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THEMATIC ARTICLES: ASSESSMENTS OF IMMIGRATION POLICIES

Contact, Perceptions of Threat, and Assessment of Migration Policies in Malta

Karina KOROSTELINA and Lynette CAMILLERI

Abstract. Numerous studies examine the effectiveness of the contact hypothesis in resolving conflict. While ample research has been conducted regarding the prevalence of xenophobia with the rise of the refugee crisis worldwide and increasing perceptions of threat towards immigrants, little has been written on relationships between contact and assessment of immigration policies. This study explores the impact of different forms of contact between the Maltese and the Sub-Saharan African migrants in Malta on perceptions of threat and immigration policies. More specifically, this study asks what are relationships between forms of contact, perceptions of threat, and assessment of migration policies and institutions. The authors posit that perception of threat arrives from different patterns of interaction between the number of immigrants and type of contacts. They also explore the impact of the form of contact and level of threat on general support for migration policies and analyze how different types of threat affect support for particular policies. The study compares the intergroup contact in two localities of Balzan and Marsa that are both home to Open Centers for migrants.

Keywords: intergroup contact, immigrants, perceptions of threat, assessment of immigration policies

Impact of contact on prejudice, perception of threat, and assessment of policies

Since Allport first detailed his original “contact hypothesis” in the Nature of Prejudice, a wealth of social scientific scholarship has emerged reaffirming the notion that contact between different identity-based groups has the function of reducing prejudice (Pettigrew 1998; Pettigrew & Tropp 2006; Wagner, Christ,
Pettigrew, Stellmacher & Wolf 2006). The scholarship of many of these authors, which has developed and refined Allport’s original work, has transformed the contact hypothesis into a now well-established theory on intergroup contact (Pettigrew 1998, Pettigrew & Tropp 2006; Pettigrew et al 2011).

While much has been written regarding the prevalence of xenophobia with the rise of the refugee crisis worldwide, little has been written in relation to contact hypothesis theory and its correlation to changes and debates on immigration policy. Although legislation cannot directly reduce personal prejudice, by controlling the “outward expression of intolerance,” it may have a ripple effect onto “inner habits of thought and feeling” (Mitchell 2005; 467-477). A change in social structure may lead to a transformation of a situation, which may in turn lead to a modification in behavior, resulting in a change in attitudes. Thus, the importance of policy must be underlined. Several studies on intergroup relations have pointed out the wider implications of the results on the policies that could be enacted at the site of intergroup clashes to reduce intergroup hostilities (Pettigrew, 1986).

In their more recent study on the contact hypothesis in relation to attitudes toward Latino populations and immigration policy in the United States, Ellison, Heeju, and Leal (2011) disaggregated the concept of friendship into two constituent parts: close friendship and acquaintance. The authors highlight that there is also a proximate association between this friendship and more positive, attitudes toward immigration policy concerning Hispanic communities. Other scholars advanced an argument of complementarity between context and contact: while contextual factors such as “level of immigration to the country” or immigrant group size serves to facilitate a heightened perception of threat, intergroup contact functions to “mediate” these contextual elements by assisting to diminish threat perceptions (Stein, Post, and Rindin 2000 & McLaren 2003). Similarly, the study conducted in New Zealand showed that individual differences in dangerous world beliefs interacted with a proportion of immigrants in the local community resulting in higher levels of prejudice (Sibley, Duckitt, Bergh, Osborne, Perry, Asbrock, Robertson, Armstrong, Wilson, & Barlow 2013). Moreover, McLaren importantly notes that the above examples of environmental factors do not serve to specifically influence “degrees of willingness to expel or include immigrants in society” (2003: 909). Stein, Post, and Rindin further suggest that context and contact variables are interactive, whereby together they both influence attitudes toward immigration
policy options (229). Pertinently, this scholarship is situated closely to emergent work on attitudes toward immigrants and immigration policy that focuses on an exploration of the interplay of intergroup threat theory and intergroup contact theory.

In their study on Luxembourg Callen, Meuleman and Valentova (2015) focused on two specific variants: assimilation and multiculturalism, and how attitudinal preferences and support towards these practices shift depending on perception of threat. The authors found that higher perceptions of threat regarding immigrants and immigration more broadly results in diminished support for multiculturalism. This is suggestive of a notion that perceptions of threat (real or imagined) facilitate a reduction in the desire for difference, but not necessarily the “expulsion” of immigrants as noted above by McLaren (2003).

The integrated threat theory (ITT) describes four basic types of threats that can cause prejudice: realistic threats, symbolic threats, intergroup anxiety, and negative stereotyping (Stephan, Diaz-Loving, & Duran 2000; Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwarzwald, & Tur Kaspa 1998). Realistic threats include political, economic threats and threats to the physical well-being of the ingroup and its members. Symbolic threats reflect perceived group differences in worldviews, ethics, values, norms, beliefs, and attitudes. Intergroup anxiety arises from negative interaction with outgroup members and fears of being rejected, ashamed, or abused. The negative attitudes toward outgroup members can be connected to different types of threat.

The presents study

Context of research: immigration in Malta

Malta is a small island in the Mediterranean of 316 km², 93 km south of Sicily and 288 km north of Libya with a population of approximately 417,000 people (NSO 2011). Although the national language in Malta is Maltese, English and Maltese are the official languages used on the island. Roman Catholicism is the official religion in the country. Malta’s strategic position in the Mediterranean between the European and African continents has led it to become the center of both emigration and immigration.

In 2002, Malta started receiving flows of migrants from the Horn of Africa. Malta was not prepared for this flow of immigrants. The Nationalist government deported 220 Eritreans back to their home country, where they were allegedly
tortured (Grech 2014). When Malta became a member state of the European Union on May 1, 2004, it dramatically increased migration flows to Malta (Cassar 2013). Yet, as a result of the Arab Spring of 2011, ‘boat arrivals’ to Malta further increased (Durick 2012). Moreover, the Labor government came under scrutiny in July 2013 when it threatened to “push-back” migrants to Libya, owing to the increased flow of migrants to Malta and the lack of solidarity from other member states, but this was blocked by the European Court of Human Rights following pressure by local NGOs (EASO Monitor 2014). While the number of boat arrivals reached a peak with 2,008 in 2013, the number has since dropped drastically with 568 (2014), 104 (2015), 25 (2016) and 3 boat arrivals in 2017 (UNHCRd, 2017).

Interviews for this study were conducted between April and June 2014. During that time according to UNHCR, the majority of migrants arriving by boat stemmed from Somalia, Eritrea, Syria, Nigeria and Gambia (respectively), and in 2014 the majority of migrants came from Syria, Somalia, Sudan, Gambia and Eritrea (UNHCRd, 2017). It is worth noting however that from April to June 2014, the majority of migrants stemmed from SSA since the Syrian migrants mainly arrived in Malta in August 2014.

At the time of the interviews, if the migrants arrives without a valid passport or visa (indiscriminately whether they arrive by sea or plane), they were temporarily subject to a Removal Order under the Immigration Act, at least until the launch of an asylum application (UNHCRa 2014), and were detained in one of the detention centers. During their wait for the outcome of the asylum procedure, asylum seekers are confined to one of the three closed detention centers (Majcher & Flynn 2014). If the asylum-seekers received a positive answer that they would be granted a form of protection, they would be released from detention upon receiving the decision. They were then usually taken to one of the open centers available. If asylum-seekers were not granted protection, Malta reserved the right to deport them back to their country, subject to international and European law. Malta returned in total 460 migrants (including both those arriving irregularly by boat and overstayers) in 2013 (UNHCRa 2014). In total “less than 30% of the around 19,000 individuals who arrived by boat since 2002” remained in Malta (UNHCRb 2014).

A new migration strategy has since been introduced in December 2015, whereby newly arrived irregular migrants would be accommodated for a limited duration at an initial reception facility wherein migrants would undergo medical
screening and processing by pertinent authorities including Police officials and the Agency for the Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS). Thereafter, only those migrants issued with a detention decision would be transferred to a Detention Center. The rest, namely those subsequently released from detention, or those subject to alternatives to detention, would be offered accommodation in an Open Center. While Malta does not yet have an integration policy, the government is planning to launch this policy in 2017.

Studies of contact between the Maltese and Sub-Saharan African migrants in an educational setting found that intergroup contact did not change perceptions vis-à-vis the extent to which migrants should be integrated into the community (Caruana Scicluna 2012). In 2012, a quantitative survey was also conducted by UNHCR on the perceptions Maltese have of migrants (UNHCRc 2012); Clark and Bradford, on the other hand, focused on the perceptions migrants have of the Maltese (Bradford & Clark 2014). The studies highlighted that although the field of contact theory is developing, “Malta lacks research in this area” (Caruana Scicluna 2012). Consequently, this study aims to contribute to fill in such a research gap.

Moreover, studies have so far not seemed to focus on migration within the localities, something that this study seeks to accomplish. The importance of such a study was in fact highlighted by Stephan (2012, 44) who called for research on both immigrants’ and the resident community’s attitudes and needs in order to better streamline and target interventions aimed at improving intergroup relations (Stephan 2012). The chosen localities for this study, both with an open center but that are largely dissimilar are Balzan and Marsa.

**Methodology**

This study asks *what are the nature and dynamics of the interaction between the Maltese and the Sub-Saharan migrants in the two localities?* More specifically, *how is the form of social contact interconnected with perceptions of threat and assessment of the detention/migration policies and institutions?*

**Form of the study**

At the time of the interviews, Sub-Saharan African migrants constituted the largest group of migrants that arrive in Malta (UNHCRb 2014). As a consequence, this group of migrants was selected for the case study, in order to get a better understanding of the contact between the Maltese and the largest migrant group
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(despite the differences in the countries of origins). The same group was also used by Clark and Bradford’s study since as they pointed out quoting the Commissioner for Human Rights, the majority of migrants at the time were migrants aged 20 to 40 stemming from sub-Saharan Africa (Commissioner 2011).

The study was conducted in the form of a comparative case study. The authors decided to focus on two out of nine different open centers. Following a Debate on migration in Malta organized by the European Parliament Information Office in October 2013 that featured representatives of the Marsa and Balzan local councils due to the open centers present in these two localities, as well as two articles comparing the two localities published in the Times of Malta (Martin 2013; Piscopo 2013), the researchers decided to follow-up on these materials and to focus on these open centers for the purpose of this study.

The village of Balzan is located in central Malta and is flanked by Birkirkara, Attard and Lija (Hal Balzan Local Council 2013). According to the last Malta Census (2014), Balzan covers an area of 0.60 km² and has a population of 4,101 (National Statistics Office Malta 2011). The Balzan Open Center (BOC) knows its start to December 1992, when a Sudanese migrant family came knocking on the door of the Emigrants’ Commission, and the Good Shepherd Sisters eventually started opening their doors to migrants.

According to the latest Census (2014), the locality of Marsa covers an area of 2.76 km² and has a population of 4,788 (National Statistics Office Malta 2011). The Marsa Open Center (MOC) was opened in 2005, in a former trade school on the outskirts of Albert Town, an area already notorious for prostitution. At the time of data collection, the Foundation for Shelter and Support to Migrants (FSM) was “a service-provider” to government for the MOC, while the center was funded and managed by the Ministry for Home Affairs (MHA) through the Agency for Welfare of Asylum Seekers (AWAS)” (Cassar 2013). The MOC has been transferred to the control of AWAS as from October 2015 (AIDA, 2017). Consequently, the Maltese residents living in Balzan had a longer time to adapt to migrants living among them (although their nationalities were not always Sub-Saharan but Iraqi due to the Gulf War amongst others).

The BOC is situated within Balzan close to the village center and the Parish Church, whereas the MOC is more towards the outskirts of Marsa and further away from the Holy Trinity parish (the closest parish of the two in Marsa). Consequently, the BOC is seen to be in the Maltese community, whereas MOC is partly isolated
and partly within the community. Yet the migrants in the BOC are still at a distance from the Maltese, because once they enter the building, there is a long corridor leading to where their actual residential area is located. Moreover, some of the residents of BOC do not go out of the center. On the other hand, not many Maltese are seen to pass by the MOC.

The BOC is home to families, single females and single mothers, as well as single males, with vulnerable individuals given a priority in the selection of residents; while in MOC the population is only male. The population in BOC is also smaller than in the MOC, so the large numbers mentioned earlier do not seem to be a big issue there. The total capacity in the BOC is 172 beds, while the MOC has a total capacity of around 500 beds, although it was not fully occupied at the time of the study. BOC migrants are also seen to have more stability (fixed jobs), whereas some of those from MOC were looking for jobs. Some Maltese people, who require jobs to be done, go specifically to the BOC to ask for workers there. A number of migrants would sit next to the roundabout of Marsa waiting for someone to give them a job.

**Method**

The method of data collection was semi-structured interviews that were based on 10 questions approved by HSRB. However, as the goal of the interviews was to engage in an open discussion with the migrants, the researchers left the interviews somewhat open regarding what to talk about. Thus, the structure of the interview was similar for each participant with the same 10 questions asked in the preset order. At the same time, the participants were asked additional follow-up questions depending on their specific answers to deeper understand the opinions and positions of each participant. Each interview lasted between a quarter of an hour and ninety minutes. Most interviewees were audio recorded and notes were also taken by the researcher. The time-frame for all the interviews was from April to July 2014.

**Sample**

The recruitment process was based on the snowballing method with “gatekeepers” represented by members of Local Councils and the staff at the Foundation for Shelter and Support to Migrants (FSM). A snowballing sampling method was used to select both a group of Maltese and a group of migrants from both Marsa and Balzan. In Balzan, the sample was created via the "gatekeepers" -
members of the Balzan Local Council; in Marsa, via "gatekeepers" such as the Marsa Local council and a Parish priest. In total, 38 individuals were interviewed: 10 people each from amongst the migrants in Marsa and Balzan and 10 Maltese from Balzan, and 8 Maltese from Marsa. The permissions to conduct interviews were given by FSM for the Marsa Open Center and Fr. Alfred Vella from the Emigrants’ Commission for the Balzan Open Center.

**Interview process**

Interviews were held according to the preference of the interviewee in order to allow the individual to feel the most comfortable. Interviews with migrants from the Marsa Open Center and the Balzan Open Center were held at the respective centers. Interviews with the Maltese took place in the homes of interviewees, in public places or in shops/offices.

Interviews were conducted with both Maltese and migrants for three main reasons. Firstly, the authors believe that a more holistic view of the situation can be acquired by asking both parties involved. Secondly, so far, studies on migration in Malta have often focused on one side of the coin, be it the Maltese people’s perspectives, by Prof. Vassallo’s survey on illegal immigrants, refugees and racism in Malta commissioned by Allied Newspapers Ltd. (Vassallo, 2002), UNHCR Malta (UNHCRc, 2012), Durick (2012) or the University of Malta Students’ Council (KSU) survey among University students (Martin, 2014), or the migrants’ perspectives, namely the one by Bradford and Clark (2014), and the one by JRS Malta, aditus foundation, and Integra Foundation (2016), “time constraints,” (Durick, 2012) being one of the reasons given. Yet it is worth mentioning that in their 2013 study, aditus and UNHCR focused both on the perspective of refugees and those of personnel within the public services in Malta. Thirdly, as the People for Change Foundation noted, “very few efforts were made to describe migration from the migrants’ perspective,” (The People for Change Foundation, 2010). Pettigrew also argues that perceptions of minorities are generally not much looked into (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2008).

Following the guide to Migration research in Malta, created by the People for Change Foundation, interviews were conducted both in Maltese and in English (the “lingua fraca” in the migration sector) (Cassar, 2013). Knowledge of the Maltese language and the local culture was seen as an asset of one of the authors, since it would allow the researcher to get a better grasp of the local context. This would especially be advantageous when it comes to interviews, since Maltese
participants would be able to speak in their mother tongue, in which they may potentially feel more comfortable. In contrast, the fact that migrants could not for the most part speak their native language during the interviews since, no interpreter was available, the migrants may not have been likewise at ease and articulate. Moreover this limited the choice in migrants since only those who could speak English or Maltese were interviewed; these were also more likely to integrate in Malta through knowledge of its official languages.

Data analysis
A thematic analysis was used to process quantitative data (Flick 2014). On the first stage, the information was documented in the columns of the respective question that was color-coded according to one of the three main themes: contact, threat, or perception of policies. On the second stage, upon reading the data, themes that kept on recurring, were singled out and subthemes were established during further analysis.

The objectivity of research was ensured by contact comparison of coding process between two researchers, debriefing with the members of Local Councils and the staff at the Foundation for Shelter and Support to Migrants.

Results

Balzan
Contact between Maltese and immigrants

Contact in Balzan was generally perceived to be positive, especially when it involved instances of helping one another. The most contact the Maltese have with migrants was in Balzan itself. In fact, all of the respondents mentioned this form of contact, which takes place mainly in the streets, in a bar, or in a shop. Migrants mostly had contact with Maltese people outside of Balzan. Half of the migrants met the Maltese by coincidence and half met Maltese at work, and two of whom made friends with colleagues and meet them outside of work settings.

The Maltese respondents saw contact with migrants as positive for a number of factors that are split into four groups. Speaking about behavior, respondents mentioned helping each other, kind gestures, and cooperation. Among personal characteristics, respondents mentioned decent education, good manners, and honesty. The theme of assimilation was connected with acceptance of Maltese traditions, learning language, and sharing of similar life experiences.
Interpersonal experiences included friendship and cooperation at workplace.

The factors that contributed to the negative contact between Maltese and migrants in Balzan can be split into two groups: cultural factors that included language problems (since not all of the migrants are able to speak/understand English or Maltese), and behavioral factors. Maltese respondents at times discussed the negative behavior of immigrants, citing harassing women, behaving “as though they own the place,” misbehaving at bars, and fighting. The majority of migrants stated that the contact is mostly good, yet they mentioned several instances of negative contact. Many migrants cited xenophobia, racism and bias of the Maltese.

