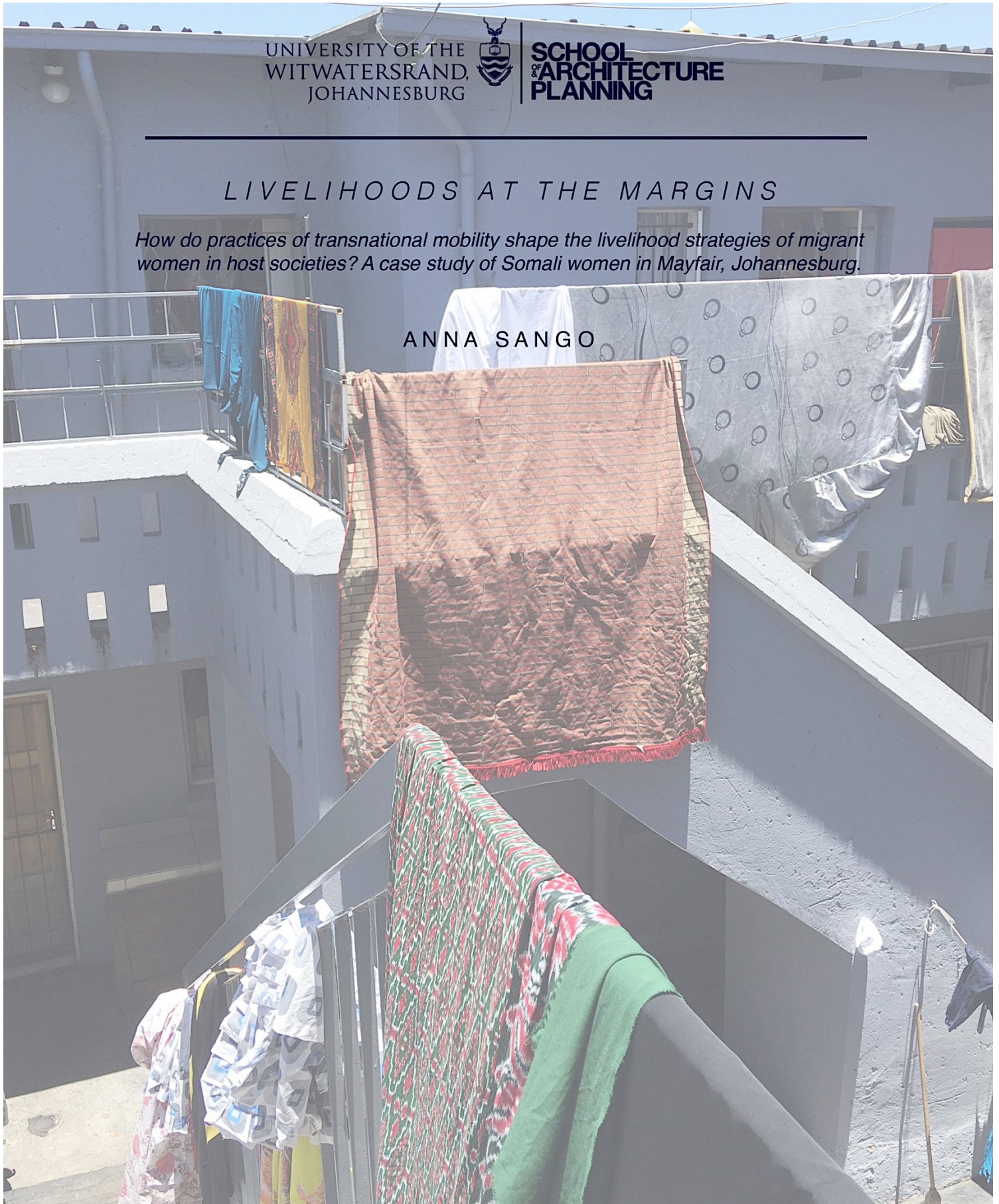




LIVELIHOODS AT THE MARGINS

How do practices of transnational mobility shape the livelihood strategies of migrant women in host societies? A case study of Somali women in Mayfair, Johannesburg.

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A research report submitted to the Faculty of Engineering and the Built Environment, University of the Witwatersrand, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Development Planning.

Johannesburg, 20 September 2019

Declaration.

I declare that this research report is my own unaided work. It is being submitted to the Degree of Master of Science in Development Planning to the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination to any other University. None of the information used in the research report has been obtained while employed by, or working under the aegis of, any person or organisation other than the University.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large loop and a horizontal stroke extending to the right.

.....
20th day of September, 2019

Abstract.

In the African context, cross-border mobility has been a livelihood strategy since the precolonial era and has provided individuals and communities with improved survival means, expanding their opportunities, and maintaining and building social relations across various contexts (Nyamnjoh, 2006: 2). The migration of women is increasingly becoming a normalised and essential livelihood strategy for African communities “amidst failing economies, a deterioration of quality of life, civil wars, and the absence of viable choice” (Kihato, 2013: 62). However, South African cities are shaped by contradictory practices of urban governance, development planning practices, as well as policies and attitudes towards cross-border mobility (Nyamnjoh, 2006 and Kihato, 2007). Practices of mobility destabilise the legitimacy and authority of the state (Kihato, 2007), as well as notions of how we understand space. This has direct implications on development planning thought and practice which, due to colonial legacies, often fails to accommodate the socio-spatial strategies of marginal actors in African cities (Harrison, 2006).

This study acknowledges the challenge that mobility poses for development planning in Johannesburg by exploring the diversity and hybridity of urban practices shaped by migration. Through a focus on the experiences of Somali women living in the Somali transnational social space of Mayfair, Johannesburg, the study seeks to uncover the interrelated relationship between gendered power relations, transnational mobility and the agency behind migrant women’s livelihood strategies. The study employs an analytical feminist framework of ‘gendered geographies of power’ (Mahler and Pessar, 2001) in order to explore the ways in which patriarchal, classist and nationalist practices shape processes of mobility and urbanisation. Ultimately, the study aims to question and confront the ways in which the intimate power dynamics within migrant groups in host cities, and across African borders, facilitate new ways of seeing and thinking about the African city.

This is an intervention. A message from that space in the margin that is a site of creativity and power, that inclusive space where we recover ourselves, where we move in solidarity to erase the category colonised/coloniser. Marginality as a site of resistance. Enter that space. Let us meet there.

- bell hooks (1989)

Acknowledgements.

A journey that has truly tested my strength and discipline. A journey that has been a site of immense healing and growth. I could not have completed this research report without the incredible Somali women who took time out of their lives to share their stories with me. I hope that my work here does your narratives justice. You have all taught me to carry myself with the utmost of strength in the toughest of times.

To the incredible people in my life, you are unending light and love. Thank you.

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ONE. Introduction

1. Background – gender and mobility on the African continent

The character of African urban centres and economies, such as Johannesburg, are shaped by practices of mobility and a hybridity of urban practices (Harrison, 2006). Simone (2008: 69) argues that “African cities are characterized by incessantly flexible, mobile, and provisional intersections of residents that operate without clearly delineated notions”. This research attempts to highlight the critical role that practices of mobility have in sustaining and shaping communities, while allowing individuals and communities to expand, or secure, livelihood practices in precarious contexts. Due to the precarious nature of various socio-economic contexts on the African continent, as well as the reality of climate change, migration will inevitably continue to shape African cities and the livelihoods of those who migrate. The everyday livelihood practices of migrants, in African cities, do not only depend on their mobility within their host society, but also on the transnational mobility of social capital, networks and the associated practices of transnationalism. These potentially influence the ways in which migrants are able to position themselves in host societies within spaces of transnational urbanism. Further, in relation to sustaining livelihoods, these mobile practices affect the choices that migrants make within host spaces, particularly in instances where extensive remittance networks are in play (Thompson, 2016: 122). The study recognises that using the term ‘transnational mobility’ as opposed to ‘migration’, addresses not only the inequalities present in the embodiment of movement, but also that “mobility generates encounters, and encounters shape relationships” (Nyamnjoh, 2013: 674).

Broadly, practices of mobility and immobility shape the way that Africans are able to locate themselves on the continent (Nyamnjoh, 2013). Africans are expected to be immobile and their movements across the continent are treated as anomalies, while the representation of this mobility is commonly associated with negativity (Ibid: 660). Nyamnjoh (2013: 659) argues that “those who permit African mobility do so selectively” through state laws privileging the mobility of, particularly, highly-skilled, wealthy individuals (Faist, 2013: 1642). On a global scale, neoliberal globalisation has privileged the movement of global capital, while limiting the movement of global labour, particularly from and within marginal economies in Africa where labour exceeds capital (Nyamnjoh, 2006: 1). Although globalisation continues to intensify and accelerate flows, this has also resulted in the acceleration of closures, such as “borders, divisions and violent strategies of exclusion” (Ibid). This is reinforced by Truong and Gasper (2008: 286), who state that:

“neo-liberal governance imposes a bifurcated vision of human movement across borders: favourable treatment of trade-related forms of movement and unfavourable control of those who are on the move through precarious means seeking to secure livelihoods and settlement.”

Mbembe (2018) critiques the construct of borders, and 'borderisation', by arguing that "increasingly, they are the name used to describe the organised violence that underpins contemporary capitalism". A further contradiction of the flows associated with neoliberal globalisation is the ease with which cultures and ideologies circulate; however, violent strategies of exclusion have been exacerbated by greater obsessions with citizenship and belonging (Nyamnjoh, 2006: 2). In this context xenophobia becomes a tool to build boundaries and assert difference (Ibid) specifically based on the "dead spaces of non-connection" (Mbembe, 2018) that borders between nation-states create. Crush et al. (2017: 4) argue that the actual removal of border controls, particularly within the SADC region, may not change migratory flows as the region is already highly mobile. The removal of border controls will, however, provide legal means for those who wish to migrate, as well as reduce corruption from state officials at border crossings reducing "the exploitation of migrants who enjoy few rights and protections" (Ibid).

1.1 Migration, development planning and the state

Migration, as argued by Crush et al. (2017: 1), poses a challenge to development; however, it is also a process that can be harnessed for inclusive development and economic growth in Southern Africa. Migratory patterns in Southern Africa follow the uneven trajectory of development in nations within the region (Ibid). As a result, South Africa has become one of the main destinations for migrants from the region, as well as other parts of the continent (Ibid). Migration linked to economic and livelihood opportunities continues to increase, as well as the instances of informal and unregulated border crossings (Ibid: 2). Migratory patterns within the Southern African region fall into the South-South category, where migration occurs between developing countries posing challenges to both sending and receiving nations (Ibid). In South Africa, migrants tend to find employment, or are self-employed, within the informal sector. Kihato (2007, 274) argues that:

"the informal sector is not just a livelihood strategy employed by vulnerable households, it is an alternative regime which has an institutional framework that governs and regulates activities such as housing, transport, employment"

Informal sector activities may also have positive impacts on the grassroots development practices of migrants who send remittances to members in home communities (Crush et al., 2017: 3). Migrant businesses are also able to create employment opportunities, provide cheaper services to locals and contribute to municipal revenue through the payment of operating licences (Ibid). However, both a lack of capital and exclusionary state practices and attitudes towards migrants' limits the survival of their businesses and exacerbates the precarious conditions in which they form their livelihood strategies.

Due to the nature and scale of mobility on the continent it is difficult to quantify migrant populations (Kihato, 2007: 266). Current strategies of deterring practices of migration through higher levels of border controls and raids of migrant owned businesses do not deter the flow of migrants into urban centres (Ibid: 271). Migrants often do not want to be seen by the state due to their lack of legal status in the country; thus, they choose to remain administratively illegible (Ibid). This poses a challenge to local governments as they are unable to plan for populations that they are unable to see. Further, migration management does not fall under the mandate of local government, although the impacts of migration significantly impacts functions at a municipal level. Thus, Kihato (2007, 271) argues that the very structure of urban governance in South African cities “implies that marginal populations are destined to remain marginalised”. Ultimately, practices of high levels of mobility in Johannesburg, and other urban centres in Africa, challenge development planning practices. Planning practices guiding local spatial and infrastructure development plans often rely on an understand that population groups are, and will remain, geographically fixed for long periods of time (Kihato, 2007: 275). However, as Kihato (2007: 275) argues, the idea that population groups are mostly immobile is a “falsehood in many African cities”. She calls for a need to rethink the ways in which populations are understood by local officials in African cities.

Kihato (2007, 263) notes that practices of mobility destabilise the legitimacy and authority of the state. However, these practices also destabilise and disrupt notions of how we understand space. This has direct implications on development planning thought and practice which, due to the longstanding implications of colonialism, “overruled many other logistics of place-making, leaving multiple spatial practices either hidden or categorised as informal or even illegal” (Harrison, 2006: 325). Thus, the challenge of development planning practice in post-colonial African cities is to find new ways of seeing and thinking that accommodates the socio-spatial and livelihood practices of individuals and communities who navigate marginality and domination (Ibid). Recognising that the role of planning is to remain “closely aligned to contemporary imaginings of the city and of governance that are rooted in metaphors of webs, networks and interactive relationships” (Ibid: 319).

1.2 Migration and policy in South Africa

Initiatives that accommodate mobility at a regional level, in Southern Africa, are often contradicted by national policies which restrict the mobility of migrants across borders, as well as within the host society (Crush et al, 2017: 4). Governments in the region tend to view migration negatively “leading to a disjuncture between initiatives to facilitate movement and co-ordinate migration for

development at the continental and regional level” (Ibid; 1). For example, the case study undertaken by Kihato (2013) of migrant women in Johannesburg indicates that South African policies and attitudes towards migrants and refugees negatively limit economic and livelihood opportunities for those who arrive in the country. A lack of policy protection for refugees and ‘unskilled’ migrants also leaves them vulnerable to exploitation (Nyamnjoh, 2006: 2), as – without valid documentation – migrants are not able to apply for employment rights in South Africa (Landau, 2007: 65).

In the South African context, police and local government officials have used regulatory practices such as ‘Operation Cleansweep’, in Johannesburg, and ‘Operation Hardstick’, in Limpopo, under the guise of eradicating informal sector activities, to displace foreign nationals at a rate significantly higher than local business owners in the same area (Crush et al., 2015). Many South African state officials, such as the police, hold hostile attitudes towards foreigners who they believe, whether they are legal or illegal, to be criminals (Kihato, 2013: 100). State practices towards migrants in South Africa have, however, been contradictory. Much of these contradictions are rooted in the tension that exists between the state’s juridical framework and the prejudices and moral frameworks of police officials, as well as their desire to maintain trust within the host communities in which they carry out their duties (Ibid). During the xenophobic violence that broke out in South African cities in 2008, migrants and refugees had to turn to the state and state officials for protection: “foreign migrants, who ordinarily avoid the police, and have violent encounters with the Red Ants, were now dependent on them for protection” (Kihato, 2013: 96). Many of the contradictory practices towards migrants in South Africa expose the reality that they are constantly caught in a liminal legal framework, their individual and communal presence distilled to mere statistics with no clear picture of how they fit into South African society (Ibid: 98).

In order to access documentation, refugees and migrants face a number of bureaucratic barriers “characterised by ever-growing wait times for status decisions, increased barriers for application and renewal of permits, and growing disregard for refugee law and court orders” (Crush et al. 2017: 752). Although this is the current reality, the South African government proposes the implementation of more stringent refugee policies, in the form of the 2016 Refugees Amendment Act, to counter the country’s post-apartheid legacy of leniency towards refugee protection policies (Ibid). Amendments to the asylum-seeker policies are based on the South African government’s claim that 90% of asylum seekers are economic migrants and not refugees, although researchers indicate that 50% are economic migrants (Crush et al. 2017: 11). In the new Green Paper, the South African government proposes:

“a controversial overhaul of the refugee protection system which would make it far more difficult for migrants to claim asylum, remove their right to pursue an economic livelihood, and confine asylum-seekers to ‘reception centres’ until their cases are adjudicated.” (Crush et al., 2017: 11)

These amendments seek to move away from strategies based on integrating asylum-seekers into South African society, while they await decisions on their refugee status, to a model based on encampment. This would entail the establishment of “Asylum-Seeker Processing centres away from the country’s urban areas” in “detention centres close to the Zimbabwe and Mozambique borders” (Crush et al., 2017: 756). While awaiting status determination, migrants would not be able to work or have access to their communities, unless they are deemed ‘low-risk’ by the South African government (Ibid: 757). Status determination periods are envisioned to take 60 - 90 days (Ibid), leaving migrants (who may have families to support) in limbo in detention centres for up to 3 months. Further, the South African government has already closed down half of the refugee receiving centres in the country, leaving only three open in Musina, Pretoria and Durban (Ibid: 758), adding further pressure to an already under-resourced system. Current asylum seekers are forced to renew their permits as frequently as one to six months (Ibid). Crush et al. (2017: 759) highlight the incredible challenge this administrative hurdle places on asylum seekers. Many have to make the journey to Marabastad, in Pretoria, on a specific day where permits are allocated to specific countries. They wait in long queues without much guarantee of reaching the front on that particular day, which means that they many may have to make a second trip after 4 days when their country will once again be catered for. Otherwise, officials are willing to take bribes of R2 000 to take you to the front of the queue. All in all, the increasingly stringent refugee policies in South Africa, not only infringe of the rights of migrants seeking economic security and safety in the country, they also seek to make South Africa an unattractive country for migrants (Crush et al., 2017). Although some of these changes are proposed and have not yet been implemented (which means that they do not all affect the respondents in this study) it is still important to understand the ways in which state policies and attitudes towards migrants significantly dictate the ways in which they are able to position themselves within host societies (Kihato, 2013).

1.3 Gender and migration

Migration, within the Southern African region is increasingly undergoing feminisation (Crush et al., 2017: 2). However, Crush et al. (2017: 2) highlight that there is generally a lack of data available on migrant women’s occupations and flows of migration in the region. Similarly, Kihato (2013: 19) argues that urban centres, like Johannesburg, have a long history of hosting migrant women; however, “few studies have stressed women’s roles in shaping the urban environment, economy,

and geography.” For example, migrant women take part in a number of transnational practices such as remitting to family members in countries of origin. These practices are shaped by gendered relations:

“female migrants send approximately the same per capita amount of remittances as male migrants but women tend to send a higher proportion of their income. Women also usually send money more regularly and for longer periods of time than men. In Southern Africa, there is some evidence of distinct gender differences in remitting amounts, frequency and means of remitting, remittance recipients and use of remittances.” (Crush et al., 2017: 3)

Without a gendered knowledge base on migration it is difficult to account for some of the vulnerabilities and challenges faced by migrant women in African cities (Ibid: 5). For example, women across African communities face the realities of gender based violence exacerbated by patriarchal attitudes. Mama (1997: 46) argues that:

“in many countries, violent abuse has been taken up as the most salient and immediate manifestation of women’s oppression by men, and in Africa, in particular, widespread violence against women is now the most direct and unequivocal manifestation of women’s oppressed status”.

Unskilled migrants, tend to engage in precarious, informal livelihood strategies; however, for migrant women gender based violence and health vulnerabilities can exacerbate exploitative realities of work in the host society (Ibid). Strategic instruments do not fully consider and integrate gender and migration governance also fails to accommodate the complexities of gender rights due to xenophobic and patriarchal attitudes (Ibid). Figures from South Africa suggest that migrant women make up 40% of the migrant population, but they have only a 56% probability of entering into the work force vs. their male counterparts (Ibid).

1.4 Somali women in Mayfair, Johannesburg as a case study

The Somali diaspora in Africa spans a number of countries in East Africa: Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda. As well as further afield in Yemen. As highlighted in Figure 1.1, most of the Somali diaspora, on the continent, is located within countries that neighbour Somalia. South Africa is also host to a significant Somali diaspora. Estimates of Somalis in South Africa range between 27 000 - 40 000; however, the data on population figures is inconclusive (Jinnah, 2010: 91). As of January 2019, the UNHCR estimated that there are 3.45 million displaced Somalis: 802 400 refugees and asylum seekers and 2.6 million internally displaced people in Somalia (UNHCR, 2019).

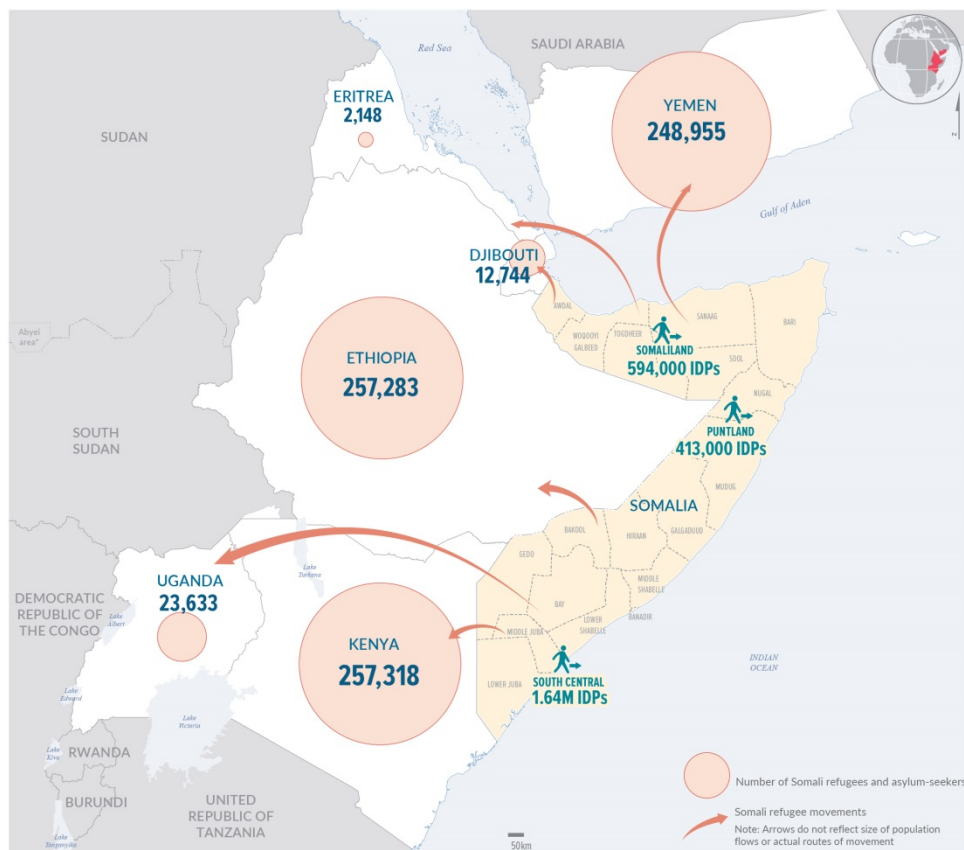


FIGURE 1.1 UNHCR map of Somali refugees on the Horn of Africa (source: UNHCR, 2019)

Somalia has a long history of civil instability, war and displacement. Since the early 1990s, Somalia existed as a state without a government (Sadouni, 2009) and to this day remains politically and economically unstable. This level of displacement has shaped the Somali diaspora's distinct practices of mobility and transnationalism (Sadouni, 2009). However, Abdi (2007: 1) argues that the implications of war and displacement have deep and complex implications for women as, under these conditions, traditions are often set up to "further consolidate patriarchy and exacerbate women's social subordination" (Ibid).

