



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Global
Education
Monitoring
Report

ED/GEMR/MRT/2018/P1/42

Background paper prepared for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report
Gender Report

*Migration, displacement and education:
Building bridges, not walls*

GENDER, MIGRATION AND NON-FORMAL LEARNING FOR WOMEN AND ADOLESCENT GIRLS

This paper was commissioned by the Global Education Monitoring Report as background information to assist in drafting the 2019 GEM Report, Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls. It has not been edited by the team. The views and opinions expressed in this paper are those of the author(s) and should not be attributed to the Global Education Monitoring Report or to UNESCO. The papers can be cited with the following reference: "Paper commissioned for the 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report, Migration, displacement and education: Building bridges, not walls". For further information, please contact gemreport@unesco.org.

1. INTRODUCTION

Processes of international migration and displacement are highly gendered. Who migrates, and how they experience migration and displacement, is affected by gender norms and relations in both in countries of origin and countries of settlement, the gendered dynamics of conflict and violence, and the gendered nature of global and local labour markets. These gendered dynamics of migration both affect and are affected by education in often complex ways, as education may both facilitate processes of migration, and be enabled or limited by them, and as gendered engagements with education prior to and during migration and settlement may have a significant influenced on how these processes are experienced. This paper is concerned with exploring this gender-migration- education nexus through a focus on the educational engagements and experiences of migrant and refugee women and adolescent girls¹. It first considers the wider body of research that has explored the relationship between gender, migration and displacement, particularly in relation to the experiences of migrant women and girls, before drawing out some of the key conceptual ideas from this, considering their implications for education, and presenting a conceptual diagram to represent this relationship. It then focuses more specifically on experiences of non-formal education for women and adolescent girls in refugee contexts and in host countries. Finally it identifies a number of key issues and recommendations emerging from this research.

2. RESEARCHING GENDER, MIGRATION AND DISPLACEMENT

Since the 1990s a growing body of literature has been concerned with the relationship between gender and migration. In particular, this has paid attention to what has been termed the ‘feminisation of migration’, whereby, in contrast to the traditional ‘male bread winner’ model of migration, in recent decades increased numbers of women have been migrating independently for work, rather than joining male family members as dependants (Cuban, 2010; Gutierrez-Rodriges, 2010; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2017; INSTRAW, 2007; Kofman & Raghuram, 2015; Pyle, 2006). According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO), women make up approximately half of the world’s 215 million migrants (ILO, 2015). A substantial number of these migrant women are employed in the care industry or as domestic workers: women make up 83 per cent of the estimated 53 million domestic workers worldwide (ibid).

¹ The gender dynamics of migration, and its intersection with education, also have implications for boys and men. However in this paper the focus is on women and girls in particular.

A growing number of studies have examined the experiences of female migrants from low and middle income countries (see, for example, Anderson, 2000; Briones, 2009; Cox, 2006; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 2007; Lutz, 2011; Parreñas, 2001). Such studies have highlighted the way in which the gendered nature of the labour market, together with global inequality and uneven processes of globalisation, has shaped both the demand for and supply of migrant women's labour in the care industry and domestic service (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2002; Pratt, 2004; Sassen, 2002a, 2002b). This has resulted in what has been described as the 'international division of reproductive labour'² (Parreñas, 2001, 2012) and conceptualised through the notion of 'global care chains' (Hochschild, 2000; Yeates, 2012), as migrant women from the global South often find themselves caring for children in the global North while, at the same time, using their wages to pay for someone else to care for their own children in their countries of origin. The notion of 'transnational motherhood' meanwhile has been used to describe the role that migrant women may continue to play in the upbringing of their children in their countries of origin, despite their physical separation from them (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Avila, 1997). Research conducted with migrant mothers has documented how they often attempt to continue to perform intensive parenting and emotional work from a distance (Madianou & Miller, 2011; Parreñas, 2005) – for example through involvement in their children's education and learning. Studies have also highlighted the significant role that migrant women play in sending remittances back to their families, and wider communities (INSTRAW, 2007). Saskia Sassen has referred to this increasingly important role played by migrant women in supporting families and communities in their countries of origin as the 'feminization of survival', arguing that "not only are households, indeed whole communities, increasingly dependent on women for their survival but so too are governments" (Sassen, 2002b, p. 265).

Over the same time period, increasing attention has also been given to the gendered dynamics of forced migration. Recent data points to the high proportion of the refugee population that is made up of women: for example an estimated 45% of refugees in Europe are women (Liebig & Tronstad, 2018). Feminist scholars, meanwhile, have drawn attention to male bias in the way in which refugee policy has traditionally been developed and the refugee phenomenon written about and conceptualised. They have noted for example, that the Refugee Convention did not pay adequate attention to 'women's discrete experiences' (McPherson, 2016; p3) and that mass rape was not recognised as a war crime until 2001 (ibid). Through exploring the specific needs, vulnerabilities and experiences of women who have been forcibly displaced, they have therefore sought to write women into the 'refugee story' (Allwood & Wadia, 2013; McPherson, 2016). Research studies have thus explored how the nature of gendered relations in both countries of origin and of

² drawing on Nakano Glenn's formulation of the 'racial division of international labour' (Glenn, 1992)

settlement affect the ways in which women experience displacement (Buck & Silver, 2013; Chrostowsky & Long, 2013) and challenged gendered assumptions regarding 'persecution' and causes of asylum, pointing to the need to pay attention to gender based forms of violence and oppression, which may often shape women's experiences prior to, during and post-displacement (Edwards, 2010; McPherson, 2016).