*Perceptions of Threat*

The perceptions of threat among Maltese respondents were connected with several factors: economic threats, demographic pressure, behavior of immigrants and knowledge of language. Among migrant respondents, the only source of threat was connected with the knowledge of language.

The half of the Maltese respondents expressed feeling of economic threat. They stressed both the fact that migrants need to have equal social contributions and that migrants were taking the jobs from the Maltese. As one respondent stated, “it is unfair that the Maltese pay the taxes and social contributions, and migrants use the services. Why they are still given benefits if they work?”

Some of the Maltese respondents referred to a threat connected to demographic pressure. Migrants were seen as a threat to Malta being a small country, because Malta does not have the capacity to accommodate all of the migrants since they come in large numbers. A respondent mentioned that some Maltese were afraid that Malta could become a Muslim country. Third, Maltese respondents expressed sources of threat connected with the behavior of immigrants. As one respondent mentioned, “their level of education is not like that of the Maltese; they were not taught to wait in the queue or to say ‘thank you’ like the Maltese.”

Fourth, both Maltese and migrants felt threatened through not knowing each others’ language. Several Maltese reported fear of not understanding the language of migrants, stressing “you feel a bit awkward when migrants speak their own language, and you do not know what their saying.”
Assessment of Policies and Institutions

Majority the Maltese respondents reported that they lacked knowledge on migration policies in Malta. They mentioned that they are not very interested in migration policy, unless it affects them. Assessing policies, Maltese respondents spoke about the link between politics and racism, stressing how some politicians used racism to get power.

Assessing the Balzan Open Center, Maltese respondents positively evaluated control and security of the BOC, namely through surveillance cameras, stressing that BOC helped integration. For example, one respondent highlighted that with the exception of a few, migrants “integrated well,” “they pay their bills, they don’t fight, they don’t cause disturbance.”

Most of the migrants assessed BOC positively because it was clean and staff was very helpful and nice. Some respondents told that they feel positively accepted by the Maltese community. One respondent noted that “if you speak to Maltese and they ask whether from Balzan, they respect you as from there.” They also mentioned the positive acceptance of migrants in Balzan: “people in Balzan have open faces as they respect Sr. Agnes.” The latter is the Good Shepherd’s nun who manages the home.

Marsa
Perception of Contact

All of the Maltese respondents reported meeting migrants in Marsa; they met migrants in the street, in shops in Marsa, in a bar and at their children’s school. All respondents told that no common projects between the Maltese and migrants take place in Marsa because they never had the occasion to and the people never really showed the wish to have them.

When it came to assessing their contact with migrants, majority of Maltese rated the contact as mostly good or positive. The reasons for assessing a contact as positive were divided into three groups: behavior, assimilation, and interpersonal relations. However, the examples were very scarce.

Factors contributing to the perception of contact as negative can be split into three groups: cultural factors, behaviors, and problems of perceptions. Speaking about cultural differences, half of Maltese respondents noted that a number of migrants do not know how to speak English or Italian, which was keeping them at a distance from the Maltese (“language acts as an obstacle”). Among important cultural
characteristics, the respondents mentioned importance of cleanliness and told that migrants “trash the community.” Discussing behavior, respondents mentioned a low level of education and absence of manners and five respondents mentioned aggressive behavior and disrespect of women among migrants. Finally, the majority of respondents stressed differences in perceptions. As one respondent mentioned, “they are very limited in what they could offer to the Maltese.”

Migrant respondents described contact with the Maltese as negative. They told that language is a big problem for them because “Maltese generally speak Maltese. They concentrate on speaking Maltese rather than English so it is hard to understand them because of the language difference.” The respondents also mentioned bias and discrimination by Maltese, discussing that some people did not like to sit close to them on the bus, or ignore them.

*Perceptions of Threat*

The first group of threats stressed by Maltese respondents was connected with interpersonal and intergroup perception. First, Maltese respondents expressed discomfort with different attitudes and cultures. As one respondent stressed, “We feel uncomfortable ... with the attitude of the illegal immigrants that we have in the open center.” Second, the respondents told that they feel threatened to be in the same community with migrants because of their aggressive behavior. Third, the respondents expressed feeling of threat to their country. As one respondent mentioned, “First of all they are going to take one’s country. That is the biggest threat that one could ever have! They invaded us, you know...” Fourth, some respondents feared that Maltese people would mix with other races.

The second group of threats mentioned by Maltese respondents was economic threat. First, the respondents described fears connected to jobs and social benefits. They stressed that some migrants depend on social benefits and do not work. Second, some respondents were afraid that migrants were better off than Maltese, mentioning that they have a lot of money, expensive phones, buy expensive meat, “buy the best clothes, and do not want second-hand clothes.”

Majority of migrant respondents did not consider Maltese people to be a threat. However, some migrant respondents told that they feel threatened because they were not accepted in the Maltese society and their skills were not recognized. As one respondent noted, “I don’t feel comfortable, because society does not recognize me.”
Perceptions of policies

The majority of Maltese respondents told that they were informed on migration policies, some of them spoke to the security officers or listened to debates on T.V. They believed that migrants should be given what they need and sent back: “The EU should take them to its own country!” The majority of Maltese considered detention to be better than a jail sentence, since migrants entered “somebody’s territory illegally.” They also believed that detention centers served as a deterrent, “so that the migrants pass on the message to others not to go Malta.” Some respondents suggested that migrants should be offered educational opportunities of some sort, while remaining under Malta’s control/custody.

Assessing the open center in Marsa, the majority of Maltese respondents stated that if it is not good for the Maltese, neither is it good for the immigrants. They stressed that the MOC did not have good enough conditions to house people, lacked hygiene, sleeping space, and privacy. All of them mentioned that the government should not keep migrants all in the same place but rather split them among different localities. They did not see it as right for Marsa residents to have a concentration of people in their locality whom they did not know, who had a different culture and particular habits, and to be expected to adapt to it. However, some Maltese respondents saw the MOC as giving migrants an opportunity to stay somewhere until they find a home and believed that the MOC is good for the migrants who do not work, since they do not need to pay for food, water or electricity.

As for the migrants, half of them considered themselves to be uninformed about migration policies, and another half noted that they have little knowledge from their own experience. Several respondents found it positive that the Prime Minister was calling upon fellow EU member states to take some of the migrants since Malta is a small country, and to resettle them in other European countries. All migrant respondents had a positive image of the open center.

Discussion

In sum, the situation of intergroup contact in Balzan and Marsa were seen to differ in a number of ways. Firstly, the BOC was opened a decade earlier than the one is Marsa, giving the Balzan community more of an opportunity to adapt to the situation and trouble-shoot when problems arose. Secondly, while the BOC was
more physically integrated into the community, the MOC was still forming a part of Marsa but was more isolated. Thirdly, the numbers of migrants in the two localities varied, in that a larger numbers of migrants live in the MOC. Additionally, while the MOC was all-male that may be perceived as more threatening, particularly when the migrants moved in groups, the BOC included single males as well as single mothers, single women and families, the latter being seen as “less disruptive.” Moreover, while the BOC residents seem to have entered a daily routine and some of them have a fixed job, many migrants in Marsa were seen looking for jobs, for instance next to the roundabout area, thereby increasing their visibility. As a consequence, since less activity seemed to take place in Balzan in the morning, the residents’ lives’ may potentially be less influenced by the migrants, than was the case in Marsa.

**Differences in contact**

The research showed that the intergroup contact experience differed in Balzan and in Marsa. Contact in Balzan was generally perceived to be more positive especially when it involved instances of helping one another or participating in common events. The examples of negative contact were usually connected with behavior of some immigrants such as harassment of women, misbehaving at bar, and fighting. Similarly, the majority of migrant respondents described the contact as mostly good, yet they mentioned several instances of negative contact because of xenophobia, racism and bias of the Maltese.

In Marsa on the other hand, respondents described contact as occasional and superficial and told that no common projects between the Maltese and migrants take place. Migrants stressed that work was the only place where they meet people and emphasized negative attitudes to them among Maltese. This situation is echoed by Bradford and Clark’s study (2014, 19). NCPE’s study also confirmed that sub-Saharan African migrants are the group most likely to face housing discrimination. The phrase “Just go back to your country!” has been the case for two notorious instances. The first in 2015 when a Hungarian dark-skinned man was attempting to organize a queue waiting for the bus card, when he was told to go back to his own country, was slapped and spat at (Galea 2017). The second was a migrant woman of African origin was also allegedly told the same phrase when her son took a toy off a Maltese woman’s son (TVM 2016).
In Marsa, respondents seemed to show a certain resistance to migrants in general. Although they described contact with individual migrants with whom they had the opportunity to speak to, as generally good and pleasant, they stressed that they are trying to avoid them as much as possible rather than to establish contact. Numerous studies have found that avoidance of intergroup interaction is the most common reaction to anxiety experienced when coming into contact with outgroup members (Stephan & Stephan 1998). Additionally in Marsa, where there is a larger number of migrants, the Maltese emphasized negative impact of co-existence on their lives.

Thus, similar to Pettigrew’s findings, our study showed that friendship and cooperation were the strong factors that reduce prejudice. The study revealed that cooperation affected the level of generalization in perception of the outgroup. In Balzan, the Maltese respondents did not say that all migrants have a habit of becoming drunk, and the migrants did not say that all the Maltese discriminate against them. However, more generalizations were found in Marsa, where Maltese usually used phrases like “all of them” and migrants were describing the Maltese in generalized terms. Bradford and Clark (2014, 21) also quoted a migrant saying “You cannot make friends with people if you do not see them.” Consequently, lack of contact between the Maltese and Sub-Saharan African migrants did not augur for the occurrence of positive relations between the two. More time spent with outgroup members led to an increased ability to speak about their individual characteristics and behaviors. Triandis & Vassilou (1972) also mention how in coming into contact with outgroup members’ one’s view about them become more complex and articulate.

Perception of threat

The respondents from Balzan considered themselves to feel less threat from the migrants there than if they had to go to Marsa. Describing the feeling of threat, Maltese in Balzan concentrated on economic threats, stressing both the fact that migrants need to have equal social contributions and that migrants are taking the jobs from the Maltese. In Marsa, majority of described threats were connected with discomfort with different attitudes and cultures as well as migrants’ aggressive behavior. While demographic pressure as a threat was mentioned in both localities, respondents in Marsa put more emphasis on the danger to the country’s culture and on the fear that Maltese people would mix with other races. On his part,
Williams argues that larger numbers of an outgroup and their fast influx into a region, may further swell their visibility; thereby increasing the perception of threat as well (Williams 1979). In fact, Stephan & Stephan (1985, 159) found that ingroup members may fear that the outgroup members “will take advantage of, exploit or dominate them.” Stephan and Stephan (1985) also found that language problems contributed to issues between immigrants and the resident community in their study on intergroup anxiety. Interviewees in our study also referred to this so-called ‘language-problem.’

The current study supported and expanded these findings. First, the study showed that the form of contact defined the specific threat perceived by the community members: the more contact and shared workplace increased the perception of economic threats as a part of competition, while occasional contact created the strong feeling of demographic threat and pressure. Second, the number of the outgroup members concentrated in particular locality had a strong connection with the perception of threat. The large number of migrants that live in the MOC and spend time in the center of Marsa, particularly in the evening, was seen as a threat by the Maltese respondents. In contrast, the number of the migrant resident in BOC was smaller that reduced the feeling of demographic threat. Third, the high concentration of migrants in particular localities could increase their in-group support, feeling of self-efficacy and self-esteem that could result in the feeling of confidence relative to the outgroup. This feeling of confidence could contribute to the increased perception of threat among local population. Thus, Maltese from Marsa mentioned that they felt in a minority in their own locality due to an “over-confidence” attitude amongst the migrants, who gave an impression that they owned the place.

Thus, in contrast to studies that describe intergroup contact as a mediator between immigrant group size and threat perceptions (Stein, Post, and Rindin 2000 & McLaren 2003), this study emphasizes that perception of threat arrives from different patterns of interaction between the number of immigrants and type of contacts. While in Balzan interpersonal contact and shared workplace has contributed to the perception of economic threats among some locals, the small number of immigrants mitigated these fears. In Marsa, occasional contact with the larger number of immigrants contributed to the stronger feeling of demographic threat.
Perception of policies

While Maltese respondents in both Balzan and in Marsa reported a general lack of knowledge on detention and migration policies, Maltese respondents in Marsa believed that they had more knowledge about policies and in fact were more critical about their implementation. The respondents from Marsa were generally against bringing migrants to Malta, stressing that that Malta’s policy has to help migrants in their own countries and to prevent them from coming to Malta. They also believed that migrants should be provided with help and sent back to their countries. Nonetheless, the existence of several misconceptions surrounding migration in Malta, has brought into question the extent to which the knowledge was factual or influenced by the perceptions of threat.

Thus, similarly to the research on the impact of perception of threat on the support of assimilation and multiculturalism (Callen, Meuleman and Valentova 2015), this study shows that increased perception of threat contributes to stronger support of particular policies. The absence of friendship and cooperation and sporadic contact leads to the perception of increased threats and thus to the amplified interest in immigration policies. Maltese respondents in Marsa were more informed about policies and had stronger opinions about their failure. Thus, they felt more need to be empowered in addressing the problems in their community caused by the open center for immigrants.

In addition, this study advances understanding of the impact of perception of threat on assessment of policies by analyzing how different types of threat affect support for particular policies. In Balzan, with the low level of perception of economic threat, Maltese assess the open center positively and support the idea of integration of immigrants into local communities. They however, stressed that migrant should pay their bills and equally contribute to community. In Marsa, with the high level of demographic threat, Maltese assess the open center negatively, demanding its demolition or decreasing in size. This perception of demographic threat had led them to supporting exclusive rather than inclusive policies and actions.

Conclusion

The study validates some research on intergroup contact and perception of threat as well as contributes to more nuanced understandings of interaction
between contact and threat and their impact on the assessment of immigration policies. The study confirms that more interpersonal interaction and cooperation leads to positive contact, while occasional and superficial interaction leads negative view on the contact. The study emphasizes that the latter also results in the higher level of generalization, as well as negative attitudes and discriminative behaviors toward migrants.

The study also shows the impact of the form of contact and number of immigrants on the perception of threat. The type of perceived threat depends on the form of contact with shared workplace leading to the perception of economic threats and occasional contact leading to the feeling of demographic threat. The number of the outgroup members impacts the perception of threat in two ways. First, higher concentration of migrants is seen by the local people as a direct threat to culture and security. Second, higher concentrations of migrants contribute to their feeling of confidence through in-group support, feeling of self-efficacy and self-esteem that in turn, is perceived as a threat by the local people.

However, the study emphasizes that the analysis of the form of contact and number of immigrants alone could not fully explain the differences in the perception of threat. Rather, the type of threat arrives from the interaction of these two factors. The study reveals two patterns: (1) smaller number of migrants with positive interpersonal contact resulting in lower level of perception of economic threat and (2) higher number of migrant with occasional contact resulting in higher level of perception of demographic threat. More studies are needed to analyze different patterns of the interaction between number of migrants and form of contact.

This study confirms previous findings that increased perception of threat contributes to stronger support of particular policies. It also advances understanding of the connections between perception of contact, threat, and assessment of policies. Thus, it shows that the increased perception of threats leads to the amplified interest in immigration policies. People who feel higher threat from migrants believe to have more knowledge and have stronger opinions about these policies. The study also reveals that different types of threats affect support for particular policies. The perception of economic threat is connected to the general support of integration (with the requirement of the equal contribution to economy and society), while perceptions of demographic threat leads to the support of exclusive policies and actions that limits immigration. Further research is
needed to explore the impact of the form of contact and perception of threat on the support of specific immigration policies.

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Cultural Interaction and Integration in the Context of Immigration: The Case Study of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese in Adelaide

Paola TINÉ

Abstract. One of the most striking elements, when looking at integration as a social problem, is the popular construction of the identity of the refugee in the hosting country, a rhetoric process often made of stereotypes supporting xenophobia largely spread by local media. In this paper, I will argue that a more positive construction of the social and cultural identity of refugees is a crucial element for meaningful integration policies. I will use a case study from my personal research conducted last year in the suburb of Salisbury in the city of Adelaide (in South Australia) with Professor John Gray, among the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, showing, in this way, a positive example of the Australian reception model. Here I will describe, from an anthropological perspective, why this arrangement has proven to be so effective.

Keywords: cultural interaction, integration, immigration, Australia

Introduction

We are in what has been defined the “age of migration” (Castles, Haas & Miller 1993, p.5), an historical phase, the consequences of which “raise critical questions pertaining to immigrant identities and multiculturalism” (Gibson & Rojas 2006, p. 69). More specifically, integration “is an interactive process between immigrants and the host society” (Bosswick & Heckman 2006, p. 11), and, as such, it needs to be studied as a social phenomenon.

One of the most striking elements, when looking at integration as a social

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1 This article is adapted from a paper presented at the International Conference: “The Challenge of Migration in Europe and the US: Comparing Policies and Models of Reception”. Agrigento, 9-10-11 June 2017.

2 The research that Paola Tinè and Professor John Gray of the University of Adelaide conducted in Salisbury focused on the cultural identity of the Bhutanese community and on their activities with a focus on the role of language, ritual and food for the affirmation of a specific socio-cultural belonging (Tinè & Gray 2017).
problem, is the popular construction of the identity of the refugee in the hosting country, a rhetoric process often made of stereotypes supporting xenophobia largely spread by local media. In this paper, I will argue that a more positive construction of the social and cultural identity of refugees is a crucial element for meaningful integration policies. I will use a case study from my personal research conducted last year in the suburb of Salisbury in the city of Adelaide (in South Australia) with Professor John Gray, among the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees, showing, in this way, a positive example of the Australian reception model. Here I will describe, from an anthropological perspective, why this arrangement has proven to be so effective.