In the South African context, although policies towards asylum seekers are increasingly restrictive, Somalis are still seen as a legitimate group of asylum seekers. Gastrow and Amit (2015: 164) note that:

"between 2001 and 2014, a total of 46 640 asylum applications were recorded from Somalis in South Africa. Of these, a total of 23 057 were adjudicated and 19 287 yielded positive outcomes, giving and acceptance rate of 83.6 per cent. This shows that Somalis are generally seen as credible applicants by the South African asylum system"

In the context of Johannesburg, the Somali community is concentrated within an ethnic enclave along 8th Avenue in Mayfair. The enclave is situated within a predominantly Islamic host community and, as illustrated by Sadouni (2009: 235), religion plays a significant role in the way the diasporic

community is able to position themselves within the host environment. This space is not only a node of capital for Somali township businesses across Gauteng, but it also provides migrants with strong socio-cultural infrastructure and support networks within the host community of Mayfair (Thompson, 2016). Migrant men from this community are often involved in informal trading practices in precarious township areas around the province and the enclave in Mayfair is described as being particularly male dominated (Ibid). However, Somali women increasingly play a role in the economy of the enclave, as they:

“own a number of the restaurants and lodges along Eighth Avenue [and] Amal plaza offers a space in which many women sell cultural goods and clothing to Somali customers, drawing on overseas connections to secure their positions” (Ibid: 132)

Generally, far less is known about the occupations and economic practices that Somali women are involved in. Very few studies critically engage with the strategies that Somali women employ in order to sustain their livelihoods and those of their households, both in the host context and countries of origin. Among other issues, there have been few studies on how Somali women navigate gendered power relations across transnational lines, and whether the socio-cultural infrastructure and support networks present in the enclave impacts on their mobility and livelihoods.

2. Problem statement

The research seeks to address a gap in development planning literature and practice that critically and specifically engages with the gendered politics of human mobility within African urban centres. As highlighted above, practices of mobility destabilise state practices and redefine conceptualisations of space. Development planning administers the socio-spatial functions of the developmental mandate of local government. Thus, planners play a critical role in accommodating marginal actors in development plans and actively need to reconceptualise spatial biases to facilitate inclusive city development processes. In order to achieve transformative planning practices in African urban centres, critical and intersectional readings of socio-spatial relationships and everyday practices of marginal actors need to be foregrounded in planning theory and practice. The study begins to account for these challenges through an analysis of power relations in the migratory patterns and everyday practices of Somali women in Johannesburg.

3. Aims and objectives

The research aims to provide an intersectional account of the power relations at play within practices of transnationalism and livelihood strategies of Somali women within the host context of Mayfair. In order to address the gaps highlighted in the problem statement, the study aims to address the complexities and realities of the gendered politics of mobility on the African continent through a feminist research framework. The objective of the study is to reposition the lens of development enquiry from the margins by turning “the dominant urban question on its head, and interrogat[ing] how cross-border women shape Johannesburg’s politics, regulatory systems and local economics” (Kihato, 2013: 13). Through this, I hope to present an approach to reimagining African cities by rewriting dominant urban narratives in order to present an inclusive, transformative approach to urban research, and policy-making, amidst the increasingly unequal geographies of urbanisation.

4. Research question and sub-questions

How do practices of transnational mobility shape the livelihood strategies of migrant women in host societies? A case study of Somali women in Mayfair.

The central research question of this study seeks to account for the ways in which practices of transnational mobility shape the livelihood strategies of migrant women in host societies. The research unfolds through a case study of Somali women in the Somali community in Mayfair which, as illustrated above, has a strong transnational network and a localised ethnic enclave in Johannesburg. The research question seeks to:

- centre migrant women’s experiences and socio-economic roles in urban centres;
- unpack practices of transnational mobility, which not only account for migratory processes, but also the transnational flows and processes associated with mobility across borders of nation-states;
- uncover the ways that livelihood practices are strategically shaped by migrant women, to accommodate transnational ties, in host societies.

The study is located within a feminist research framework; thus, it also seeks to account for and expose the intersecting gendered power relations that either shift or remain consistent across transnational lines. These questions seek to foreground two of the three conceptual themes introduced in Mahler and Pessar’s (2001) ‘gendered geographies of power’ framework: gender across geographies, and power relations. The two questions account for an analysis of the shifts in

gendered relations across geographies, as well as an analysis of women's agency in the context of migration. Ultimately, an analysis of agency illustrates the ways in which intersecting social institutions – patriarchy, class and citizenship – affect the everyday decisions that women make across transnational lines. These sub-questions are as follows:

1. To what extent do gendered power relations shift across transnational lines and how does this affect socio-spatial relationships in the host context?
2. How does the migratory process shape the agency of migrant women's decisions and access to transnational flows of capital?

5. Summary of ethical considerations and limitations

As the study deals with migrant women, a few ethical considerations were raised. These included: sensitivities around the legal status of the respondents in the study, as well as concerns around evoking traumatic experiences during the interview processes. None of the interview questions explicitly called for respondents to share traumatic experiences; these were volunteered to me by respondents who felt comfortable with sharing intimate details about their lives. As a researcher, questions around access to legal documentation could not be avoided, as it was important for the purposes of the study to uncover the ways in which legal instruments plays a role in shaping livelihood strategies. I did not explicitly ask respondents whether they were here 'legally' or 'illegally'. Instead, I asked them to explain whether there were any *challenges* accessing documentation. However, respondents had the option to not answer any questions that they felt uncomfortable with or that would expose their legal status in the country. Respondents were made aware through the Participant Information Sheet, from the onset of the study, that their participation was voluntary and that the research was to be used for academic purposes (see Appendix A). Only two respondents consented to having their interviews audio recorded; most respondents were against this, so I made them aware that handwritten notes would be used instead. Finally, although most respondents did not have issues around their names being used in the report, I still chose to protect their identity and privacy by changing them. Note that culturally specific names have still been used; however, these are pseudonyms and do not reflect any individuals that I encountered in the field.

The study was constrained by a number of factors, these include: access to the community, language and cultural barriers, as well as time and scope. Establishing access to women in the community was a lengthy process and time constraints present a challenge in increasing the sample size of research

interviews, which remained relatively small. Language barriers presented one of the biggest stumbling blocks. Translation occurred in an informal manner, which meant that some may have been lost in translation. Thus, the study in no way attempts to make any generalisations about Somali women in their community in Mayfair. Finally, time and structural constraints limited the research scope to one migrant community in Johannesburg. Leaving further room to exploring the questions and frameworks explored in this study across a broader group of migrant women in Johannesburg, especially those who do not live within a transnational social space like the Somali women in the study.

6. Outline of chapters

- **Chapter 1: Introduction.** This chapter introduces the research and will include background information to the study, the problem statement, aims and objectives, the research question and sub-questions, as well as a summary of limitations and ethical considerations.
- **Chapter 2: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework.** This chapter contextualises the study against a backdrop of literature on transnationalism and transnational mobility; gendered geographies of power (the basis of the conceptual framework); and livelihoods, social capital and remittances.
- **Chapter 3: Research Methods.** This chapter outlines the feminist research framework employed in the study and contextualises the case study.
- **Chapter 4: I came here alone. Analysis of findings.** This chapter presents a summary of the findings and an analysis, based on the conceptual framework, of the qualitative data from the research interviews.
- **Chapter 5: Acting from the margins. Conclusions and Implications for development planning.** This chapter addresses the research questions and presents areas of further research.

TWO. Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

Introduction

Stock (2012: 1579) argues that very few studies focus on migrant women's agency in processes of migration. Migrant women experiences are either not centred at all, or discussed in the context of male dominance, sexual violence or trafficking (Ibid). In this light, women's mobility is constantly depicted as being forced (Ibid). Issues around violence and trafficking should not be disregarded, as they are a reality for many migrant women; however, it is important to consider that migrant women's journeys can be strategically carried out for socio-economic reasons centred on improving their, and their families, livelihoods (Ibid). Very little is known about the occupations and practices that Somali women are involved in, in order to sustain their livelihoods and those of their households, both in the host country and the sending country. Further, there have been few studies on how Somali women affect socio-spatial relationships in the host space of the ethnic enclave in Mayfair, and whether the social and cultural capital present in this space empowers or constrains their mobility and ability to sustain their livelihoods.

The literature review takes shape around three key thematic constructs. The literature seeks to present an intersectional account of Somali women's practices of transnational mobility, in order to recognise the complexity present in the movement across borders and resettling in host societies. Gendered, as well as other markers of difference, impact the ways in which people are able to access resources in their communities and within societal structures at large. These intersections have the potential to shift in the face of migratory processes, as well as to be reinforced in the context of the host society. It is through interrogating these complexities that we begin to understand migrant women's positioning in transnational social networks and how this affects their access to social capital. These themes contextualise and frame the case study of Somali women in Johannesburg against a backdrop of literature that uncovers the complexities of power relations present in practices of mobility. Uncovering how power relations operate within the mobile practices, across geographies, in these women's lives begins to account for the way their agency is shaped and finally how agency informs practices associated with livelihood strategies. The conceptual framework specifically seeks to provide an analytical framework from which to examine the degrees of agency across Somali women's lives, and provides a basis from which to answer the sub-questions in the study.

The first theme centres on practices of transnationalism and transnational mobility. Concepts of transnationalism and mobility, as opposed to migration, begin to account for the power relations that present themselves in the context of migration. Cresswell (2011) argues that practices of mobility, as embodiments of movement, are influenced by societal power dynamics; power affects

who moves, how they move and with what speed. Similarly, Sheller and Urry (2006) highlight that power relations are reflected in practices of mobility. They argue that feminist studies of transnational practices are important to the mobility paradigm as they “examine how migrants reconstitute belonging and mobilise place-based identities across geopolitical borders” (Ibid: 211). The second theme accounts for the way livelihoods take shape in the context of extensive remittance networks and through the mobilisation of social capital, and the gendered relations that shape access to particular livelihood strategies. Finally, the third theme explores gendered geographies of power, a conceptual framework introduced by Mahler and Pessar (2001). This framework seeks to specifically account for the ways that gendered, and other, power relations shift across transnational lines and the effect these shifts have on individual agency. Exploring this particular dynamic can reveal “the connections between migrants’ aspirations and abilities of mobility because this perspective allows analytical space for the interplay of migrants’ agency and the structures surrounding them” (Stock, 2012: 1578). Within this section, gender and the state, as well as social constructions of scale will also be expanded on.

1. Transnationalism and the mobilities paradigm

Transnationalism, as a practice and as a paradigm, is defined in a number of ways across the literature; centrally, the term was coined to account for the “grassroots activities of international migrants across borders” (Faist, 2010: 13). Similarly, Mahler and Pessar (2001: 443) quote, Glick Schiller (1996: 96) who employs “the word transnational to discuss political, economic, social and cultural processes that extend beyond the borders of a particular state”. Collins (2011: 320) defines the term ‘transnational’ as a “phenomena that involve[s] continued cross-border mobility”, suggesting that transnationalism can be seen as an embodied practice of movement. Yu (2017: 3) defines transnationalism as “a divergent process that generates boundaries, territory, and heterogeneity”. Both of these definitions highlight that transnationalism is both a spatial representation and identity, as well as a practice and that place is in itself “progressive, dynamic, and practiced” (Ibid: 2). However, transnational processes have created “multiply displaced subjects, who are always on the move both mentally and physically” (Ong, 1999: 2).

This section of the literature review seeks to address three key themes that emerge from the literature on the transnational approach in migration studies. These include: the mobility paradigm in relation to the practice of transnationalism; transnational social space and families; and the practice of transnationalism in relation to the concept of diaspora. This section, is centrally concerned with the social formations under conditions of migrancy. It looks at the way state

practices intersect with cross-border mobility, as well as modes of identity formation under conditions of transnationalism.

1.1 Mobility in the context of transnationalism

Cresswell (2011: 160) describes mobility as “a fragile entanglement of physical movement, representations and practices” and unlike migration studies does not merely focus on “place” (Ibid). Thus, challenging the view that societies are inherently stable and bounded by place (King and Christou, 2011: 454). Cresswell (2011: 160) discusses three aspects of mobility, which include: the physical act of movement, the representation and the practice of mobility. He further argues that mobilities “have a physical reality, they are encoded culturally and socially and they are experienced through practice” (Ibid: 162). King and Christou (2011: 452), referencing Urry (2007), list five interdependent practices of mobility: corporeal, material, imaginative, virtual and communicative. In the context of migration studies, corporeal mobility is of significance; however, they also argue that:

“there are links also to the imaginative and communicative domains inasmuch as migrants and returnees often develop powerful affective and mythological connections to a ‘homeland’ as well as communicating transnationally back and forth within kinship, friendship, business and religious networks” (Ibid)

A focus on mobility is also able “to capture flows across boundaries such as administrative borders and to capture structurally the formations that criss-cross national state borders” (Faist, 2013: 1639). Migrants also reconfigure places of arrival through practices of mobility:

“in leaving a place, migrants often carry parts of it with them which are reassembled in the material form of souvenirs, textures, foods, colours, scents, and sounds - reconfiguring the place of arrival both figuratively and imaginatively” (Sheller and Urry, 2006: 211).

Faist (2013: 1638) notes that in migration studies, the reconsideration of spatial mobility has been linked to the transnational approach. The mobility paradigm, provides an intersectional account of transnational practices, by accounting for the social inequalities that are reproduced in the movement across borders (Ibid: 1643): “many different bodies are on the move [and it is often through their movements and proximities that bodies are marked as ‘different’ in the first place]” (Sheller and Urry, 2006: 207). Movement is an embodied practice, and a focus on this begins to account for the complexities inherent in migration processes. Although practices of mobility counter notions of fixed territories, they are not practiced outside of the realm of social relations; therefore, they are shaped and defined by power relations and political contestations (Cresswell, 2011; King and Christou, 2011). Thus, mobility is both a process and a practice subject to and shaped by socio-

political intersections; for example, gendered relations control access to mobility and migration (Morokvasic, 2004: 11). As both process and practice, the performance of mobility varies according to socio-political and socio-economic contexts. It is not a linear process of movement, but rather “a dynamic process that can lead to fragmented journeys” (Stock, 2012: 1578). Stock (2012: 1578) argues that it is important to also consider immobility as part of the processes shaping the routes that define migrant journeys. However, transnational mobility does not necessarily denote nomadism or oppose the notions of locality (Yu, 2017: 2).

Mobility can both be used as a resource and a survival strategy for migrant women (Kihato, 2013: 35). Morokvasic (2004: 8) expands on this by arguing that transnational mobility as “a strategy can be empowering, a resource, a tool for social innovation and agency and an important dimension of social capital”. However, gendered politics of mobility shape the ways in which mobility can be practiced by migrant women. In as much as transnational mobility can be a source of empowerment for women, it can also act as a constraint (Silvey, 2006: 65). In order for transnational mobility to significantly serve as a resource for migrant women, they need to be in control of this mobility (Morokvasic, 2004: 11). Here, Morokvasic (2004: 11) argues that “the less control they have, the less they are likely to use (benefit from) the returns of their mobile strategies”. Further, it is important to note the significance of host states in constraining the agency of migrant women through policy frameworks which encourage social integration, in the host context, in order to gain naturalisation or legal citizenship (Faist, 2011: 1642). For many economic migrants, and specifically migrant women, it is through access to legal status or citizenship that secure (potentially less exploitative) livelihood opportunities may open up. In this case, migrant practices of transnationalism – although providing migrants with economic and social resources within the host society - may lead them to fall into a “social mobility trap”, inhibiting social integration and further marginalising them within the host society (Ibid).

In the African context, Kihato (2013: 35) argues that the intensification of mobility, in terms of goods, people and capital, challenges the construct of the nation state. Migrant women, in Johannesburg, use their “legal limbo and mobility to avoid state capture” (Ibid: 35). She indicates that this presents itself as a means of urban survival; however, it is also a constraint. Due to their lack of legal status in the country “they live as if suspended in South African society” (Ibid). Legal frameworks pose major challenges to the mobility of migrants once they enter host societies like South Africa, where even if migrants are able to access legal status, as asylum seekers, their mobility, in host spaces, is limited as a result of bureaucratic urban governance structures (Kihato, 2013). She illustrates that:

“a section 22 permit allows women to work and study while awaiting their refugee status determination. While the law (the Refugee Act of 1998) indicates that status determination should take six months, in practice it takes years for the state to establish whether an asylum seeker qualifies for refugee status. In the meantime, migrants are unable to access services as few employers or service providers (...) recognize their asylum-seeker papers as legal documentation.” (Ibid: 33)

Migrant women cannot fully participate within the formal institutions of their host society and may have to result to precarious spaces and informal networks in order to sustain their livelihoods.

Regardless of the challenges highlighted above, mobility is often perceived to hold particular meanings related to social values and expectations: “the notion of being ‘mobile’ carries connotations of improvement, escape from poverty, modernity, and even success” (Kihato, 2013: 51). Geographic mobility, can also be seen as a process which facilitates social mobility both for the émigré and their families in countries of origin (Kihato, 2013: 60). However, this is largely influenced by a migrant’s social standing across transnational lines. When women arrive in Johannesburg they are faced with legal obstacles, which make it difficult for them to establish sustainable livelihoods (Ibid: 60). The decision to migrate is rarely an individual decision, but rather influenced by “social relationships and cultural norms of exchange in which families’ expect material benefit” (Ibid: 68). In most cases, families are unaware of the precarity of urban life in Johannesburg, and out of a fear of shame, migrant women based in the host context do not express their struggles to families in countries of origin (Ibid: 69). Migrant women, in particular, are faced with the burdens that exist within practices and processes of cross-border mobility – as well as the work that goes into maintaining caregiving networks across these mobile setting – Yeoh (2005: 230) argues that “the grounding of the body in locality means that mobility entails a cost [...] in physiological, social and emotional terms”.

Somali women in Johannesburg, face many of the same legal, and socio-political, challenges that are highlighted in the study by Kihato (2013). However, their strategic rooting within their own ethnic community in the host society, may afford them access to transnational social capital and economic resources that could mitigate the effects of living in legal limbo in Johannesburg.

1.2 Transnationalism as a social process: transnational social space and families

Transnationalism, as a paradigm, is concerned with the social space of migrants (Faist, 2013: 1639). Mahler and Pessar (2001: 441) describe transnational social spaces as those that are “anchored in but extend beyond the borders of any one nation-state”. Migrant communities may make use of strategic practices of rooting in their host spaces in order to practice other forms of mobility – material, imaginative, virtual and communicative – that do not involve corporeal mobility, but rather

the emplacement thereof (Conradson and Latham, 2005: 228). Communities may use these dimensions to mobilise transnational resources, such as transnational social capital. Transnational social spaces are the “living spheres and projects of transmigrants which span a number of residential and geographical spaces” (Ibid). Fournon and Glick Schiller (2001: 544) describe the socio-spatial relationships that exist within transnational social fields and spaces, between the migrant’s home society and the host society as those:

“in which transmigrants become part of the fabric of daily life in their home state, including its political processes, while simultaneously becoming part of the workforce, contributing to neighbourhood activities, serving as members of local and neighbourhood organizations, and entering into politics in their new locality”

Transnational social spaces emerge and are sustained through social and symbolic ties which facilitate a transfer of capital between those who migrate and those who remain in the sending society (Ibid: 209). Further, these spaces are not static, but subject to complex social dynamics which are affected by the politics and legal frameworks of migration, social institutions and material infrastructure, as well as identity formation and livelihood strategies of migrants (Ibid). For example, Kihato (2013: 39) notes that, in the context of the host community, state laws remain as symbolic and powerful instruments that shape the nature of urban spaces. Thus, the socio-political forces within the host society affect the ways in which transnational social spaces can be constructed and maintained.