Research on women's experiences of forced migration have revealed the ways in which conflict and displacement may exacerbate gender inequalities, increasing the vulnerability of girls and women to violence and exploitation (see, for example, Stark et al, 2018; Hossain et al, 2018) and weakening women's access to "pre-displacement forms of power and conflict resolution during asylum" (Chrostowsky & Long, 2013, p. 87). At the same time, some research has also pointed to potential for the asylum environment to open up new opportunities for women – for example through education – or to constitute sites for resistance and contestation of repressive gender norms (Heninger & McKenna, 2005). However it has also pointed to the complexity of these processes, and the impact that changing gender roles in contexts of displacement may have on men and boys, their identities and self-esteem, which may be associated with push-back, and increased violence against women and girls (McPherson, 2016; Buck & Silver, 2013).

3. CONCEPTUALISING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER, MIGRATION AND EDUCATION

Running through the literature on gender, migration and displacement are a number of key - and linked – themes and conceptual ideas, which are useful for thinking about the nature of the complex relationship between gender, migration and education.

The research literature on migrant and refugee women reveals how women's experiences are shaped by their marginal positioning within structures of power and inequalities, which are mediated by gender, class, race, ethnicity, and immigration status, often drawing on the notion of intersectionality (Brah & Phoenix, 2004; Crenshaw, 1991; Yuval-Davis, 2006). Intersecting forms of disadvantage and inequality mean that migrant girls and women are often vulnerable to sexual and racial abuse, harassment, and discrimination, as well as to exploitation and abuse in the workplace. This vulnerability is well documented both in relation to refugee women (Holzle, 2018; Johnson, 2013; Schulte & Rivzi, 2012) and in relation to domestic workers (for example, Anderson, 2004; Cox, 2006). But research with migrant women has also pointed to the potential for migration to entail the opening up of new opportunities, and liberation from restrictive family control or gender regimes (see, for example, Anthias, 2012; Barber, 2000). For example, although taking on the bread

winner role can contribute to binding migrant women into networks of obligation which may constrain their ability to leave exploitative working conditions (Lai, 2011; Williams, 2010), positioning themselves as the breadwinner – through the sending of remittances - may, in some cases also enable migrant women to enhance their status and position vis-a-vis family and community members at home³. Meanwhile, researchers working with women who have experienced forced displacement have cautioned against simply portraying refugee women as ‘un-agentic victims’, arguing instead for a need to privilege ‘representations of refugee women that recognise their agency and resilience in a manner that does not invisibilise their dire experiences and/or circumstances’ (McPherson, 2016, p. 4).

In examining the complex nature of the relationship between agency and resilience on the one hand and vulnerability on the other, the notion of ‘constrained agency’ (see McNay, 2000, 2008, 2010), may be useful for exploring how migrant women may be able to exercise forms of agency even in contexts of vulnerability, and how this may be affected by factors including their access to cultural capital in the form of education – and associated knowledge – prior to and during the migration process (see North, 2013). The extent to which migrant women are able to draw on their educational capital, may vary as they move between shifting social, economic and cultural contexts, in which they are differently positioned in relation to others (Anthias, 2008), and in which their education may be valued in different ways (North, 2018)⁴. This means that the relationship between education and the empowerment and enhanced agency of migrant and refugee women is not a simple one.

Research with refugee women, has pointed to the ways in which having low levels of formal education or literacy may increase experiences of marginalisation and vulnerability to abuse (Holzle, 2018), and hinder

³ Note however that the evidence on this, and the extent to which it can be associated with wider changes in gender relations, is mixed (see, for example, George, 2005)

⁴ Floya Anthia’s work on translocational positionality, provides a useful lens through which to explore this. For Anthias, the term positionality brings together a concern with both structure and agency through reference to “social position (as a set of effectivities: as outcome) and social positioning (as a set of practices, actions and meanings: as process)” (2008, p15), whilst ‘location’ points to the need to consider “context, the situated nature of claims and attributions and their production in complex and shifting locales” (ibid). The notion of ‘translocational positionality’ therefore “not only focuses on the crisscrossing of different social locations, but also relates to the shifting locales of people’s lives in terms of movements and flows’ (2008, p. 17). This enables consideration of the multiple – and sometimes contradictory - positionings and identities that migrant women may occupy as they navigate between shifting economic, social and cultural contexts.

processes of integration (Akua-Sakyiwah, 2016). Research with Somali women refugees in the UK, for example, has highlighted the way in which girls' and women's exclusion from formal education prior to displacement, contributed to the difficulties refugee women faced following settlement in the UK. For these women lack of education, combined with 'home patriarchal norms' and 'institutional structures in the host community', contributed to restricting their access to the social resources, and participation in social activities needed to facilitate their integration (Akua-Sakyiwah, 2016).

However, even when refugee women are highly educated, research suggests that their educational capital is often not valued, pointing to the difficulties that highly educated refugee women face in gaining recognition of their pre-displacement qualifications, and obtaining appropriate employment once settled. A study by the OECD of refugee women in Europe, for example, found that 40% of refugee women with tertiary education were over qualified when they found a job (Liebig & Tronstad, 2018) and research with refugee women in the UK found that among the women with professional qualifications, there was evidence of occupational downgrading, with teachers, for example working as administrators or interpreters (Bloch, 2004; Clayton, 2005). Thus 'being educated' in itself is clearly not sufficient to overcome the intersecting forms of discrimination and disadvantage that refugee women experience. Similarly research with women employed as migrant domestic workers or carers, highlights the downward mobility that many migrant women experience, as, although highly educated in their countries of origin, they find themselves in low skilled, low status domestic or care work, where their educational qualifications and skills are not recognised (see, for example, Abrantes, 2012; Cuban, 2008; Lutz, 2011). Here, although 'being educated' may be valued in their communities of origin, and may contribute to lessening vulnerability to exploitation by employers (see, for example, North 2013, 2018), it does not guarantee better paid or higher status forms of employment in the countries to which they migrate.