A brief overview on the immigration policies in Australia

The Humanitarian and Refugee Programme, together with the Migration Programme, represent the main pillars of the immigration regulation system in Australia. In terms of numbers, the Migration Programme constitutes the largest component of the system. Under this programme, in the 2013-2014 period, the Australian state conferred 190,000 visas, of which roughly two thirds were skilled migrants and the remaining third were granted to incoming family members (OECD 2015, pp. 184-5). Furthermore, each year the government designates a certain number of visas that can be granted under the Humanitarian Programme. In the period 2013-2014, Australia allotted 13,768 of these visas with 6,501 for refugee resettlement (Karlsen 2016, p.8). It should be noted that refugee resettlement is only 3.4% of the total migration. Since the establishment of the Department of Immigration in 1945, more than 7.5 million people have migrated to Australia. Among these people, over 800,000 arrived under the Humanitarian Programme as refugees (AGDIBP n.d.).

3 The research that Paola Tinè and Professor John Gray of the University of Adelaide conducted in Salisbury focused on the cultural identity of the Bhutanese community and on their activities with a focus on the role of language, ritual and food for the affirmation of a specific socio-cultural belonging (Tinè & Gray 2017).
4 Australia adheres to the 1951 Refugee Convention, which is the key international legal document defining who is a refugee, their rights and the legal obligations of the signatory countries.
5 Australia has four offshore refugee category visas: Refugee (visa subclass 200); In-Country Special Humanitarian (visa subclass 201); Emergency Rescue (visa subclass 203) and Woman at Risk (visa subclass 204).
It is interesting to note that in 2016, 28.5% of Australia's population was born overseas (ABS 2017) reinforcing the fact that Australia is a multicultural country.

Importantly for our discussion, Australia is one of the 37 countries that work closely with the United Nations Refugee Council (UNHCR), offering resettlement to refugees from refugee camps. Australia is consistently ranked in the top three countries offering resettlement alongside the USA and Canada (UNHCR, 2016, p.26). However, despite Australia being so open to collaboration with the UNHCR in relation to structured programmes of refugee resettlement, its way of dealing with people arriving ‘illegally’ via the sea, the so-called ‘boat people’ is strongly criticised by international public opinion for the “inhumane detention regime in which detainees, including young children, have been held for two to seven years” (Carr 2016, p. 239). The controversial birth of off-shore detention camps on the islands of Nauru and Papua New Guinea in 2001 was instigated by the then Prime Minister John Howard during his election campaign to combat the perceived threat of ‘boat people’ (Smit 2009, pp. 208-9). This treatment of asylum seekers is contrary to Article 31 of the Refugee Convention, of which Australia is a signatory, which states that refugees should not be penalised for entering a country illegally if they are seeking asylum (UNGA 1951).

**Integration practices and policies in Australia**

According to Article 34 of the 1951 Refugee Convention,

> The Contracting States shall as far as possible facilitate the assimilation and naturalization of refugees. They shall in particular make every effort to expedite naturalization proceedings and to reduce as far as possible the charges and costs of such proceedings (UNGA 1951).

In terms of respecting the cultural and social identity of refugees, however, states are largely left to pursue their own interests and policies. Some countries, such as Australia, take a multicultural approach allowing for cultural groups to remain and interact within the larger social system.

The Migrant Integration Policy Index provides a rough overview of how different countries are handling integration through policy. It takes the following eight policy areas into account: labour market mobility, education of children, political participation, family reunion, access to nationality, health, permanent
residence and anti-discrimination. Overall, Australia ranks highly at number 8 with a score of 66 out of a possible 100 in 2014 (MIPEX 2015, p. 3). European Union countries average a score of 60 in this analysis.

Social integration is a factor that is often overlooked or assumed to take care of itself in state led approaches to resettlement and integration, but in terms of wellbeing after resettlement, it is a vital factor. This issue becomes particularly important after migrants have satisfied their basic needs, such as hunger, thirst and safety (Kim, Ehrich & Ficorilli 2012). To help with social integration, in Australia there are many activities and programs that the government offers to newly resettled people. Upon arrival, a Humanitarian Settlement Services (HSS) provider delivers basic services on behalf of the Australian government with the goal of helping people belonging to refugee and humanitarian backgrounds to start their new lives. This includes assistance with finding long-term accommodation and instructions on how to access services, such as health care, schools, welfare, and language services. This assistance generally lasts between six months and a year, but it will continue until the newly arrived people have achieved competency in accessing general services, such as renting property, using the transport system, understanding Australian law, finding employment and accessing education. In addition, other government-funded services include: translating and interpreting services that are provided 24 hours a day, seven days a week and trauma counselling.

One important point that should be made here is that the assistance provided by the Australian government can be seen as a type of social investment. Apart from minimising interruptions to other citizens and services, the refugees themselves make important economic, civil and social contributions to Australian society after resettlement (AGDIC 2011, p. 55). In particular, people from refugee backgrounds have proven to have entrepreneurial qualities, tending to engage in small and medium business enterprises. Furthermore, many humanitarian entrants maintain economic links with their country of origin, in this way providing monetary development to their home country, which may reduce some of the causes of displacement, but also may have the effect of increasing trade and strengthening the Australian economy (AGDIC 2011, pp. 40-1). Additionally, through volunteer work, participation in community projects and engagement with local institutions, refugees have become fundamental and positive actors in a vibrant multicultural society.
The story of exile, migration and resettlement of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees

The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese or Lhotshampa⁶, are descendants of Nepalese migrants that settled in Southern Bhutan in the late 1890’s. After a period of pacific coexistence in 1988, they were culturally repressed and forced to assimilate or be forcibly ejected from the country (Hutt 2003).⁷ They were forced to seek refuge in Nepal and in 1992, the UNHCR established camps in Eastern Nepal, built to house more than 100,000 refugees (IOM 2008).

From 2007, with the help of the UNHCR and the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Nepali-speaking Bhutanese people started resettling in eight hosting countries. Since the beginning of this initiative, the UNHCR has relocated over 100,000 refugees, the majority of which have resettled in the United States (Shrestha 2015).⁸

In Adelaide, The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese community of Salisbury is now a compact and socially active community. Overall, the results of our research have shown that their process of integration into Australian society has been successful.

The added value: social identity and cultural diversity (NGO and BAASA)

Australia values the qualities of refugees as survivors and it believes that by assisting the newly arrived to recover from their past, they are more likely to become actors that contribute to Australian society (AGDIC 2011). It is important to note here that Australia is a multicultural country with multicultural policies. This means that there is a focus on integrating new arrivals and even ethnic groups into a society without forced assimilation. For example, the Australian government provides grants for the formation of non-profit ethnic community organisations that have the ability to advocate on behalf of its members, in this way building strong communities.

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⁶ The meaning of Lhotshampa is “Southern”.

⁷ This cultural policy stipulated that only the traditional Bhutanese language (Dzongkha) and the traditional dress (driglam namza) were allowed in Bhutan.

⁸ The countries of resettlement are: the United States of America (84,819), Canada (6,500), Australia (5,554), New Zealand (1002), Denmark (874), Norway (566), the United Kingdom (358) and the Netherlands (327).
The multicultural approach of the Australian government has allowed the Bhutanese community to form the Bhutanese Australian Association of South Australia (BAASA). This organisation is community based and run by elected members of the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese community. It works two-fold, cooperating with and implementing government assisted settlement projects, but also advocating for the Bhutanese community, giving its members a voice amongst the larger Australian community. Furthermore, this organisation provides jobs for the chosen representatives, thus helping with one of the most difficult aspects of integration. The government is supplying the spaces for several cultural activities organised by BAASA. The following are some of the main activities that they organise:

- The Bhutanese Ethnic School: organised to teach Australian Nepali-speaking children how to read and write Nepali language and some other elements of their culture and traditions.
- Nepali-speaking Bhutanese Radio, based in Adelaide.
- The Seniors Social Support Program: born with the specific aim of ‘making people happy’, and explaining basic things, such as how to cross the street, understanding traffic and advice about nutrition.9
- Cultural events to promote Nepali culture, such as ‘Resettlement Day’.
  Sporting activities for young people.

From the perspective of the refugees

The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese show a great appreciation for their newly received citizenship certificates by the Australian Government and many say that they are “proud to be citizens of this great country” and “happy to be graced with a peaceful environment and fully content with their life”.

Nevertheless, cultural identity still constitutes a more complicated issue. During the forced movement from Bhutan to Nepal, their culture was all that they had left to them, and they protected it fiercely, in order not to lose their identity during that period of displacement. Now in their current context, they are aware of the importance of their culture and they work hard to preserve it through the generations. Amongst people that we have interviewed within the community, the
majority have reported having made a conscious effort to preserve their cultural heritage and have expressed a will to pass it on to their children and grandchildren.

One man said that he wanted his children to learn Nepali, so he lied to them saying that he couldn’t speak English and so at home they had to speak Nepali. He said:

“One day my son and I were at the market and I was talking in English with a Filipino friend. Afterwards, on the way back home my son asked me: ‘why did you tell me that you could not speak English?’ I said: ‘it is because I wanted you to learn our language. This is the language of our culture, without it you don’t know where you come from. Even if you learn English, if at home you speak Nepali this makes it easier if one day you want to go to visit Nepal’”.

Another man underlined the importance of learning English to live and integrate in the new context of Australia, when he said:

When I arrived, my wife asked me to go to the shop Woolworths, but I couldn’t buy anything because they didn’t understand me, so I came back with empty hands. I felt frustrated and inadequate so we both went to TAFE to learn English.

A teenager used the metaphor of the traveling up a mountain to explain that cultural adaptation should not affect the cultural belonging: “if you go on the top of a mountain you have to adapt your clothing, but you don’t change yourself”.

Why Social identity and Cultural diversity matters: social identity and cultural diversity among the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese

Many sociologists demonstrate that the social identity of immigrants constitutes a vital factor when studying the processes of cultural interaction (Verkuyten & Martinovic 2012; Mana, Orr & Mana 2009; Pfeiffer et al. 2007; Phinney et al. 2001). Moreover, recent research has added empirical evidence to the assumption that “social exclusion encourages separate identity” (Collier 2013) showing that the level of integration of immigrants is strictly linked to the level of trust offered by the hosting people (Herreros and Criado 2009).

In order to elaborate a theory of integration in the context of immigration, I apply the ‘theory of social integration’ by Peter Blau (1960) within

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9 This information was gained through interviews with the organisers of the seniors group.
a multicultural context. Blau started his discussion from Émile Durkheim’s (2014 [1893]) social theory, that speculates on social change, social integration and collective consciousness. Durkheim argued that the division of labour would not necessarily create social solidarity and that mediation between the individual and the society might be required and this could be provided by the state. Expanding on this theory, Blau underlined the role of acceptance and attraction as the driving factors for integration in a group. By applying this theory in the context of multiculturalism, we can define the boundaries of social identity and cultural diversity within which the dualism of integration/segregation is displayed. This theory of social integration suggests that people in a group accept each other according to a ‘mechanism of exchange’ (Homans 1958), in which each actor has something to give to the other that will improve the potential and capability of the group as a whole. In multicultural contexts, immigrants are the new introduced elements, and as such, they will be accepted if they are portrayed to society as a positive addition, bringing knowledge, experience and culture. This means constructing the social identity of immigrants as worthy individuals.

The concept of trust, elaborated by Herreros and Criado (2009), is useful here to explain the relationship between immigrants and state. By giving refugees the trust and respect that is accorded to every regular citizen, governments can act as the cohesive function that Durkheim proposes in his model, as an entity able to "foster the general interest of society at a level that most citizens can understand and accept" (Grabb 1990, p. 88). It is crucial that the state intervenes to create more inclusive integration policies, as studies have shown "that more inclusive integration policies may reduce the general public’s feelings of threat and, perhaps, anti-immigrant attitudes” (Callens 2015, p. 11). This is the point on which we can say Australia has succeeded.

Australia has policies in place that allows immigrants to construct themselves in their own way while simultaneously feeling wanted and useful for society. The Australian government achieves this by celebrating cultural diversity, sponsoring cultural events that are open to the public and providing mechanisms for helping them to fully integrate into society. In the Australian context, the social identity of the ‘legal’ immigrant is built around the category of trust and respect.  

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10 This is vastly different, however, from the treatment and construction of the ‘boat people’ for which Prime Minister John Howard specifically required that the media not take any photos that humanise them (Smit 2009, p. 211).
Under this anthropological framework, we can conclude that it is not important whether or not people assimilate or keep their culture, however it is important that these people cooperate in the social and economic context, feeling in this way part of the community. This will occur more easily if assimilation is a choice and not enforced. Having an awareness of the laws of the hosting country, being in possession of a national citizenship certificate, but at the same time having the freedom to express their own culture, migrants will usually reciprocate with economic and social engagement and participation.

Concluding Remarks

Research has demonstrated that refugees have a strong impact on Australian society. Their positive actions have occurred and continue to occur within the Australian context largely due to the willingness of arrivals to participate in society. In understanding why this occurs, we have adopted an anthropological approach to deconstruct the mechanisms that are taking place. We have argued that the construction of social identity is vital in this context and this construction can be effectively assisted by the state. One theme that has occurred while interviewing people from the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese community is that individual and cultural practices of the refugees had been respected and encouraged. This is important as it allowed the individuals to interact with society at large, on their own terms and from their own cultural experience.

The Nepali-speaking Bhutanese community were able to form their own NGO, under governmental guidance, in order to advocate for their own ethnic group. In this way, the newly resettled residents were able to interact with the Australian institutions and become a meaningful part of the community. The reciprocal trust between the refugees and government quickly led the Bhutanese community to reconstruct themselves as ‘Australian Nepali-speaking Bhutanese’. As such, there was a willingness to participate in community issues, to join the workforce and to contribute to society, not just for themselves, but also for the wider Australian community. This is the major goal of integration policies and should be considered as a positive example of successful integration across the globe.
Acknowledgements

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RESEARCH ARTICLES

“Being a Muslim” in France: The Case of Turkish Immigrants

Hasan GULER and Emrullah ATASEVEN

Abstract. In this article the “Muslim Question” of France in terms of Turkish immigrants, who are the subjects of a relatively recent migration movement compared to other immigrant groups in France, was examined. The findings that support the study are based on a qualitative research conducted in Paris between 2014 and 2015. In the first chapter of the study, the focal point was a critical interpretation of formation of the “Muslim Question”. Whether this question is a fiction or based on solid facts was another subject tackled in this chapter. In the second chapter, by focusing on the migration process of the Turkish immigrants, the experiences of Turkish immigrants who are struggling to form a hybrid identity by acting within a social structure without ignoring the origin country codes. The basic argument of the article, however, is that the integration policies imposing themselves as the absolute truth should be put aside and at the same time a common culture should be created, also the Muslim origin immigrants should not ignore every criticism as for being “Islamophobia” and they should revise their attitudes in this regard.

Keywords: France, Paris, Immigrant, Turkish, Islam, Muslim, Integration

Introduction

Since 1980s, we have been witnessing two different discourses with a clear contradiction on migration and border issues in the US and the EU countries: On one side globalization based on change of things, on the other side, security discourse. While the first talks about the weakening of the borders, the other is based on renewing the security functions and strengthening the borders to prevent the passing of "unwanted" elements. Nowadays we can talk about an increase in favor of the latter (Ceyhan, 1997:236). Despite the atmosphere surrounded by the security discourse, some scholars give voice to alternative approaches instead of this separation. The first results of the research that has been carried out since 2013 by the political scientist François Gemeine, who has been a lecturer at the universities of Paris and Liege, give
voice to an alternative opinion against those who emphasize "border". According to Gemenne (2015), the mobilization of immigrants in the labor market does not have a structure that will scare local (French) players. Those who migrate are employed either in low-qualified fields (construction, restaurant etc.) or high-qualified fields (football player, engineer etc.) and there is in fact difficulty of finding people to work in these sectors in France. In addition, there is a need for a dynamic population due to the concentration of economic activity in services sector and entrepreneurship of migrants increase new job fields. We are witnessing that the presence of borders does not annihilate migration. It seems as a more rational policy to transfer the astronomical sums of money spent on border security in Europe to other fields, for example the finance of integration programs. Though a "borderless" Europe looks like a utopia in terms of realpolitick, the opinions suggested by Gemenne can be read as the anti-thesis of security understanding in imagining another Europe.

Considering the current immigration debates in Europe, in an atmosphere where security is the principal discourse, it is shaped around two phenomena that are in a relationship with each other. The first is the "refugees" reflected by the visual media in a dehumanized way accompanied by images of mass immigration especially during summer months; the second is the "Muslim immigrants" who have been on the agenda for quite a while after the Paris attacks. Taking into account the geography where the majority of refugees came from and their religious affiliation, we have been witnessing that both phenomena are sometimes discussed by the public with a similar rhetoric. The decisiveness of the language used when defining the issue also determines the nature of the policies created on migration. Approaches produced towards this case which are formulated with the titles "refugee question" and "Muslim question" usually have acute qualities. As of its current image, Europe, which is struggling to produce solutions from an atmosphere dominated by fears, is gliding towards security policies. While saying this, we need to keep in mind that leaning against the perception of a homogeneous Europe will prevent us from seeing the diversity within Europe.

Within the limits of this article, we will be trying to examine the reflections of "Muslim question" today over immigrants from Turkey who are the actors of a migration movement to France that has taken place recently and has no colonial history. We used a descriptive and immigration-oriented approach, based largely on the situation of immigrants from Turkey in the host country, rather than comparison in this article based on the results of a qualitative study. The work on which the article is
based on was carried out between 2014 and 2015 in the Evry region where immigrants from Turkey live intensively within the borders of Paris. By living in the same place for 10 months in the same neighborhood as immigrants, some details that are hard to obtain, such as unemployment, children's education, relationships with neighbors, living in community, business organizations, worship activities, etc., have been found. Apart from ethnographic observation, the other basic research technique of our study was semi-structured in-depth interviews. With the help of a questionnaire consisting of about 60 questions, we tried to get information about immigrants' immigration process, working life, daily life activities, political participation, suburb life and identity issues.