The construction of ethnic enclaves and the ethnic community are spaces synonymous with transnational social spaces. Yu (2017: 3) quotes Marcuse who defines ethnic enclaves as spaces which are concentrated by members of similar cultural groups and a space which provides resources to new immigrants, of that group, who seek socio-economic upward mobility within the host society. Enclaves are often seen as immobile sites within urban spaces through voluntary enclosure or other forms of boundedness. Or, as illustrated by Yu (2017) they are nodes where the ethnic economy is concentrated. In the context of the research, the Somali ethnic community in Johannesburg is localised within an ethnic enclave in Mayfair. Similarly, in Eastleigh, Kenya and Kampala, Uganda, Somali migrants physically construct transnational social spaces to localise ethnic resources in areas that become known as ‘little Mogadishu’. In Kampala, Uganda, Somalis are able to

“draw upon the support of clan networks and the Somali Community Association [while the] Somali mosque also connects people in Kisenyi and collects *zakat* (a ritual form of alms-giving) to support new arrivals.” (Monteith and Lwasa, 2017: 390)

Bhattacharjee (1997) explores the transnational social spaces of the South Asian ethnic community in the United States. The insights from her case study are relevant to the ways in which the Somali community has positioned itself in Johannesburg. Through her case study, Bhattacharjee (1997: 318) argues that “the immigrant community sees itself, in all its specific ethnicity, as a private space, within it must guard its own national heritage against intervention”. State laws are not only significant to the mobility of migrants, and the formation of transnational social spaces, but also to the structure of transnational families. Bhattacharjee (1997: 316) argues that “for immigrant homes, the state can hardly be accused of inaction – if anything, it is actively involved in determining the very existence of the family”.

Further, Bhattacharjee (1997) explores the ways in which transnational social spaces hold potential for different levels of homing or family construction. The family or the ‘home’, Bhattacharjee (1997: 313-314) argues, can be defined in three ways and extends past the ‘private’ or ‘personal’ domain that tends to define constructs of ‘home’. First, there is the conventional definition where the home or domestic sphere is structured by heterosexual, patriarchal constructs (Ibid: 313). The second, is defined as the space constructed by “an extended ethnic community separate and distinct from other ethnic communities” (Ibid). The third definition of ‘home’ refers to the nation of origin of the community (Ibid: 314). Through Bhattacharjee’s definitions of ‘home’, the second definition best describes the mode of settlement that characterises the Somali community in Johannesburg. However, due to the concentration of ethnic social networks and resources within these spaces, they often reproduce inequalities and social expectations across transnational lines and may consolidate oppressive practices towards migrant women (Ibid).

1.3 Diaspora and transnationalism

Brah (2003) links the formation of a diaspora to a desire for homing, echoing the definitions introduced by Bhattacharjee (1997). The concept of ‘diaspora’ embodies the notion of ‘home’ and a desire for ‘homing’, but not necessarily the ‘homeland’ (Brah, 2003: 615). Critiquing the notion of fixed origins, ‘diaspora’ connotes dispersion from a centre, or a home, and evokes the imagery of a journey or multiple journeys (Brah, 2003: 616). Similarly, Faist (2010: 10) defines diaspora as “religious or national groups living outside an (imagined) homeland”. Both concepts of transnationalism and diaspora explore social processes that involve cross-border mobility (Ibid). However, while transnationalism refers more to the practices, ties and networks that migrants maintain across borders (Ibid), the notion of diaspora ultimately speaks to the formation of an identity, along shared religious or national identities, outside of the homeland (Brah, 2003: 616).

Brah (2003: 616) questions the ways in which these journeys have been shaped through socio-economic, political and cultural conditions, as well as the regimes of power which define the ways that certain diasporas are formed. In the context of contemporary forced migration patterns, individuals become displaced and occupy states of dispersion as a result of political conflict (Ibid). Further, Brah (2003: 167) notes that the conditions of arrival and settling down are equally important. She questions how the diasporic group situates itself within the country that it migrates to, while arguing that this situatedness – shaped by the “economic processes, state practices and institutional practices” - plays a significant role in the future trajectory of the diasporic community (Ibid). The imagined identity of a diasporic community varies according to different historic contexts (Ibid). Thus, these identities not only shift as a result of the journeys that take place, they are also not fixed or predetermined (Ibid). Although diasporas seek to construct a common identity, Brah (2003: 168) questions who is empowered and disempowered in the construction of this common identity.

Sadouni (2009: 243) describes diaspora formation as a “migratory phenomenon characterised by a strong communal experience, an ethno-religious identity and strong links between the receiving and sending countries”. The Somali diaspora, particularly in Johannesburg, is incorporated into the host space through a “formation of an imaginary diasporic Somali nation” (Ibid: 236). Sadouni (2009: 243) describes Somalis across the world, as “stateless diasporic communities” due to the extent of displacement from the ongoing conflict in Somalia. The conflict has, in the context of Somali migrants in Johannesburg, shaped their social processes and “encounters with urban culture” in the city where they rely on common religious ties to reconfigure modes of settlement (Ibid: 235).

2. Livelihoods, social capital and remittances

Practices of transnationalism may expand migrants’ livelihood options and challenge power imbalances; however, migration can also reproduce certain inequalities and modes of exclusion limiting the livelihood strategies of those who migrate (Thieme, 2008). de Haan et al. (2002: 38) define the livelihoods framework as a concept that “relates to households’ and communities’ conditions of poverty, well-being and capabilities, resilience, and their natural resource base”. The authors argue for an institutional focus on livelihoods in order to account for the group dynamics, and societal rules, that affect the livelihood practices of individuals (Ibid: 39). For example, in the migratory context, they note that “how people migrate using their networks, and how their migration movements are determined by rules of their ‘home society’” are important considerations within a livelihoods framework (Ibid). The authors further determine that the maintenance of the

household and its structure, as well as the ability to access resources through networks have significant impacts on the livelihoods of migratory individuals (Ibid). This is reinforced in the work of Montieth and Lwasa (2017), who argue that migrant livelihood strategies should be analysed together with the dynamics of the transnational practices and social spaces that they occupy. The authors argue that an analysis of livelihood strategies alone cannot provide a basis for understanding the ways in which refugees position themselves in host societies (Ibid: 387). Their case studies in Kampala, Uganda, highlight that Somali migrants had greater opportunities to sustain their livelihoods when compared to other migrant groups (Ibid: 391). Somalis have a long history of migration to Kampala and through the establishment of transnational social spaces were able to access extensive social and cultural networks within a well-located area within the city (Ibid). However, Congolese refugees and Acholi Internally Displaced People struggled to sustain their livelihoods due to a lack of access to similar types of transnational and social networks.

In a similar light, Thieme (2008: 58) further argues that migrant experiences should be analysed within prevailing strands of social theory. In this study, the analysis predominantly draws on feminist theory to account for gendered power relations. However, Thieme (2008) examines Bourdieu's Theory of Practice (1977, 1986) in order to define the functioning of various forms of capital, which provides a framework for understanding power relations within society and between individuals (Ibid). The focus on forms of capital exemplifies the ways in which livelihood strategies are shaped by wider societal structures (Ibid: 52). For example, Kihato (2013: 53) indicates that socio-cultural relationships affect how migrants make decisions about their incomes. Thus, economic activities associated with livelihood practices, are also embedded and affected by complex socio-cultural contexts. This is important to the nature of study, as Somali women are situated within a transnational social space which may facilitate improved access to forms of capital; however, this is subject to the prevalence of patriarchal relations which may significantly diminish women's access.

This section will specifically focus on the gendered dimension of social capital in the transnational context, as well as the ways in which remittance practices function and impact on migrant women's livelihood strategies.

2.1 Gender, forms of capital and livelihoods

Power relations play a significant role in establishing access to social capital. Within Bourdieu's framework, capital is defined as power and possessing and being in control of capital is also inseparable to power (Kelly and Lusi, 2006: 831). Capital is distributed, exchanged and valued

according to various social constructs and practices (Ibid). Within this framework, capital is not only defined by its economic values, but also encompasses forms of social and cultural capital (Ibid). Economic capital refers to financial worth and the availability and access to assets that are convertible into money, which also includes property (Ibid). Social capital refers to social networks and connections that can be mobilised by individuals in order to gain some form of benefit; thus, improving access to various social institutions (Ibid: 834). The ability for an individual to benefit from social networks within the framework of social capital largely depends on an individual's positioning within these networks. This is affected by factors such as class, ethnicity or gender (Ibid). Finally, cultural capital refers to "the symbolic assets that a person possesses" (Ibid). These symbolic assets could include institutional forms of cultural capital, such as qualification levels and where an individual received education, as well as proximity to particular socio-political institutions (Ibid). Other embodied symbolic markers such as race, class and gender are also described as forms of cultural capital (Ibid).

Thus, gendered power relations, as explored earlier through 'social location', may place limitations on migrant women's access to capital. Women may not always be able to rely on social networks and other forms of social capital to sustain their livelihoods due to patriarchal or class relations which place limitations on their access to social resources (Silvey and Elmhirst, 2003). Thieme and Siegmann (2010: 715) note that in development discourses, social capital has been described as a means to mitigating the vulnerabilities of individuals and communities. Further, there is an assumption that access to social capital improves access to resources for migrants, thus increasing resilience in the context of migration (Ibid: 716). However, the literature on the social capital of migrating subjects tends to be gender-blind and does not give enough attention to the ways in which gendered relations shape power dynamics and hierarchies at the scale of the household (Silvey and Elmhirst, 2003: 866). Social networks and capital are not constructed in a societal void, thus power relations, which also include intergenerational conflicts, intersect in these spaces (Ibid). Feminist analyses have indicated that social networks and capital can, in certain cultural contexts, exacerbate women's vulnerabilities through their subordination in male-centred networks (Thieme and Siegmann, 2010: 715). Gendered relations also determine the kind of vulnerabilities faced by different groups (Ibid: 717); thus, social capital that is male-controlled may not provide the level of support needed by women who access these networks to improve their livelihoods.

Al-Shamani (2006) explores patterns of Somali women's migration to Cairo and the associated establishment of Somali transnational networks and practices that have resulted. The study focuses on both Somali women who left Somalia and migrated directly to Cairo, as refugees, and those who

left Somalia, moving to Western nations before relocation to Cairo, as 'emigres'. Both of these groups are predominantly made up of single mothers or mothers with spouses based in their countries of citizenship (Ibid: 57). Within this context, Somali women's migration to Cairo plays an important role in their ability sustain the livelihoods of their families (Ibid: 58). Further, it is mainly Somali women, their younger siblings and their children who relocate in order to acquire legal status in host countries, which is central to the expansion of livelihoods (Ibid). Through acquiring legal status these women are able to sponsor the migration of another family member, send remittance to families in the sending society and expand opportunities for their children to access education in the host society (Ibid). Women who migrate to Cairo tend to find opportunities for work in the informal sector either through small-scale trade activities or domestic work (Ibid). The financial capital that these women acquire allows them to establish a more prominent role in their household's decision-making (Ibid). Somali migrant women, through their reproductive duties, are also responsible for the education and socialisation of the children that they migrate with (Ibid). Children are an important part of the social capital that migrants have, thus women also play an important role in the establishment and expansion of the transnational family's support network (Ibid). In this case, the older children who have migrated with their mothers are more likely to feel an obligation to them which means that women have more claims to the social capital than men (Ibid). This case study of Somali women exemplifies "a transnational household political-economy in which women participate and that shapes their decision making about migration, consumption, and employment, and return migration" (Fouron and Glick Schiller, 2001: 545). Ultimately, if women are able to fully participate in the structural processes of the formations of these transnational social networks, they have greater access to transnational forms of capital.

2.2 Remittance practices

The feminisation of migration flows has resulted in many women migrating independently and maintaining ties to families in countries of origin through monetary remittances (Dodson et al., 2008: 1). Thus, remittance practices significantly shape the livelihood strategies of migrant women; however, "little is known about the nature of migrant women's remittances and their impact on the households that receive them" (Ibid). For example, in the study by Dodson et al. (2008: 5), the findings revealed that remittances from women are lower than their male counterparts' due to lower incomes and less employment security; however, in some instances, women sent a larger portion of their income to families in countries of origin than men did.

Wong (2006: 360) argues that migration presents an opportunity for gender relations to be renegotiated in the host context, while remittance behaviours “may cause [a] rearrangement of migrant family care and reconfiguration of gender and intergenerational relations among family members” (Suksomboon, 2008: 466) across transnational lines. To solely analyse remittance practices from an economic perspective ignores the layers of socio-political complexities – such as “social relations, cultural values and norms, and migration experiences” – that shape remittance behaviours (Wong, 2006: 356). Remittance practices largely rely on continuous relationships between those who send and those who receive (Ibid). Wong (2006, 356) notes that relationships shaping remittance practices are also contested across various spaces, subject to intra-household politics, and embody “complex and potentially conflict-ridden relationships between different groups” (Ibid). Drawing on a case study of remittance practice among Ghanaian women in Canada, she argues that the context in which remittances behaviours take place is equally important, as remittances may be constrained in “precarious economic conditions and the competing values and demands of families that are structured transnationally” (Ibid). For migrant women, the precarity of economic conditions in the host context are often a reality; however, families often view them as more reliable remittance senders than male family members who migrate (Ibid: 360). Further, women’s limited incomes disrupted the frequency and amounts that they were able to send from one month to the next (Ibid: 364). Exchange rates between currencies, and the devaluation of the Ghanaian *cedi*, led to discrepancies in the value of the remittance once families received them in the country of origin (Ibid).

3. Gendered geographies of power

While transnationalism accounts for the grassroots practices of migrants between nation-states, feminism frameworks, through centring migrant women’s experiences, are able to further account for the politicised nature of mobility and the gendered inequalities inherent in practices of transnationalism. Feminist theory questions and explores how gender is conceptualised. Gender identities, ideologies and relations are socially constructed and fluid (Mahler and Pessar, 2003). Thus, gender is not static, but rather shaped by various ongoing processes through the social and cultural institutions that we interact with (2001: 442). In the same way that we have come to understand the conceptualisation of race as a social construct, gender needs to be understood in the same way: that it is a process that humans use to perpetuate and create categories of social difference (Ibid). Gender as a marker of biological difference permeates through culture and through our socialisation within particular cultural frameworks assume gendered constructs to be natural

(Pessar and Mahler, 2003: 813). Other social constructions have an effect on the power dynamics inherent in gender relations and these include: race, ethnicity and nationality (Ibid: 443).

Yeoh (2005: 68) argues that although transnationalism produces new spaces, they do not exist outside of prevailing socio-political contexts. Gendered relations are embodied practices; therefore, through migrant women's connections to transnational social fields, networks and families, patriarchal practices are likely to be reproduced limiting the potential for women to redefine their identities across transnational boundaries (Ibid: 69). To better examine how gendered, and other, power relations shift across transnational spaces, and how these shifts affect the agency of people, Mahler and Pessar (2001: 445) introduce the conceptual framework of "gendered geographies of power" (Ibid: 447). Their framework is shaped by three concepts: gender across geographies, social location and degrees of agency. These concepts attempt "to explain migrants' agency while recognising constraints imposed by time, space and power inequalities" (Stock, 2012: 1582). Thus, the gendered geographies framework locates the interplay of power hierarchies in shaping the agency behind migrant women's livelihood strategies.

3.1 Gender across geographies

The first section of Mahler and Pessar's framework examining gender across geographies, takes into account that gender relations are reproduced across multiple spatial and social scales, i.e. across different geographic scales (Ibid). They argue that gender relations may be reconfigured or reinforced (or both) across varying scales (Ibid). Further, they argue that because gendered relations manifest across various scales, "any given gender regime is reinforced through repetitions in the ways in which gender is embedded and re-enacted between and among scales" (Pessar and Mahler, 2003: 819). Similarly, Yeoh (2005) indicates that practices of transnationalism potentially lead to the redefinition of traditional gender roles that women occupy within the family: either when they migrate or when men migrate and they are left behind. In some instances, women migrate in order "to counter patriarchal control and remake their agency" (Yeoh, 2005: 64). However, patriarchy operates much the same across various contexts; thus, certain gender roles will remain consistent across transnational borders (Yeoh, 2005: 71). For example, in the case study of Vietnamese women in the United States, Yeoh (2005: 71) observes that "women transmigrants seem prepared to uphold the patriarchal system within the Vietnamese community, in return for economic and social protection by men in an unfamiliar environment" (Ibid). Thus, certain gender relations may be upheld strategically by migrant women. To further expand on the way that gendered relations manifest across spaces and scales, Pessar and Mahler (2003) argue for a focus on the ways in which

the state works towards reinforcing particular gender relations, as well as how scales operate as social constructs.

Social constructions of scale

In order to understand how gender may be redefined or reconstructed across multiple scales, it is important to understand that spatial scales are socially constructed products (Marston, 2000). Silvey (2004: 492) argues that the meanings associated with particular scales “come into being through, and are productive of, socio-spatial hierarchies and processes”. Through socially constructed processes, spatial scales become laden with power relations “endemic to capitalism” (Marston, 2000: 221), including those that construct difference through gender and race (Silvey, 2004: 492). The social construction of scale is subject to “patriarchy and the gendering of social relations of consumption and social reproduction” (Marston, 2000: 221). Feminist migration studies critically question the privileging of particular scales, as well as the “knowledge that is produced about scale and the dynamics and meanings of scale in practice” (Silvey, 2004: 492). An understanding of scalar relationships of “the body, the household, the region, the nation and supra-national organizations” are central to analyses of mobility (Ibid: 494). The political relations and assumptions that exist about and within these particular scales are important as they have an effect on the ways in which, specifically, government policy frameworks are structured (Ibid).

Silvey (2006: 67) notes that pre-feminist migration research ignored the “gendered productions of a hierarchy of scales”. Thus, the ‘smaller’ scales of the household and body were coded as feminine (therefore given less attention to), while the ‘larger’ scales of the national and the international were coded as masculine (Ibid). Feminists prioritise the analytical value of the household scale by accounting for the hierarchical and power relations which shape it (Silvey, 2006: 68). The household takes on “place-specific meanings through the social practices” that define it (Ibid). Thus, migration potentially influences, reproduces and shifts patterns of gender relations across scales. For example, “the household takes on its meanings and composition through its members’ mobility and migrants’ interactions with national, transnational and regional labour processes” (Silvey, 2004: 494). Feminists view the personal as political; thus, arguing that the decisions that women make about childcare, intimate relationships and household incomes – which all occur at the scale of the household – are influenced by political factors (Kihato, 2013: 71). Importantly, Kihato (2013: 73) argues that the domestic space, or household, is a locus of social change and that within this space migrant women may be able to “negotiate, shape, and recreate their lives in ways that challenge hegemonic ideas about space and gender – and have a profound impact on cities in contemporary Africa” (Ibid: 72).

Nations, states and gender relations

Fouron and Glick Schiller (2001) explore, through a case study of transnational connections within the Haitian community in the United States, how gendered practices are reproduced across transnational social fields. Here, they observe that “gender and nation are mutually constituted within the transnational social fields that link homeland and new land” (Ibid: 539). The construct of nationhood, as identity formation, embodies familial and gendered imageries (Sinha, 2010: 218). Further, Fouron and Glick Schiller (2001: 539) argue that “gender hierarchies are constituted as part of the way women and men learn to identify with a nation-state”. While on the policing of women’s bodies, Mupotsa (2010: 4) notes that, in the African context, “the control and management of young women has and continues to be a feature of the project of nation-building, [yet] young women continue to un-belong to the nation.” Women are often excluded from the project of nation building: “nationalist rhetoric often portray a core of males who embody the nation, while female bodies are possessed by the nation” (Fouron and Glick Schiller (2001: 542).

The state, as an administrative function, infiltrates and shapes the very structure of immigrant homes (Bhattacharjee, 1997) and shapes migrants’ experiences navigating relationships between the country of origin and the host country. State policies around migration are governed by border crossings and administrative and physical fortifications (Silvey, 2006: 73). Political borders and boundaries between nations are produced by the privileging of particular identities and the marginalisation of others (Silvey, 2005: 139) and “the unequal geographies of spatial control reflected and created through these borders are intertwined with social hierarchies of gender, race, nation, and class” (Silvey, 2006: 72). In this way, the state constructs and reinforces “boundaries of inclusion and exclusion” (Kihato, 2013: 107). The state not only plays a key role in defining the ways in which borders position individuals, it also determines and reinforces gendered hierarchies and roles across various scales. Like political borders and boundaries, the national scale is constructed through social and political processes of exclusion and the privileging of particular identities (Silvey, 2004: 493). For example, exclusionary notions of citizenship “both materially and symbolically exclude specific women” (Ibid). This includes women who are actually citizens of the nation-state in question (Miraftab, 2004), as well as migrant women. However, in the post-colonial context, women have not only embodied the ideals of the nation, but actively participated in national liberation struggles (Fouron and Glick Schiller, 2001: 542). Though, whether women have equal claim to citizenship within the context of the post-colonial nation and how this affects their private lives in the context of the household scale, as well as at the scale of the body, is yet another question. Fouron and Glick Schiller (2001: 542) argue that “in state societies, public and private domains are constructed and penetrated by the institutions and interests of the state”. Thus, the ideals of the

nation are also reproduced and embodied at the scale of the household through the disciplining, surveying and inhabitation of the political regime (Ibid). In the lives of migrant women, the national scale presents itself as a space of exclusion fortified by immigration policies, as well as through the constructions of difference that locals within the nation-state express (Silvey, 2004: 493).

3.2 Power across geographies: 'social location and agency'

Through the second concept, Mahler and Pessar (2001) acknowledge that "multiple dimensions of identity also shape, discipline, and position people and the ways they think and act" (Mahler and Pessar, 2001: 446). Here, they introduce the concept of 'social location', which identifies how people are positioned within hierarchies of power and how particular socio-economic, political, historical and geographic factors shape these hierarchies (Ibid). Generally, people are born into a social location and this demarcates their access to social spaces, institutions, patterns of mobility, or access to resources and mobility in the transnational context (Ibid, 447). This does not mean that one's social location is fixed, it is fluid and may change over time "through individuals' own resourcefulness" (Stock, 2012: 1581). However, the various power hierarchies which shape social locations are defined at a societal level and cannot simply be and remade by individuals, regardless of their efforts to remake or resist them (Ibid).

