

The mediating role of traditional and social media in African migration journeys

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Abstract

Migrants face multifaceted challenges during migration journeys. The ability to communicate among themselves or with migration intermediaries has been instrumental in defining migrants' experiences as well as the outcomes of their migration. The horde of challenges migrants to a new destination face, including in terms of their adaptation and communication, have been significantly bridged by information and communications technology (ICT) (Holmes and Janson, 2008). Human mobility is impacted both positively and negatively by technology which now provides a range of channels of communication options which are important in migration networks. Furthermore, the ease with which information may now be shared online and the new communication capabilities made possible by the advancement of internet technologies, have led to a proliferation of social media content (Pan and Crotts, 2012). As one of the online media options available to migrants worldwide, social media plays a pivotal role in their lives. Borkert et al. (2010) conceptualise migration as incorporating both geographical mobility and digital mobility as migrants use social media for a wide range of migration-related activities including as sources of information, communication, networking, intelligence gathering and for promoting social ties. The significance and impact of new technologies in migration, including social media and mobile phones, especially for migrants in and from Africa, came to the fore during the so-called migrant crisis in Europe in 2015 (Stremlau and Tsalapatani 2022; Santos, 2023). My presentation will reflect on how migrants increasingly use media platforms and technologies to facilitate pre-migration planning, the execution of migration journeys and the maintenance of social networks across different spatial levels.

Biography

Leander Kandilige is an Associate Professor of Migration at the Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana. He obtained his DPhil. (PhD.) in Migration Studies from the University of Oxford and an MSt. in Forced Migration also from the University of Oxford. He also holds a PGCert. in Managing Voluntary Organisations from the University of Southampton. In addition, he holds an MA in International Affairs and a BA in Political Science with Philosophy from University of Ghana. His areas of academic research interest include migration policy formulation; migration and development; labour mobility and regional integration; labour

migrations in Africa; return migration and reintegration and theories of migration. He has been Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator and Researcher for several large projects that have been funded by diverse international funders such as the AU, ILO, OECD, IOM, ICMPD, UKRI/GCRF, GIZ, EU and ECOWAS.