"The Muslim Question" of France

The "Muslim question", caused by settled Muslim immigrants born in Europe or legalized as a result of immigration waves is loaded with today's traces as well as traces from the past.1 Settled Muslims are described as "internal affairs" of today, immigration worries Europe, especially France because of its Muslim population. For a long time immigrants have been involved in the economic life of France as "migrant workers" and "docile" actors. Post-1980 equality demands and anti-racism mobilizations (the anti-racist march “Marche pour l'égalité et contre le racisme” that started in Marseilles in 1983 and ended in Paris), where the identity of the new generations was at the center, and the increase of immigrants' visibility in the public arena have brought about debates. At the same time, as the transformations that took place in the Islamic geography were shown in the visual and written media, these discussions rapidly evolved into the mention of Muslim immigrants with the word "problem". In this period (from the beginning of 1970 to the end of the 1980s), which opened the way for Islam to be constructed in an imaginary way on television that reinforced this image, we come across three events: First, the oil crisis and the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979. After the crisis, immigrants turned into problems that had to be resolved and "foreign" and "French" discrimination began on television. Seeing "Islam" behind immigration and the media's handling with the view that this does not comply with the French society. The second is the death fatwa against Salman Rusdie in 1989, and finally the wishes of three girls to enter the school with hijabs in the same year. After these events, the increasing frequency of Islam's presence in the television and media and its coming to the centre of the French society have sparked debates that are identity-based and centered on Muslim immigrants. The entry of Islam into the dining rooms in France happened due to the frequent showing of the Islamic revolution of Iran in 1978-1979 on television. Amazing long beards and black sheets accompanied the French dinners for many weeks. Audiences encountered both unusual images and new words such as "molla", "veil", "shi", "sunni", "sharia" when politicians and intellectuals started to participate in programs to explain this situation. We see the themes of "Islam in France" and "suburban youth"come to the fore in the 1990s. On the other hand, we can talk about the influence of political events such as the debates on "Islam-West" controversy with the demolition of the Berlin wall and the First

1Today, immigration worries Europe, especially France because of its Muslim population. For a long time immigrants have been involved in the economic life of France as "migrant workers" and "docile" actors. Post-1980 equality demands and anti-racism mobilizations (the anti-racist march “Marche pour l'égalité et contre le racisme” that started in Marseilles in 1983 and ended in Paris), where the identity of the new generations was at the center, and the increase of immigrants' visibility in the public arena have brought about debates. At the same time, as the transformations that took place in the Islamic geography were shown in the visual and written media, these discussions rapidly evolved into the mention of Muslim immigrants with the word "problem". In this period (from the beginning of 1970 to the end of the 1980s), which opened the way for Islam to be constructed in an imaginary way on television that reinforced this image, we come across three events: First, the oil crisis and the Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1979. After the crisis, immigrants turned into problems that had to be resolved and "foreign" and "French" discrimination began on television. Seeing "Islam" behind immigration and the media's handling with the view that this does not comply with the French society. The second is the death fatwa against Salman Rusdie in 1989, and finally the wishes of three girls to enter the school with hijabs in the same year. After these events, the increasing frequency of Islam's presence in the television and media and its coming to the centre of the French society have sparked debates that are identity-based and centered on Muslim immigrants. The entry of Islam into the dining rooms in France happened due to the frequent showing of the Islamic revolution of Iran in 1978-1979 on television. Amazing long beards and black sheets accompanied the French dinners for many weeks. Audiences encountered both unusual images and new words such as "molla", "veil", "shi", "sunni", "sharia" when politicians and intellectuals started to participate in programs to explain this situation. We see the themes of "Islam in France" and "suburban youth"come to the fore in the 1990s. On the other hand, we can talk about the influence of political events such as the debates on "Islam-West" controversy with the demolition of the Berlin wall and the First
Europe in response to the immigration which crystallizes on the refugee issue and describes the outside. The fact that most of the people actively involved in the Paris attacks came from immigrant Muslim families and were European-born brought together a series of questionings. The fact that, the "new" type of jihadists grew up "inside the house" unlike previous experiences made the problem complicated. We can say that the controversy on "Islam" within France is roughly proceeding on two axes. The first axis is the thesis voiced by the culturalist camp that European values and Islam are not possible to reconcile and that Islam's essence is an obstacle to this. The second axis, on the other hand, centers on a critical thought and is shaped by why the republican values (valeurs républicaines) cannot create a melting pot and how the suburbs in which the practice of spatial exclusion is produced turn into alternative identity spaces.

In the political arena, we can think of the rhetoric of the National Front, which we are sure is represented by the first tendency, sometimes to the extent of xenophobia. The second tendency is the views of the ruling socialist party, which

Gulf War and the Second Algerian War (1992-1997). The September 11 attacks on America emerged as the most important event in the formation of the language of the 2000s (Deltombe, 2005).

As an example of xenophobia discourse of the National Front, we can give Marine Le Pen's resembling those, who performed salaats on the streets because mosques did not have sufficient place, to the Nazi invaders in 2010: "Sorry, but some people like talking about the occupation and the second world war. Let's talk about the occupation. There is an occupation here yes, but not by tanks and troops; it is an occupation by people" (Liberation, 20.10.2015). Le Pen is being prosecuted for hate crime because of this speech. At the same time, praying on the streets is banned by a law issued in 2011. The immigration phenomenon, on the other hand, has become one of the favorite themes of nationalism in the political arena. When we look at French nationalism, the heritage it carries has bonapartism, anti-semitism (antisémitisme), fascism, Vichy, petty bourgeois fascism (le poujadisme) and bounlangism. (Boulangisme is an anti-parliamentary movement during the third Republican era, by General Boulanger between 1886-1889. The reasons for the emergence of the movement were the great economic crisis and the feeling of loss to the Germans in the Alsace-Lorraine region problem.) We can say that today's nationalism is fed from these sources. We can describe this new nationalism as "populist nationalism". It began to appear in the political scene considerably due to the start of debates on the issue of immigrants by the French public in the 1980s. Actually, their program is quite simple: to send the immigrants from the country. Three important principles, to be taken in relation to the immigration problem, presented by Bruno Megret (one of the influential figures of the National Cephen in this period) on November 16, 1991 are as follows: The first is stopping all new immigration. The second is organizing repatriations (cancellation of 10-year residence permits, repatriation of unemployed persons, cancellation of bilateral repatriation agreements) and, finally, preventing the secret or illegal entry of immigrants into the country by taking serious security measures. (Gastaut, 2000: 121, 135).
we can consider in light of its historical mission. The right-wing rhetoric of some administrators' in immigration policies after the attacks and the legal changes they wish to impose (such as the termination of the citizenship of dual citizens born in France involved in terrorist incidents) make us think that way. The socialist party is criticized by other leftist structures for its policies sliding towards "right" and for not being able to put into effect a structured and radical program to solve the employment problem of "popular classes" (they are represented today by mostly young people and the immigrant population in the suburbs), police violence in the suburbs and the participation of non-French citizens in local elections. Besides, former Prime Minister Valls' and former minister of economy Macron's views that support neoliberal policies justify criticism. Remi Lefebvre (2015), political science professor, emphasized that the Socialist Party has increasingly turned its view on suburbs into an instrument of electoral tactics in an interview with La Monde newspaper. According to Lefebvre, leftist thinking ignored democracy and the ones related to its symbolic definition when approaching the suburbs by making a hierarchical classification of problems and giving priority to economic and social problems. The fact that Hollande was not able to fulfill his promise that non-French citizens would be able to vote and local Muslim opinion leaders in the suburbs have very little active presence within the party open the social distance between the Socialist Party and the suburbs, even turn this distance into a political and cultural abyss. In the 1960s, all the variations of the left wing embraced migrant workers on the same side of the class war in terms of practicing internationalist principles, which offered the possibility of an alternative integration model against the church and the republic. However, the facts that the "socialist party", representing the mainstream left, started to apply neo-liberal politics after a period which we can call as its "surrender" to its "opponent", it was not able to solve the problem of unemployment and started to defend some rightist policies about immigrants (despite being party in opposition) ambiguated the difference between the right and "mainstream" left.

Abdellali Hajjat and Marwan Mohammed (2013) stated in their Islamophobie that "the elites" also made a great contribution to this issue. According to the authors, the construction of Islam as a problematic structure in the French public has come about through the influence of the French elites. When describing the elite, they classified it as a heterogeneous group rather than a homogeneous one. According to them, elites are high bureaucrats, politicians,
media leaders and scientists, and they are the most prominent actors in the production of the "Muslim question". Despite all the diversity between them and the disagreement between the fractions, the interesting thing is that this is the point where the elites unite (Hajjat and Mohammed, 2013: 103). The authors also point out the existence of many works by sociologists and historians to shed light on the immigrant problem, and do not link the origin of this problem to the electoral victory of the Front National in the early 1980s. The "Population and Immigration Directorate" (Direction de la population et des migrations), established in 1966, the majority of which was constituted by the civil servants returning from the Algerian war, pointed out that the new institutional culture created in order to regulate the flow of migration is the primary place to examine for the immigrant problem.

Nowadays when the debate on Islam in the public continues increasingly, there are also scholars who approach to the issue more calmly. Apart from the dominant paradigm, an alternative approach was expressed by French political scientist and Islamic movement activist Olivier Roy and anthropologist Alain Bertho. The views of the two experts complement each other in terms of understanding the motivation behind the radicalization and those who are involved in the ISIS. According to Roy (2015), culturalist and third-worldist approaches to understand the issue that is covering the media scene are insufficient to grasp the true dimensions of the problem. According to him, the situation of French young people, of Muslim origins or later became Muslims, who became radicalized since the 1990s is not the radicalization of Islam but the Islamization of radicalism. After mentioning that this radicalism should not be interpreted as a sectarianism, Bertho (2015), stated that it is more correct to describe the issue by saying "Islamization

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3 At this point the authors showed similarities in the attitudes of different social groups to immigrant workers occupying a factory in Tolbot-Poissy in 1984. The fact that right-wing trade union member workers who did not participate in the strike protested the strikers and shouted "Arabs to the oven" (les arabes au four), "negros to the sea (Les noirs a la mer!), the minister of the leftist government said "you will see twelve hours of torture", the boss wanted to label the strikers as Islamist fundemantalists, the media spread the footage of praying strikers and the socialist government perceived the issue in terms of religion rather than showing class solidarity were all important in the construction of the Muslim problem. Before closing the parentheses, we can say that one of the most effective instruments of the governments, which are inadequate in solving economic and social problems of today, to attract public attention to other subjects is the "immigrants". This approach, which aims to prevent possible alliances, may work in the short term, but it will lead to the sharpening of cultural camps in the long run and will create huge problems in managing the communities that have been diversified through immigration.
of the radical rebellion" rather than the radicalization of Islam. Another example is the work of Nilüfer Göle (2015). The definition of "ordinary Muslim" that Göle expressed starting from the daily routines in different cities of Europe suggests a new formation in which the effort of European Muslims to reconcile their modern lifestyles and beliefs was blended with Western civilization and its cultural codes. Apart from the perception of "Islamist" in terrorist activities, the Muslim profile, that is, "ordinary Muslim", who has no problem with the values of the society they live in and expresses him/herself through a kind of hybridization, provides a good framework for describing immigrants from Turkey.

**Being a Muslim from Turkey in France**

Turks' migration to Europe is relatively new compared to other immigrant groups when they are considered together with the migrations of Asians and Black Africans. When we look at the character of this migration, it has two distinguishing properties. The first is that it is a recent wave of migration, and the second is that there is no colonial relationship with France. The migration of Turks to France gained massive character with the labor agreement signed in 1965. The population in Turkey's inadequately industrialized areas mostly participated in immigration activities. Within this framework, rural origins dominate the socio-economic structure of the first generation of Turkish immigrants coming to France in the early 1970s. The main source of motivation of this migration based on single male profile is economic:

"I came by train in 1973. The employer came here with us. He is a factory owner; a hundred men work in his factory. The man took us from labor exchange organization in Istanbul with ten people and caught the train and came here with us. On the way, we ate cheese and bread...they built houses like dormitory. They

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4 "Ordinary Muslims" have a pluralistic structure. The ethnic range of women and men, between the ages of 19-45, whom we can include in this category is wide. This range includes Pakistani, Turkish, Algerian etc and different professions. The adjective of "ordinary" refers to actively participating in social life while performing religious practices in everyday life rather than a passive subject in the social structure. They are aware of the codes of the source country, but at the same time they do not abstain from being visible by melting in the dominant social structure. They may even develop behaviors in accordance with the cultural codes of the country they live in. While they are overly proud to be free in the UK, they can be surlier in France. In addition, they do not object to owning the cultural values of the dominant society with their "halal" way of life. Halal hi-pop, halal delicatessen, non-alcoholic diploma ceremony, etc."
have kitchen. They have bathrooms, toilet. They have rooms, both single and double. Near the factory. We first settled there. We don't know even one word of French. The factory was not in Paris. 300 km outside Paris. After working there for two years, I brought the kids. There were not enough workers then. While working in construction sites, construction site chiefs were competing with each other to transfer workers from each other. For example, the hourly wage here is 5-6 Francs. Another says that it is 7 Francs... There is unemployment...At that time, for example in Peugeot, 30 thousand people were working. 20-25 thousand people were working in Citroen. 30 thousand people were working in Simka. Now, in these factories, 3-4 thousand people are working..." (Male, 66).

Migrations continued until 1974, when formal employee recruitment was stopped. After this date, there was an immigration practice that continued with family reunions and illegal ways. With the addition of women to Turkish migrants, the majority of whom were male, as a result of family reunification and the involvement of children who were born in France to the families, immigrants from Turkey began to appear more often in the public arena:

"I came in 2000. After leaving the school, I entered the coal factory. After that I started peddling. There are suburban trains between Istanbul and Gebze; I was a peddler in those trains. I used to sell chocolates, bagels, waffles ... Also I was a waiter in a tiny restaurant. The last time I was a waiter was when I was coming here. My father brought us through illegal ways. My father did not have the paper when I came here. I came here and my father received the paper. My father actually lived in France for a while from 1985-1990 for the first time. Then he returned to Turkey. He stayed in Turkey for 3-4 years and then came back here. He could not live there anymore so he came here again. I came here in 2000 and my mother and brother came here a year later. One of my brothers was already benefiting from family unification. I had a sister; she also came here from illegal ways...When I first came here, there was no proper working environment. There were times when I did not work for 2 years. Since we did not have any papers, we were very little". (Male, 28)

As Turkish migrants became more visible within the society, academic interest began to be directed towards them. The earliest study on Turkish immigrants is based on interviews carried out by Riva Kastoryano(1986) with Turkish families (“Etre Turc en France”- Being a Turk in France) and this work is a descriptive work full of rich information from the family structure of the first-comers to everyday life practices. Based on extensive data set on Algerian, Portuguese, Moroccan, Hispanic, African, Asian and Turkish immigrants, the
quantitative studies of Michele Tribilat (1995,1996), who influenced the formation of Turkish perception in France, are most famous. Based on the results of the survey, she considered Turkish immigrants as an "exception". She defines the Turkish immigrants as the least integrated immigrant community in French society, based on the ability of Turkish immigrants to use the French language, their marriage practices, the tendency to live in the same place, and so on. The evaluation of Turkish immigrants as a closed "community", based only on quantitative evidence, was criticized. Although we found some outcomes which had similarities with Tribilat's framework during our literature research; we can easily say that this approach which treats Turkish immigrants as a homogeneous population and does not include the source country accounts for only a part of the truth. Although Turkish immigrants have characteristics that deserve to be defined as a closed community through the cultural and social spheres, we can easily say that they are integrated with local markets in the economic field. Even if we look at it from the perspective of our subject, we can say that Muslim identity and European values led to some hybridization.