Finally, Mahler and Pessar (2001: 446), in examining degrees of agency, question to what extent people are able to make and have control over individual decisions based on their social location. Here, agency is defined as the ways in which people exert power over, and the extent to which they are affected by, particular structural forces and processes (Ibid). However, agency is not only determined by an individual's social location, but also by, for example, by an individual's initiative: "two people may hail from equally disadvantageous social locations, but one – owing to her own resourcefulness – will exert more influence than another" (Ibid). Agency is reflected in the way that material flows, such as remittances, are controlled across transnational spaces (Ibid: 449). Examining the agency of migrant men and women's remittances practices, Mahler and Pessar (2001: 450) indicate that when remittance activities occur across unequal gendered geographies of power they impact gender ideologies and relations. Although the practice of remitting can level economic disparities for families left behind in countries of origin, they also "communicate important matters of obligation, prestige, and power" (Ibid). For example:

"Salvadoran male transmigrants similarly achieve more through their remittance payments to their wives than mere sustenance; they also promote male dominance by ensuring their wives' fidelity through mobilizing the vigilance of the men's kin in El Salvador." (Ibid)

Thus, remittance activities can be used, by men, to reproduce patriarchal relations within families.

3.3. Gendered geographies: conceptual framework

The conceptual framework in this study is based on the ‘gendered geographies of power’ framework introduced by Mahler and Pessar (2001). The conceptual framework incorporates the three key themes from the original framework, which include: determining social location, gender across geographies, and analysing agency. Through the concepts explored in the literature review, the conceptual framework will:

- determine the social location of women in the study through an analysis of the ways in which women access social capital in the transnational context, as well as the ways in which the state constructs their position in the host society;
- examine shifts in gender relations across geographies through women’s experiences navigating practices of transnational mobility and their participation within transnational social spaces; and
- illustrate and analyse degrees of agency through women’s control over their decisions around livelihood strategies and remittance practices.

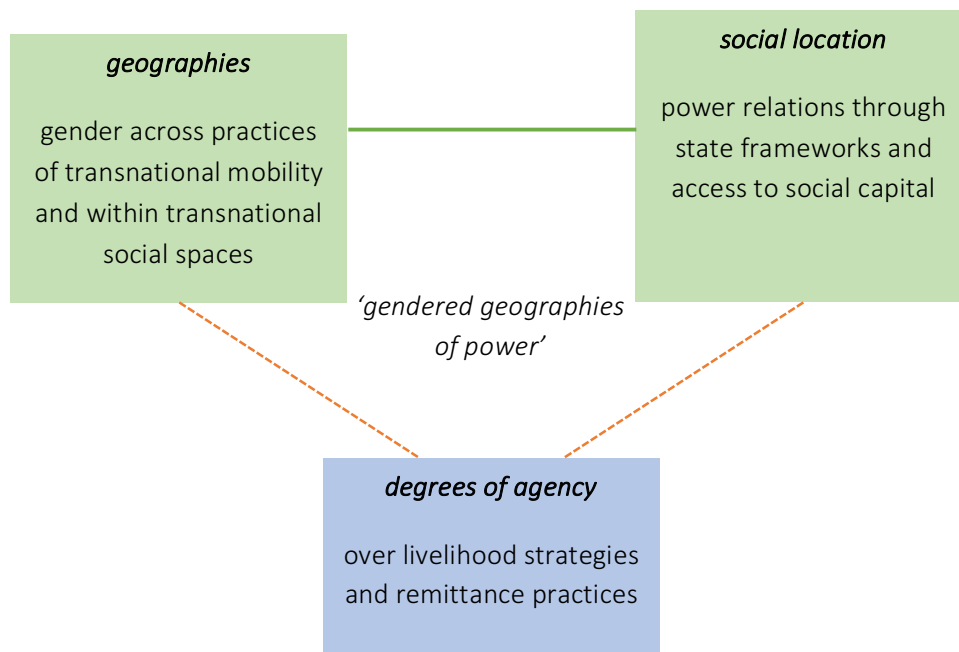


FIGURE 2.1 Conceptual framework: ‘gendered geographies of power’ (Mahler and Pessar, 2001)

Conclusion

The literature review has sought to unpack themes that are relevant to the main research question and sub-questions. Through the three themes, the chapter contextualises the everyday practices that shape migrant women's journeys and livelihood practices against intersecting power relations. The transnationalism and mobility paradigm accounts for the mobile networks that significantly impact on the livelihoods of women who migrate. The study of transnationalism also accounts for the ways in which these networks shape the spaces of host societies and the identities of those who migrate. In order to contextualise how mobile and transnational survival strategies are shaped, the chapter briefly explored the livelihoods framework, as well as how, for migrant women, access to forms of capital takes shape against an unequal terrain of gendered power relations. Finally, the chapter introduced and defined the 'gendered geographies of power' conceptual framework (Mahler and Pessar, 2001), which guides the analysis of findings. This framework is able to account for not only the power relations shaping everyday practices, but also the agency of migrant women to influence their migratory journeys and livelihood strategies. Ultimately, the chapter centres the experiences of migrant women, as well as the strategic intentions shaping their practices of livelihood formation within a transnational context.

THREE. Research Methods

1. Feminist research design

The study, privileges the experiences of migrant women, and is situated within a framework of feminist research design - rooted in feminist standpoint epistemology and intersectionality. DeVault and Gross (2012: 206) argue that feminist researchers use standard methods, but the transformative aspect of feminist research is that it strategically challenges mainstream theorizations about research processes (methodological concerns) and the ways in which knowledge is produced (epistemological concerns). Similarly, Clarke (2012: 389) argues that:

“feminisms also affect how we go about research (and other aspects of life). Pushing ourselves and others to be open to new ways of seeing and knowing, to legitimate and promote epistemic diversity (knowledge production by differently situated producers), and to work against epistemic violence that erases or silences minor voices and perspectives are each and all important.”

More generally, feminism has facilitated a space for oppressed groups to reclaim their experiences from the bounds of epistemic violence, while also asserting the value of difference (Narayan, 2010: 333). Through this feminist framework the research seeks to facilitate new ways of seeing and approaching socio-spatial complexities within African urban centres, through unearthing the unequal power dynamics which shape the survival strategies of marginal actors. Feminist epistemology is best described as a framework which is both concerned with creating knowledge and conducting research with the intention of unearthing power relations (Collins, 1997: 381). Narayan (2010: 332) argues that: “our location in the world as women makes it possible for us to perceive and different aspects of both the world and human activities in ways that challenge the male bias of existing perspectives”. This view is borne out of the reality that women’s contributions in a number of spaces have been ignored or undervalued; however, the inclusion of women’s voices and experience to various discourses would challenge and change the nature of knowledge production (Ibid).

Feminist standpoint theory exists alongside a framework of feminist epistemology. Centrally, standpoint theory “places less emphasis on individual experiences within socially constructed groups than on conditions that construct such groups” (Collins, 1997: 375). These groups would have also had “shared histories based on their shared location in relations of power” (Ibid: 376). As with the concept of ‘social location’ in Mahler and Pessar (2001), group dynamics are, thus, shaped by social processes which construct and uphold difference, and gives us an insight into the positioning of, for example, migrant groups in various host spaces. In the context of the study, Somali women have shared histories based of nationality, displacement and resettlement, as well as a shared relationship based on their interaction with patriarchal social institutions. Similarly, Hekman (1997: 343) argues that standpoint theory “enables us to connect everyday life with the

analysis of the social institutions that shape that life". Collins (1997: 376) further asserts that "it is common location within hierarchical power relations that creates groups, not the results of collective decision making of the individuals within the groups." These factors all result in common experiences being expressed about power relations; thus individuals, although maintaining their agency, within the group are argued to be predisposed to interpreting their experiences comparably (Ibid: 377).

Intersectionality begins to account for how the aforementioned hierarchies of power relations manifest within groups and the lives of individual actors. As a form of analysis, intersectionality exposes "intersecting patterns between different structures of power and how people are simultaneously positioned—and position themselves—in multiple categories" (Christensen and Jensen, 2012: 110). Further, it exposes "the multiple ways that race and gender interact with class in the labour market; interrogating the ways that states constitute regulatory regimes of identity, reproduction, and family formation..." (Cho et al., 2013: 785). An intersectional approach It is important to not make the mistake of viewing migrant groups from the same nation as homogenous. Although all of the research participants in the study are of the same gender, they are not a homogenous group. They may all have migrated from Somalia, but their roots and routes (Christensen and Jensen, 2012: 110) are varied. This has an effect on the ways in which they are able to position themselves within the Somali community in Mayfair. This also affects whether they are able to access education, social networks and employment. Thus, the other intersections that are relevant to the study - due to a context of capitalism and neoliberal globalisation, and the associated oppressive practices thereof – are inequalities linked to class and citizenship and the effect they have on mobile groups in urban contexts.

Finally, Kihato (2013: 39) argues that state law is a powerful and symbolic instrument that shapes urban space. With this in mind, one of the major concerns of the study is to unearth the ways in which social institutions - such as patriarchy, class and citizenship – shape urban dynamics in African cities. While questioning and confronting the ways in which these socio-political intersections affect the lives of women on the move. All in an effort to present an approach to transformative urban research, and policy-making, amidst the unequal terrain of post-colonial urban formations. The city, as argued by Kihato (2013: 115) is shaped by a dynamic set of interrelations and not only by the administrative registers which seek to legibly delineate and coproduce the spaces within it. Thus, the city:

"is also comprised of urban dwellers' own systems of knowing and understanding their experiences – the codes and symbol *they* use to interpret their experiences, the tactics they employ to navigate it, the vocabularies they use to describe it..." (Ibid)

The constant reconfiguration of urban space by urban actors does not occur in a socio-political void; thus, it is also important to consider the role social institutions play in shaping urban dwellers systems of knowing and experience. As I am particularly dealing with feminist urban research, patriarchy becomes one of the central theoretical concerns in the study (Peake, 1993: 415). For example, it is through patriarchy that the city has been shaped to confine women within the domestic realm, usually within suburban areas, where traditional family roles of caregiving take place (Ibid: 416). Leading to urban areas being deemed inherently masculine. Much more is understood about the ways in which, singular social institutions of patriarchy, race or class have been used as a way of delineating the city, particularly in cities constructed within colonial frameworks; however, there is often a lack of engagement with the ways in which patriarchy intersects with other social institutions and how these not only physically shape process of urbanisation, but also the politics surrounding every day, grassroots practices. Urban spaces are often equally racialized, classist and formed in line with nationalist discourses which, collectively, leads to a privileging of the mobility of particular groups over others. This presents a challenge to development planning and the field's role in upholding patriarchal divisions, as well as raising questions around planning for mobile populations. Feminist research provides a valuable platform to understand everyday life in relation to social institutions and their sets of power relations. This offers important considerations for development planning practice and thought in an African, post-colonial context.

Looking at Somali women's experiences of navigating transnational processes, the city and their households offer us yet another way of encountering and understanding processes of urbanisation, as well as how these processes affect people (Ibid: 114). Centring the experiences of migrant women counters assumptions of masculinised migration flows - both in the Somali community and within other migrant communities - which further re-inscribe assumptions of male dominance in shaping urban space and ignoring the influence that women have in reconfiguring urban space to sustain their livelihoods.

2. The case study: addressing socio-spatial relationships, everyday practices and livelihoods

Yin (1981: 98) argues that case studies are used when it is unclear why something occurs in one context over another, as well as to observe and allow for the real-life observation of a particular phenomenon. Thus, the case study is an appropriate method, for this study, as it provides a basis for unpacking complex socio-spatial relationships, as well as uncovering the types of spaces that are

formed across borders and how they affect practices in host spaces. While further understanding how the Somali community is rooted in the host community in Mayfair. Although case study is capable of embracing both qualitative and quantitative means of data collection (Dooley, 2002: 336), here the case study is used for exploratory purposes and relies on the narratives, accounts and everyday practices of Somali migrant women.

The Somali community is physically rooted within a transnational social space, or an ethnic enclave, within the vicinity of 8th Avenue in Mayfair, as seen in Figures 3.1. Religion plays an important role in rooting the community in the host space. Sadouni (2013: 51) notes that the nature of migration routes taken by Somali migrants to South Africa has shaped a diverse Somali diaspora in Johannesburg. However, religion provides a sense of unity for a community displaced by violent conflict from the civil war: creating a “diasporic culture of solidarity (Ibid). Unlike in other South African cities, such as Cape Town, the Somali community in Johannesburg is almost entirely located in Mayfair (Jinnah, 2010). Displacement and violence are dominant features in the lives of Somalis across the diaspora. However, the Somali community in South Africa has not only had to contend with violent displacement from the home society, but also with xenophobia in the host community (Thompson, 2016: 125).



FIGURE 3.1 Somali businesses on 8th Avenue, Mayfair

2.1 Locating home: conflict in Somalia and Somali migration

In order to contextualise Somali migration to South Africa, and elsewhere in the diaspora, it is important to understand the conflict that led to their displacement from Somalia. Sadouni (2009: 236) notes that, the first wave of the civil war in the 1980s led to the internal displacement of Somalis. Somalis affected by the conflict in urban areas were the first to flee to neighbouring countries: Kenya and Ethiopia (Ibid). In 1991, the Somali government was entirely destabilised by clan-affiliations and international institutions were unable to foster stability leading to a withdrawal of UN peacekeepers in 1995 (Ibid). Internally, the civil war resulted in the loss of 500 000 lives due to the conflict and eventual famine (Al-Shamani, 2006 and Abdi, 2007). Sadouni (2009: 236) notes that the youth who left at this point in the conflict had no “systematic planning of preferred destinations” (Ibid). In the wake of the conflict, many families were dispersed and relied on remittances sent through money transfer networks (Thompson, 2016: 121). This dispersion also occurred along gendered lines. For example, Thompson (2016: 121) indicates that “80% of Somalis living in Saudi Arabia were men, while over 60% of those in the UK were women”. The prolonged conflict in Somalia has also shaped a significant diasporic population that is often described to be successful in their practices of transnational development due to “ownership and trust kept within the Somali community, consolidated by common experiences of displacement” (Ibid: 122). While extensive, transnational money transfer networks support Somali businesses across multiple sites in the diaspora (Ibid).

As of January 2019, the UNHCR estimates that there are 3.45 million displaced Somalis: 802 400 refugees and asylum seekers and 2.6 million internally displaced in Somalia (UNHCR, 2019). While further, the social consequences of the civil war were gendered. Abdi (2007: 185) argues that:

“women not only become the first casualties of conflict in terms of the violence inflicted on their bodies and psyches; they also bear the gendered consequences of war in post-war gender roles and relations within that society.”

Many of the women in the study still expressed concern for those left behind as, particularly their children who are not able to go to school in cities like Mogadishu due to the frequency of bombings. Others, who had recently left Somalia, or who had gone back to seek employment, expressed that the country is still unsafe due to the presence Al-Shabaab, an extremist, militant group fighting the Somali government for control over Somalia.

2.2 Locating the host: Somali migrants in Johannesburg

Mayfair has experienced different waves of mobility throughout its history. The Indian community began moving into the area, during the 1980s, after the collapse of the Group Areas Act – using white South Africans as proxies to buy properties in the area on their behalf (Sadouni, 2013: 48).

This was followed by, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, an influx of migrants seeking economic opportunity in the area. In terms of Somali migration into the area, Jinnah (2010: 1) notes that there have been three significant waves. These include: the period in the early 1990s following the civil war, between 1995-2000, and the most recent in 2006 after the Ethiopian invasion of Somalia (Ibid). However, Sadouni (2013: 48) indicates that Somalis first arrived in the country during the Anglo Boer War as servants to British soldiers. These early Somalis decided to settle in Johannesburg, but were subsequently integrated into the Cape Malay community (Ibid). The author argues that “they have embedded their legitimate presence in an invented generational history of settlement which resembles the claim of Malays and Indians to be part of the city” (Ibid). During the 1990s, South Africa became a desired destination for Somali migrants due to the Refugees Act of 1998, which “granted refugees legal status in the country, thereby distinguishing itself from most African countries, and enabled refugees freedom of movement without encampment” (Shaffer et al., 2018: 161). Thus, newly arrived migrants are able to rely on longstanding social infrastructure, within the urban context of Johannesburg, shaped by Somali familial and clan relations (Thompson, 2016: 127). Currently, there are no clear figures on how many Somali migrants live in South Africa, but estimates range between 27 000 – 40 000 (Jinnah, 2010: 91). While Mqadi (2015) notes that there are around 6000 Somalis in Johannesburg.



FIGURE 3.2 Site in context: Mayfair, Johannesburg (source: GCRO, 2019)

Mayfair is located along the western outskirts of the Johannesburg CBD, as indicated in Figure 3.1. Sadouni (2009: 236) argues that Islam has played an important role in the positioning of the Somali

community within Mayfair, Johannesburg – and this has allowed the community to “assert urban legitimacy” (Sadouni, 2013: 49). Religion has shaped the way that migrants have been able to mobilise social and economic resources and incorporate themselves into the host community (Ibid). For example, Sadouni (2013: 50) illustrates that Somalis identify “first and foremost as Muslims” in order to attain solidarity with South African Indians in order to improve access to opportunities within the area. Through their positioning as African Muslims in a South African Muslim urban area, Somalis have physically integrated themselves into the Mayfair community through the establishment of a Somali mosque and madrassa, Somali community organisations, as well as the Amal Shopping Centre – a central point in the Somali ethnic economy in Johannesburg (Sadouni, 2013; Thompson, 2016). Figure 3.2, below, locates the Somali community concentrated amongst a number of religious spaces within Mayfair.



FIGURE 3.3 The study area and key amenities in Mayfair

The enclave concentrates the Somali ethnic economy, which is “constructed and reproduced by practices differentiating spaces and networks characterised by shared region of origin and experience of displacement” (Thompson, 2016: 125). Somali owned shops in townships around Gauteng are central to the Somali economy in the region (Ibid). Some migrants in this space are able to utilise diasporic networks to participate in international trading; however, “participation in a transnational economy is not equally available to all immigrants” as not all members of the community have an equal share of capital (Sadouni, 2009: 244). Small entrepreneurs who are able to participate in transnational trade with partners in Africa or the Middle East, use these networks to “renew their stock in Johannesburg and elsewhere in the country” (Ibid). Somali migrants are also expected to participate in remittance activities and sometimes these intersect with business practices: “as is the case of a Somali refugee businesswoman who, from her home in Mayfair, sells fabric from her mother in Jeddah since her shop was burnt in an African township” (Ibid).



FIGURE 3.4 Somali businesses on 8th Avenue, Mayfair

Figure 3.4, above, indicates various Somali businesses along 8th Avenue in Mayfair. Most of the business along this street include money transfer outlets, wholesalers, small convenience stores, travel agencies and internet cafes, as well as a number of restaurants. The Amal Shopping Centre

functions as a small mall and, as illustrated by Sadouni (2009: 243), is a strategy used by the community to “protect Somali traders from theft and police harassment”, while also providing livelihood opportunities for women in the community. Sadouni (2013: 51) highlights that gender roles have shifted in the context of migration, leaving many women running single parent households; thus, having to sustain themselves by accessing employment within the enclave or in other parts of the city, including townships. Thus, women are able to attain a level of financial independence that they otherwise would not have (Ibid). However, their level of financial independence is still reliant on a number of factors, such as the level of remittance activities that women are expected to participate in.

3. Data Collection

Data collection was reliant on qualitative methods, including participant observation and qualitative interviews with Somali women in the Mayfair community. Nowicka and Ryan (2015: 8) argue that:

“increasing feminisation of migration studies and migration discourses goes also hand in hand with the expansion of qualitative methods in migration studies related to a growing interest in issues such as identity formation, the role of social capital and networks, ethnic discrimination, and the complex nature of the causal mechanisms linked to migration”

Although the study is primarily concerned with transnational mobility, as opposed to migration, a qualitative approach is able to account for the associated socio-political complexities inherent in the practice in a way that cannot be captured through quantitative means. For example, Wong (2006) argues that remittance networks – important in this study – cannot simply be understood through figures, as the relations shaping these networks and practices are affected by complex sets of human relations. Thus, it was important that the data collected focused on the narratives of the everyday life of Somali women within this community. Ultimately, observations, interviews and sampling came about through a series of informal negotiations no different to the negotiations we make as we navigate informality in urban spaces like those in Johannesburg.

3.1 Observation

Participant observation is defined by Bogdan (1973: 303) as a method which involves the researcher spending a vast amount of time in site of enquiry. These observations are then recorded as field notes (Ibid). Jupp (2006: 214) also notes that the researcher often actively participates in the everyday life of the setting in which the research will take place. Further, participation observation is also often associated with ethnography and used as a basis towards qualitative interviewing (Ibid:

215). This method allows the researcher to immerse themselves into the culture and every day practices of the study area, thus facilitating the opportunity to provide deeper accounts of the practices in the area (Jupp, 2006: 215).

I did not actually spend much time as a participant observer. The challenges of observation and access were exacerbated by the fact that I am an outsider, as well as a woman. However, when I did engage with women informally, or to explain the project to community members, I also shared my narrative of migration ensuring that I am interested in the narratives of women in this community due to a common basis of us being migrant women in the city of Johannesburg. Otherwise, it was very difficult to observe women within the community, as they are busier than their male counterparts and do not occupy public realms, outside of their work environments, as comfortably as men do. I observed that while men tend to loiter on the street, women tend to be constantly on the move and preoccupied, but they are active and dominant participants in the economy of the enclave. The Somali Community Board, as a male run organisation were also hesitant to interfere in a research project that was centred on women experiences and referred me to a young Somali woman working for a religious-based NGO as a health worker. As she was busy, we only met a few times at the early stages of the research project. In those occasions, she walked me around the area and introduced me to a few women within the community. As she could only offer me assistance until July, establishing any further access to the community was a challenge that I never managed to completely overcome. Although she was not able to assist for the duration of the project, the introductions proved useful when I went back to the community by myself. One of these introductions led me to a salon run by a Somali woman, on 8th Avenue, where I was able to establish further access to a small part of the community. Establishing access within this space was particularly important, as it was one of the only spaces that allowed me to 'hang out' as a woman in the community. On my first visit I decided that supporting the salon through the use of one of the services offered may ease access (see Figure 3.5). This is where I met a henna artist and salon owner, and together with her I was able to find the majority of my interview participants. Securing research participants dependent largely on trust; thus, having an insider in the community eased interactions. Early on in the project, a Somali woman who owns a shop in Amal Shopping Centre expressed an interest in the project and had asked me to come back if I needed any assistance. She, together with her friend, became participants within the study.