This means that, while the research evidence suggests that experiences of education and the educational capital acquired prior to and during the migration process can play a role in influencing women's experiences of migration, it is important to pay attention to the wider social, political and economic contexts which not only affect the extent to which migrant and refugee girls and women are able to access educational opportunities, but also shape how these are valued or may be drawn on to support their agency, resilience and well-being. A concern with intersectionality, and with understanding the complex nature of the relationship between agency, resilience, vulnerability and constraint in the lives and experiences of migrant girls and women thus suggests a need for a dynamic and multi-directional understanding of the relationship between gender, education and migration.

This is illustrated in figure 1 below:

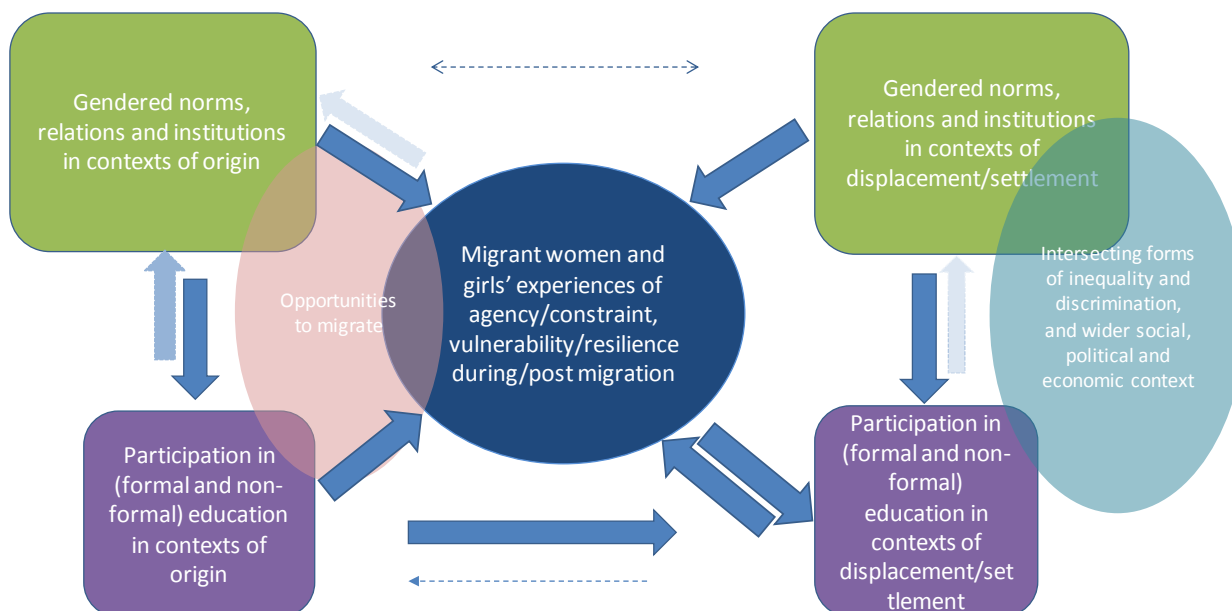


Figure 1

In this diagram, in which the experiences of migrant women and girls are placed in the centre, we see how, gendered norms, relations and institutions in contexts of origin affect – and may also be affected by – women and girls’ educational participation in their countries and contexts of origin. These may affect the opportunities that women and girls have to migrate, decision making around migration, and, importantly, their experiences and the extent to which they are able to exercise agency, or experience vulnerability or resilience during processes of migration and settlement. These experiences of agency or/in constraint, and of vulnerability or resilience are also affected by the gendered norms, relations and institutions and intersecting forms of inequality, and the wider social, political and economic environment (including, for example, the nature of the immigration regime and experiences of racism or hostility to migrants and refugees) that women and girls encounter in their new contexts of displacement or settlement. New educational opportunities and experiences during the migration process – and the extent to which they may be associated with enhanced agency and resilience - may themselves be affected not only by the wider context of migration and settlement, and its gendered dynamics, but also by previous experiences of education prior to migration. Meanwhile, the process of migration itself, the dynamics of movement and shifting between different social, cultural, economic and educational contexts that is entailed, may also impact on the status, identity and agency of individual migrant women, and has the potential to affect gender norms and relations more widely.

In the following sections I explore this further, through an exploration of empirical research that has considered migrant women and adolescent girl's engagement with a range of (primarily non-formal) educational interventions in refugee settings and in receiving countries.

4. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION FOR ADOLESCENT GIRLS AND WOMEN IN REFUGEE CONTEXTS

A small, but growing, body of research has explored the educational experiences of girls and women in refugee contexts in the global South. Such studies have highlighted the disadvantages that women and girls often face in refugee camps with respect to education access and quality. For example, a recent report by the UNHCR revealed that refugee girls were half as likely as their male peers to be enrolled in secondary school and pointed to the way in which social and cultural norms and conventions resulted in boys' school being prioritised over that of girls (UNHCR, 2018). However, a number of studies, as explored below, have also explored the ways in which women and young women have engaged with learning opportunities – particularly non-formal education - in refugee contexts, and have considered the implications of non-formal educational interventions for individual women and girls, as well as for gender relations more widely both within refugee camps themselves and for return or eventual settlement in host communities. These studies very clearly reveal the ways in which engagement with learning is affected by wider gender regimes in both host communities and communities of origin, and point to the complexity of processes of change in gender relations through education in such contexts.