"There are a lot of problems in France ... but it is also different to look at the world from Paris. For example, there are serious differences between my old and current religious views. I used to read anti-Christian or anti-Jewish verses from the Quran when I was a political Islamist in my childhood years in Turkey; then I needed to question those verses two or three years ago. When I questioned, there were changes in my ideas. No one here can cut off anyone's throat in the name of Allah... According to my findings, there are two types of Muslim: European type and Eastern type ... To give an example, I would never cut a man's head in the name of Allah. We have no intention to change this world by force, we need to learn how to live together. I did not have an aim to make people Muslim here. But when I go to Turkey, my friends ask me about how many of foreigners I have made Muslim. I don't care about people's religions. This is asked directly. This question does not come from only a person. If I lived there, maybe I would ask the same question to someone coming from the West. But this question is not asked among people who try to live Islam here ... I witnessed the courtesy I had not seen in Muslims in Turkey on the first day I came here. You get shocked when you get health care in a hospital. Despite everything we criticize, in my opinion the cultural values of Europe are at the top of the world. "(Male, 40)

The definition of "European Type of Islam", uttered by an imam in addition to the above statements, is very strongly parallel with Göle's "ordinary Muslims". We can talk about a Turkish immigrant profile that does not forget about their
cultural and religious baggage but accepts the values of the place they live by transforming those values. Especially in terms of the potential for creating an alternative identity against established culture, the relationship between strong Muslim values and young people does not go beyond the symbolic level at some points (Kaya, 2006). A study on 285 young people in France showed that young people's perception of "fasting" is complicated: the feeling that they get out of debt by fasting on the first and last days of the month of Ramadan is prevalent in half of the young people who practice fasting. Non-political Islam has a more moderate place among the young Turkish people in the daily life, without denying their cultural significance (IRTIS-DABBAGH, 2001: 318-19). In the recent studies on young people who live in the urban fringes in France and radicalize, it is stated that the number of Turkish "immigrant" children is low in this group. The fact that family control dynamics are tight, the multitude of the fellow citizens who live in the same region, and the presence of Turkish entrepreneurs who can move freely in the labor market are underlined as the obstacles to the radicalization of the young people of Turkey. These features we have mentioned led to their being marked as a society resistant to integration until twenty years ago, but now they have become the indicators of a more positive image. However, the fact that the young Turks have remained between the two cultures, like their peers, constitute the other side of the truth:

The young Turkish people express themselves as Muslims. The future of those who do this is brighter. Things get worse for those who cannot do this. "If milk rots, it becomes cheese; if meat rots, it becomes poison". I do not have a problem with the French people. The French have the rules of good manner. However, the people from our country cannot behave like them. When you are separated from your own culture, everything is upside down. There arises a type that even the French cannot accept. Most of the families are not aware of this danger. The elders make their children insatiable saying "I did not have anything when I was a child." I did not have that, but my child should have it. I did not wear it, but my child should wear it... There are many problems ... (Male, 40)

The Halal lifestyle gives the immigrants flexibility in everyday life in softening the rigidity preached by religion. The Halal lifestyle and the organization of economy according to it is a "European" initiative looking for the possibilities of living together without denying the identity for some of the Turkish immigrants. The "halal business" has been liberated from the orbit of a conservative political ideology, and has become widespread in France, with economic interests and
home country nostalgia (Tapia, 2005: 99). Halal is, in fact, a matter of central importance, from neighborhood relations to eating and drinking habits outside. As Göle points out, "halal" can be read as a kind of acceptance of established cultural values. Almost all of the immigrants we talked to stated that despite the fact that they have non-Muslim colleagues in business life, their relationship between them is limited to business only. In Gilles Kepel's work in the 1980s, the answer given to the question "Would you accept if your non-Muslim neighbor invites you for a dinner?" by a Turkish immigrant to the question is quite influential in terms of reflecting the mindsets of the Turkish immigrants:

"You asked such a question that it is beyond my depth. In fact we would not go. But it would be wrong to perceive this as fanaticism. The reason why we would not go is that our food would not be cut according to Islamic conditions. We eat meat after it is cut according to the Islamic conditions. They are certainly not dirty. They are clean and obey the rules of their religion. But they eat the meat that is prohibited by our religion. On the other side, they drink wine with their meal ... you can definitely say that drinking is not compulsory. I probably would not want to upset my friend who invites me, but I do not want to eat the food that is not prepared according to the conditions of my own religion. It is best not to go rather than upset my friend "(Kepel, 1987: 35-36).

It is one of the characteristics of the Turkish immigrants to search for ways to live side by side with other people without forgetting their origins and excluding other cultures. The administrator of an association in Paris emphasizes the importance of the "Democratic-integration" model in creating a common public space:

"You need to be an individual here. The new person created by democratic integration is important to us. Just like the Bretons defend democratic values in France without denying their identity, we can do the same. Dissolving the values of the country you came to with your own values ... In our view, democratic-integration is a model of creating a common culture together by respecting cultural values. It is a process that continues by opening out rather than closing inside. It is the building of a joint equal life" (Male, 48).

**Conclusion**

Although Turkish immigrants are "reluctant" to enter French social and public life, there is a need for more comprehensive frameworks to explain this,
rather than essential reasons. The experiences of the Turkish immigrants in France, which were tried to be explained by concepts such as "staying within the community", "resistance to integration" and "Turkish exception" especially in the early migration literature, cover a period of approximately fifty years. Both the length of the process and the heterogeneous nature of the arriving migrants necessitate a more dynamic look.

In the suburbs where religious-referenced radicalization accompanied by a sense of ethnic and cultural exclusion is common among young people, in an atmosphere where unemployment figures are high, anxiety about the future increases and the length of attendance to school decreases, the greatest risk is the hierarchical integration policies that impose itself as the absolute truth from outside. One of the most important consequences of our research is the necessity of subjecting the politics which tend to see a single color when looking at the suburbs to a critical reading. We can say that it does not comply with the suburban reality to regard all of the "Muslims", who develop a "performance"-based relationship with Islam in a more secular dimension apart from the forms known, as radicals.

We also think that it must be underlined that Muslims, who are the subject of the immigrant debate over Islam, have responsibilities in creating a common public culture as well as their neighbors. Slurring over any criticism brought on by the Europeans by keeping the argument of the Islamophobia and the negative memory of the colonial past alive limits the possibility of criticizing within the neighborhood. We believe that there is a need for a perspective that takes into account the new reality apart from the arguments saying that terrorism and Islam cannot be brought together or Islam is essentially a religion of peace that were voiced by the Islamic sections especially after the attacks in November 2015. It is clear that a dialogue that is not imposed and a language for understanding and learning is one of the most important instruments in the creation of an alternative publicity in Europe, which has fallen into awe of the "refugee" issue and has introduced fear-based and democracy-abusive practices after the attacks.

References


Reintegration Experiences of Internal Return Migrants in the Wa Municipality, Ghana

Elijah YENDAW, Augustine TANLE and Stephen B. KENDIE

Abstract. In Ghana, studies on returnees’ reintegration are mostly limited to international return migrants from western countries. Re-integration of internal return migrants has not attracted much research. This paper explores the reintegration experiences of internal return migrants resident in the Wa Municipality. Using the mixed method approach, the study surveyed 150 return migrants and interviewed 10 key informants. The results indicated that the main challenges associated with reintegration of returnees were frequent family demands, unemployment and low incomes. To mitigate these problems, some of the returnees had to relocate from their previous places of abode while others engaged in illegal artisanal mining activities. A chi-square statistic test revealed a significant association between returnees’ challenges of reintegration and their length of stay, age, level of education and marital status. Consequently, most of the returnees expressed their desire to re-migrate perhaps due to the difficulties they faced in their reintegration process. The study recommends that relevant stakeholders such as the district assemblies, NGOs and religious bodies should develop programmes to assist returnees with skills training and start-up capital/loans to enable them reintegrate into their communities to avoid unemployment.

Keywords: Reintegration, Return migrants, Southern Ghana, Wa Municipality

1. Introduction

The three northern regions of Ghana have the highest number of rural out-migrants in the country but has less than 20.0% of the national population since 1970 (GSS, 2008, 2012; 2014). This phenomenon is due to north-south migration which has been generally attributed to low socio-economic development and unfavourable physical characteristics in the north compared to the south (Van der Geest, 2011; Awumbila, Owusu & Teye, 2014; Tanle, 2014). From the perspective of Oppong (1967), Nabila (1975), Awumbila (2007) and Tanle (2014), the consequence of uneven development between the north and south is the widespread impoverishment in the north and the relative buoyant economy in the south.
This was partly due to the British colonial administration which initiated compulsory labour recruitment from the northern territories of the then Gold Coast (now northern Ghana) to satisfy the need for cheap labour in the mining, timber, cocoa and oil palm plantation areas in the south (Nabila, 1985; Abur-sufian, 1994; Anarfi et al., 2003; Van der Geest, 2010). That is, there was a deliberate policy that designated northern Ghana as a labour reservoir for the southern mining areas such as Obuasi, Konongo, Prestea and Tarkwa. Thus, chiefs and other opinion leaders were mandated by the then district commissioners to recruit able-bodied men as labourers for the mines, cocoa farms, the army and construction works in the forest and coastal areas (Benneh, 1976; Lentz, 2006; Tanle, 2010).

This was followed by voluntary seasonal migration of mainly young people from the north to the south during the long dry season in the north (Anarfi, Kwankye, Ababio & Tiemoko, 2003; Tanle, 2010). Other factors which influenced north-south migration are population pressure on the land leading to less land per farmer, land ownership problems, inadequate agricultural resources like credit for small farmer holders, underdeveloped rural industry, absence of social amenities, increased deprivation and lack of entitlements in rural areas (GSS, 2004; Anarfi & Kwankye, 2005; Abdul-Korah, 2006).

The three northern savannah regions are among the poorest regions in the country (GSS, 2008, 2014). They continue to lag behind other regions in terms of development especially in education, health and infrastructure. While the state of health and medical facilities leaves much to be desired in the face of hunger, malnutrition and diseases that are prevalent, the area is also characterized by low level of school enrolment and high school dropout resulting in high rate of illiteracy and early marriages (GSS, 2004, 2012). In the Upper West region in particular, where this study was conducted, about 83% is rural with limited livelihood options (Akyeampong, Fobih & Koomson, 1999).

It is noteworthy, that northern Ghana had attracted, and continues to attract, development interventions by government, foreign development partners and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) (GSS, 2012). Some of the major notable development interventions in the past included the Upper Region Development Project (URADEP), the Farmers Company Service Ltd (FASCOM), the Tono and Vea Irrigation Projects, the Northern Region Rural Integrated Projects (NORRIP), and the Upper West Development Project (UWADEP) among others. The latest major interventions by government are the Savannah Accelerated
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Development Authority (SADA) and the National Youth Employment Programme (NYEP). With the emergence of SADA, many have been optimistic that the inclusive and diverse programmes under it were sufficient to surmount many decades of neglect of northern Ghana, which led to the recurring out-migration of the youth to southern Ghana.

North-south migration in Ghana has gained increasing academic research interest (Hashim, 2007; Kwankye, Anarfi, Tagoe & Castaldo, 2009; Van der Geest & Dietz, 2010; Wouterse, 2010) particularly on the patterns, determinants and implications for both areas of origin and destination (Awumbila et al., 2008; Yendaw et al., 2016). Apart from these studies, there are a number of other studies (both past and present) on north-south migration which have examined the migration trend of children and young females from the northern parts of Ghana to the southern cities, particularly Kumasi, Accra, Tema and Secondi-Takoradi to engage in menial jobs such as the ‘kaya yei’ business (the term ‘kaya yei’ (Singular ‘Kaya yo’) refers to women who engage in carrying wares for a fee (Yendaw et al., 2016).

However, in many of these studies, issues concerning permanent return migration and returnees’ reintegration experiences are mostly glossed over despite the fact that most internal migration flows in Ghana are largely transient which usually culminate in return migration. This has resulted in the dearth of literature on the theoretical and empirical bases for understanding internal return migration and reintegration processes of permanent return migrants in the country. The few studies which have attempted to interrogate the issue of returnees’ reintegration in Ghana are mainly centred on international return migrants (Black & Gent, 2004; Kyei, 2013; Mensah, 2012; Yendaw, 2013; IOM, 2015). Meanwhile, an understanding of the dynamics of permanent voluntary return migration and returnees’ reintegration is an important topic that requires empirical research for its policy relevance to the development of northern Ghana. One of such policies is the desire of various successive governments to reverse the north-south migration trend.

To fill this gap of knowledge therefore, this study assessed the reintegration experiences of permanent return migrants resident in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to provide answers to the following research questions: What are the demographic characteristics of those who return? What are the motivations for permanent
return? What are the challenges involved in reintegration? What strategies do returnees use to mitigate their reintegration difficulties? Do some permanent returnees intend to re-migrate in future? In addressing these research gaps, the study was guided by the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between the socio-demographic characteristics of permanent return migrants and challenges associated with their reintegration in the study area. This hypothesis is based on the fact that the degree of success in returnees’ reintegration according to Chirum (2011) largely depends on their socio-cultural and demographic characteristics.

2. Conceptual Issues

According to Goldscheider (1971) migration is defined as any permanent change in residence; it involves the detachment from the organization of activities at one place and the movement of the total round of activities to another. Internal out migration is defined as a temporary, semi-permanent or permanent change of residence to a place outside the native region but within the country. Permanent return migration, which is the main focus of this study refers to the act of a person returning to his or her country or community of origin after having been a migrant in another country or community and who intends to stay in his/her own country or community for at least one year (UN Statistics Division, 1998; King, 2000).

International Organization for Migration-IOM (2015) defines reintegration as the re-inclusion or re-incorporation of a person into a group or process, for example, of a migrant into the society of his or her country/community of origin or habitual residence. Reintegration according to Anarfi and Jagare (2005) and Cassarino (2008) is a process that enables the returnee to participate again in the social, cultural, economic and political life of his or her community of origin. In this study, the social aspects of returnees’ reintegration include participation in organisations, relationships and acceptance with family and friends (such as respect within the household), access to information sources, and societal acceptance. Cultural reintegration deals with returnees’ participation in religious or cultural events, and participation in the norms and values of the society. As regards economic reintegration, it refers to the occupational and employment status of the returnees and their ability to afford a certain standard of living. It also includes entrepreneurial activities and local investments opportunities. Finally, political reintegration of return
migrants refers to their participation in the political process of their country or community of origin upon return (Cassarino, 2004).

Taft (1979) and Ammassari (2004) also explained returnees’ reintegration as the original learning of migrants to adapt to the situations upon return to their original communities of childhood. For Taft (1979), the term reintegration often refers to emotional stability and freedom from internal conflicts and tensions thus, freedom from psychoneuroses (Taft, 1979). Gmelch (1980) and Kyei (2013) however, observed that returnees’ reintegration is a process which involves a number steps and livelihood choices known as reintegration strategies. These strategies according to Cassarino (2008) are the full range of activities which return migrants adopt to ensure successful reintegration. Reintegration in this view is multidimensional, encompassing many different elements such as cultural orientation, social networks, self-identification, and access to rights, institutions and the labour market (Ammassari, 2004; Cassarino, 2008).

2.1 Reasons for Return Migration

According to Hirvonen and Lilleør (2015), return migration usually take place after a single long migration spell. That is, the term return migration refers to a permanent or semi-permanent return to the place of origin (King, 1986 cited in Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015). Return migration is therefore distinct from other forms of migration such as seasonal, temporary, or circular migration, which are pigeonholed in the literature by systematic and regular movements between place of origin and destination (Skeldon, 2012; Constant, Nottmeyer, & Zimmermann, 2013).

Theoretically, in the Harris-Todaro framework, a return migrant is viewed as an “unsuccessful” migrant; someone who failed to find a formal job in an urban area (Hirvonen & Lilleør, 2015). That is, for Harris and Todaro, the magnitude of return migration is a reflection of fluctuating conditions of the urban labour market. Contrary to this view, the literature on return migration has examined other non-economic variables as determinants for return. According to Wang and Fan (2006) and Dustman (2003), the economic “success-failure” dichotomy is insufficient for understanding return migration, and thus needs to be understood in a larger institutional context of the family.

Following from this line of inquiry, King (2000) and Piotrowski and Tong (2010) observed that the decision to migrate back home involves a mixture of professional and personal motivations at both places of origin and destination. For
instance, Hirvonen and Lilleør (2015) noted in their study of internal return migrants in rural Tanzania that social and family factors remain important for some potential returnees. In a similar study by Piotrowski and Tong (2010) in rural Thailand it was discovered that factors such as marriage, parenthood, and obligations to ageing parents strongly motivate migrants to return from destinations. According to Schoder-Butterfill (2004) and Piotrowski (2009), in many developing countries, prospective migrants sometimes face the difficult choice of travelling to some distant locale to take advantage of better economic opportunities mainly because of lack of formal childcare options, and the inability of parents to afford to take children to another destination. In such instances, migrating parents are often obliged to leave their children with extended family members which poses a challenge, since the separation of parents and their young children can be detrimental to the parent-child relationship (Dreby, 2007), and may cause migrant parents to return home (Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). Other factors are related to migrants’ stage in the lifecycle, as age brings changing needs and preferences (Knodel et al., 2007; Baldock, 2000). They may return to get married, to care for elderly parents, or to take on particular family related responsibilities (Smith, 2000).

There is also a substantial body of literature on international return migration. One of the earliest contributions in this literature is King (1978) that offers a framework for examining return migration. A series of in-depth interviews carried out with physicians further shed light on the phenomenon. According to Ganguly (2003), family-related reasons predominated, especially going home to care for aged parents followed by issues of discrimination at the destination. Similarly, a study by Iredale, Rozario and Guo (2003) on return migration amongst skilled migrants in four Asian countries found that individual decisions to return home are made in response to a careful weighing of personal factors, career-related prospects and the economic, political, and environmental climate.

Furthermore, Tiemoko’s (2004) study of African migrants also indicates more emphasis on family factors. Carrying out in-depth interviews on migrants in London and Paris, Tiemoko (2004) found that family was one of the most important factors influencing return. At the same time, returnees cited family-related problems as one of the most common difficulties they encountered, and the expectation of such problems delayed the return of some migrants (Tiemoko, 2004). Some migration scholars have also examined the relationship between
integration and assimilation and return (Hoffmann-Nowotny, 1973; Esser, 1980). Hoffmann-Nowotny (1973) and Esser (1980) have also claimed that return migration occurred because migrants were unable to integrate or assimilate into the host society.

Thomas-Hope’s (1999) study of migrants returning to Jamaica, for example, noted that the decision to return involved a combination of two sets of factors: the personal and domestic circumstances of the individual and his or her family and perceived conditions in the place of origin such as comfort level, cost of living, opportunities for investment, political stability and attitudes towards returning migrants. Existing empirical evidence on Ghanaian return migrants also shows that social and family-related reasons are of particular importance (Yendaw, 2013). Strong family ties, the wish to re-join family and friends, homesickness, problems of adjustment at the destination, and the desire to enjoy an improved social status back home are significant reasons for return migration (Ammassari & Black, 2001 cited in Yendaw, 2013). The above evidence from the international return migration literature though not on internal return migrants confirm some of the findings obtained by Piotrowski and Tong (2010) and Hirvonen & Lilleør (2015) who studied internal return migrants in rural Thailand and Tanzania respectively.