FIGURE 3.5 Making in-roads by supporting women's work

Finally, since I was not able to gather a large sample for the qualitative interviews, the limited participant observation that I undertook, together with the help of the NGO worker and alone as a researcher, I was able to build an understanding of the socio-spatial dynamics that women in the community occupy. While observing and looking for research participants, I approached women in their businesses along 8th Avenue and through informal conversations and observations gained some insight into the diversity of their business practices on the street.

3.2 Qualitative interviews

As participant observation was constrained and limited to infrequent visits and walks around the area, qualitative interviews became the primary mode of data collection and narrative formation. As the study is rooted within feminist research, it was important that interviews were conducted in line with feminist concerns. DeVault and Gross (2012: 206) argue that although interviewing can simply be described as an approach that facilitates in-depth dialogue and interaction between the researcher and the informant, this outlook fails to account for the dynamics of power between actors from varying contexts. Human talk is complex, and is shaped by:

“the flexibility and productive powers of language; the subtle shades of meaning conveyed through the nuances of speech, gesture, and expression; issues of translation (...) the injuries and uses of silence; the challenges inherent in listening” (Ibid).

In the context of this study, issues around translation fundamentally shaped the ways in which I could conduct the interviews. Only one interview was conducted with a fluent English speaker, and she was present for a later interview where she assisted with translation. The rest of the interviews were conducted without any translation, which meant that I had to pay more attention to non-verbal cues, such as: emotions, silences/pauses, structures of shared narratives, emphases/recurrences of particular themes or topics, and which experiences women chose to reveal or conceal. Most participants did not consent to the use of audio recordings, so I made use of handwritten or typed notes which I transcribed immediately after each interview. With the consent of the participants, the last two interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. The interviews took place in varied contexts, over five days stretched across four months. After numerous attempts to secure participants, it was still particularly difficult to find time to sit down with them for the interview as they are all employed. One participant was out of the country for an extended period of time, which delayed out interview to February. Another, was employed in a position where she worked 12 hours a day, 7 days a week. While in on case, many women were available on the same day and I interviewed them together, in the same space. Although there were common experiences shared across interviews, based on the participants shared contexts of displacement, the routes and experiences that shaped these women's lives were incredibly diverse. Each interview set had varying textures; and the contexts in which the interviews took place are important:

- *INTERVIEW DAY 1 – 12 October 2018*

This was the first introductory discussion between me and Amina. She had been interested in my background and presence in Mayfair and offered her assistance with the project and had promised to introduce me to her younger sister who was arriving, from Kenya, in November 2018. Although I had not formally interviewed her, through our discussion she had volunteered in-depth narratives of her migratory experiences. These, I made note of and have included pieces in the analysis, together with 'formal' interview data. I then chose to formally interview her younger sister, Neema, when she arrived in the country, to give a fuller account of this particular household.

- *INTERVIEW DAY 2 – 28 October 2018*

Two interviews, with Fawzia and Habiba, were conducted on this day. They took place in Habiba's shop, in the Amal Shopping Centre. I interviewed Habiba while she went about her work, so I had to pause on many occasions while she assisted customers. This environment allowed me to observe her business practices during these pauses in the interview. Fawzia, her friend, was present for a portion of the interview and, having observed a portion of her friend's interview, was willing to

share her own experiences. Habiba had a better grasp of English and was able to step in where translation was needed or to fill in gaps of the story when Fawzia was unsure of how to put something across to me.

- *INTERVIEW DAY 3 – 28 November 2018*

Amina offered space in her home for three interviews to be conducted, one after the other. The interview was conducted in one of the bedrooms in the home and a number of Amina's household members were also present, including her daughter who, having grown up in Nairobi, was fluent enough in English to be able to translate when necessary. This environment, due to its intimacy, facilitated in-depth exchanges between all of the women in the room.



FIGURE 3.6 Courtyard outside Amina's home on 9th Avenue, Mayfair

- *INTERVIEW DAY 4 – 3 February 2019*

The 4th day was host to one interview with Neema, Amina's younger sister. It also took place in Amina's home. Neema and I had, at this point, built a relationship over 2 months. She is fluent in English and the only participant to have completed her schooling, so we did not have any difficulties understanding each other and, as a result, she was able to share an in-depth life history, as well as offer critical feedback on gender issues in the Somali community.

- *INTERVIEW DAY 5 – 10 February 2019*

One interview was conducted on this day with Aliyah, in her salon (see Figure 3.7). This was an early Sunday morning, a slow day for business; thus, a quiet environment for the interview to take place. Aliyah was the only participant with a weak comprehension of English, so the interview was fully translated with Neema's assistance.



FIGURE 3.7 Aliyah's salon on 8th Avenue, Mayfair

Reflexivity

Finally, a reflexive approach to feminist research projects is important, as “research relations are never simple encounters, innocent of identities and lines of power” (DeVault and Gross, 2012: 215). During the fieldwork, a woman in the community reminded me that many of the women that I will be approaching will open up about their struggles in the hope for some form of assistance. I explained to her that the project was fully for academic purposes and that I am only a student. Although she understood my position, she further stressed that, regardless of my research intents, my actions may be deemed exploitative. This speaks to the unequal set of power dynamics present in research relations. Although I am also a migrant, and a woman of colour, I was able to empathise and comment on their experiences of patriarchy, class and ethnicity. However, I was still very visibly an outsider in the community: as I am not Somali, nor Muslim. I am also formally educated and conducting research for academic purposes, as opposed to working with an NGO or an environment

that is resourced and able to provide some form of material assistance. This often left me feeling conflicted. Many of the women did express that they were struggling, had been in abusive relationships or unable to be with their children or help their families back home, and had asked me if I could help them. These experiences made me question whether, unintentionally, unearthing such traumas was in fact necessary and to what ends did all of this serve if these experiences would only be used for a student research report. However, as argued by DeVault and Gross (2012: 217), since “women’s perspectives have been silenced or ignored”, sharing and writing their narratives into academic literature has a potentially transformative effect. While the relationships that I have built with some of the interview participants will extend past the research and in time I do aim to, through the networks I may build, assist women in their efforts to seek material assistance in Johannesburg.

Interview guidelines

The interview guidelines (see Appendix B) encompassed the core themes introduced and explored in the literature. I mostly asked women to narrate their experiences based on these distinct themes and included a set of questions, under each theme, to guide the dialogue and to ensure a level of consistency across the interviews. Not all of these questions were relevant to every respondent, as some, for example, did not work in their country of origin or in the host context. The line of questioning sought to uncover Somali women’s personal backgrounds and migratory experiences; their households and occupations, both in countries of origin and within the host context; and how these have changed across in the transnational context; their support systems, both from within their community and within their households, and remittance networks, as well as their general and gendered experiences of the city.

It was important that through the interviews participants had the space to focus on the aspects of their lives that they wanted to share rather than being forced to share details that they may not feel comfortable opening up about. I respected their boundaries at all times and did not probe in circumstance where it was clear that certain topics were off limits. Some women chose to speak at length about their businesses or their children, but made very little mention of their current or former marriages. Some women spoke at length about abusive relationships they had been in. Some chose to focus heavily on the lack of support from their community, while another focused greatly on her desire to further her education and her disinterest in engaging with the Somali community. In this way, since each interview had a common theme, I was able to gain a deeper insight into the aspects of participant’s lives that held the greatest value to them. Finally, as only one of the interviews was conducted one on one, another important aspect of the interview process was to

acknowledge “commonalities of experience” and to allow these to “become part of a mutual exchange of views” between the women in each interview setting (McDowell, 1992: 405).

Identifying participants

The interviews were conducted on a relatively small sample size with 8 Somali women. Similar case studies – such as Wong (2006), Kihato (2013) and Jinnah (2013) – were conducted on sample sizes of a minimum of 15 participants; however, across those projects the researchers worked with extended time frames. Access to women within the community was constrained and time-frames did not allow me to build enough connections across different parts of the community. Thus, the sample size of interview participants in this study is by no means representative of the entire population of Somali women in Mayfair. And the study, by no means, seeks to make any generalisations based on the findings. I simply aim to present, through a critical engagement with methods, methodologies and epistemologies, new ways of seeing. Although the sample size was small, and language constrained, the data that came out of the interviews encompassed a vast amount of complexity and a diversity of migration experiences within a group that is often assumed to be fairly homogenous. The sample group was, unintentionally, comprised of a younger group of Somali women – ranging between 20 – 35 years. Although I did not particularly seek out women based on their age, an expanded sample size would have given room to an engagement with an older generation of women, who’s experiences may have added another dimension of complexity to the findings.

The process of finding interview participants was organic and informal. I had approached three of the participants on my own and they eventually introduced me to the other 5 participants in the study. I had initially intended to work with the Somali Community Board in order to identify participants. However, due to the status of the organisation in the community – as well as their hesitation around getting involved with “women’s issues”, there may be a bias in whose voices were included within the research report. Of course, the informal approach that I used did not allow me to escape biases in the data, but the narratives shared by women were incredibly diverse and since I was not perceived as a complete stranger, I was able to access a level of sincerity in their narratives that may not have otherwise existed.

Profile of participants

Name	Age	Country of Origin	Married	Children	Years in SA	Education	Occupation
<i>Ilhan</i>	26	Somalia	Y	2	6	None	Sells tea (on the street)
<i>Miriam</i>	28	Somalia	N	3	5	None	Sells samosas (home-based)
<i>Khadija</i>	31	Somalia	Y	7	6	None	Sells tea (in a shop)
<i>Fawzia</i>	27	Somalia	Y	5	8	Early primary	Stays at home
<i>Habiba</i>	30	Somalia	Y	7	8	None	Shop owner
<i>Neema</i>	20	Somalia	N	-	3 months	Matric (started university)	School secretary
<i>Aliyah</i>	32	Somalia	N	7	3	None	Salon owner
<i>Amina</i>	35	Somalia	Y	7	10	Early primary	Salon owner

Figure 3.8 Profile of participants

4. Analysis

The qualitative interviews were transcribed and then coded in order to reveal recurring themes. These were grouped under analytic categories, in line with the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter 2: determining social location; gender across geographies; analysing agency. Through social location the analysis will focus on the challenges of crossing the border into South Africa and access to legal documentation (asylum-seeker permits). This section will also focus on forms of transnational capital, such as education, former occupations and access to transnational social networks. Through ‘gender across geographies’ the analysis will focus on the dominant socio-spatial relationships in this study – transnational mobility and transnational social spaces – and examine the ways in which gendered relations shift or are reproduced within these spaces. Finally, through

looking at the way livelihoods and remittance practices are constructed, the analysis will focus on agency. As argued by Wong (2006: 360), “migration presents an opportunity to renegotiate power relations in households in host countries”. Thus, the role of the analysis is to explore how power relations are renegotiated across transnational lines and how the agency of Somali women is shaped by these renegotiations which are made visible through their survival strategies.

THEMES	ANALYTICAL CATEGORIES
• education • access to social networks • former occupations/skills • other transnational resources • access to documentation • administrative boundaries	DETERMINING SOCIAL LOCATION 1. Politics of borders and boundaries 2. Mobilising transnational capital
• migratory journeys • resources and decisions around mobility • structure of transnational household • social expectations • experiences associated with violence: trauma, abuse, exploitation	GENDER ACROSS GEOGRAPHIES 1. Transnational mobility 2. The enclave and the transnational household
• choice of occupation • business practices • remittance networks • control over remittances	ANALYSING AGENCY 1. Livelihood strategies 2. Remittance practices

Figure 3.9 Themes and analytical categories

5. Limitations

The study, as mentioned previously, in no way attempts to make any generalisations about Somali women in their community in Mayfair. The study was constrained by a number of factors, these include: time and scope, access to the community, language and cultural barriers. As already mentioned above, the study was constrained by a limited time-frame and because establishing access to a community was a lengthy process, my interview sample size remained relatively small.

This also limited the scope of the research to only looking at a few intersections such as patriarchy, class and citizenship. Clan affiliations and religion are also social institutions that affect the positioning of Somali women in the community. Although, I do briefly touch on religion in the analysis, issues around clan affiliations were not commonly raised in the interviews so I chose to leave this out. Language barriers presented one of the biggest stumbling blocks. As highlighted above, translation occurred in an informal manner, which meant that a lot may have been lost in translation; thus, providing room for misunderstandings and my own potential misrepresentations of particular narratives. Language barriers in most of the interviews also didn't allow me to get a descriptive sense of women's life histories, and again due to time constraints, I was not able to go back to each woman and fill in gaps in narratives. Finally, time and structural constraints limited the research scope to one migrant community in Johannesburg. However, this leaves room for future areas of research by expanding the study area to accommodate a broader group of Somali women who do not reside in Mayfair, or to migrant women from various communities in Johannesburg. Especially those who do not live within a transnational social space like Somali women in Mayfair and navigate the host context in potentially contradictory ways to the women in this study.

6. Ethical considerations

I was faced with 2 major ethical concerns while completing this research project. The first concern, as I was working with migrant women, was around exposing their legal status in the country. I was not able to avoid discussions around the challenges around access to documentation, as this factor was important to questions around livelihood strategies. Exposing the legal status of the respondents in the study poses a threat to their safety in the country; however, names were changed in order to ensure anonymity in the responses.

The second concern, was navigating trauma and the potentially exploitative nature of academic research conducted on marginalised societal groups. Consent and respecting women's boundaries, while approaching them for their participation and during interviews, was crucial here. I explained to all of the participants from the onset that their participation in the study was voluntary and that I was not in a position to offer any material assistance. I also made them aware of what the research entails and about what I would expect from them in the interviews. I had also expressed that they were welcome to stop the interview at any point and that they did not have to speak on any issues that they did not feel comfortable in sharing. If a potential participant was uncomfortable with the entire idea of contributing to the research project I did not approach them further. While compiling the interview guidelines I also stayed away from any questions which would expose sensitive details

in the women's lives, such as abuse and exploitation. However, a number of women did volunteer traumatic experiences to me even though my line of questioning did not explicitly ask for this. As they are women who have been displaced from their countries of origin it was, of course, not possible to avoid encountering their trauma at some point. In one interview, the participant became incredibly emotional when I asked her about her children who are still in Somalia and she is not fully able to support them. I handled this situation in the most compassionate way I could and told her that we did not have to continue and did not probe for further participation. She did, eventually, consent to continuing with the interview.

FOUR. I came here alone

Analysis of findings

Introduction

Somali women's everyday practices take shape within the Somali community's transnational social space in Mayfair, Johannesburg. Their interactions with this host space are mediated by relationships with practices of transnationalism, which significantly shape their livelihood strategies. In this space, gendered power relations together with state practices, associated with citizenship, significantly shape the agency of women and their decisions around livelihood practices. By focusing on the transnational environment in which Somali women's livelihoods take shape, we are met with the immense complexities that exist in maintain ties across borders, while navigating the gendered social expectations of the host community. The women in this study are active agents in shaping their migratory processes in order to strategically improve their, and their families' livelihoods. However, their ability to enact agency over their livelihood practices, in the host context, sets up distinct socio-spatial relationships that are both constraining and enabling. On the one hand, their experiences highlight that for migrant women, participation within the socio-economy of a transnational social space is not necessarily emancipatory. On the other, although they may navigate their transnational context at the margins of power relations, they are also able, through their agency, to subvert power and shape their spaces to support their livelihood strategies.

The analysis focuses on the role that gendered politics of transnational mobility play in the lives of migrant women in the Somali community, by bringing together data from interviews with eight women. The analysis will first determine the social location of women in the study through their ability to access legal status in South Africa, as well as their ability to access and mobilise transnational capital. Next, the analysis will focus on gender across geographies and illustrate, through women's experiences of transnational mobility and navigating the transnational social space, the ways in which gendered relations are reproduced across transnational lines through the social expectations that manifest across the scale of the enclave and the transnational household. Finally, the analysis will focus on Somali women's decisions around livelihood strategies and remittance practices in an attempt to understand their ability to assert agency over their social location. Through these considerations, the analysis seeks to illustrate the ways in which patriarchy, class and citizenship, shape everyday practices, as well as how migrant women are able to subvert power relations to accommodate their livelihood strategies.

1. Determining social location: Somali women in Johannesburg

The women in this study navigate unequal access to institutions shaped by patriarchal, classist and citizenship-based power relations. Together, they commonly share a social location shaped by

patriarchy, class and citizenship placing them at the margins of power hierarchies both within their community and in the broader host community. This social location, across geographies, “affects their access to resources and mobility across transnational spaces, [as well as] their agency as initiators, refiners and transformers of these conditions”. Much like in the study of migrant women in Johannesburg by Kihato (2013), Somali women here exist within a state of legal limbo and liminality in Johannesburg. Further, for many women, access to social networks in their community, as well as transnational capital, is limited by class and patriarchy.

Thompson (2016: 125) notes that two contexts of violence shape Somali identity in South African society: civil war in Somalia, as well as xenophobic violence in South Africa. This has vastly determined their pattern of settlement and ethnic economy in Johannesburg. Through the grassroots practices, and agency, of the community, as well as the inability of the South African state to protect migrants from xenophobic violence, Somalis in Johannesburg have constructed a space that physically differentiates their citizenship. Although drawing on a common religious identity as their host community in Mayfair, they are distinctly separated from a South Africa identity or desire to assimilate into South African culture. However, for Somali women in this space, not only are their identities shaped by the dual violence mentioned above, they are exposed to an added layer of gendered based violence, an embodied manifestation of patriarchy.

Women who chose to express their encounters with multiple layers of violence spoke of the ways in which it fragmented their families or disrupted their livelihoods. Although the violence associated with displacement and xenophobia is commonly discussed amongst community members, there is a lack of engagement with issues around gender based violence. Due to social expectations, which create an atmosphere of silence, women are unable to seek safety and community assistance when they are faced with abuse. However, Khadija expressed that she felt it is not easy for either men or women in her community. Women face a level of intimate violence that men don’t, but she argues that, men are more likely to face xenophobic violence:

“I don’t feel I have many opportunities. Men do have more opportunities, but they will see that he has money and he might get killed, especially in the locations. They can’t always give money to support their families because they are being robbed or killed.”

Violence, either expressed through xenophobia or in its gendered manifestations, provides an example of how power is embodied and used to impose marginality on certain groups. This section seeks to determine the social location of women in the study by examining their experiences of navigating the border and the state, through access to legal documentation, as well as their experiences mobilising and accessing forms of transnational capital.

1.1 Politics of borders and boundaries

National borders are maintained through sets of administrative and legislative boundaries, which manifest as physical hurdles to the mobility of the women in this study, in the host context. For the women in the study, the national scale presents itself as a space of exclusion fortified by immigration policies (Silvey, 2004: 493). While further, state practices, in the host country, illustrate the exclusionary nature of nationalist practices. Across the world, migrants fleeing economic, political or social instability are criminalised for making 'illegal' border crossings into safer, stable or developed nations. The border presents itself as the first site of violence, exclusion and exploitation for migrants making their journeys to improving their and their families' lives. In this study, a number of women in the study expressed that they had either been arrested, by officials, or kidnapped and threatened, by criminals, with violence at the border. Neema had been kidnapped between the border of Zimbabwe and South Africa by the people who were helping her cross into the country, demanding R12 000 for her release. Aliyah's narrative mirrored hers. Ilhan, Fawzia and Miriam were arrested by officials at different points at the border. Miriam was forced to pay a bribe for her release, but officials let her go after she had explained that she simply did not have any money. She also had no one in South Africa to contact for help. Ilhan explained that: "the police arrested me at the border, but I got the 14-day paper and went to Home Affairs in Pretoria". This '14-day paper' gives migrants entering South Africa a 2-week period in which to apply for asylum in the country. Without an asylum application, migrants may face deportation; however, while they wait for their cases to be adjudicated they are able to start businesses and start sending money back home.

Habiba's case is exceptional in the study. She flew to South Africa from Dubai, where she was based at the time, to join her husband in South Africa: a Somali with citizenship in the Netherlands. During the interview, she showed me his passport and expressed that she did not struggle to access documentation in South Africa due to her husband's status as a citizen of a Western nation. She did not specify whether she had attained refugee status, or in which ways her husband was able to assist with her legal documentation in South Africa. Unlike the other women in the study she neither had to physically cross borders nor deal with the bureaucratic hurdle of accessing documentation by herself. For the other women in the study, accessing legal status in the country required an application for an asylum-seeking permit. In South Africa, Somalis are seen as a legitimate group of asylum seekers (Gastrow and Amit, 2015). However, many of the women in the study have been in South Africa for over 5 years and are still renewing asylum permits between one to three months with very little hope of attaining refugee status. A young Somali woman working at an NGO in the

area explained that attaining refugee status is becoming increasingly difficult, and that many Somalis were lucky to even receive 6-month long asylum permits.

Many women expressed that they had grown weary of the bureaucratic hurdles of accessing and renewing their legal documentation. Aliyah also spoke about needing to renew the asylum permit after short intervals:

“I got the asylum [permit] for 1 month, for 3 months I was getting this. After 3 months, they gave [me a 3-month permit]. But the kids don’t have anything now and if they want to study, they can’t.”

