. (BBC, 2014)

For Ethiopian migrants who can pass all these challenges and make it to 'their dream place', other types of challenges will wait for them in their destinations countries of the Middle East. These abuses and challenges in destination countries come from their employers and families mostly. As Dusit Abdi Ali illustrates it the migrants encounter discrimination and maltreatment based on their ethnicity and race (Ali , 2018). Mohammed in his study also explains that Ethiopian migrant women in the middle east obliged to work long time, get refused to be paid their wages, sexually attacked, denied food and medication, attacked physically and emotionally and subjected to insult and bad words (Mohammed, 2016).

Similarly, a study held by Selamawit Bekele explain that how migrant workers obliged to work for 18 to 24 hours per day without rest, to hide their religion and act as Muslims if they are not one, not be able to contact their families, exposed to physical injury by their employers like beating and pushing down to stairs and denial to get medical treatments (Woldemichael, 2013). Additionally, the abuses and maltreatment don't only perform by employers. There are instances that agency personnel (Woldemichael, 2013), brokers, smugglers and even embassies commit violations and treat migrants improperly (Maastricht graduate school of governance, 2017).

Bina Fernandez illustrates that multiple types of exploitation exerted on migrant domestic workers. The workers forced to do extra works that are not included in their contract and extra hours without extra payment. Additionally, verbal humiliations, restrictions in movement, forbidding adequate rest and sleep and forbidding communication with family and friends are common violations (Fernandez, 2014).

Due to such kind of physical, psychological and verbal abuses and challenges of migrant workers through their journey and destination, when returning back home, they are highly likely of getting mental illness and sever physical injuries. Zeleke, Waganesh, Abebaw Minaye and Gibbs Kygana, in their study on mental health of migrant returnees from Middle East, concluded that mental health is a big problem among Ethiopian returnees. They explain that mental health problem exist in one in four (24 percent) returnee migrants, and 23 percent of migrants show somatic symptoms. Additionally, they found out that the average mental disorder symptom among Ethiopian returnees is higher than the overall national average (Zeleke, et al., 2015).

Woldemichael, S. in her study illustrates a story of women who came back from the Middle East with a brutal wound on the hand and a broken leg, due to a burn with boiled water and pushed down from the first floor of an apartment by their employers respectively (Woldemichael, 2013).

In the worst scenarios, there are deaths of Ethiopian domestic workers, which made headlines. The daily star reported the death of a 26 years old woman called lembibo, Ethiopian migrant domestic worker drowning in a swimming pool in her agent's house in Lebanon, on August 2018. She is allegedly found dead after her former employers return her to her recruiting agent with a severe psychological and physical condition (The Daily Star, 2018). According to the national, every week, up to two domestic workers died in Lebanon, mostly by suicide or trying to escape from their employers (Hall, 2018). As a result, Ethiopian migrants are exposed to multiple human right violations and events that abuse their human dignity and security throughout the migration process to the Middle East. Among multiple factors that contribute to this, legal and administrative frameworks of the sending and destination countries are one of them. The next sub topic will explore that.

## 6. Middle East Legal and Administrative Frameworks on Migration and Migrants

It is a regular phenomenon for migrants to the Middle East to be exposed for lot of violations and abuses, in their journey and destinations. These challenges are associated to different reasons. Legal and administrative frameworks of migrant source and destination countries are cited as some grounds for it. The complicated migration processes and legal and administrative failures in protecting migrants, exposed migrants to dangers and risks.

A lot of studies consider the Kafala system in Middle East countries as one main reason for breach of rights of migrants. According to human rights watch 'Kafala system is a visa sponsorship system where a worker's visa and legal status is tied to her/his employer' (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Basically, this system allows a two year employment contract in which the employer cover the expenses for employee's recruitment, medical and visa expense to the destination country. Moreover, the national identity card, iqama, of the employee will be associated to the employer, and the employee cannot go out of the country or change work place without permission from the employer (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Human rights watch state that this system tends to give tremendous power to employers to control employees. Many employers use these to exploit and violate their employees and their rights (Human Rights Watch, 2018). Similarly, Bina Fernandez states that migrant domestic workers are the most vulnerable groups for violations, out of migrant workers, in the Kafala system. This is basically because of they are confined at homes and are not allowed to contact to the outside (Fernandez, 2014).

The exclusion of migrant domestic workers from the labor laws is mentioned as another reason for migrant domestic workers exposure for violations. A human rights watch report shows that Saudi Arabia, a major destination for Ethiopian migrants, excludes domestic workers from labor law protection, which leave domestic workers even more vulnerable to violations exceptionally (Human Rights Watch, 2018).