2.2 Challenges Involved in Reintegration

The existing literature provides paradigms of the reintegration problems returnees face once they are back to their communities of origin. In a study by Chirum (2011) and Gmelch (1980), it was discovered that the need to establish new friends, a slow pace of life, lack of social services, and lack of employment opportunities were the major deterrents to full integration for the majority of returnees to Western Ireland. Eikaas (1979) also observed that fear of social disgrace by those who had not done well at their various destinations, lack of job availability, changed personalities, and climatic conditions were the main barriers to reintegration among returnees to the Caribbean. A similar study by Levine (1982) also found that low standard of living, housing shortages, a long wait for jobs, and family conflicts were the major re-integration problems for most Southeast Asian returnees.

Another investigation by Marmora and Gurrieri (1994) of Rio Della Plat, indicates that individual attributes are among the major factors related to post-return resettlement challenges for most returnees. For example, in Namibia, Preston (1994) found that the inability of the majority of returnees to speak fluent
English was the major deterrent to obtaining education and jobs. Many studies have also highlighted the sense of disappointment, isolation and feelings of alienation and not-belonging experienced by return migrants as major challenges returnees encounter (Constable 1999; Long & Oxfeld, 2004; Christou 2006). Cerase (1974) has also investigated the reintegration experiences of Italian migrants from the US in the 1960s and 1970s and found that the longer the time spent away, the more difficult the reintegration in Italy and those who spent less than ten years in the US faced fewer difficulties.

A study by McGrath (1991) reveals that return migrants remained a separate and distinct community in the literature of migration. McGrath (1991) added that most returnees faced a range of different reintegration problems including: the poor economic situation and lack of employment opportunities; the unfriendly attitude of locals; and the inefficiency and slow pace of business activities. McGrath (1991) further observed that more than a quarter of returnees definitely intended to re-emigrate due to the problems faced. Zachariah and Rajan (2011) also indicated that indebtedness and unfavourable financial status of return migrants are some of the main challenges in the reintegration process of returnees. The Financial situation after return and debt problems and access to money are obviously of crucial importance for setting up or revamping a life back after return. In another study, Rajan and Narayana (2010) in Kerala, found unemployment as a key disincentive for returnees’ reintegration indicating that the state was ill prepared to receive returnees. As a result, many returnees who could not withstand these difficulties according to Rajan and Narayana (2010) were compelled to re-migrate.

2.3 Theoretical Perspectives on Return Migration and Reintegration

Return migration and reintegration as a sub-process of migration has been theorised by various approaches and schools of thought which offered contrasting sets of propositions stemming from but not limited to the Neo-classical Economics (NE), the New Economics of Labour Migration (NELM), Structuralism, Transnationalism and Social Network Theories. According to the neo-classical perspective, migration is motivated by wage differentials between origin and destination areas, in which case migrants generally move from areas with suppress wages to those with higher wages (Borjas, 1989). Using this framework, Thomas (2008) and Hirvonen and Lilleør (2015) argue that migrants will only return home if they fail to derive the expected benefit of higher earnings at the destination. For the
NE approach, return migration cannot but under conditions of failed migration projects. Meanwhile, the question is, does it mean migrants who achieve their migration objectives do not return home?

In contrast to the NE, the NELM Theory considers return migration as part of a defined plan conceived by migrants before their departure from their places of origin (Thomas, 2008; Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). Adherents of this theory argue that the original plan of migrants includes designing an eventual return to their areas of origin after accumulating sufficient resources. Therefore, most migrants leave home with the intention of acquiring skills, savings, and other resources that would be useful to them upon their return home (Piotrowski & Tong, 2010). The time at the destination is often considered a temporary enterprise, and most migrants are said to return home soon after they have achieved their goals (Ammassari, 2004). With this assumption, it is thus expected that migrants who return to their origin communities are assumed to be only success returnees (who have accumulated the needed resources for their smooth reintegration). But the question is does this mean that return migration does not subsume failure returnees or does it mean that migrants who return to their communities of origin is mainly due to economic factors?

Structural theories on return migration, on the other hand, stress the importance of the social, economic, and political conditions at the origin of migrants, not only as major factors in the decision to return, but also as components affecting the ability of return migrants to make use of the skills and resources that they have acquired at the destination (Diatta & Mbow, 1999; Thomas-Hope, 1999). Unlike the other two theories above, structural theories of return migration do not consider the success of the migration experience as a key factor in the decision to return; instead they focus on the productivity of return migrants after arriving home. Structural theorists argue that returnees may not be able to reintegrate and consequently may decide to leave again if the ‘gap’ between their own norms and values and those at home is too large (Cassarino, 2004). Alternatively, returnees may also respond to expectations at home by spending their savings on consumption or unproductive investments which can affect their reintegration process negatively (Thomas, 2008).

Transnationalism compared to the NE, NELM and Structural approaches, provides a better framework for explaining return and reintegration. It sees reintegration as a process of re-adaptation which may not entail the abandonment of the identities migrants acquire while at the destination. While structuralists do not
envisage the maintenance of social ties between origin and destination during the migration period and after return, these links are at the heart of transnationalist theory (Cassarino, 2004). Migration and return are depicted in a positive way, and return is seen as part, but not as the end of the migration experience. According to this approach, migrants maintain regular contact with the origin community, for example through visits and transfers. At the same time they are also embedded in social networks at the destination, constituting links which are kept after returning to the origin society. These links allow for a better preparation of the return and a smooth reintegration after return.

More importantly, there is less critical attention on any evidence supporting the challenges faced by returnees, particularly internal return migrants; hence, the focus of this study. Potter (2005) and Preston (1993) argue that upon return from a chosen destination, the migrant needs to be reintegrated into the original society as it will be unrealistic to assume that the social and economic milieu to which migrants returned, had not changed since they left their communities. However, N’Laoire (2007) observed that several factors determine the extent to which migrants would be estranged upon their return home. These include the age of the migrant prior to leaving home, the length of time spent at the destination, the nature of contacts with family members and friends back home among others.

There is no doubt that all the theories discussed above have contributed to shedding some light on the phenomenon of return migration and returnees’ reintegration, but the structural and transnationalism theories guided the current study. This is because most of the issues discussed in their level of analyses relate to the objectives of this study. For example, structural theorists recognized the importance of returnees’ reintegration and thus argue that most returnees may not be able to reintegrate and may decide to re-emigrate back if the ‘gulf’ between their own norms or values and those at home are too large to cope with (Cassarino, 2004). This implies that returnees face challenges in trying to settle into their communities. The Neo-classical Economics and NELM Theories on the other hand were less considered in the study because they mainly concentrated in explaining the causes of return migration. In addition, most of their basic assumptions dwelled on economic related factors without assessing the other socio-cultural factors which underpin the dynamics involved in return migration and returnees’ reintegration.
3. Profile of Study Area

Established in 1988, the Wa municipality is found in the Upper West Region of Ghana and is located between latitudes 1°40’N and 2°45’N and longitudes 9°32’W and 10°20’W (Figure 1). Like many areas in northern Ghana, the climatic condition of Wa Municipality is characterized by long, windy and hot dry season followed by short and stormy wet season (GSS, 2012). The vegetation of Wa Municipality is the Guinea Savannah grassland and the soils are generally poor. Consequently, the area experiences high unpredictable rainfall patterns imposing drought conditions with consequences on crop yield and food security.

Figure 1: A Map of Wa Municipality showing the study area

The total population of the Wa Municipality is 107,214 and forms 15.3 percent of the population of Upper West Region (GSS, 2014). Of this number, 49.4 percent are males while 50.6 percent are females with a sex ratio of 97.7 percent. The major ethnic group in the municipality, the Wala, operates a clan-based system...
with clear division of labour along gender lines (Songsore & Denkabe, 1995). Furthermore, although formal education is widespread in the Upper West Region, school enrolment is generally low compared with other regions in the country (Blench, 2005). There are limited socio-economic opportunities in the Municipality compared to the southern part of the country while infrastructural facilities are generally poor, especially roads.

Thus, the unfavourable physical and socio-economic conditions in the Municipality account for out-migration of young people from the Wa Municipality to urban areas in southern Ghana in search of greener pastures. The Wa Municipality was therefore selected for this research mainly because figures for out-migration according to the 2000 and 2010 Population and Housing Censuses indicated that five regions including the Upper West are relatively large migrants’ sending areas to southern Ghana, in the sense that about a fourth of the population of these regions live in other regions. Similarly, Geest (2004) and GSS (2012) also described the Wa Municipality as a major migrant sending area in Ghana.

4. Data and Methods

The study adopted the mixed method approach to research which included both quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques. Data for this study were purely gathered from primary sources using structured and unstructured interviews. This was supplemented with secondary literature obtained from the Wa Municipal Assembly records, Ghana Statistical Service reports (2000, 2002, 2004, 2008, 2012, 2014) and published articles which treated different aspects of the study. The target population for the study was voluntary permanent return migrants aged 18 years and above who had ever travelled to and stayed at any part of southern Ghana for at least five years and had returned to the Wa Municipality within the last five years prior to this survey. A five year period was chosen because it was felt that five years was long enough to capture the reintegration experiences of returnees since time plays a critical role in migrants’ reintegration (Gmelch, 1980; Ghosh, 2000; N’Laoire, 2007).

A reconnaissance survey undertaken in the study area using the snowballing technique revealed a sampling frame of 240 internal return migrants who met the inclusion criteria for the study. Out of that figure, a sample size of 150 respondents was computed using Yamane’s (1967) formula for sample size
determination in social research. In addition, 10 key informants comprising five non-migrants and five returnees of both sexes who had stayed longer in the south were selected and interviewed.

The respondents were selected using the snowballing, simple random and purposive sampling techniques. First, the snowball technique was used to identify the 240 respondents who met the criteria for the study. Afterwards, the simple random sampling technique (specifically the lottery method) was then used to select the sample size of 150 return migrants. For the qualitative aspect of the study, the purposive sampling technique was used to select the 10 key informants for in-depth interview. One major flaw for using the snowball sampling technique is that sampling bias cannot be ruled out.

Interview schedule and in-depth interview guide were the main instruments used to collect quantitative and qualitative data respectively. An interview schedule was used instead of a questionnaire because most return migrants in the Wa Municipality are predominantly illiterates (GSS, 2002, 2012, 2014). Both instruments were structured into five main modules. Module A consisted of the background characteristics of the respondents, module B discussed the motivation for their return migration while module C explored challenges associated with their reintegration. The fourth module (module D), interrogated strategies returnees use to overcome challenges of reintegration while the last module which is module E examined their future intentions to re-migration. The instruments were pre-tested at Nadowli, which had similar socio-demographic characteristics as the Wa Municipality.

All issues relating to ethics such as confidentiality, privacy, anonymity, and informed consent were strictly adhered to. The data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative analytic techniques. The qualitative data were first edited, transcribed and analyzed using content analysis based on common themes while the quantitative data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Service Solutions (SPSS) version 21. Figures, frequencies, percentages and tables were used to present the data.

5.0 Results and Discussions

5.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Table 1 indicates that more than one third (34.0%) of the respondents were aged between 20-29 years and over half (52.0%) were males. The study further showed that about 51.0 percent of the returnees had no formal education followed
by those who attained primary education (29.0%). The majority of the respondents were mostly married (76.0%) and a few of them were widowed (5.3%). In terms of religious affiliation, 53 percent of them were Christians followed by those who were Muslims (35.0%). Over one-third (34.7%) of them were traders which confirmed results of GSS (2012) that most inhabitants of the Wa Municipality were into trading. About a quarter of the respondents were unemployed while 56.0 percent of them resided at their last destinations between 5-9 years. The present evidence where majority of the returnees were young adult males goes to confirm GSS (2012) reports on internal migration where most north-south migrants were relatively youthful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Socio-demographics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JHS/ML</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHS/TECH/VOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital status</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Divorced/Separated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Current occupation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.2 Reasons for Return Migration

The literature on return migration revealed that migrants’ reasons for return migration could have either positive or negative implications on their reintegration (Gmelch, 1980; King, 1986, 2000). In that regard, this section of the study explores the underlying motivations for the return migration of the respondents. Table 2 shows most of the respondents returned because of family related considerations (32.1%) followed by joblessness and low income (24.9%). The current revelations where most of the respondents returned as a result of family related factors run contrary the basic assumptions of the success-failure dichotomy espoused by the neo-classical economics and the new economics of labour migration theories which overly emphasized economic motives as the main determinants for return migration (Dustman, 2003; Wang & Fan, 2006). The evidence however lends credence to what Piotrowski and Tong (2010) and Hirvonen and Lilleør, (2015) had found among internal return migrants where social and family related considerations strongly motivated migrants to return from destinations (such as marriage, parenthood, and obligations to ageing parents). This also emerged in the in-depth interviews as a 26 year old female indicated saying: “Look my return to Wa was due to family pressure especially from my parents. They keep worrying me about marriage saying that all my colleagues are settled and you are in Kumasi roaming about. My father even threatened that if I don’t come home he will disown me as his first daughter and so I was compelled to come home to get married. Anyway, I have no regret I have four beautiful children now. In any case I will not advice friends to travel there because Kumasi is not easy
if you are not strong” [26 year female returnee from Kumasi]. The findings further confirm the family strategy perspective that the family unit plays a crucial role in the decision to migrate and return (King, 2000; Yendaw et al., 2016).

With respect to sex and reasons for return, whereas females were numerous among those respondents who returned because of family-related reasons (37.5%) and joblessness/low income (28.8%), their male counterparts were dominant among those who returned because of accumulated savings (21.4%) and health related challenges (10.4%). Similarly, while females (23.1%) were most probable to return because of adjustment difficulties, males demonstrated the highest likelihood of returning home due to discrimination/marginalization at the destination (4.5%). The fact that more males than females returned because of health reasons could be because males engage in more risky behaviours than females (Weeks, 1999). The following excerpt from a 35 year old female returnee also attest to the fact that some returned due to joblessness and difficulties in adjusting at the destination: “I returned home as a result of some problems I faced in Accra. In fact, it was difficult for me to get a job and accommodation, cost of living was generally high and nobody was ready to assist. As for Accra my brother it is everyone for himself and God for as all. [35 years male return migrant from Accra]. The present evidence where more than a third of the females were motivated to return home because of family-related considerations could be due to their maternal, domestic and conjugal roles which sometimes oblige them to return home (Schoder-Butterfill, 2004; Piotrowski, 2009; Yendaw, 2013).

### Table 2: Reasons for Return Migration by Sex (N=150)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons for return</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>% of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Joblessness/low income</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>24.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjustment difficulties</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family reasons</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accumulated savings</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health reasons</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discrimination/marginalization</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

### 5.3 Reintegration Challenges of Return Migrants

The analysis shows that 86.0 percent of the returnees were confronted
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with reintegration difficulties upon return with only a few (14.0%) who said otherwise. Among the former group, Table 3 indicates that more than a quarter cited frequent family demands (27.0%) as their main reintegration difficulty followed by those who lamented over joblessness and low incomes (22.3%). It was also revealed that as high as 22.1 percent of them complained about frustrations which affected smooth reintegration. The fact that frequent family demands featured strongly as the main reintegration difficulty among the respondents buttressed the structuralists’ perspective that migrants after return are most likely to face reintegration challenges when they respond to expectations at home by spending their savings on family consumptions. These findings are also in tandem with previous studies by McInnes et al. (1998), Long and Oxfeld (2004), Christou (2006), Chirum (2011) and Cassarino (2014) who noted that return migrants upon return voluntarily or involuntarily encounter family-related challenges in trying to reintegrate into their origin communities. Likewise, the fact that excessive family expectations remained the key challenge of the return migrants in the study area could be attributed to the driving force behind their return which in this case was family considerations.

Table 3: Reintegration Challenges of Return Migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reintegration challenges</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequent family demands</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>27.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost traditions and family entitlements</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difficulty establishing networks</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slow business environment</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joblessness &amp; low incomes</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frustrations</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>22.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork, 2015
*Frequency exceeds 129 because of multiple responses

A male non-migrant key informant narrated some of the difficulties returnees face whenever they come home: “You see, when they come back like that they have to start all over because they are not aware of a lot of things back home. But the most serious challenges returnees face include too much expectations from their family members and friends, loss of networks and also some cannot even remember some aspect of their traditions” [32 years non-migrant male from Wa]. On the same issue, a 27 year old female returnee shared her story on reintegration as follows: “My brother, if you are connected to the president of
Ghana tell him that we are suffering and we need jobs. In Wa here, it is difficult to find any job to do apart from farming and even the farming itself you need some money and access to land. I am currently helping my mother to sell vegetables in the market which doesn’t fetch us any good money because sometimes people don’t buy much and remember the business is for my mother and not mine. But if I was in southern Ghana, at least in a day someone could ask me to help carry his/her luggage or help in any other small job which could earn me some money. In Wa, such jobs do not exist. Life in Wa is frustrating my brother, because nothing works for me but I am waiting to see what God has for me” [27-years female return migrant from Accra].