Although she has legal status in the country, her children were undocumented at the time of the interview and will be unable to access formal education in South Africa until they are able to access some form of legal paperwork. Amina, who has lived in South Africa for 10 years, explained that she struggles to make the journey to Pretoria, every 3 months, uncertain of whether she will be granted a renewed permit. She is still struggling to access paperwork for her daughter, who had grown up in Nairobi, and will be unable to continue her studies in Johannesburg.

Amina’s younger sister, Neema, had been in South Africa for 3 months at the time of the interview. She had spoken to me at length about her challenges and conflicts around accessing documentation in South Africa. She has yet to make the journey to Marabastad in Pretoria, as she is currently employed in a full-time capacity and cannot take time off from work. She explained that this Home Affairs (one of three in South Africa that carries out refugee applications) only handle Somali asylum applications on a Thursday before 1pm. She is only able to leave work at 2pm. Both her and Amina were worried that they may have to pay a bribe of R2 000 to get to the front of the queue at the Home Affairs and simply did not have the money on hand. Neema also explained that she is nervous to attempt to apply for asylum in South Africa, as she does not actually have proof of Somali citizenship, in the form of a birth certificate, with her. Having grown up in Kenya, she was granted refugee status and travelled to South Africa on her Kenyan passport. She has struggled to find guidance from members within the community around the asylum application, but believes that, as a Kenyan national, she may not be granted asylum in South Africa. Together with this uncertainty, she also simply does not have the time, or the resources to make the journey to Pretoria. Her continued status as an undocumented migrant in South Africa affects her access to secure, stable employment, while leaving her without any form of state protection. She also remains vulnerable to deportation.

Although most of the women in the study have legal documentation in the country, they remain in a state of legal limbo. With asylum seeker permits that require constant renewal, many women have simply grown weary of the bureaucratic hurdles of existing in a state of legality and continue to

circumvent these hurdles by going about their everyday lives – with or without legal paperwork. In a context where their transnational families are reliant on them for economic resources, the resources required for constant journeys to Pretoria unnecessarily stand in the way of the livelihood practices that they have managed to constructed regardless of their illegibility in the eyes of the state (Kihato, 2013).

1.2 Mobilising forms of transnational capital

Having access to forms of transnational capital significantly impacts the ways in which migrant women are able to locate themselves in the transnational social space. Regardless of their legal status in the country, women are still able to sustain their livelihoods through the occupations they undertake within the enclave or in other parts of the city. Access to work opportunities was often based on encountering other Somalis in the city, or in other parts of the country. However, for most women in the study, access to basic forms transnational capital was incredibly limited. Further, only one woman in the study was able to rely on start-up capital from a family member to establish a business in Mayfair. Most of the women in the study simply felt that they were better off supporting themselves through the economic capital they were able to acquire through livelihood practices in Johannesburg, rather than asking for support within the social networks in their community. This section illustrate how women's access to basic transnational capital, such as: education, former occupations and social networks, further determines their social location in the host society.

Education and former occupations

Education and the transferable skills developed from former occupations are forms of cultural capital. Apart from Neema, the other seven women had either early primary school education (in three instances) or no education at all (in four instances). One of the factors limiting their ability to access education was the conflict in Somalia; however, Neema also noted that Somalis tend not to prioritise the education of women. She had spent most of her life in Nairobi, completed school and holds a matric qualification. She is the only woman in her family to finish school and had started studying civil engineering at a Kenyan university, but could not complete her studies due to a lack of funding. However, she made sure to diversify her skillset while she was in high school:

“I also learn computers when I was in high school and I learnt some basic skills like art and design. And I learnt cooking things and I can do that to get small money, which I can provide for my family. Today, in my job as a secretary, the computer skills are helping me and I learn it just for fun and my mom pushed me. She said, learn, learn, learn. Maybe tomorrow it is going to assist you and today that is what I am working with.”

She had also worked extensively before migrating to South Africa and is fluent in English; thus, has the most substantial basis of cultural capital across the women in the study. Her fluency in English, as she noted, should help her navigate Johannesburg with a greater sense of ease, opening up more livelihood opportunities in other areas. Most of the other women had been employed before or during their migration to South Africa. Thus, shaping their economic capital well before their arrival in the host context. Through this capital women are able to make the decision to migrate and fund their journeys through their livelihood activities. Ilhan started working in Somalia in order to afford the journey to South Africa: “I didn’t have money so [before I left] I was helping people, cleaning for them, and when I had enough money I left”. While, for Khadija the need to work only arose once she came to Johannesburg:

“In South Africa, it is the first time that I am working. In Somalia, I didn’t have to work because we lived in a house, that we owned, and we had a garden for food. My parents were also both alive and working”

For Habiba, Aliyah and Amina, their daily livelihood practices in Mayfair, are shaped by the skills they had developed through former occupations while in Somalia or in other countries. Aliyah had worked in a salon in Somalia and when she migrated to South Africa she used these skills to fund her journey. Amina, who has been working with henna for 15 years, explained that when she had arrived in the country she only these skills to rely on, but she eventually started learning to read and write in English through an American NGO in Johannesburg. Habiba worked extensively in Dubai before coming to South Africa. First as a maid, and then in a number of shops. She explained that although she is uneducated, her previous work experiences have given her the foundation to build a successful business in Amal Shopping Centre.

Transnational economic capital and social networks

Having access to economic and social capital is another factor that significantly shapes the ways in which women are able to locate themselves within their community. The women in the study had varying views about the strength of the Somali social network in Mayfair often highlighting the complexity associated with living in a transnational social space. The Somali social networks, rooted in the Mayfair enclave, are often described as having the potentially to strengthen material support for migrants, especially on arrival to Johannesburg (Thompson, 2016). Although the experiences of the women here do reinforce this, there are also a number of contradictions that arise due to class and patriarchal power relations. Essentially, not everyone in the community has the same level of access to the flows of transnational social networks and economic capital present within this space. From the group of women in this study, Habiba is the only participant who expressed having start-up

capital, in the form of a remittance from her sister, to start her business. However, Neema noted that it is actually not enough for a community to provide material support for one another. She expressed that the discouragement and lack of emotional support that she has experienced, and observes amongst other individuals in the community, significantly limits the social mobility of women in the community.

A number of the experiences of women in the study do indicate that simply knowing someone in the community that they could contact on arrival vastly mitigated the challenges of precarious border crossings. This was the case for two of the women in the study. After Aliyah had been arrested at the border she was able to reach out to people she knew in Mayfair to assist her:

“At the border, by Zimbabwe, they arrested me. They take money from me, money I didn’t have... so I called some people who live here so they take debt somewhere. Before I left I knew some people here. They used to be my customers and we became friends, they are the people who went to collect the money. They sent the money into an account and then they freed me.”

Neema, who was kidnapped at the border, had a similar experience. She was able to contact her sister, Amina, in Mayfair, who was then able to reach out to community members to loan the R12 000 that her sister’s kidnappers were demanding.

Most women who did not know of the Somali community in Mayfair at the time of arrival to South Africa. However, they eventually do hear about the concentration of their community members through other Somalis in other locations. Stumbling across Somalis in other places in Johannesburg or the country opens up access to the Mayfair community, housing or potential job opportunities. Ilhan explained that she had heard people speaking her language at the Home Affairs in Pretoria, realising that they were Somali, she asked them to help her and they brought her to Mayfair where she was later able to find employment. Fawzia met Somalis after crossing the border into South Africa:

“When I came to Limpopo I met a Somali family who were looking after me, but I wanted to go to Johannesburg to find a job. I came with the man from that family and then that neighbour [from Somalia] helped me find a hotel in Johannesburg and I stayed with another Somali girl who was also looking for a job.”

However, further access to Somali social networks, as noted by Khadija, is determined by how you are positioned socially:

“Only if you know people or have enough friends then if you ask for small money, people will give you. But if you are outside they will ignore you. The Somali Community do not help me. They ignore me when I ask for help. I’ve even told them that I just need money for school fees and I’ll take care of the rest, but they still will not help. [...] Somali people don’t always help you, no one has helped me here.”

As well as whether you are willing to reach out for help and participate within social networks. A number of women actively choose to remain autonomous in their strategies to support themselves. For Aliyah, asking for assistance isn't easy:

"The community doesn't help me here [although] I do need people to help. But I never say I need it. [...] If you go to the mosque you'll tell them your problem and they are going to assist you. We have big community leaders, and you can go to them and tell them. But I never know those people and I have no idea about those things because I never beg anyone. I just depend on myself."

Miriam noted that she feels like an outsider in the community and has struggled to access support within the Somali community. Although, clan affiliations significantly shape Somali society, they are not discussed at depth here as it was not a common talking point across interviews. However, Miriam narrates: "I am from the Somali Bantu clan and the other Somalis here just ignore me. No one wants to help. These Somalis are not good." Although she believes that she is not part of a supportive community, she expressed that she cannot live anywhere else because she does not have the cultural capital to live anywhere else, as she is both (formally) uneducated and does not speak English well. For Ilhan, living in Mayfair has allowed her to benefit from the social networks; however, she explains that you cannot simply go around asking for help if you are able to support yourself:

"Some people help me in 2015. We had a baby and my husband lost his shop in the locations [townships]. My friend helped us, she went around and asked people for money for me. Somali people will help you when it is serious. So, if you are working they won't, but that time I was sick and had nothing and they helped me with some money for the rent. If you are a friend to Somali Community [Board] they will help you, but if you don't they will ignore you. I went there to ask for rent, or anything, and they ignore me."

Ilhan's experience further indicate that class plays a significant role in defining women's access to material support within social networks:

"Somalis are not like Indian people though. If they are rich they won't help you. Especially those ones from Ethiopia or Kenya. They are not at your level, so they just ignore you."

In this particular interview, based in a group setting, a number of the other women in the room expressed that their wealthier relatives in the diaspora rarely offered any material support to poorer family members. Neema also shared an experience with a wealthy uncle, back in Kenya, who had no interest in funding the portion of her studies that could not be covered by her bursary. Fawzia shared a similar experience: "we have a rich uncle in Europe and he never helps with anything". The women in the room all seemed to suggest that comparatively, Somalis are more divided by class than their Indian hosts in the Mayfair community.

Neema felt that her values and goals, as a Somali woman, contradict with the social expectations placed on her by members of her community. She not only has no interest in asking for help from

community members, but she also expresses her disinterest in associating herself with her Somali community in general, and reflected on feeling much the same growing up in Nairobi. She noted that as much as Somalis will help you, they will also discourage you when you choose a path that contradicts with their expectations. Ilhan also further expressed, in relation to my line of questioning about gender disparities, that:

“Somali people don’t help women. Even the husbands don’t help. Men do not respect women, they will abuse them. (...) Some men will tell you not to work, but they will not give you money. If you work they will say use your own money and don’t ask for mine.”

In this interview, this topic elicited a lot of emotion for Amina, Khadija and Miriam – all present in the room. Khadija then stating that “if you are a mother you can see your children in pain, but a man doesn’t. They will marry you and give you more children, but they won’t support you.” All agreeing that they were consistently unsupported by men in their community. Although the women in the study expressed that they are not forced to follow the gendered forms of social obligations that manifest within social networks in the community, they are potentially placed at the margins of their social networks when they choose to assert their autonomy.

Gender based violence adds a further layer of complexity to the women’s attempts to access support, and safety, within social networks. For women, in this study, and in the community, gender based violence plays a complex limitation and is an explicit manifestation of male dominance over women’s bodies. Three women in the study opened up about their personal experiences with gender based violence or those of family members. Earlier in the research, I spoke to an NGO worker in the community about common challenges that women face. After encountering themes of violence in the women’s interviews, I spoke to her about whether women are able to find support within the community to address these issues. She explained that:

“gender based violence is really common in the Somali society, but no one talks about it because it is taboo. A lot of those people who experience this are women and girls and, unfortunately, they do not have any support systems whatsoever. They think it is okay because we, as Somalis and Muslims, feel that God will cover us and our sins. They are not allowed to talk about it and if they do they are seen as one who has no control over her family issues”

Gender based violence is a common issue for women across communities on the African continent. By silencing women’s voices, migrant social networks in host societies, potentially isolate women who face violence from male partners in the community

Due to their precarious legal status in the host context, many women remain at the margins of legal frameworks. This limits their everyday practices and livelihoods to the Somali enclave in Mayfair –

although some women do leave the space, briefly, to pursue opportunities in other areas. In this space, although they are able to utilise the strength of Somali ties to establish themselves in the host society, a number of contradictory gendered social expectations manifest within this space. In the next section, the politicised nature of their transnational mobility will be discussed and these expectations will be further explored through an analysis of how gendered relations shift across the transnational socio-spatial context.

2. Gender across geographies: Socio-spatial relationships across transnational lines

Fouron and Glick Schiller (2001: 542) argue that “in state societies, public and private domains are constructed and penetrated by the institutions and interests of the state”. In this context, the state (or lack of state stability) infiltrates the scale of the household in both contexts, triggering the dispersion of bodies resulting in fragmented transnational households. As explored above, the social location of women in the study is determined by factors outside of their making. Once in the host context, women are excluded from the national scale through their legal limbo in South Africa and have to navigate the margins of Somali networks of capital with a limited basis of transnational capital to establish their livelihoods in Johannesburg. Women’s lives and livelihoods take shape, in the host context, against a backdrop of transnational mobility which, in this study, broadly reproduces gendered power relations through social expectations. These practices subordinate women within the broader societal structures of the host context and reinforce the fact that patriarchy operates much the same across contexts (Yeoh, 2005: 71). Collins (1997: 377), discusses the concept of ‘group location’ which, similarly to ‘social location’, examines the ways in which intersecting power relations shape groups and individuals within them. She argues that it is important and not to make the mistake of seeing individuals as being inherently unique in their complexity; thus, depoliticising their ways of being. She further argues that:

“fluidity does not mean that groups themselves disappear, to be replaced by an accumulation of decontextualized, unique women whose complexity erases politics. Instead, the fluidity of boundaries operates as a new lens that potentially deepens understanding of how the actual mechanisms of institutional power can change dramatically while continuing to reproduce longstanding inequalities of race, gender, and class that result in group stability” (Ibid)

Within the study, the fluidity associated with the shift in geographic boundaries, brought about by practices of transnational mobility, reproduces and adapts the Somali group dynamic within the host society.

Although for the women in the study their practices of transnational mobility – migration and practices of transnationalism thereof – are shaped by violent conflict in Somalia, they also

strategically move in order to secure improved opportunities to socio-economic resources for their children and families. Once in the host context some women also seek to acquire enough capital to bring family members to South Africa. However, in the meantime, their mobility comes at the cost of fragmenting their familial relations across transnational lines. Often leaving children, husband, parents and siblings behind across multiple sites on the continent. While the state, not only determines the social location of women in the host context, but it also shapes migrants' patterns of settlement and the structure of their transnational families. Sinha (2010: 218) argues that "the family – constructed as a 'natural' heterosexual and patriarchal unit – performs a variety of critical and ideological services in the constitution of the nation". As a result, the household, or family, reproduces the ideals of the diasporic nation.

This section, contextualises and explores the practices of mobility of the women in the study, as these practices determine the strategies these women make with regards to their households and the livelihoods that sustain them. Migrant women's practices uncover the blurred lines between public and private realms, inherently challenging the notion that the women's lives, in this community, are isolated in the private sphere of the household. However, their experiences continue to expose the ways that exclusionary practices of the nation-state, as well as social expectations and violence in the community, limit women's socio-spatial mobility in the host context.

2.1 Transnational mobility

Women's narratives of mobility are "transient and complex, ridden with disruptions, detours, multi-destinations, and founded on interconnections and multiple chains of movement (Yeoh, 2005: 60). Across narratives, mobility, the dispersion from Somalia, is largely influenced by socio-political unrest as a result of conflict brought about by civil war and extended periods of government instability. Neema, who went back to Somalia to work, in 2018, commented on the ongoing conflict:

"You know why we are running from Somalia? In Somalia, there is no education, to start with, and the other thing is that it is a risky life. When you stay there, you see a lot of problems and people are killing each other, you may end up killing or they may end up killing you. Maybe, let's say, intentionally or unintentionally. So, Somalia is very dangerous and that's why we are running away."

Although women's decisions to migrate are largely shaped by conditions of forced migration, it is important to also understand that these women have agency in making these decisions and that they are in fact strategic and economically driven (Stock, 2012: 1579). Thus, transnational mobility is, across narratives, a resource and important dimension of social capital, but does not equate to emancipation from oppressive institutions once migrants settle in host contexts. Stock (2012: 1580) argues that "women's (im)mobilities are often shaped by their family and caring responsibilities and

influence women's agency in the migration process". Here, these responsibilities primarily shape women's decisions around transnational mobility. None of the women travelled with male companions and were mostly alone in their journey to South Africa. Although some women travelled with their children or with strangers. Few women expressed that their decisions to migrate were in anyway shaped by male control – they were, on the most part, agents in their decision-making processes around mobility. In Aliyah's case, the absence of her children's father largely influenced her mobility, allowing her to expand her livelihood options and support her children.

For some women, the journey to South Africa was gradual and by no means linear. For them, coming to South Africa did not appear to be an inherent aspiration, but rather a consequence of a series of journeys and decisions. For Habiba and Fawzia, the practice of transnational mobility featured early in their lives and, for both, was triggered by a need to support their livelihoods. Habiba left Somalia at the age of 14 and started her journey in Dubai:

"My aunt was there so I lived with her. Then I got a job cleaning a house and I lived with those people. After some time, I left that and I started working in shops. I met my husband in Dubai. He is Somali, but he has a Dutch passport and he lived in the UK while he studied engineering. I wanted to go the UK with him, but his family didn't accept me because I am uneducated."

Eventually, Habiba's husband came to South Africa, in 2004. As their marriage was split across transnational lines, he eventually brought her to Johannesburg in 2010. Fawzia had run away from Somalia at the age of 13; however, it was unclear why she had chosen to do this. She spoke at length about her experiences before she came to South Africa. She, first, found herself in Yemen:

"I lived with my parents in Somalia and then I ran away when I was 13 and went to Yemen. I just took money from my parents and went. In Yemen, I was cleaning houses for people. Then I went to Saudi Arabia and I got married. This man took me to Ethiopia and told me that we would move to Europe together."

However, after a series of abusive encounters with this husband, and a divorce in a following marriage, she was forced to go back to Somalia as, she realised that there were no options for her in Ethiopia, as a single mother of 2 children:

"After I got divorced to this second man I went home to Somalia with my 2 children. I went back to my mom there and she told me that she could not afford to give me money for Europe, but she said I will find a job in South Africa and she said she will pay for me to go. We knew that our neighbour had moved to South Africa."

Fawzia then travelled for 3 months, with a larger group of migrants, to South Africa. Her decision to leave from Saudi Arabia to Ethiopia was, of course, male controlled – through her husband who further promised her the opportunity to move to a Western nation – and she found herself in a situation where she was not only isolated from her family and community, but she was also unable to establish a sustainable livelihood in Ethiopia and had no control over her financial capital.

However, mobility proved to be emancipatory for her as, after she got divorced for the second time, she still had the option of going home and her mother paid for her to continue her journey to South Africa. Neema left Somalia as a young child, with her mother and older siblings, primarily due to the conflict in the country. Initially, they had lived in a Kenyan refugee camp, but managed to move to Nairobi when Neema and her brother were sent to a national school on a government scholarship. Her sister, Amina, the first-born in the family, migrated to South Africa alone, leaving behind her young daughter.

For some women, the decision to migrate to South Africa was directly sparked by violence in Somalia and they came directly to South Africa, commonly citing that they had heard that many people were coming to South Africa due to the abundance of jobs and opportunities. Khadija left Somalia after an Al-Shabaab attack in her area, which resulted in her father's death and the dispersion of her family:

"Then we ran away. My husband also ran away and I still don't know where he is. All because of those people. (...) I stayed at the refugee camp [in Kenya] for a few days and then with the bus I came to South Africa. My brother who is at the refugee camp helped me with money to come to South Africa. (...) We heard that many people come to South Africa so we thought life was easy here."

Miriam's narrative is similar to Khadija's. Her father was also killed by Al-Shabaab and she left Somalia out of fear. She then travelled over-land to South Africa:

"I came with Kikuyus from Nairobi. When I reached Tanzania, I ran out of money and some people helped me reach South Africa. I travelled by bus. Some people helped me, I don't know who they were but they were arrested at the border."

Ilhan, too, left the country after violent conflict led to the dispersion of her entire household. For Aliyah, the decision to migrate to South Africa rested on her need to support her children, have them sent to school and to provide a safe living environment for them. Aliyah had no one supporting her when she decided to leave Somalia. She left her children with family members and made her way to South Africa, working to fund her journey as she crossed 6 borders over-land:

"I came with a bus, from one country to another country. I was alone. Slowly by slowly, I came here. It took me 3 months to get here. The first country, I came, and I look for a job. (...) As I travelled I worked, I had some basic skills. (...) In some countries I could work, in some I couldn't."

Stock (2012: 1580) argues that "gender, as a structural factor of power inequality, can both constrain and enable movement". Although for most women, mobility is utilised to strengthen their family's social capital, once in the host context, the transnational social space becomes a constraining site to further realise these aspirations.

2.2 Transnational social space: the enclave and the transnational household

For some migrant groups, practices of transnational mobility converge in sites of transnational social spaces. For the Somali community in Johannesburg, the enclave in Mayfair localises Somali transnational networks, social capital and economic resources, in Johannesburg. Through Bhattacharjee's (1997) definitions of 'homing', introduced in the literature review, the enclave can be described as a 'second home' for the Somali ethnic community in Johannesburg. The enclave becomes a space constructed by "an extended ethnic community separate and distinct from other ethnic communities" (Ibid). Somalis in Johannesburg blur the lines between private and public dichotomies by reconfiguring the 8th Avenue site through practices of transnational mobility to support diasporic ways of being. As a researcher, I immediately felt like an outsider walking along 8th Avenue, simply because I am not Somali. The enclave, located along 8th Avenue in Mayfair, even though it is an open street, becomes a private space for the community to "guard its own national heritage against intervention" (Bhattacharjee, 1997: 318).