Many women and girls living in refugee camps come from countries where gender norms mean that formal schooling for girls is limited, and may have had their learning further interrupted by the experience of displacement itself. In relation to Somali refugee adolescent girls in refugee camps in Ethiopia, for example, a report from the Women's Refugee Commission notes that "the vast majority of adolescent girls in Sheder and Aw Barre camps have been out of school for several years since fleeing Somalia in 2008-2009 and lack the social support and resources needed to return to their education. Of the girls who did manage to return to school, many dropped out because of heavy domestic chore burdens, early pregnancy and early marriage. Girls who are out of school and caring for others consistently reported poorer health and lower social and economic status than their in-school peers." (Schulte & Rivzi, 2012, p. 6). This lack of educational opportunity may increase the vulnerability of girls and women in the camp environment: the report notes that "adolescent girls in the Somali refugee camps in the Jijiga region are at extreme risk of sexual violence, exploitation and harmful traditional practices" (Schulte & Rivzi, 2012, p. 1). However, at the same time

gendered practices such as early marriage, and their isolation and exclusion from social networks may make accessing formal educational opportunities in the camp difficult. The report thus points to the importance of combining incentives to encourage girls' enrolment in schooling – including through in-kind or material support, and child care for young mothers – with alternative and non-formal education opportunities for adolescent girls. It points to the importance of vocational and life-skills programmes that are being implemented inside and outside the camp, while noting that the training available “continues to be channelled along stereotypical gender lines. Typically, young women are learning hairstyling, beautician techniques, jewellery making and sewing, while young men are learning carpentry, agriculture and welding” (Schulte & Rivzi, 2012, p. 10).

Although research is limited, attempts to address the vulnerability of adolescent girls to sexual violence and exploitation in refugee camp contexts, through non-formal education programmes have been documented in a number of settings. The *Creating Opportunities through Mentoring, Parental Involvement and Safe spaces* (COMPASS) program, for example, has been implemented in three settings: Ethiopia, Pakistan and the Democratic Republic of Congo (Stark et al, 2018; Falb et al, 2016). This programme was concerned with the social and economic empowerment of adolescent girls in refugee camps through weekly life skills sessions held with a female mentor in a designated safe space for women and girls. However, baseline and endline research conducted in relation to the programme in Ethiopia to assess its effectiveness in improving girls' safety and well-being revealed mixed results. The data suggests that the intervention did not have a statistically significant effect on the economic vulnerability of the participants, their likelihood of being engaged in transactional sexual exploitation or experiencing sexual violence, or their likelihood of staying in, or returning to school. The study thus points to the need to consider the wider structural constraints that shape the lives and experience of girls in the refugee camp. While the program may have been successful in raising girls' knowledge and understanding, the study suggests that reducing their vulnerability also requires addressing the resource constraints they face, noting, for example, that ‘if a girl learns about financial planning and saving but has no access to capital... it is unlikely that we would expect to see behaviour change around income generation in the form of working for pay or transactional sexual exploitation’ (Stark et al, 2018, p 518). This suggests a need to integrate interventions focused on empowerment for girls in refugee contexts with ‘economic empowerment programmes and additional structural interventions’ (ibid, p 519). It also points to the need to complement work with girls with work with boys and men in order to achieve greater impact in relation to reducing violence (ibid).

The complex nature of refugee contexts, and the way in which structures of oppression that exist for women in their countries of origin may often be reproduced in contexts of displacement, including through forms of

sexual violence and exploitation (McPherson, 2016) means that even when displacement opens up potential new educational opportunities for women and girls, accessing these may be complicated. Research with Southern Sudanese female refugees seeking educational, legal, and psychosocial services in Cairo – Egypt, for example, uncovered the gendered nature of the everyday violence and harassment that they had to contend with in order to access these opportunities (Johnson, 2013), as getting to classes entailed enduring exposure to harassment and gender based violence, which was linked to their racial and gendered positioning as Sudanese refugee women. Despite this, women described their determination to take up educational opportunities, which they hoped would enable them to insulate themselves and their families from future violence as they positioned “themselves for an imagined future away from Egypt” (Johnson, 2013, p. 71) either through resettlement to an English speaking country, or through “stable employment in urban centres in South Sudan if the new nation does not resume war with the North” (ibid).

The difficulties associated with taking advantage of new educational opportunities was also revealed by research with Somali girls and women in Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya (Buck and Silver, 2013). Since fleeing across the border many Somali girls and women have gained new opportunities for education. However accessing these has required them to negotiate between competing ideologies (Buck and Silver, 2013). Researchers describe how an ‘enlightenment agenda’, framed around a human rights discourse, and promoted by the UNHCR and aid agencies in the camps, could be associated with support to girls’ and women’s education, and attempts to move camp communities away from what were viewed as harmful gender practices was resisted by a ‘traditionalist pushback’ from male leaders in the camp (Buck & Silver, 2013, p124). They suggest that Somali girls and women had to negotiate between these two ideologies in their efforts to access education, highlighting the ways in which women advocating for education “did so in knowledge of traditionalists’ disapproval” (Buck & Silver, 2013, p. 127). Advocating and participating in education could therefore be seen to represent an act of resistance and contestation. However, it is also associated with the changing nature of livelihoods within the camps themselves, which meant that participation in education was linked to women being able to access new means of production, including wage labour with NGOs, which was important for enabling families to supplement rations. Education thus took on both a symbolic and a practical significance for refugee women and girls.