Shukria Yusuf in her study mentions that this exclusion of domestic workers from labor law leaves the domestic workers' destiny to be decided by the free will of their employers than the protection of the law or the court (Omer, 2015). Saudi approved regulation improving the exiting labor law in the country regarding domestic workers, in 2013. The regulation gives better protection to domestic workers and regulates both the responsibility and rights of employer and employees to some extent, in terms of work time, daily break and leaves. And also put an obligation on the employees to obey their employer and their family and perform their job rightly, not to refuse performing a job given to them or leave their work without a proper reason (Omer, 2015). However, Shukria citing the ILO mention



that, even though this regulation shows some development in protecting migrant domestic workers in Saudi Arabia, it is not enough and comprehensive. It doesn't touch multiple other areas which expose this group of workers for violations, like confiscation of passport document by employers and a chance of changing their employer or leave the country only in the will of the employer. Apart that, the regulation doesn't have penal sanctions and is not practiced that much in the ground (Omer, 2015).

Additionally, Bina Fernandez point out that, the fact that most relevant international conventions on migrant workers are not ratified by the GCC countries or not get practiced properly make the vulnerability of domestic migrant workers high in the region. Fernandez refers that, important conventions like ILO convention No.189 on domestic workers, ILO Convention No. 143 on migrant workers and UN International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICPRMW) are not ratified by the GCC countries (Fernandez, 2014). This has its own negative effect in protecting migrant workers' rights since these conventions provide legal grounds for better protection of migrant workers in all aspects. Moreover, Fernandez cite that the issue is not only that these important conventions are not ratified but also the ones that are ratified by most GCC countries like ILO conventions related to labor, right to organize and against discrimination are not easily reachable to the migrants and are not practically used (Fernandez, 2014).

## **7. Ethiopia Legal and Administrative Frameworks on Migration and Migrants**

In the other side, it is also shown in different studies that legal and administrative issues and challenges in Ethiopia are also contributing effects to exposing migrants for difficulties and violations of rights. Mohammed in his study point out that even though the private employment agency law of the country obliges the sending agencies to give the necessary information about the condition of work and destination country before signing to employment contracts, in practice the agencies not only doesn't give a proper information about working conditions but also gives an idealistic image about the destination countries. This situation leads migrants to migrate without knowing what they are going to face in their destinations (Mohammed, 2016).

Ethiopian migrants mostly choose the illegal migration route to the middle east. And it is more dangerous and put migrants' life and safety at risk and their rights for violations, in journey and destinations. This choice of illegal route comes from different grounds. According to Mohammed's study migrants choose to migrate illegally to avoid the lengthy processes in the legal route. Apart that the legal agencies are not mostly easily accessible from migrant workers resident areas and migrants must wait for quiet sometimes to get a job through these agencies. Moreover, the unorganized method of the whole legal migration process also cited as contributing factor (Mohammed, 2016).

Additionally, as per a study by Ashine, Ethiopia did not ratify the important UN and ILO international conventions which give better protection for migrants, i.e. Palermo Protocol, the first international instrument that provided an internationally accepted definition of trafficking in persons, the Migration for Employment Convention of 1949 (No. 97), the Migrant Workers Convention of 1975 (No. 143), the UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (ICMW) are not ratified by Ethiopia. Accordingly, the study recommended that Ethiopia should ratify these conventions to better protect migrant workers (Ashine, 2017).

Additionally, after migration, when citizens come back to their home country, given the traumas and challenges they have passed thorough, a system which enables them to recover emotionally and psychologically is necessary. Helping them to integrate with the society in both psychological and economic terms is important. However, lack of rehabilitation center and integration works for migrant returnees in Ethiopia is weak (Ali, 2018). Consequently, exposing migrant returnees to face migration again, despite their bad experiences, or to live somehow isolated and tabooed in the society.

## **8. Conclusion**

The Middle East takes a high portion of Ethiopian migrants out of all Ethiopian migrants globally. The fact that most Ethiopian migrants to this region being women, less educated, engaged in domestic works and use irregular routes to reach to their destinations make them the most vulnerable group for human right violations and threats. The discussions above show that Ethiopian migrants encounter multiple security issues and threats. These threats stretched in time span, from home country through transit and destinations, and in types from emotional and psychological abuse to losing a life.

As human security concept put it, human security issues can be a cause and/or result to peoples' insecurities. This fact is evidenced the same in Ethiopian case. The studies show that Ethiopians don't have the secured economy or job for their survival, and this by itself create insecurity about their very existence at home country. Furthermore, by being main reason for migration it became a cause for other types of insecurities in their life as physical injuries, psychological damage and even life threats. Other reasons for migration, being related to the environmental degradation, societal and cultural pressures, political threats and poverty, are directly connected to the human security concept and issues. Furthermore, the discussion also indicates that administrative and legal conditions in origin and destination countries as contributing factors for the encountered human security issues.

Governments are in duty to protect citizens' human rights. These include in working to provide citizens with enough economic and financial needs that able citizens to have a secured life. However, the government's failure in providing the necessary economic security exposes Ethiopians to various human right abuses coming with migration. Moreover, destination countries of the Middle East countries contribute and participate in the inhuman treatment and violations by putting disadvantageous laws and administrative procedures for migrant workers. Consequently, both Ethiopia and Middle Eastern countries should work on mainly, in enhancing the economic rights of citizens and for the betterment of migrant and migration laws to create a safe and better environment for migrant citizens.

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