Then, there is the transnational household, which takes on the conventional definition of 'homing' where the home or domestic sphere is shaped by heterosexual, patriarchal constructs (Bhattacharjee, 1997: 313). This refers to the household within the host context and in the country of origin: households stretched across borders. The enclave and the transnational household will be looked at together as scalar constructs to explore the ways in which migrant women's activities, further, blur the lines between public and private dichotomies. In an attempt to redirect misconception that women, particularly in the Somali community, are relegated to private realms and that public and private realms are necessarily fixed. Not only do Somali women, in this study, move outside of the 'home' of the community to expand their livelihood strategies, they also do not always choose to 'stay at home': bound within either the household in countries of origin or in the host context.

The enclave

The Somali enclave in Mayfair not only localises the community's transnational capital to a single space in Mayfair, it also provides new arrivals with basic social capital that they may not otherwise have in Johannesburg. Kihato (2007: 265) describes the realities and material deprivations that migrants are faced with living in the inner-city of Johannesburg:

"Living conditions are often harsh, business and economic opportunities are limited, with few households able to make ends meet. Research conducted in the inner city often reveals that migrants live in conditions that are often worse than those in their home countries. (...) Migrants also face difficulties accessing basic services such as shelter, education, health services, water and so on. (...) Similarly, business or work opportunities have been limited. Because migrants are often undocumented, they are unable to secure formal sector employment even though they are often

relatively well qualified.”

Although material deprivations are a feature of the Somali enclave in Mayfair, their pattern of settlement significantly mitigates their proximity to the precarity brought about by living as a migrant in Johannesburg. Through their positioning as Muslims, occupying a Muslim host community, they have access to improved socio-spatial infrastructure than migrants who live within the hostility of the Johannesburg inner-city. Somalis have used religion to claim legitimacy in the urban space of Johannesburg without relying on the state to grant them the same.

For women who defy the expectation to ‘stay at home’, the enclave, and the city beyond, provides them with a space to construct their livelihoods. Women in the Somali community tend not to establish business practices in township areas due to the dangers associated with these spaces. For women who did not know someone in Mayfair on arrival, their lives in South Africa do not begin in this space, but eventually intersect with the suburb due to the concentration of their community members in this area. Most of the women expressed that they did not know the city of Johannesburg very well, as they do not leave the Mayfair area frequently. However, women do take up employment in other parts of the city, countering any assumptions that these women, not only do not leave their homes, only stay within the perceived safety of the enclave. Some women, such as Khadija and Fawzia, worked in other parts of Gauteng before eventually arriving in Mayfair. Khadija explains:

“I first lived in Pretoria and worked in a hotel there for six months. Some boys helped me find this job, but they were not Somali. After six months, I fought with the boss at the hotel and came straight here. I hoped to find a job in Mayfair and I started to work in a Somali shop,”

Ilhan worked in Mayfair on arrival to Johannesburg, but now works around City West at Dragon City. Although Habiba has always lived in Mayfair, she ran a restaurant in Springs for a year before falling pregnant. After having children, she continued to work within the enclave, setting up a business in the Amal Shopping Centre. Amina and Aliyah, having always lived and worked in Mayfair, and have been able to utilise the transnational social capital within the enclave to improve their livelihoods. Miriam has always lived in Mayfair, but briefly worked in Jeppestown. While Neema currently lives and works in Mayfair, but briefly found work in Kempton Park on arrival to Johannesburg.

The transnational social space can be both an enabling and constraining resource. The enclave localises Somali social resources in Johannesburg, which does assist women to cross the border, access employment or housing on arrival to Johannesburg; thus, supporting their basic sustenance needs. For some women, access to transnational social capital also determines the ways in which they set up their businesses. However, through power hierarchies shaped by patriarchy and class,

their proximity to the social networks within this space may diminish women's decision-making capacities as they build families and navigate social expectations.

The transnational household

Transnational mobility inevitably splits families and reconfigures the household unit. The transnational household is multi-sited dimension of all women's lives. Women are torn between, especially when married, supporting their households in the host context, as well as supporting household members in countries of origin. All of the interviewed women maintain familial ties across borders and are expected, by their families in countries of origin, to remit regularly. Women's livelihoods are greatly impacted and shaped by the obligation to sustain a transnational household. What is evident in this study of Somali women in Johannesburg, is that families are often highly reliant on the one who migrates for socio-economic resources. These women are often not able to ask families for support, as they are the ones expected to provide it. Yeoh (2005: 61) questions the cost that sustaining a transnational family has on women, "who often bear the emotional costs of holding the family stretched across countries together". Women who have migrated are faced with the expectation of holding the family together through material support and when they are unable to do this, they place strains between themselves and members of their families back home. Neema was the only woman in the study who does not have children. The rest of the women are mothers and at some point have been separated from their children, or still are. Further, they have had to make decisions about how many children to travel with and how many to leave behind, hoping that at a later stage they will be able to reunite their family in South Africa.

For some of the women, the fragmentation of their family in Somalia occurred as a direct result of the conflict in the country. For example, Khadija's case:

"I lived with my parents and my father was killed by Al-Shabaab. Then we ran away. My husband also ran away and I still don't know where he is. All because of those people [Al-Shabaab]. My mother and my brothers are still there [in Somalia], they have a property so they can't leave. My one brother and his ten children and my two sons are in the refugee camp in Kenya."

Khadija currently lives with her five children in Mayfair and supports her mother in Somalia. Miriam also fled Somalia after her father was killed in an Al-Shabaab attack. However, when she came to South Africa she left her three children behind with her mother in Somalia. She became emotional very early on in the interview when I asked whether she had any children, expressing that she is constantly concerned about their safety, but does not have the resources to bring them to South Africa. She noted that her mother places daily pressure on her to send money home and has been asking when Miriam will be fetching her children. Ilhan does not have children in Somalia, but her household in Somalia was, similarly, fragmented because of the conflict:

“I live with my family: my parents and my brother and sister. Everyone has left now, but my mother is still in Somalia. My father ran away to Ethiopia. My brother and sister ran away around 2007, everyone did. I still don’t know where they are, but there were too many bombs and we had to run”

These are the first instances of how the state infiltrates the scale of the household, triggering the dispersion of bodies shaping fragmented transnational households. It is an example of how “in state societies, public and private domains are constructed and penetrated by the institutions and interests of the state” (Fouron and Glick Schiller, 2001: 542). Although Somalia has remained stateless since the early 1990s, it is the very lack of state stability, which facilitates violence that destabilises households and bodies. Neema had gone back to Somalia in 2018, to work for an NGO, and noted how her everyday life was shaped by the imminent threat of violence posed by Al-Shabaab. She expressed that there was a sense of always having to watch your back, and having to watch what you say against the militant group. For fear that anyone could be watching or listening. The way that this violence is administered is an example of how the disciplining, surveying and inhabitation of this political regime reconfigures the structure of the household (Ibid). As well as how the body may have to, indefinitely, move across borders in search of stability. In the host context of South Africa, there is state stability; however, violence is administered on the ‘other’ through the political boundaries and borders discussed earlier. These significantly shape the trajectory of migrant women’s lives in the host context, by imposing limitations on their mobility and impacting the ways in which women are able to support their households in Somalia.

For the other women in the study, although conflict also reconfigured their households in Somalia, they did not explicitly focus on this theme in their interviews. Amina and Aliyah focused on the roles they have to take on as mothers due to the absence of their children’s fathers. Throughout the interview, Aliyah spoke of herself as the sole provider of material support for her children. Although other women had volunteered information about former marriages, whether abusive or not, she made no mention of the marriage she was in – just that the children do not have a father. Although Amina has a husband, she described herself as a single mother. She expressed that the money her husband sends to her does not cover the rent or expenses for their children. Neema expanded on her sister’s situation saying that her husband has another family, so he isn’t able to fully support the one he has with Amina. In both cases, these women are both breadwinners and caregivers in their families: taking on both the expected roles of mothers and fathers. Stock (2012: 1580) argues that “mothers’ (and fathers’) roles and choices during the migration process change with the places they move to and the time they are participating in new social networks.” Both Aliyah and Amina have physically reconfigured their spaces in order to facilitate their roles. Aliyah, who had recently returned from Somalia with her six children, had moved out of a flat-share and into the space

adjoining her salon. Aliyah's activities indicate the ways in which women blur the lines between public and private dichotomies in order to ensure that they are able to support their families:

"There's no father for the children so I have to work. There are many challenges for me. I have to act like the father and the mother because when I sit like this and I know there is no husband providing for me, the father of the children, I have so many difficulties. I have to be acting as a home for the children (...) that's why I live near the salon. I have to provide something for the children, I must work for them. If I sleep one day, and don't work, my children will not have something to eat. So, I must be here each and every day."

In this way, Aliyah is able to be physically present with her children, as a caregiver, and physically present in her work environment to provide for them. Amina's salon is located in her household's complex and she is able to do much the same.

Social expectations across transnational social spaces

Social expectations are reproduced and contradicted across transnational lines, manifesting in ways that affect the agency of Somali women. For example, social and religious expectations within the community, such as - pointed out by Habiba - "that Muslim women just stay at home" contradict with a migrant woman's financial obligations to their transnational families. She further explains:

"Some men don't like to let women to work, but women work harder. I believe that if you don't work as a woman, the man will take your power. You will be dependent on him and he can do anything to you."

In this context, Neema expressed that, women are criticised by the community for stepping out of their traditional roles when they have no choice, but to do so for the survival of their families. She further argued that strong ideals around marriage, in the community, are counter-productive in a context where women are also expected to support a transnational family. However, this does not mean that women are undervalued in their contributions in the community, as long as their contributions align with traditional roles. Narayan (2010: 334) notes that feminists need to also consider the way that a woman's value is conferred in traditional discourses where their contributions may not actually be 'undervalued'. In this context,

"not only are the roles of wife and mother highly praised, but women are also seen as the cornerstones of spiritual wellbeing of their husbands and children (...) in cultures that have a pervasive religious component (...) everything seems aligned a place and value as long as it keeps to its place" (Ibid).

However, it is necessary to problematize the fact that, in the transnational context, women are expected to do physical, emotional and spiritual labour for their households, in the host context, without monetary compensation and are faced with the reality of having to monetarily compensate families in their countries of origin. Further, although this tension exists, women may also seek

“security in traditionally defined roles” (Ibid: 339), which is why marriage is synonymous with a sense of security for some of the women in the study.

Many women expressed that marriage is a common expectation for both men and women in the community. Habiba noted that this stems from the fact that sexual relations between men and women in her community are only permitted after marriage. Thus, marriage is presented as the only viable sexual relationship between men and women (Sinha, 2010: 218). However, as discussed earlier, the idea of ‘the family’ or ‘the home’ is important in the diasporic space of the Somali community and further exemplifies ideals around reconstructing a sense of nationhood: “all nations are imagined as ‘domestic genealogies’” (Ibid). The very act of building a family, suggests a desire for permanence, at the level of the community and the body, reinforcing notions of rooting, homing and belonging. This is of further significance in a context where mobility creates a dispersed family unit. Sinha (2010: 220) argues that:

“the further work ideological work of the family is to make the various forms of hierarchies both within the nation and between nations seem ‘natural’. Because the family is idealized as a domain in which individual members willingly subsume their interests within the supposedly unified interest of the family (as represented by the male head of household), it becomes a signifier of ‘hierarchy within unity’ for the nation. The myth of the family as a fundamental ‘unity’, of course, is sustained in part through a belief in the allegedly natural subordination of women and children to adult men within the family”

Thus, gendered relations are further reproduced and solidified in the process of family formation, through marriage, in the host context. It is a social practice fraught with patriarchal relations; however, for many women in the study, marriage is aspirational as it is linked to social and financial stability. In Miriam’s case, this is what she had hoped for when early in her stay in Johannesburg she got married:

“I met a man who said he wanted to marry me and help me. I asked him for help to send money home, but he beat me and left me. I was 4 months pregnant, but lost the baby.”

Similarly, for Fawzia, one of her earlier marriages became a site of violence and neglect:

“But then I became pregnant and this man started abusing me. He didn’t want to pay for the hospital. Then I couldn’t send money home and I was selling my gold to send money home. When the child was born I was desperate. I told this man to take the child or we would both die.”

However, she still expressed a desire to meet someone who would support her upon arrival to South Africa. After migrating to South Africa, Fawzia met her husband while she was working at a restaurant in Witbank and was explicit about her desire to be married: “I said to him: do you want marriage? Please don’t waste my time.” However, she now expressed the limitations of married life: “I stay at home with the kids and cook, my husband doesn’t want me to work and leave the children with other people.” Because her husband does not let her work and was able to fully assert control

over her labour, she is not able to fulfil her obligations towards her own transnational household and relies on him to transfer remittances to her family members. On the other hand, for some women, like Ilhan, her current marriage is a site of emotional trauma, insecurity and disappointment:

“they will marry you, make you pregnant and leave. I know my husband is looking around for another woman and I can’t say anything. He will tell me I’m crazy, that I must keep quiet.”

Although both men and women are encouraged to get married, only women are discouraged from working and providing from the household. And women, predominantly, face the level of physical abuse that manifests in these intimate relationships. For Neema, these are some of the reasons that she refuses to get married until she has completed her studies and has realised her goals of fully supporting her family. Both Habiba, although she is married, and Neema were adamant about asserting their autonomy from male partners and working in order to be fully in control of their financial capital. However, Habiba noted that: “I expect my husband to support me still. In Muslim culture, men must look after their wives especially if they are wealthy.” Although the expectation to be supported is expressed by all women, finding a husband who will fulfil these expectations is rare.

Somali women, who migrate, are expected to take on the role of the provider, a role that men typically occupy, to support their families in countries of origin. However, the reproduction of gendered expectations within the transnational social space of the host context, contradict with the provider duties that women have to their families. Many of the women in the study have been married multiple times and often, they enter into these marriages to both fulfil societal expectations and in the hope that they will be materially supported and better able to support their families. However, marriage often becomes a site of male domination over women’s decision-making processes, further solidified by practices of gender based violence. While, women are also more likely to fulfil societal expectations, men are rarely held accountable for not fulfilling theirs. Thus, the women, in the study, exist within patriarchal frameworks which enforce contradictory disciplining measures over their practices and decisions.

3. Analysing agency: livelihoods and remittances across transnational spaces

Agency is asserted over one’s social location, but also shaped by it. Although the women in the study are able to assert agency over their practices of transnational mobility, their socio-spatial mobility is limited within the host context, which significantly constrains their livelihood strategies. Such

immobilities in the host context are not only a by-product of patriarchal and classist relations that persist across transnational lines, but also through their illegibility within the eyes of the South African state. Although the enclave in Mayfair offers women some form of basic support, they still largely exist at the margins of power, even within their own community. The women in the study have to establish secure livelihoods in order to support remittance practices to members of their families in Somalia. For most women, migration presented an opportunity for them to expand and improve their families' livelihoods. Thus, for most women, staying at home and relying on a husband was not an option. Livelihood strategies are more stable for some, due to the lack of conflict at the South African state level. However, as many women have limited access to cultural, economic and social capital, as well as state recognition, they tend to reproduce livelihood strategies that they are familiar with based on experiences in countries of origin or along their migratory journeys. Ultimately, women's agency over their livelihood decisions is constrained by socio-political factors that they are unable to assert agency over in the host context.

3.1 Livelihood strategies and occupations

The women in the study undertake various occupations and are mostly self-employed and in control of the capital they produce in their spaces of work. However, this does not mean that they are fully able to support themselves and their transnational households, nor does this mean that they have full agency in the decisions they make around the occupations that they are able to undertake. As has been revealed, immigration policies limit Somali women's employment opportunities further afield in the city, as well as language barriers and a lack of education. Further, although the enclave provides a space of safety for the ethnic community, it is also a space – like many in the city for migrants – limited in economic opportunity. An early informant had noted that Somalis tend to do the same thing or do what they know. There is, of course, extensive literature on the economic practices of Somali men, but the same has not been written of Somali women. In a context where very little literature engages with the economic practices of Somali women – what are the exact occupations that women are able to engage in.

For Neema, Habiba, Amina and Aliyah, having established livelihood practices in their country of origin, as well as along their journeys to South Africa, allowed them to establish stable livelihood strategies in Johannesburg. All of them are either self-employed or employed formally. Aliyah's case, for example, indicates, as explored earlier, the way that former skills allow migrant women to establish their livelihoods in the host setting. She also, independently, had access to start-up capital:

“Before I came here I was working in salons like this one. The money that I got there, I saved it. I came with it here. I used some of it to pay for transport and the rest I kept to start a business here. When I came here I was searching because I had the basic skills of the salon. I was searching so much for a

place to settle down and show people that I am talented. It was difficult, but at last I got it. I started with one machine and 2 boxes of dye and those [beauty products]. But I adapted. The salon was small, but I just started this business. I paid that money, it's a lot of work. I am renting this space, but at the same time you have to buy other things. That's how I started this salon and it has prospered."

Habiba, similarly, is in charge of her business and relied on her former work experience, as well as start-up capital from a family member, to establish her business in the Amal Shopping Centre:

"In 2015, I wanted to work again. I started sharing a shop with my friend, here in Amal. So, I did this for 8 months and looked after my kids. We were selling curtains and bedsheets like the other shops. Eventually, my friend gave up the space and my sister helped me with money to start this business. I wanted to be my own boss, so I fixed up the space and added these shelves. I then started selling these perfumes. No one else was selling them and they are very popular especially in the hot weather. I see now that others have learnt. I was selling these same perfumes in the shops in Dubai so I ship them from there."

Prior to this, she ran a restaurant in Springs where some of her husband's businesses are located. On the day that I had conducted the interview Habiba's shop was particularly busy. I noticed that she has a diverse customer base, as her choice in products does not only serve a Somali clientele. She has also used her former business experience to shape her business strategies in Mayfair. She described her business as being one of the most successful in Amal and that many other shop-owners, in noting her success, have also started selling products like perfumes which attract a wider customer base than only selling culturally specific products. In Aliyah's case, being located within the Somali community means that she is able to maintain an ethnic customer base:

"My customers are Somali and they do help me with the money I need to provide for my children. I do many things in this salon, so these customers are the ones who come here and support me. Without them I couldn't afford to support my family. The things I do here are the Somali things, that's why without these customers I can't get anything. They are supporting me, today if they are not around I won't get anything."

Amina also owns a salon, but specialises in henna. On the day that I had first visited Aliyah's salon, to ask to get henna done, she told me that since she only does hair, her friend will come to do the henna. Through their partnership they are able to exchange their social capital, which also indicates that the social networks that women construct between and for themselves have the potential to strengthen livelihood strategies. Both Habiba and Aliyah had access to start-up capital to invest into their business spaces: both drawing on transnational capital. In Habiba's case, her sister was able to send money to her so that she was able to refurbish and extend the shop-space. While Aliyah was fully financially independent and drew on the savings she had acquired while working in a salon in Somalia. Neema, with her stronger basis of cultural capital has more opportunities to remain mobile in Johannesburg and in this way, improve her, and her family's, livelihood. Neema is currently formally employed as a school secretary at a nearby school in Mayfair. Two weeks after arriving in Mayfair she found employment in an Ethiopian-owned retail space near the OR Tambo International

Airport in Kempton Park. Here she worked 12 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout December, but made enough money to send home to her mother in Somalia for a costly medical procedure which had been delayed due to a lack of funds.

Khadija, Miriam and Ilhan are also self-employed; however, the formation of their livelihood strategies takes on a much more informal and precarious character. Khadija currently sells tea from a space in a small shop. Ilhan also sells tea, but she does not have a fixed space, like a shop or a restaurant, so she sells from the street:

“Now I sell tea in Dragon City, but it’s dangerous. The security, one of them is South African, one of the is Congolese, threatens me and chase me. They even threw hot oil at me once and my foot is still in pain. So, I have to be careful and work outside.”

After the end of Miriam’s abusive marriage, she too started selling tea on the street in Jeppestown. However, after a violent encounter in a taxi on her way to Soweto, she was robbed and lost all of her equipment. She expressed that she could not afford to replace the equipment and had to consider other options of making money and is now home-based and sells small foods like samosas. For both women, violence plays a role in destabilising already precarious livelihood practices. As discussed earlier, Fawzia is no longer employed and her husband currently supports her. Prior to her marriage, she worked at a Somali run restaurant in Witbank. However, Ilhan explains, relying on a husband is an unsustainable option:

“My husband gives me R1500 for the children, but it’s not enough. There is only me and my husband, but sometimes I even support him. He also asks me for money, sometimes maybe R10 for airtime. He has a job as a driver for some Somali shop. My husband’s salary is too small, so I had to work. You can’t ask other people [for] money for children. You can’t stop working.”