The complexity of the relationship between gendered norms and relations, changing forms of livelihood, and education is also reflected in the experiences of Dinka women from Sudan in Kakuma, Kenya, where (Chrostowsky & Long, 2013). Here, women’s experiences of engaging with new educational opportunities that had not been available to them in Sudan had implications not just for their lives in the camps, but also for their experiences post-repatriation as education acquired in the camps allowed “returning women

increased opportunities to work outside the home, including employment in education, government and policy, positions previously and customarily reserved for Dinka Bor Men” (Chrostowsky & Long, 2013, p. 86). However the research also points to the complex nature of changing gender relations in shifting contexts of displacement and return: although their experiences of education enabled Dinka women to access increased cash-based economic power, the experiences of urbanisation and the changing livelihood patterns that accompanied their return to Sudan were also associated with the loss of agro-pastoralist Dinka social practices which had “afforded Dinka women a certain power and space through food production and procurement” (ibid) prior to their displacement.

These cases point to the ways in which women and girls’ participation in forms of education in refugee contexts may be associated not just with changes at the individual level but also with changing economic relationships, and new livelihood opportunities for women, as well as with the possibility of a different sort of future, either on return, or on more permanent settlement in a new country. They thus highlight the symbolic promise of education for refugee girls and women, which may be an important motivating factor to take up opportunities for learning. The existing research points to the value in supporting non-formal learning that builds on women’s existing experiences, and that links to the sorts of livelihoods opportunities that may be available to women in the immediate refugee setting, and as they move out of these settings either through returning to their countries of origin through processes of repatriation, or as they settle in host countries. However, there is a need for further research that explores the extent to which educational interventions can be associated to real changes in the lives of women and girls in refugee camps, and that documents how this plays out as women move out from the ‘transitional’ contexts of the refugee camps themselves, and considers the implications of this for gender relations in the longer term.

As well as highlighting the value of educational interventions, the research also points to the constraints that refugee women and girls experience as they seek to engagement with learning opportunities. More studies are needed to understand the lives of women and girls in refugee contexts, and how these affect engagement with educational opportunities. The studies that do exist suggest that childcare and other caring responsibilities (see for example, Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, 2010), as well as gendered norms, harassment and gender-based violence all act to make it difficult for women and adolescent girls to take advantage of learning opportunities even when these are available. This points to the importance of ensuring that non-formal education interventions include attention to providing childcare, and to ensuring the safety of women and girls participating, and that they are complemented by appropriate work with men and boys, and wider economic and structural interventions.

5. NON-FORMAL EDUCATION INTERVENTIONS IN CONTEXTS OF MIGRATION AND SETTLEMENT

A number of studies have explored the experiences of migrant women living primarily in high income countries and their engagement in non-formal learning. Often focused on participation in basic literacy or ESOL programmes, such research points to the potential for non-formal education to enable women to develop skills and confidence, which may be linked to processes of social integration, the development of social networks or changes in their position in relation to family and the wider community, even if their participation in education is not associated with significant improvements in their employment or official immigration status. Like the women in the refugee settings discussed above, the participation of migrant and refugee women in non-formal education in high income countries is shaped by both their previous experiences of education as well as their experiences as migrant women juggling work or childcare responsibilities, supporting families under often precarious economic conditions, and navigating hostile immigration regimes.

The literature concerned with the engagement of migrant and refugee women in non-formal learning in high income host countries has pointed to the need for educational interventions that recognise – and are responsive to - the pressures and constraints of migrant women’s lives that affect their engagement with education. Research with refugee women in the UK, the US and Australia, for example, has highlighted the significant constraints that childcare and other care responsibilities may place on migrant women, particularly mothers who may find themselves separated from their social and support networks (see, for example, Warriner, 2004; Clayton, 2005; Tuliao, Najjar, & Torraco, 2017; Watkins, Razee & Richters, 2012; Chung & Phillimore, 2017). For migrant domestic and care workers, meanwhile, long working hours, and the difficulties of negotiating time off from employers, can make attending regular classes difficult (North, 2013, 2018; Cuban, 2007). This research has also pointed to the need to recognise and build on the ‘funds of knowledge’ – that is the existing skills and experience that refugee and migrant women bring with them into the classroom space (see, for example, Choi & Najar, 2017; Klenk, 2017). Research among refugee women in the US, for example, has pointed to the way in which English as a Second Language (ESL) classes that view refugee women as ‘deficient’ and in need of quick fix teaching methods and curriculum focused on job preparation to the exclusion of other forms of knowledge and learning result in limiting – rather than widening – opportunities for refugee women (Warriner, 2004a, 2004b). Similarly, research with Karen refugee women and their children highlighted both the way in which women’s engagement with literacy learning was shaped by their existing experiences and cultural practices around learning, and also their future aspirations – computer skills, for example, were emphasised by the women as particularly important (Quadros & Sarroub, 2016).