5.4 Socio-Demographic Characteristics by Challenges of Reintegration

This section of the study sought to verify whether returnees’ socio-demographics (e.g. age, sex, education, marital status and length of stay) have any influence on their reintegration. Thus, the hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between returnees’ socio-demographics and the type of reintegration challenges faced was tested using a chi-square test of independence since the variables were categorical. The results in Table 4 showed that while a significant association between returnees age and joblessness/low incomes was found ($\chi^2=13.097; p=0.011$), no significant relationship was observed between age and the other reintegration challenges stated. That is, joblessness/low income was higher with increases in returnees’ age and those who were young ($<=20-29$ years) experienced more joblessness/low incomes (76.8%) compared to those who were older. This evidence is consistent with national demographics where unemployment and low incomes are higher among the youth in Ghana (GSS, 2012).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Family Demands</th>
<th>Loss of Traditions</th>
<th>Difficulty forming social networks</th>
<th>Slow business environment</th>
<th>Joblessness &amp; low incomes</th>
<th>Frustrations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
<td>(%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Less than 20</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>39.3</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-29</td>
<td>35.1</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>30.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>32.4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-49</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>20.8</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50+</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\chi^2$</td>
<td>3.251</td>
<td>4.120</td>
<td>4.306</td>
<td>7.953</td>
<td>13.097</td>
<td>0.713</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-value</td>
<td>*0.517</td>
<td>*0.390</td>
<td>*0.366</td>
<td>*0.093</td>
<td>*0.011</td>
<td>*0.950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sex</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4: Socio-Demographic Characteristic by Challenges of Reintegration
Similarly, the results revealed a significant relationship between returnees’ educational level and slow business environment ($\chi^2=6.742; p=0.034$) and unemployment/low incomes ($\chi^2=10.409; p=0.005$). For example, whereas 75.0 percent of returnees with no formal education encountered more difficulties with the nature of the business environment in the study area, only 8.3 percent of those with secondary or higher education complained of the slow pace of business activities in the area. Additionally, while unemployment and low income was higher among returnees with no formal education (53.6%), only 17.9 percent of those with basic education and 28.6 percent of those with secondary/higher education experienced unemployment and low income as challenges of their reintegration. The above findings are in congruent with results of Ghana Statistical Service (2012) reports where unemployment and low income is very high among young people with no or little education.

Even though sex of the respondents indicated no significant relationship with the kind of reintegration problems stated, it was observed that male returnees experienced more reintegration challenges than their female counterparts. For instance, with respect to respondents who experienced frequent family demands, males encountered more family dependency than females. This evidence is consistent with the traditions of most Ghanaian societies where males are seen as breadwinners of most families (GSS, 2012). A strong relationship was also observed between returnees’ marital status and family demands ($\chi^2=2.256; p=0.013$). This was expected because married couples are more likely to experience high family demands compared
to unmarried people. The reason being that marriage is selective of responsible adults and society expects married people to be more responsible than singles.

The study generally showed that returnees who stayed for a shorter period (5-9 years) at their last destinations encountered more reintegration challenges compared to those who stayed longer (10 years and above). In particular, the chi-square test results revealed a strong association between length of stay at last destination and unemployment/low incomes ($\chi^2 = 8.839; p=0.012$) and slow business environment ($\chi^2 = 9.789; p=0.007$) where shorter stay returnees experienced more unemployment/low incomes and faced more difficulties in doing business as compared to those who stayed longer at their destinations.

The findings of this study contradict results of previous studies by Cerase (1974), Gmelch (1980), King (2000) and Gosh (2000) who found more reintegration difficulties among migrants who resided longer at their last destinations. The main reason for the current evidence could be that perhaps migrants who stayed longer at their last destinations might have accumulated the needed economic resources for investment back home and are, therefore, less likely to encounter unemployment and low incomes. Moreover, those who stayed longer at their last destinations are more likely those who did not stay long to have weak social ties with family members back home and are less likely to yield to excessive family dependency.

5.5 Reintegration Strategies of Return Migrants

Table 5 highlights reintegration strategies internal return migrants in the Wa Municipality adopt to mitigate their reintegration difficulties. The analysis shows that most return migrants in the study area relocated from their previous places of abode (26.0%) to reduce excessive family demands while others were compelled to engage in illegal artisanal mining activities (19.0%) to meet basic needs. The study further reveals that about 15.0% of some returnees worked as casual labourers while others (14.0%) assisted in family businesses. In connection with the reintegration strategies of return migrants in the study area, two interviewees who were interviewed during an in-depth interview made the following sterling revelations: “My brother, my main challenge now is too much family demands and how to make trusted friends. When you travel and return like this the family thinks you have made a lot of money and all their problems are always on you. Since I came, the pressure from my relatives is just unbearable and because of that I have moved away from my family house to rent elsewhere.
Another problem is that you know when you are away from home for some years, you lose all your friends when you finally return and you have to start again. So what I do is that I attend all important social gatherings in my community in order to make friends and get along. For instance, I don’t joke with Church activities, marriage and naming ceremonies and funerals. If you don’t attend others funerals or naming ceremonies, nobody will come for yours” [A 26-year female returnee from Accra].

Table 5: Reintegration Strategies of Return Migrants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reintegration strategies</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relocation from previous residence</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attending social gatherings</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple livelihood activities</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Casual labour</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Petty trading</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illegal artisanal mining</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assisted in family business</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Fieldwork, 2015  *Frequency exceeds 129 because of multiple responses*

The other interviewee intimated that: “When I first arrived I had nothing to do because I could not save enough towards my return. Lucky on my side, I was introduced to a business man who gave me one of his mini-commercial buses to drive. So as I am talking to you now I’m a “Trotro” driver. Apart from that, I have made a small farm which I attend to every weekend. My brother, if you don’t do more than one jobs you cannot survive in Wa” [A 29-year old male from Kumasi].

The current quantitative and qualitative evidence confirm findings by Ammassari (2004), Anarfi and Jagare (2005) and Cassarino (2008) that most returnees re-integrate by engaging in various entrepreneurial activities and attending social gatherings in their communities to improve upon their status and build social networks.

5.6 Intentions to re-migrate

Intention to re-migrate is a common feature among some returned migrants. From the study, about two-thirds (62.0%) of them indicated they were not satisfied with their return and expressed their desire to re-emigrate in future. The current finding where a large percentage of the returnees reported their intentions to re-migrate in future could be due to the challenges associated with reintegration. This evidence goes to support what structural theorists observed about returnees’ reintegration that return migrants may not be able to re-integrate.
smoothly and may decide to re-migrate if the “gulf” between their own norms and values and those at home is too large to adjust to (Cassarino, 2004). In corroborating the returnees’ re-migration intentions, this was the observation made by a non-migrant key informant: “Mostly, return migrants run back to southern Ghana when they face some difficulties in the cause of reintegration. You see they are used to money and modern lifestyles so they cannot stay here in Wa” [55 years male non-migrant key informant].

6. Conclusion

This paper assessed challenges internal return migrants face in reintegrating into their communities of origin in the Wa Municipality of the Upper West Region of Ghana. The study showed that nearly 60.0 percent of the returnees were males and were young (61.3%). This suggests that most internal return migrants in the study area are relatively young adult males whose human capital could be harnessed for the socio-economic development of the Wa Municipality and the region as a whole. The main determinant for their return was motivated by family-related factors (32.1%) which appeared to have had some negative implications on their reintegration. For instance, the majority of the returnees admitted that they faced serious challenges in reintegrating into their communities due to excessive family demands.

With the exception of sex, a chi-square test results revealed a significant relationship between returnees’ length of stay in southern Ghana, age, level of education and marital status vis-a-vis the kind of reintegration difficulties faced in the study area. In particular, returnees who had no formal education and were married and had stayed quite shorter at their destinations encountered more reintegration challenges compared to their counterparts who stayed longer at their last destinations. In order to overcome the challenges associated with reintegration, some returnees relocated away from their previous places of abode to reduce persistent dependency from family members. This suggests that the behaviour of families of returnees is critical for successful reintegration which validates the perspectives of the structural approach to return migration that the family organization and other contextual factors are necessary for a smooth reintegration of returnees (Thomas, 2008; Kyei, 2013). Thus, most of the returnees expressed their desire to re-migrate in future which perhaps might be due to the
challenges associated with their reintegration.

7. Policy recommendations

In the first place, families and friends of returnees should be educated by the Wa Municipal Assembly and other development partners on the negative implications of excessive demands on return migrants. Second, government and other relevant stakeholders involved in migration and development management should implement practical policy initiatives to assist return migrants to re integrate successfully. For instance, returnees could be offered some skilled training and small loan facilities through Microfinance and Small Loans Centre (MASLOC) to enable them establish economically to reduce unemployment. Third, return migrants could be educated to take advantage of the social policy interventions found in the Wa Municipality such as SADA and the National Youth Employment programme.

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Competing interests
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Pattern and Determinants of Urban Male Out-Migrants from Bijnor District, Uttar Pradesh

Mashkoor AHMAD

Abstract. The present study aims to explore the patterns and the determinants of male out-migration from towns of Bijnor district (Uttar Pradesh). Besides, efforts have been made to discuss how social networking, decision to migrate and source of information helped in facilitating migration. The study is based on both primary as well as secondary sources of data. The primary data has been obtained using a comprehensive household schedule during February–May, 2011. The result revealed that urban areas of Bijnor district have emerged as highly out-migrating areas. Due to strategic location of Bijnor district in relation to other state, inter-state out-migration has emerged as the dominant form of migration. Interestingly international out-migration towards the Gulf countries was found to be second most prevalent among the males because urban areas of the district are highly Muslim dominated. The lack of employment opportunities, undesirable work and low wages were found as the main factors determining male out-migration from the district. Social networking has played a significant role in facilitating the process of male out-migration from the study area. The result of logistic regression revealed the variation in the propensity of migration by religion, caste, family type and number of males in the household.

Keywords: out-migration, social networks, source of information, male migrants

Introduction

Presently some of the most burgeoning issues in the world and India as well are associated with migration. However, in India, most of the studies on migration have focussed either on the problems of in-migration in big cities or out-migration from rural areas. Therefore, the problem of out-migration from small and medium size towns of under developed states remains largely unexplored. It is in this context that the present study aims to explore the patterns and the determinants of male out-migration from towns of Bijnor district of Uttar Pradesh. Besides, efforts have been made to discuss how social networking, decision to
migrate and source of information facilitating migration. Being situated in the highly fertile Gangetic plain, Bijnor district agriculturally is very advanced but the industrial base is not sound enough to absorb and sustain even its own urban population. Most of the towns of the district are small and medium size towns with low level of industrialisation, inadequate employment opportunities and predominantly inhabited by Muslim population (67 percent as per Census of India, 2011) who face very high poverty and unemployment in urban areas.

**Data Base, Sampling Framework and Methodology**

To fulfil the objectives of the present study, the data have been obtained from both the secondary and primary sources but the main emphasis has been given to primary sources of data. Secondary data from Census of India 2001 and 2011 has been used to show various social and demographic aspects of the district. Sample survey was conducted, during February–May 2011, with the help of a well-structured household schedule to obtain primary information about various aspects of migration from selected households of the five towns of the Bijnor district.

For detailed analysis of the process of urban male out-migration, a total of five towns namely Noorpur, Haldaur, Jalalabad, Nagina and Sahaspur have been selected on the basis of purposive sampling. There are five tahsils (subdivision) in the district. One town from each tahsil has been chosen keeping in view population growth, size and geographical location of the town. From each selected town, two wards have been chosen on the basis of simple random sampling. From each selected ward of towns, 15 percent households have been surveyed for the present study on the basis of systematic random sampling. In all, 400 households have been surveyed from selected wards of the five towns.

Out of 400 households, around 44 percent of the households (175) have emerged as out-migrating households, i.e. from these households at least one male member was found to be an out-migrant either within India or outside India, while nearly 56 percent households were non out-migrating households (225). However, the percentage of out-migrating household to the total sampled households varied from town to town: the highest being in Sahaspur (49 percent) and the lowest in Haldaur town (37 percent). Various primary studies revealed varying percentage of out-migrating households for example, Haberfeld et al. (1999) in their study in
Dungarpur district of Rajasthan, have found that around 55 percent of the households were having at least one out-migrant member.

For collecting the required information on migration and out-migrants a modified definition of household has been adopted. A household is usually a group of persons who normally live together and take their meals from a common kitchen. Persons in such a household may be related or unrelated or a mix of both related and unrelated. The modified definition of household however includes those who live outside the town but claim the household to be their own. Persons of this category work outside the town and often send remittances to left behind family members. Such persons are called the migrated members of the household and such households are known as out-migrating households. Therefore, completely out-migrated entire households have not been included in the present study. Simple statistical methods have been applied for the analysis of data. Regression analysis has been used to investigate the propensity of out-migration by religion, caste, family type and the household size.

Geographical and Socio-Economic Background of the Study Area

Bijnor, a district in the western part of Uttar Pradesh, lies between 29°01′10″ and 29°47′44″ north latitudes; and 77°59′23″ and 78°56′45″ east longitudes. It occupies the north-western part of the Moradabad division. The total area of Bijnor district is 4561 sq. km. The district has been divided into 5 tahsils and 11 development blocks (The Encyclopedic District Gazetteers, 1998).

As stated earlier, the present study is an attempt to explore the process of male out-migration from urban areas of Bijnor district which is in spite of being situated in the most developed, industrialised and urbanised region (Western part) of Uttar Pradesh remained industrially one of the weak districts in the region. However, Bijnor district is situated in the highly fertile Gangetic plain therefore agriculturally it has emerged as one of the developed districts in Uttar Pradesh, thereby, most of the population depends on agriculture and allied activities. But it should be noted that agriculture can support the rural population to an extent but the urban population cannot be supported in a sustainable way. Therefore urban areas of Bijnor district have emerged as highly out-migrating, partly due inadequate of industrialisation, lack of business activities and partly due its nearness to other developed and industrial and
developed cities within and across Uttar Pradesh—the state in which the district is situated.

Interestingly, the strategic geographical location of Bijnor district has encouraged its male population to migrate to different states of India because many states and union territories are very close and well connected by rail and roads to various towns of Bijnor district. Hence, the people of the district have enjoyed this geographical advantage in the migration process. Various states and union territories like Uttarakhand, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Chandigarh and Rajasthan are in the near vicinity of district.

As per the Census of India 2011, the total population of Bijnor district is 3682713. Around one-fourth of the total population is housed in urban areas while about three-fourths is distributed in rural areas. The district recorded 23.7 percent urban population growth rate (rural population growth rate being 28.9 percent was higher than the urban population growth rate) during 1991-2001 which is one of the lowest urban population growth rates among all the districts of Uttar Pradesh and is much lower than the state average of 32.98 percent. During 2001-2011, the urban population growth rate in the district further declined to around 21.5 percent as against 28.8 percent in the urban areas of Uttar Pradesh. In 2001, there were 21 towns in Bijnor district and none of them was having the class I status. Majority of towns in the district have shown declining population growth during 1991-2001 in comparison to the previous decade. Only five towns reported a small increase in population growth rate of 2 to 8 percent during the same period. Very slow and declining population growth rate in towns of Bijnor district may be attributed to out-migration of the population. Besides, there are certain other factors that also indicate that urban areas of Bijnor district are experiencing out-migration. One of the features that results from out-migration from towns is that they are ‘characterized by comparatively higher sex ratios’ (Premi, 1980). According to the Census of India 2001, the urban areas of Bijnor district also reported a comparatively higher sex ratio of 904 in contrast to the sex ratio of 876 females per thousand males in Uttar Pradesh. In 2011, the sex ratio has further increased 913 in urban areas of Bijnor district against 894 in urban areas of Uttar Pradesh. It has generally been accepted that the urban and industrialised areas register low sex ratio due to male selective in-migration. But the out-migrating areas show higher ratio of females than males. Higher sex ratio in
urban areas of Bijnor district may be attributed to male selective out-migration.

Bijnor is one of the ‘sick’ districts of western Uttar Pradesh in respect of industrial well being and progress (Census Handbook, Bijnor District, 2001). Premi (1980) has observed that a combination of weak economic base and intentional neglect by local and national government are responsible for out-migration from small and medium towns. So is case with towns of Bijnor district which are unable to sustain and absorb even their own male population in the secondary and tertiary occupation. Male population from urban areas of the district, thereby, choose to out-migrate towards other regions, especially outside the state. . Kundu (1994) has pointed out medium and small size towns are noted to be delinked from the national system leading to their slower and fluctuating demographic and economic growth rate. Moreover with the launching of economic liberalisation, development in India has adversely affected the growth of the small and medium size towns in the country. Their economic base seems to have become weaker over time (Kundu and Bhatia, 2002).

Moreover, Bijnor district is located in the vicinity of many developed and industrialised states that attract migrants. A considerable part of the district’s boundary coincides with Uttarakhand state which is emerging as one of the developed states and hence attracts population from Bijnor district. Delhi and Haryana are about within 200 km from various towns of the district. Apart from this, Punjab, Chandigarh and Himachal Pradesh are also nearly within a 400 km distance band. Therefore the out-migration of male population from the district to other neighbouring states and districts is motivated by both push and pull forces.

Literacy is of paramount importance among the indicators of social development. Thus the level of literacy reflects the social and economic conditions of a particular area. In Bijnor district though the total literacy rate (58.10 percent) was slightly higher than the total literacy rate in Uttar Pradesh (56.26 percent) in 2001 (literacy rate in U.P. was very low when compared to the other developed states in India). In urban areas of Bijnor district the male literacy rate was only 67.28 percent while in urban areas of U.P. male literacy rate was as high as 76.76 percent. This clearly indicates that urban areas of Bijnor district are educationally very backward. It is very surprising to note that urban male literacy rate (67.28 percent) in the district was lower than the rural
male literacy rate (69.27 percent). As per the Census of India 2011, urban male literacy rate (72.59 percent) remained lower than the rural male literacy (77.91 Percent).

Map 1: Location Bijnor District in Uttar Pradesh

Both Bijnor district and Uttar Pradesh have very rich and diverse religious composition. But it is very surprising to see that the religious composition of Bijnor district and Uttar Pradesh is very different from each other in the rural and urban areas. As per Census of India 2011, in Uttar Pradesh, Hindu population constitute about 80 percent of all the population and Muslim population accounts only about 19 percent of all the population.

Contrary to this, in Bijnor district, Hindus constitute 55 percent whereas Muslim population comprises 43 percent of all religious communities. Thus, there is higher concentration of Muslims in Bijnor district. Further, it is very interesting to see that in urban areas of Bijnor district Muslims constitute 67
percent while in urban areas of Uttar Pradesh the proportion of the Muslims is only 32 percent (Table 1-a). Various studies including Sachar Committee Report (2006) have revealed that socio-economically Muslims are one of the backward communities especially in urban areas in India and in some of the areas their conditions are more backward than that of the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes. Therefore they migrate to other places in search of livelihoods. The Muslim population has social networking with Gulf counties and thus many people migrate to these countries for economic reasons.