3.2 Remittance practices

Remittances play a dominant role in women’s agency around their livelihood strategies in the host society. In this study, only Habiba expressed that she had received help from a family member within the diaspora. And noted that remittance patterns have been reciprocal while she has been abroad, in both Dubai and South Africa. For the rest of the women, remittances flows are particularly one-sided: the one who migrates is the one who sends. In as much as remittance patterns do occur within unequal gendered geographies of power, both, women who migrate and families in countries of origin are face with the reality of material deprivations. Families in countries of origin are not aware of the challenges that their family member faces in the host context and, as some women expressed, they assume that they are making a lot of money in South Africa and put pressure on them to remit. Most of the women send very small amounts of money to families in Somalia, infrequently. Perhaps, then, the most significant and transformative feature of remittance

networks for women, in this study, is to acquire resources, to bring a family member or many family members here. This is particularly common for women who have children left behind in countries of origin. Aliyah had, a few days before the interview, travelled back to Somali and brought her 6 children to join her in South Africa. Prior to this, her children were the primary recipients of monetary remittances. Now, she expressed that she will no longer have to send money back home. Amina had left her daughter behind, in Kenya, before traveling to South Africa by herself. Her oldest daughter, now thirteen, joined her in South Africa shortly before I met Amina. Now that Neema has migrated to South Africa and is employed, she has also become a contributor to the remittance network within her family. Her sister, Amina has a large family to support in the host context; thus, Neema sends her entire income to the family in Somalia. She currently earns R4 000 a month; however, she noted that the money still has to be exchange into US dollars before it can be sent to her family in Somalia. After the money is exchanged the value of the remittance decreases. Although, Neema is fully in control of her remittance practices: she is able to decide, every month, whether she will send money home and fulfil her obligations to her family members – she remains completely dependent on the resources within Amina's household until she is able to find secondary employment to supplement her current income. Further, she expressed the desire to continue studying in South Africa and hopes for extra sources of income to enable this.

Unlike Neema and Amina's household, Miriam finds herself alone in South Africa with a limited means to sustain her livelihood. She too stressed the importance of bringing her three children to South Africa; however, she is currently unable to send any money home: "All I have is this small job selling samosas and I [have to] use the money for myself, what do I send home then?" Fawzia did not express that she was planning on bringing her two children, living with her parents in Somalia, to join her in South Africa. And since she is currently unemployed, she noted how difficult it is to maintain a remittance practices:

"I don't work so it is hard to send money home. My husband supports me, but it is not enough so I struggle to send money home... maybe every 3-4 months I send money home. I am the 1st born so my family expects a lot from me."

However, while she was working, Fawzia was able to send money home every month even though she was earning around R2 000 a month, depending on how busy the restaurant was. In this case, it is important to note that expectations around remittances once again take place in unequal terrains of power. Essentially, she does not have control over her remittance practices anymore as monetary flows are subject to whether her husband is able to assist her or not. Fawzia shared that her father started asking her for money when she had only just arrived in South Africa and had fallen ill during her travels. However, she noted that her father had never expressed any interest in providing her

with material support and refused to help her mother pay for her journey to South Africa. Ilhan notes that she is also expected to support her husband's family, with the limited resources she currently has:

"I have to send money home. Even to my husband's family. They will call and say: someone ran away; there was a bomb; I need money for transport and I must send. But no one sends for me. I have to support myself."

For many women, the reality of having to support themselves alone is a daunting task. All of the women in the study are young and do not have older children to rely on for financial support. Families in countries of origin do not have the means to support women who migrate and expect them to provide monetary remittances. However, in order for women to send significant remittances to their families, they need to build sustainable livelihoods in the host context.

Conclusion

The women in this study draw on what they have to survive and support their families. Women's activities, across transnational lines, exist within oppressive social institutions, which operate much the same across urban contexts on the continent. The decisions that women make about their lives and livelihoods reconfigure assumptions about socio-spatial relationships. Their experiences reveal the ways in which public and private dichotomies are blurred, where the personal becomes very much political. Through their personal lives they attempt to resist the limitations of their social location by asserting their agency over social institutions, critically navigating them and not allowing for their personhood to be reduced to victimhood. They may clearly need assistance from their community members, but they actively choose to act independently by autonomously providing for themselves, and for their families. Through this, although as constrained agents, they strive to improve their, and their families', livelihoods through their limited means and states of marginality within frameworks of power. However, it is this marginal positionality which is reproduced across transnational lines particularly within the diasporic construct of the communal family. In as much as women maintain a level of autonomy over their livelihoods, they are also forced to navigate patriarchal power relations, at the enclave and household scale. These power relations significantly shape remittance behaviours by either limiting women's livelihoods or placing added obligations to remit to their male partner's family. Although there was no clear sense from the interviews that women were more, or less, independent in host contexts, their decisions to migrate alone expresses that they have had the ability to assert agency over their practices while in countries of origin. Many of these women came here alone, and may continue their journeys through Johannesburg alone. Navigating the complexities of patriarchal social expectations within the community in the host

context, while adhering to their obligations to provide for their families in Somalia. While further afield, existing within a liminal legal framework at the margins of South African society.

FIVE. Acting from the margins

Conclusions and implications for development planning

Introduction

African cities, in as much as they are shaped by legacies of colonial histories, neoliberal policies and contradictory modes of governance, are also continuously shaped by the subversive relationships, networks and mobile practices of grassroots actors. However, the character of cities like Johannesburg are often hostile to fellow African migrants, as well as to women. For migrant women, manifold oppressions limit their positions to marginal actors in the city. In as much as migrant women constantly shape socio-spatial relationships in the city, their access to viable livelihood strategies are limited. Thus, socio-economic inequalities are reproduced across transnational lines. Through this study, I have sought to challenge representations of urban women and their experiences. Instead of depicting them as victims of oppressive forces they have, in this study, been given voice as active, albeit constrained, agents using practices of transnational mobility to reconfigure and shape livelihood strategies for themselves and their families. For some women, this is more challenging than for others; however, they all actively strive to mobilise resources within their reach to circumvent power hierarchies which attempt to limit their mobility.

Urban environments are sites and networks of human relations. The analysis of the intimate power dynamics between people, across African borders, exposes the disproportionate ways in which power relations shape processes of mobility and urbanisation. In African cities, development planning often implicitly reproduces socio-spatial relationships shaped by patriarchy, class and citizenship, as well as perpetuating legacies of colonial dispossession. The research attempted to provide an intersectional account of the power relations at play within practices of transnationalism and livelihood strategies of Somali women within the host context of Mayfair. And began to address the gaps in development planning discourse that not only focus very little attention on practices of human mobility across African centres, but also largely ignore feminist discourses. Through a framework of feminist epistemology, the lens of development enquiry was repositioned in order to examine the realities of migrant women who occupy the margins of power relations in Johannesburg. This revealed the complexities and realities of the gendered politics of mobility in a small group of migrant women's lives, as well as the ways in which social institutions significantly shape their position in Johannesburg. Thus, the margin presents itself as a site of radical openness (hooks, 1989). From the margins, we are able to reimagine African cities by rewriting urban narratives, examining the intimacies and intricacies of urban lives, in order to challenge dominant approaches to urban research, and policy-making, amidst the increasingly unequal geographies of urbanisation.

1. Addressing the research questions

For women in the Somali community, and many other migrant communities, transnational mobility forms a critical part of a household livelihood strategy. Transnational mobility fundamentally serves as a survival strategy for the women in the study. The study shows, there is a need to critically engage with the power relations that shape the everyday activities of urban actors in an attempt to accommodate complexity within development strategies. The research questions aimed to centre migrant women's experiences and socio-economic roles in urban centres; unpack practices of transnational mobility, which not only account for migratory processes, but also the transnational flows and processes associated with mobility across borders of nation-states; and to uncover the ways that livelihood practices are strategically shaped by migrant women, to accommodate transnational ties, in host societies.

How do practices of transnational mobility shape the livelihood strategies of migrant women in host societies?

In this study, the practices of transnational mobility exhibited by women include, the migratory process and the practices of transnationalism thereof. Here, practices of transnationalism were associated with the construction of and participation within a transnational social space, as well as maintaining remittance practices to members of families in Somalia. The migratory process expands livelihood options for Somali women, but their limited access to transnational capital and their precarious legal status limits women's livelihood strategies in practice. Women utilise limited means, generally in the form of knowledge of previous livelihood strategies to shape theirs in the host context.

The transnational social space reflects the ways in which Somali mobility reconfigures the host space. Centrally, practices of mobility significantly reconfigure migrant women's households across borders. Recreating fragmented familial structures in countries of origin, while reconfiguring socio-spatial relationships in the host context. In this study, transnational mobility became a resource and important dimension of social capital for migrants and their families, but it did not equate to emancipation from oppressive institutions once women settle in host contexts. Revealing that mobility is not inherently emancipatory even if women are in control of their mobility in the context of migration. The fragmented nature of the transnational household is maintained through remittance networks shaped by the obligations of families who remain behind. In the study, it was revealed that migrant women tend to adhere to their obligations as providers, while attempting to send money to relatives regardless of how limited their means are in the host context.

To what extent do gendered power relations shift across transnational lines and how does this affect socio-spatial relationships in the host context?

For the women in this study, gendered power relations did not seem to shift significantly and are reproduced at the scale of the transnational social space through the social expectations that manifest within the social networks of the diasporic Somali community in Mayfair. However, through the migratory process, women have to actively subvert these relations in shaping their livelihood strategies. Gendered power relations may be reproduced through social pressures that expect women to marry or to stay at home, but in shaping survival strategies women take on both the role of the caregiver and of the provider in their families. The narratives that women shared explore the ways in which women navigate socio-spatial relationships on an intimate level: often at the scale of the body, within the transnational home and in their direct environment in Mayfair. Thus, the findings did not indicate a clear sense of how women in this study navigate the host city, but they did indicate the nuanced ways in which transnational relationships take shape on a personal level. Perhaps the most significant finding is that when women subvert gendered power relations they are also able to physically, and sometimes symbolically, blur the lines between public and private dichotomies. Through their transnational practices of caregiving and providing for communities stretched across borders, they also subvert the colonial practices of delineating borders between nation states. It is through these intimate relationships that women play a critical role in hybridising urban practices (Harrison, 2006: 327) as a means of survival.

How does the migratory process shape the agency of migrant women's decisions and access to transnational flows of capital?

Women are active agents in control of their migratory process, strategically mobilising across geographies to expand their livelihood opportunities. However, their agency operates in particularly contradictory and constrained ways, as women are caught between social expectations within their communities in the host context, which are inherently patriarchal in nature, and the desire to emancipate themselves, and their families, from socio-economic inequalities. Many women chose to assert autonomy over attempts to access transnational capital, recognising their marginality in relation to flows of capital. This, of course, constrains decisions around livelihood practices, as these were constructed in ways that reproduced women's livelihood strategies in countries of origin, or along their migratory journeys. Indicating that transnational mobility may, due to constraints in the host context, continue to limit women's abilities to expand livelihood strategies and significantly reconfigure the socio-economic inequalities that shape their everyday lives. All of this indicates that,

in as much as women have agency over their social location's, their position at the margins of power relations place limitations on their ability to redefine this location even within the migratory context.

2. Implications for development planning

Authors writing about Johannesburg, including Kihato (2007, 2013), Harrison (2006) and Watson (2003), Simone (2004), Mbembe and Nuttall (2004), have argued for a need to rethink the ways in which we represent, negotiate and engage with the city. Many have explored the necessity of new ways of seeing the metropolis and thinking about “the creative process of constructing *citiness* at the intersection of multiple rationalities, cultural representations and urban practices” (Harrison, 2006: 328). The practice of seeing the city anew has been central to this study. Much like the work of Kihato (2013), this research engagement with Somali women in Mayfair has developed a way of seeing the city through the lens of feminist methodologies that are rooted in uncovering the everyday power relations shaping the survival strategies of actors at the margins. The intersections between mobility, gender and power, explored here, have significant implications for development planning practices in a highly unequal and mobile urban context. In the post-colonial context of African cities, formal development practices need to be facilitated to transcend nationalist, classist and patriarchal notions of space-making.

The study sought to present an approach to understanding the layered and complex nature of cross-border and the associated socio-spatial relationships that mobile individuals are involved in. In inner-city areas of Johannesburg, such as Mayfair, an engagement with migrant communities and the networks and relationships that shape helps us understand mobile populations who are often seen as elusive and ignored in development strategies. Mayfair is an inner-city suburb that has been shaped by various waves of mobility and spatial reconfiguration, much like other inner-city areas in Johannesburg. However, unlike other migrant groups in the city, the Somali community has established a sense of permanence in its Mayfair site, finding commonality within the Islamic host community and physical establishing a transnational social space. The findings suggest that some migrant communities do invest in their host communities through spatial interventions, establishing economic networks across sites in the host city, while shaping diasporic practices that reproduce ideologies of home. Most of the women that I had interviewed have established families in Mayfair. Some are hoping to bring family members to Mayfair over time, expressing a desire for security and stability for the individuals who are still in Somalia or other sending countries. However, their settlement practices in the host community are still shaped by the maintenance of transnational networks, which play a critical role in sustaining cross-border livelihood strategies.

The women who participated in this study shared narratives that were descriptive of the networks and relationships that they take part in, rather than of physical detail about their host context of Johannesburg. The focus on relationships, often of an intimate nature, reveal the significance of the household as a site of development for migrant women. Whether through the physical location of women's workplaces in home spaces or through the symbolic interactions between the household in the host context and home country. Households become sites of exchange between not only economic but also caregiving networks. The analysis sought to illustrate that women very often carry the burden of ensuring that these economic and caregiving networks are maintained through their livelihood practices in the host context. Migrant women, through their practices of mobility and the decisions shaping their livelihood practices, they deconstruct spatial binaries and boundaries. In order to sustain cross-border networks of care and economy they subvert gendered expectations, by taking on roles as caregivers and providers, they blurring distinctions between public and private dichotomies.

Finally, an analysis of gender and agency shaping everyday practices exemplifies the ways in which patriarchy, class, citizenship, and other power relations, shape cities. Beebeejaun (2017: 323) argues that "a greater engagement with everyday spatial practices provides critical insights into how claims to urban space and the exercise of rights are inherently gendered". She further asserts that in shaping urban theory and planning practice along a rights based approach to urban development requires a sustained interaction with the everyday and "the unmapped" (Ibid: 331). An analysis of the ways in which migrant women negotiate agency through their everyday practices provides a framework from which to understand the strategic intentions of population groups, as well as the dynamics which shape these strategies. An understanding of agency could offer us insight into the "practices that have emerged as the subalterns have found ways to live in circumstances of marginality and domination" (Harrison, 2006: 325). Practices in which migrant women, and other dominated groups, subvert hegemonic modes of power to accommodate relational practices of livelihood formation.

3. Avenues for further research

This study was limited in its scope and conducted during a short time frame. There is room to pose the same research question among a larger, more diverse group of migrant women in the city of Johannesburg, or other African cities. Migrant women, to some extent maintain transnational ties to their countries of origin; however, not all of them do so while living within a physically constructed transnational social spaces like the Somali women in the study do. Thus, women who exist more openly in the host context may face increased vulnerabilities due to their legal liminality or their

practices of transnational mobility may be more emancipatory than those of the women in the study. Similar, to the study by Kihato (2013), participatory visual methods can be employed to compliment feminist research methods. Feminist research is fundamentally geared towards challenging knowledge production; thus, the use of participatory visual methods allows research participants to have greater control over the ways in which they seek to represent their knowledge. Photographic and counter-mapping practices could be used to further challenge ways of seeing and representing women in urban environments. Finally, when conducting research of this nature it would be important, as a researcher, to align with non-profit organisations in the city who are able to offer material or emotional support to participants who share traumatic experiences. Or who have children affected by policies that keep them out of school for long periods of time while their guardians wait to acquire legal documentation. Women and children in migrant communities may face higher levels of isolation and violence and have fewer safe spaces to turn to in the host context. A potential by-product of research within a feminist spatial practice paradigm is the potential to set up safe spaces that can work with migrant women to mitigate some of the vulnerabilities they face in host contexts, providing them with tools to improve their social standing.

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GCRO (2019) *Figure 3.1: Site in context: Mayfair, Johannesburg*.

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PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET
Livelihoods at the margins



As-salamu alaykum,

My name is Anna Sango and I am currently a full-time student studying towards a **Master of Science in Development Planning at the School of Architecture and Planning, University of Witwatersrand**. I am currently investigating how migrant women, in Mayfair, support themselves in the context of migration. I would like to invite you to participate within my study through an interview.

During the interview, I will ask you questions about: your background; your life in your home country; how you came to Johannesburg; what kind of work you do here and how you support yourself and your family. I am also interested to find out about your experiences as a Somali woman and would like to know about some of your dreams for the future.

The interview will not take more than 1 or 2 hours. If allowed, I will make use of an audio recording to record the conversation. If not, I will only use handwritten notes. The interview can take place anywhere in the area where you feel comfortable. If you struggle with English, I will ask someone in the community to help translate. You may refuse to answer any questions or stop the interview at any point if you do not feel comfortable.

The research undertaken is solely for academic purposes. Your participation is voluntary and I cannot offer you any payment for your participation. If you so wish, your participation will be completely anonymous and you will not be personally identified in the final report. There are no foreseeable risks associated with your participation.

If you have any questions, concerns, or comments or if you would like a copy of the final report, please feel free to contact me at **079 109 4624**. Or my supervisor, Prof. Aly Karam at **011 717 7707**.

I look forward to speaking with you and hearing your story!

Anna Sango

MSc Development Planning, SoAP, Wits University.

Appendix B



INTERVIEW GUIDELINES

Livelihoods at the margins

SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE & PLANNING

Date:

Place of interview:

Participant name:

Duration of interview:

As-salamu alaykum,

My name is Anna Sango and I am currently a full-time student studying towards an **MSc in Development Planning in the School of Architecture and Planning (SoAP) at the University of Witwatersrand**. I am currently investigating how migrant women support themselves in the context of migration. Thank you for your willingness to share your story and for taking the time out to participate in the interview. It will not take more than 1.5 hours and I will make use of an audio recording, if permitted. If not, I will make handwritten notes only. The interview consists of 10 questions. You may refuse to answer any questions or stop the interview at any point if you do not feel comfortable.

QUESTIONS

1. I would like to know some basic personal details.

- How old are you?
- Where were you born and where did you grow up?
- Have you ever been married and do you have children?
- What is your highest level of education?
- How long have you lived in South Africa?
- Which languages can you speak?

2. Tell me about your life before you came to South Africa.

- What was your daily life like in your home country? Did you work?
- What was your household like?
- Do you still have relatives or friends in your home country?
- Do you have any other relatives or friends who have migrated? Who? Where are they?
- What made you decide to leave your home country?

3. Tell me about your journey to South Africa.

- When did you leave your home country?
- Did you leave your home country with anyone?
- Did anyone help you on your journey? How?
- How did you travel?

- e. Did you come straight to Johannesburg, or did you live somewhere else? If you lived somewhere else, how long were you there and what did you do?
- f. What did you know about South Africa before you came? Did you know anyone here?

4. Describe some of your first experiences in the country.

- a. Why did you come to Johannesburg?
- b. Did anyone help you when you arrived in Johannesburg? How?
- c. Who did you live with when you arrived?
- d. What was your experience of accessing documentation?
- e. Where do you live now? Have you always lived in the same area or have you moved within the city?

5. Tell me about your current household.

- a. Who do you live with now? Did you always live with these people?
- b. Who supports your current household?
- c. How different is your household here vs. in your home country?

6. Tell me about your daily life and your work in Johannesburg.

- a. What do you do from day to day? Do you have a job?
**If yes:*
- b. What do you do in your job? How long have you done this?
- c. How did you find this job? Did anyone help you?
- d. Who else do you work with?
- e. Do any of your previous experiences or education help you with your job?

7. Tell me about how you support yourself and your family.

- a. **If you do not have a job, what do you do for money?*
**If you do have job, does it provide enough money for your needs and those of your family?*
- b. Who do you provide support to?
- c. Do you ever send money or goods to your family or friends outside of Johannesburg? How often? How do you do this?
- d. Does anyone send you money or goods? How do you receive this?
- e. When you need help now, who do you go to? Who has helped you the most?
- f. Do you have any challenges in supporting yourself? If so, what kind of resources would help you?

8. Tell me about support within the Somali community.

- a. Have you sought help from any organisations (NGOs, religious) in Johannesburg? If so, for what reasons? How have they helped you? Have they been Somali, Islamic, local or other?

- b. Have you helped anyone, a friend or family member, come to Johannesburg? How?
- c. Do you think that living in this community has helped you in anyway? How?
- d. Do you have any connections with members of your community outside of South Africa? What is the nature of these connections?
- e. How do you feel about the Somali community in Johannesburg?

9. Tell me about some of your experiences as a Somali woman.

- a. What is expected of a Somali woman compared to a Somali man?
- b. Do you think being in Johannesburg has changed these expectations?
- c. Have other Somali women helped you during your time in Johannesburg?
- d. Do you think it is important for Somali women to support each other? Why?
- e. What have been some of your challenges as a woman?
- f. Do you feel that you have the same access to opportunities as Somali men?
- g. How do you feel about women migrating?

10. Reflect on some of your experiences in South Africa.

- a. How do you feel as a migrant in the city?
- b. Has coming to Johannesburg changed your life for better or worse?
- c. Do you feel like there are more or less opportunities for you in Johannesburg?
- d. What do you like about the area that you live in? What are some of the problems?
- e. Do you think you will stay in Johannesburg?
- f. What are some of your goals or dreams for the future?

Appendix C



**SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING
HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

PROTOCOL NUMBER: SOAP055/07/2018

PROJECT TITLE: *Livelihoods at the margins:* How do transnational mobilities shape the livelihoods strategies of migrant women in host societies? A case study of Somali women in Mayfair, Johannesburg

INVESTIGATOR/S: Anna Sango (Student No: 1608185)

SCHOOL: Architecture and Planning

DEGREE PROGRAMME: Masters of Science in Development Planning (MScDP)

DATE CONSIDERED: 03 September 2018

EXPIRY DATE: 03 September 2019

DECISION OF THE COMMITTEE: Approved

CHAIRPERSON

(Professor Daniel Irurah)

DATE: 04 - 09 - 2018

cc: Supervisor/s:

Aly Karam

DECLARATION OF INVESTIGATORS

I/We fully understand the conditions under which I am/we are authorized to carry out the abovementioned research and I/we guarantee to ensure compliance with these conditions. Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved I/we undertake to resubmit the protocol to the Committee.

Signature

Date 19/09/2018

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