Although fewer opportunities to attend formal schooling in their countries of origin mean that women are often more likely than men to seek opportunities to access basic English (ESOL) and literacy classes, research suggests that the content of these classes is not always well matched to the needs, experiences or aspirations of the women accessing them. Research conducted with migrant domestic workers from Nepal and India, who were trying to learn to read and write in English despite having little formal schooling, for example, revealed how difficult they found it to engage with formal English classes which relied heavily on grammar based worksheets which bore little resemblance to the forms of English literacy that they encountered and engaged with in their daily lives. In contrast, non-formal literacy learning which linked directly to their day-to-day literacy practices (for example sending SMS messages, or completing travel documentation), and which recognised and drew on their knowledge and experiences as migrant women, was valuable in enabling them to develop confidence as they negotiated everyday life as migrant workers in the UK, and as they were able to draw on emerging literacy skills in maintaining their global social networks. Although the development of basic literacy skills in English did not enable them to move into better employment – and nor was it directly associated with changed immigration status – it was important in enabling more subtle changes in identity, status and self esteem, and as such held symbolic as well as practical value for the women (see North 2017, 2018). Research with migrant women employed as domestic workers in New York and the Bay Area has similarly highlighted the symbolic value that engaging with education may hold in the context of the stresses of the low pay, low status and long hours entailed domestic work as engaging in literacy learning is seen “as a way to move out of the private domain of the home and ‘be somebody’” (Cuban 2007, p. 5).

Where education programmes recognise and are responsive to refugee women’s skills, experiences and aspirations, it is clear that they can play an important role in women’s lives, even when they don’t automatically translate into improved employment opportunities. Research with a group of refugee women from Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Eritrea, who attended English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) classes at a community centre in London, revealed how, for the women participating engaging with non-formal learning was not only valued in terms of its potential for advancing their individual economic situation, but was also ‘tightly bound to their children’s well-being and familial relations, as well as their ability to build social networks that promote stability and belonging in their lives’ (Klenk, 2017; p). While their future career aspirations – and the desire to build on qualifications and skills obtained in their home countries – were important motivating factors for engaging in non-formal learning, the classes themselves, and the adult social space that they provided were also seen as playing an important role in reducing isolation, boosting confidence and providing practical support to the women who participated in them (Klenk, 2017).

However, there is also a clear need to pay closer attention to ensuring that when women do access educational opportunities these are recognised and can be used to support them to move into employment or further education where appropriate. Research with refugee women in London and Glasgow revealed that, although women generally have lower educational levels than men, in a sample of 30 refugee women interviewed two-thirds had attended higher education institutions and one-third had obtained degrees. However despite this there was a “frequent failure to place women on a course at a level which is appropriate to their stage of learning and to ensure their progression” (Clayton, 2005). Even when women were able to access relevant education and training, the study revealed that translating this into appropriate employment was challenging, with the women experiencing a range of barriers including discrimination by employers, a lack of recognition of their skills and experiences, insufficient knowledge of the system and poor access to informal networks (Clayton, 2005). There is therefore a clear need for education and training for refugee women to be linked more explicitly to work to challenge workplace discrimination, and explore meaningful employment opportunities for migrant and refugee women.

Taken together, the emerging body of work that has explored the educational engagement of refugee and migrant women in host countries points to the need for flexible and responsive learning opportunities for refugee and migrant women, that engage with and build on their prior experiences of learning, as well as the skills, knowledge and experience that they bring with them as migrant women. For such programmes to be successful in supporting migrant and refugee women’s agency, they must also respond directly to some of the constraints that limit the extent to ability of women to participate in and benefit from them, through for example the provision of childcare.

6. CONCLUSIONS

The existing research that has looked at the educational experiences of migrant and refugee women and adolescent girls points to the value that they place on accessing educational opportunities, often linked to wider aspirations for safety, freedom from violence, and economic opportunity. It suggests that, while non-formal interventions alone do not automatically result in the realisation of these aspirations, they can play an important role in supporting the agency and resilience of migrant and refugee women and girls, which may, in some cases, be associated with wider changes in gender relations either in the immediate refugee context, or contexts of return. The research suggests that programmes that are cognisant of, and build upon, migrant and refugee women’s existing knowledge and educational and wider experiences, and which take into account the wider contexts in which they are located, are particularly valuable. In this respect, the research points to the importance of understanding the constraints that migrant and refugee women and

girls face in accessing and benefiting from educational programmes, the particular (gendered) challenges that refugee contexts present, and the intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalisation that migrant and refugee women may experience. It suggests a need to develop programmes that respond to this by, for example, ensuring that women are able to access to childcare, or are able to travel to classes safely, and points to a value in complementing educational interventions for women and girls with other interventions to tackle wider issues that affect their ability to access education, or draw on and make use of their educational qualifications. These include, for example, gender-based violence, lack of livelihood opportunities and labour market discrimination.

However the research evidence base regarding the educational engagements of migrant and refugee women is still limited. More research that considers the lives, experiences, and aspirations of migrant and refugee women is needed to better understand how to ensure that educational programmes and complementary interventions aimed at migrant and refugee women and girls adequately respond to their needs and build on their existing skills knowledge in ways that are empowering to them. There is also a need for further research to explore the longer term outcomes of educational interventions for migrant and refugee women that considers their impact on the agency or resilience of migrant women themselves, and the extent to which they may contribute to wider changes in gender norms and relations either in contexts of origin or in contexts of displacement and settlement.

7. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abrantes, M. (2012). You're Not There To Make The World Any Cleaner. *European Societies*, 14(3), 320-337. doi: 10.1080/14616696.2012.676661

- Akua-Sakyiwah, B. (2016). Education as Cultural Capital and its Effect on the Transitional Issues Faced by Migrant Women in the Diaspora. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 17(4), 1125-1142. doi: 10.1007/s12134-015-0455-8
- Allwood, G., & Wadia, K. (2013). *Refugee women in Britain and France*. Manchester: Manchester Hive.
- Anderson, B. (2000). *Doing the Dirty Work? The Global Politics of Domestic Labour*. London and New York: Zed Books.
- Anderson, B. (2004). Migrant Domestic Workers and Slavery. In C. van den Anker (Ed.), *The Political Economy of New Slavery* (pp. 107). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Anthias, F. (2008). Thinking through the lens of translocational positionality: an intersectionality frame for understanding identity and belonging. *Translocations: Migration and social change*, 4(1), 5-20.
- Anthias, F. (2012). Transnational Mobilities, Migration Research and Intersectionality *Nordic Journal of Migration Research* (Vol. 2, pp. 102).
- Barber, P. G. (2000). Agency in philippine women's labour migration and provisional diaspora. *Women's Studies International Forum*, 23(4), 399-411. doi: [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0277-5395\(00\)00104-7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0277-5395(00)00104-7)
- Bloch, A. (2004). Refugee Women and Employment: Barriers to Integration. *Refugee Women's News*(27).
- Brah, A., & Phoenix, A. (2004). Ain't I a Woman? Revisiting Intersectionality. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 5(3), 75-86.
- Briones, L. (2009). *Empowering migrant women: Why agency and rights are not enough*. Farnham: Ashgate.
- Buck, P., & Silver, R. (2013). Tradition, enlightenment, and the role of schooling in gender politics among Somali girls and women in Dadaab. In L. Bartlett & A. Ghaffar-Khucher (Eds.), *Refugees, immigrants, and education in the Global South*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Cheung, S. Y., & Phillimore, J. (2017). Gender and Refugee Integration: a Quantitative Analysis of Integration and Social Policy Outcomes. *Journal of Social Policy*, 46(2), 211-230. doi: 10.1017/s0047279416000775
- Choi, J., & Najar, U. (2017). Immigrant and refugee women's resourcefulness in English language classrooms: Emerging possibilities through plurilingualism. *Literacy and Numeracy Studies*, 25(1), 20.
- Chrostowsky, M., & Long, D. E. (2013). Transnational educational capital and emergent livelihoods: Cultural strategies among repatriated South Sudanese. . In L. Bartlett & A. Ghaffar-Khucher (Eds.), *Refugees, immigrants, and education in the Global South* (pp. 85-98). London and New York: Routledge.
- Clayton, P. (2005). Blank slates or hidden treasure? Assessing and building on the experiential learning of migrant and refugee women in European countries. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 24(3), 227-242. doi: 10.1080/02601370500134917

- Cox, R. (2006). *The Servant Problem: Domestic Employment in a Global Economy*. London and New York: I.B. Tauris.
- Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241-1299.
- Cuban, S. (2007). 'For Some Reason, I'm Just Tired': Women Domestic Workers Persisting in Community-Based Programmes. *Journal of Adult and Continuing Education*, 13(1), 3-18.
- Cuban, S. (2008). Home/work: the roles of education, literacy, and learning in the networks and mobility of professional women migrant carers in Cumbria. *Ethnography and Education*, 3(1), 81-96.
- Cuban, S. (2010). Examining the feminisation of migration concept for adult education. *Gender and Education*, 22(2), 177-191.
- Edwards, A. (2010). Transitioning gender: Feminist engagement with international refugee law and policy 1950–2010. *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 29(2), 21-45.
- Ehrenreich, B., & Hochschild, A. R. (2002). Introduction. In B. Ehrenreich & A. R. Hochschild (Eds.), *Global Women: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. London: Granta Books.
- Falb, K. L., Tanner, S., Ward, L., Erksine, D., Noble, E., Assazenew, A., . . . Malinga, P. (2016). Creating opportunities through mentorship, parental involvement, and safe spaces (COMPASS) program: multi-country study protocol to protect girls from violence in humanitarian settings. *BMC public health*, 16(1), 231.
- Fiddian-Qasmiyeh, E. (2010). "Ideal" Refugee Women and Gender Equality Mainstreaming in the Sahrawi Refugee Camps: "Good Practice" for Whom? *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, 29(2), 64-84. doi: 10.1093/rsq/hdq023
- George, S. M. (2005). *When women come first: gender and class in transnational migration*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Glenn, E. N. (1992). From servitude to service work: Historical continuities in the racial division of paid reproductive labor. *Signs*, 1-43.
- Gutierrez-Rodriges, E. (2010). *Migration, Domestic Work and Affect. A Decolonial Approach on Value and the Feminization of Labor*. New York: Routledge.
- Heninger, L., & McKenna, M. (2005). Dont forget us: the education and gender-based violence protection needs of adolescent girls from Darfur in Chad
- Hochschild, A. R. (2000). Global care chains and emotional surplus value. In W. Hutton & A. Giddens (Eds.), *On The Edge: Living with Global Capitalism*. London: Jonathan Cape.

- Holzle, R. (2018). *"Illiteracy makes me suffer a lot!" An oral history of illiteracy, gender and forced displacement with a female asylum-seeker* (MA Education, Gender and International Development), UCL Institute of Education, London.
- Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (2007). *Domestica: Immigrant workers cleaning and caring in the shadows of affluence*. Berkeley, LA: University of California Press.
- Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. (2017). Gender and migration scholarship: an overview from a 21st century perspective. *Migraciones Internacionales*, 6(20), 219-234.
- Hondagneu-Sotelo, P., & Avila, E. (1997). "I'M HERE, BUT I'M THERE": The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood. *Gender & Society*, 11(5), 548-571. doi: 10.1177/089124397011005003
- Hossain, M., McAlpine, A., Muthuri, S., Bacchus, L., Muuo, S., Kohli, A., . . . MacRae, M. (2018). Violence, uncertainty, and resilience among refugee women and community workers: An evaluation of gender-based violence case management services in the Dadaab refugee camps: DFID.
- ILO. (2015). *Labour Migration Highlights No. 3: Migrant Domestic Workers*. Geneva: ILO (International Labour Office).
- INSTRAW. (2007). *Feminization of Migration, Gender, Remittances and Development: Working Paper No. 1*. New York: United Nations.
- Johnson, G. A. (2013). "There is Violence Either Way So Let Violence Come With an Education": Southern Sudanese Refugee Women's Use of Education for an Imagined Peaceful Future. In L. Bartlett & A. Ghaffar-Khucher (Eds.), *In Refugees, Immigrants, and Education in the Global South* (pp. 82-96). London and New York: Routledge.
- Kofman, E., & Raghuram, P. (2015). *Gendered Migrations and Global Social Reproduction*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Lai, M.-y. (2011). The present of forgetting: diasporic identity and migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong. *Social Identities*, 17(4), 565-585. doi: 10.1080/13504630.2011.587309
- Liebig, T., & Tronstad, K. R. (2018). *Triple Disadvantage? A first overview of the integration of refugee women*. Paris: OECD.
- Lutz, H. (2011). *The New Maids: Transnational Women and the Care Economy*. London and New York: Zed Books.
- Madianou, M., & Miller, D. (2011). Mobile phone parenting: Reconfiguring relationships between Filipina migrant mothers and their left-behind children. *New Media & Society*, 13(3), 457-470. doi: 10.1177/1461444810393903

- McNay, L. (2000). *Gender and Agency: Reconfiguring the Subject in Feminist and Social Theory*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- McNay, L. (2008). *Against Recognition*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- McNay, L. (2010). Feminism and Post-Identity Politics: The Problem of Agency. *Constellations*, 17(4), 512-525. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-8675.2010.00611.x
- McPherson, M. (2016). *Refugee Women, Representation and Education: Creating a discourse of self-authorship and potential*. London and New York: Routledge.
- North, A. (2013). Reading and writing between different worlds: Learning, literacy and power in the lives of two migrant domestic workers. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 33(6), 595-603.
- North, A. (2017). What kind of literacy? Reflections on the experiences of migrant domestic workers negotiating learning in London. *European Education*, 49(2-3), 184-200.
- North, A. (2018). Domestic work, learning and literacy practices across transnational space. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 27(2-3), 217-238. doi: 10.1080/09620214.2018.1425101
- Parreñas, R. S. (2001). *Servants of Globalization: Women, Migration and Domestic Work*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Parreñas, R. S. (2005). Long distance intimacy: class, gender and intergenerational relations between mothers and children in Filipino transnational families. *Global Networks*, 5(4), 317-336. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-0374.2005.00122.x
- Parreñas, R. S. (2012). The reproductive labour of migrant workers. *Global Networks*, 12(2), 269-275. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-0374.2012.00351.x
- Pratt, G. (2004). *Working Feminism* Edinburgh and Philadelphia: Edinburgh University Press and Temple University Press.
- Pyle, J. L. (2006). Globalization, transnational migration, and gendered care work: Introduction. *Globalizations*, 3(3), 283-295. doi: 10.1080/14747730600869938
- Quadros, S., & Sarroub, L. K. (2016). The case of three Karen refugee women and their children: Literacy practices in a family literacy context. *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 10(1), 28-41.
- Sassen, S. (2002a). Global Cities and Survival Circuits. In B. Ehrenreich & A. R. Hochschild (Eds.), *Global Women: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy*. London: Granta Books.
- Sassen, S. (2002b). Women's Burden: Countergeographies of Globalization and the Feminization of Survival. *Nordic Journal of International Law*, 7(2), 231-262.

Schulte, J., & Rivzi, Z. (2012). In Search of Safety and Solutions: Somali Refugee Adolescent Girls at Sheder and Aw Barre Camps, Ethiopia New York: Women's Refugee Commission.

Stark, L., Seff, I., Assezenew, A., Eomkham, J., Falb, K., & Ssewamala, F. M. (2018). Effects of a social empowerment intervention on economic vulnerability for adolescent refugee girls in Ethiopia. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 62*(1), S15-S20.

UNHCR. (2018). Her Turn: It's time to make refugee girls' education a priority. New York: UNHCR.

Warriner, D. (2004a). "The Days Now Is Very Hard for My Family": The Negotiation and Construction of Gendered Work Identities Among Newly Arrived Women Refugees. *Journal of Language, Identity & Education, 3*(4), 279-294. doi: 10.1207/s15327701jlie0304_4

Warriner, D. (2004b). Multiple literacies and identities: The experiences of two women refugees. *Women's Studies Quarterly, 32*(1/2), 179-195.

Watkins, P. G., Razee, H., & Richters, J. (2012). 'I'm Telling You... The Language Barrier is the Most, the Biggest Challenge': Barriers to Education among Karen Refugee Women in Australia. *Australian Journal of Education, 56*(2), 126-141.

Williams, F. (2010). Migration and Care: Themes, Concepts and Challenges. *Social Policy and Society, 9*(03), 385-396. doi: doi:10.1017/S1474746410000102

Yeates, N. (2012). Global care chains: a state-of-the-art review and future directions in care transnationalization research. *Global Networks, 12*(2), 135-154. doi: 10.1111/j.1471-0374.2012.00344.x

Yuval-Davis, N. (2006). Intersectionality and Feminist Politics. *European Journal of Women's Studies, 13*(3), 193-209.