Table 1-a: Population by Religion in Bijnor District in Comparison to Uttar Pradesh, 2011 (In Percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religious Community</th>
<th>Bijnor District</th>
<th>Uttar Pradesh</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>55.18</td>
<td>63.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>43.04</td>
<td>34.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculations based on Census of India, 2011, Series C, Table C1.

Table 1-b: Population by Religion in Sampled Towns of Bijnor District, 2011 (In Percent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Jalalabad</th>
<th>Haldaur</th>
<th>Nagina</th>
<th>Sahaspur</th>
<th>Noorpur</th>
<th>Urban Bijnor District</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>8.80</td>
<td>73.64</td>
<td>29.06</td>
<td>8.54</td>
<td>27.78</td>
<td>31.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>89.97</td>
<td>23.43</td>
<td>70.53</td>
<td>91.16</td>
<td>62.87</td>
<td>67.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>9.34</td>
<td>1.38</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculations based on Census of India, 2011, Series C, Table C1.

Pattern of Out-Migration from Bijnor District

Presently a huge number of male population out-migrates across the border of their country and many more migrate within the national boundaries. In India too, people migrate for a variety of reasons. In this context, out-migration of the male population from urban areas of Uttar Pradesh (which is the most populous and one of the poorest states in India)—the state in which the district is located is very common and thus its Bijnor district is no exception. Out-migration from one area to the other shapes the population contours of various regions and thus evolves certain type of spatial pattern which needs to
be explored to learn about the distributional aspects of the migrants. In other words by exploring the spatial pattern of migrants we can investigate where various migrants are located and what type of pattern they have created. Pattern and direction of migration to some extent are determined and guided by regional disparities and previous pattern of migration, social networking and influence placed by return migrants and of course the most important the availability of socio-economic opportunities. Redistribution of population through the process of migration can have significant ramifications on the spatial patterning of various socio-economic and demographic phenomena and the repercussion of these may be observed long after the migration event has taken place (White and Woods, 1980). In the present time, migration has been adopted as an important livelihood strategy by poor groups across the world and not just a response to shocks. Besides, the globalisation has enhanced the process of migration in search of survival, fulfilment and a better life for migrants as well as their families (Deshingkar and Grimm, 2005; Devi et al., 2009). A large number of households opt to send one or more male members to other places to escape poverty.

Migration defining boundary is one of the important criterion for the classification of migrants. Since migration involves the change of residence across a migration defining boundary which may be a tahsil boundary, district boundary, state boundary or a national boundary, hence on the basis of these boundaries all out-migrants from Bijnor district have been classified into four categories namely intra-district (within Bijnor district), inter-district or intra-state out-migrants (from Bijnor district to other districts within Uttar Pradesh), inter-state out-migrants (from Bijnor district to other states in India) and international out-migrants (emigrants). It is interesting to note that most of the urban out-migrants (internal) constituting 97.80 percent from Bijnor district have migrated to urban areas while only 2.20 percent have moved to the rural areas. Above mentioned four types of migration have been discussed below.

**Intra-District Male Out-Migration**

As stated above, intra-district migration involves the movement of people within the boundary of the district. In case of male out-migration from urban areas, this type of migration is not very significant however, in this type migration people especially move from rural to urban areas. From Table 2 it is
evident that a very insignificant proportion, of the male out-migrants (3.58 percent) out-migrated from one part to another within the boundary of Bijnor district (intra-district out-migration). This may be attributed to the fact that all the towns in district are of small and medium size and there is very little employment opportunities in these towns, and therefore, people from these towns migrate to other big industrial and urban areas, especially outside Uttar Pradesh. The district being located in the fertile Gangetic plain has evolved in agriculture based economy and thus remained industrially underdeveloped. However, various towns of the district have grown as marketing centres for their rural hinterland and in many towns a very large proportion of population engage in agriculture. Therefore, there are meagre employment prospects in these towns. If at all there are employment opportunities, they are seasonal and provide low wages and which in many cases do not match with the skills of the urban people. For example, there are many sugar mills in various towns of the district but the employment opportunities in these sugar mills are seasonal and in most cases do not suit to urban and educated people because sugar cane industry is predominantly run by unskilled, semiskilled and uneducated labourers. Further, the wages are not enough for the urban people. However, due to inadequate employment opportunities, many urban people work in these sugar mills also.

Thus due the dearth of employment opportunities, male population of the urban areas of the district prefer to migrate to other areas having employment potentials, business and educational opportunities. Out-migration from urban areas is quite different from rural areas. Usually, a very large proportion of the male population from rural areas migrates to urban areas within the district or to other districts within the same state. However, this is not the case with Bijnor district. Urban out-migrants can bear comparatively higher cost of migration in terms of travel and other expenses and out-migrants have higher level of educational attainment compared to rural people and hence they can migrate to distant places in other states or even to other countries.

**Inter-District Male Out-Migration**

Inter-district out-migration (movement of people from one district to another district within the state) from the study area was also not very significant as only 12.90 percent of the total male out-migrants from Bijnor
district out-migrated to other districts within Uttar Pradesh. As discussed earlier, Bijnor district is situated in the western region of Uttar Pradesh which is the most developed among the four regions of the state. Hence, majority of the inter-district out-migrants from the Bijnor district confined themselves within the western region especially in the districts such as Ghaziabad, Gautam Buddha Nagar, Aligarh, Moradabad, Meerut and Muzaffarnagar.

Table 2: Type of Migration from Surveyed Towns of Bijnor District (In Percent), 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Migration</th>
<th>Noorpur</th>
<th>Haldaur</th>
<th>Jalalababd</th>
<th>Nagina</th>
<th>Sahaspur</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intra-District</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-District</td>
<td>10.34</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>19.05</td>
<td>11.84</td>
<td>16.13</td>
<td>12.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inter-State</td>
<td>75.86</td>
<td>75.61</td>
<td>59.52</td>
<td>63.16</td>
<td>54.84</td>
<td>65.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>8.62</td>
<td>9.76</td>
<td>19.05</td>
<td>23.68</td>
<td>25.81</td>
<td>18.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculations based on Field Survey Conducted from February to May, 2011

**Inter-State Out-Migration from Bijnor District**

Inter-state out-migration contributed to about 65 percent of the total out-migration from the sampled towns of Bijnor district. However, this varied from town to town: the highest being from Noorpur (75.86 Percent) closely followed by Haldaur (75.61 Percent) and the lowest from Sahaspur (54.84 Percent). Pattern of inter-state male out-migration from urban areas of Bijnor district were highly uneven and directed toward the developed industrialised and urbanised states. Under development in terms of lack of industrialisation, scarcity of social amenities and facilities such as institutions of higher, technical and professional education, inadequate and uncertain power and water supply etc. in the urban areas of Bijnor district and its strategic location in the vicinity of other states like Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, Chandigarh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh have prompted its people to migrate to these states and a large proportion of the male population from the district migrate to other countries also.

Strategic geographical location of Bijnor district has encouraged its people to migrate to different states of India because many states and union
territories are very close and well connected by rail and roads to Bijnor district. Hence, the people of the district have enjoyed this geographical advantage in the migration process. Various states and UTs like Uttarakhand, Haryana, Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi, Chandigarh and Rajasthan are in the near vicinity of district. These states and UTs are comparatively developed and easily provide employment to people, they, therefore, exert a pull on the population of Bijnor district. The pattern of urban male out-migration from Bijnor district is slightly different from the rest of Uttar Pradesh because as per Census of India for entire Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra was the chief destination, whereas in case of Bijnor district it was Delhi that attracted the largest proportion of male migrants from the district. However, Maharashtra has evolved as the second most preferred destination and was closely followed by Uttarakhand. Delhi and Maharashtra are the traditional destinations for the male migrants from Bijnor district but recently after the creation of Uttarakhand in 2001, it has emerged as one of the most attractive destinations for the male migrants from urban areas of Bijnor district. Moreover, Uttarakhand has locational advantage as it shares its boundary with Bijnor district and many cities of Uttarakhand are in the near vicinity and have emerged as growing cities after the formation of Uttarakhand. Therefore, Uttarakhand is increasingly becoming one the most preferred destinations for urban male out-migrants from Bijnor district.

The percentage distribution of inter-state male out-migrants from the surveyed towns of Bijnor district has been displayed in Table 3. From the table it is clear that the most prominent destination for inter-state urban male out-migrants from Bijnor district was identified as Delhi. It is very close to the towns of Bijnor district and requires all types of labour force due to its diversified nature of functions. Therefore, a very large section of the population from the district chose to migrate to Delhi. More than one-fourth of the total inter-state male out-migrants from Bijnor district moved to Delhi. Social networking plays a key role in selecting a destination by the out-migrants. Maharashtra was the second most important destination for the urban males of Bijnor district. About 18 percent of the total inter-state out-migrants from the district preferred Maharashtra as their destination. Though Maharashtra is very far from Bijnor district which is located in the north-western part of Uttar Pradesh, but due to the unavailability of employment opportunities in the district the male population is compelled to out-migrate to this far away located state. As
already stated, Maharashtra is one of the most industrialised states of India and thus acts to pull male population from less urbanised, less industrialised and backward areas of various states. Uttar Pradesh and Bijnor district in particular are no exception to it.

Uttarakhand has evolved as the third main destination for inter-state urban male out-migrants (15 percent) from Bijnor district and was followed by Haryana (11.54 percent) Punjab (8 percent), Chandigarh (5.56 Percent). Rajasthan attracted 4.44 percent of the total out-migrants. All these states are also in the near vicinity of Bijnor district and therefore many young people of Bijnor district facing the problem of unemployment at origin, chose to move to these nearby states. While around only one-tenth of the total urban male out-migrants from Bijnor district moved to other states of India not mentioned above.

Table 3: Pattern of Male Out-Migration from Urban Bijnor District to Various States (In Percent), 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State of Destination</th>
<th>Noorpur</th>
<th>Haldaur</th>
<th>Jalalabad</th>
<th>Nagina</th>
<th>Sahaspur</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Delhi</td>
<td>22.73</td>
<td>22.58</td>
<td>28.00</td>
<td>31.25</td>
<td>35.29</td>
<td>28.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>25.00</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>20.00</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>14.71</td>
<td>17.58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uttarakhand</td>
<td>13.64</td>
<td>22.58</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>11.76</td>
<td>14.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>11.36</td>
<td>16.13</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>10.42</td>
<td>11.76</td>
<td>11.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punjab</td>
<td>9.09</td>
<td>6.45</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>8.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandigarh</td>
<td>4.55</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>4.17</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajasthan</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>6.25</td>
<td>5.88</td>
<td>4.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other states</td>
<td>6.82</td>
<td>9.68</td>
<td>12.00</td>
<td>10.42</td>
<td>11.76</td>
<td>9.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculations based on Field Survey Conducted from February to May, 2011

Emigration from Bijnor District

As stated earlier, that urban areas of Bijnor district are predominantly Muslims dominated. Muslims have a very high tendency emigrating towards Gulf country. It is also evident in Bijnor district round 18 Percent of the out-migrants were recorded to have been working in other countries. This is very high when compared to the proportion of international out-migration of the urban male out-migrants (5 percent) from Uttar Pradesh (NSS 64th Round, 2007-08). The proportion of international out-migrants varied from town to town.
The lowest proportion of international out-migrants was found from Noorpur (8.62 percent) while the proportion of international out-migrants from Sahaspur was as high as 25.81 percent. The pattern of international out-migration from the district was highly directed towards the Gulf countries, specifically Saudi Arabia. Muslim population usually migrate to Saudi Arabia because of religious and cultural factors. However, the nature of this migration was entirely different from the one to the industrialised countries. Majority of the migrants are unskilled or semiskilled (Sekher, 1997) and have a very low educational status.

**Determinants of Out-Migration**

As mentioned earlier, majority of the towns in Bijnor district are small and medium in size and have evolved as agriculture dependent towns. Presently, they are therefore unable to support the growing modern demands of their population based on agricultural dominant economy. Hence, they are experiencing very high male out-migration in search of livelihood. Lack of economic opportunities and social amenities and facilities compels the population to leave for elsewhere within and outside the national border. In different towns various factors have motivated to out-migrate. For instance, Nagina town was famous for its handicrafts but during the last few years this art has been abandoned by many workers due to the replacement of the handicraft items by plastic and electronic products from China that are much cheaper than the wooden items produced in Nagina. Besides, some of the people associated with the export of the handicraft items pointed out that the 9/11 attack on the World Trade Centre (WTC) in the USA has disconnected their linkages to the importing countries and thus trade network could not be maintained or revived again. Besides, increase in wood prices and stringent laws regulating the cutting of the trees from the nearby forests have also affected the handicraft industry of the town, thus forcing people to out-migrate. Handloom and power loom industry was also common in many towns of the district. However, it has also declined very rapidly due to unavailability of raw materials resulting in high cost of raw material. Moreover, introduction of new sophisticated machines in big cities has put a brake on the handloom sector in small and medium size towns. Therefore all these problems have motivated the male population to out-migrate to other areas. Both these activities namely handicraft and handloom industry were dominated by Muslim population and therefore their decline has mainly
affected the Muslim population consequently forcing them to migrate to other areas.

Though there may be very many reasons to migrate, yet economic hardships and poverty often create strong compelling factors for out-migration. A migrant from an impoverished backward region may be attracted to more prosperous regions because of better public facilities and amenities, higher salaries, more prosperous business, more employment opportunities etc. (Parida and Madheswaran, 2010). In a *laissez faire* economy where the process of migration is mostly voluntary, the relative strength of the push and pull factors, both in the areas of departure and arrival, determine the volume and direction of migrants (Premi, 1980). Small and medium size towns have a relatively high incidence of urban poverty because of their poor economic base, poor infrastructural facilities and amenities as well as poor employment opportunities. These centres also suffer from finance for improving the situation. Therefore, small and medium size towns are emerging as important challenge for the policymakers from the point of poverty reduction as well as human development (Hiraway and Mahadevia, 2004).

In case of male out-migration from the urban areas of Bijnor district, predominantly economic reasons prompt people to leave their origin. Though this is voluntary migration but mainly forced by economic conditions of the households and the unavailability of employment in the study area. In the more general form, out-migration of male population from the study area seems to be a collective outcome of individual, household and community decisions arising in response to the unavailability of employment opportunities along with the lack of infrastructural facilities and amenities.

Table 4 illustrates that around 16 percent out-migrants left the study areas because of no work opportunity at the place of origin. About one-fourth of the total migrants did not get appropriate work at the origin so they migrated to other places from the study area. About 16 percent of the total male out-migrants from the surveyed towns out-migrated to other place because they could not get appropriate wages as per their skills and abilities to sustain their lives. All these circumstances exert a push on the male population especially the young males and prompt them to migrate to other places. Out-migration of the male population is increasingly getting significant.
Table 4: Reasons for Male Out-Migration from Sampled Towns of Bijnor District (In Percent), 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason for Out-Migration</th>
<th>Name of Town</th>
<th>Noorpur</th>
<th>Haldaur</th>
<th>Jalalababd</th>
<th>Nagina</th>
<th>Sahaspur</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No work opportunity at the place of origin</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.24</td>
<td>12.20</td>
<td>19.05</td>
<td>9.21</td>
<td>24.19</td>
<td>16.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not get appropriate work</td>
<td></td>
<td>24.14</td>
<td>26.83</td>
<td>21.43</td>
<td>27.63</td>
<td>19.35</td>
<td>24.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not get appropriate wages</td>
<td></td>
<td>13.79</td>
<td>7.32</td>
<td>16.67</td>
<td>19.74</td>
<td>17.74</td>
<td>15.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.34</td>
<td>12.20</td>
<td>9.52</td>
<td>15.79</td>
<td>12.90</td>
<td>12.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To get better opportunity</td>
<td></td>
<td>20.69</td>
<td>24.39</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>13.16</td>
<td>11.29</td>
<td>16.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td></td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>11.90</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>5.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Calculations based on Field Survey Conducted from February to May, 2011

There is a lack of institutions of higher, technical and professional education in the towns of Bijnor district. Further, the quality of education is very poor in the existing institutions of education in the study area. People think that their children can perform better and can get good education if they are admitted in the highly reputed educational institutions of other places outside Bijnor district. 12.54 percent of the male out-migration was prompted by education. A manifestation of the dearth of educational institutions in these towns is reflected by the urban male literacy. Low urban literacy rate in the district may be attributed to the dearth of educational facilities and poverty of people to educate their children. Most of the towns of Bijnor district are Muslim dominated. Therefore the under development of educational institutions here may be partly due to negligence of the government and partly due to unawareness of the Muslim population towards education. Many of the towns of the district till recently did not even have a high school or intermediate college. However, at present the spread of awareness have resulted Muslims communities to send their children for professional, technical and higher education. Nearly one-tenth of the total male population from the study area, however, was pulled by higher salaries at other places that induced them to migrate. Around 16 percent of the male out-migrants from the district
were motivated to get better opportunities and remaining about 6 percent migrated for other reasons.

**Decision to Out-Migrate**

The decision to migrate is made by one member, or by some agreement among members of a household. Those who migrate and those who do not, both in places of origin and in destinations, may be engaged in making decisions about migration and may be affected by those decisions actually participating in the decision making process, while the opposite is uncommon (Roseman, 1971; and Trager, 1984). Participation in the decision to out-migrate depends on the degree of mutual understanding and maturity and age of various members in the household as well as the understanding of the prevailing situations at the destination. In majority of the cases the decision about out-migration of any male member is taken by the family. However, in many cases the decision to out-migrate is taken by the out-migrant himself as he is central to the process of migration, especially if he is the household head. When people are unable to get any employment at their home place or do not get proper employment or want to get some better opportunities, they are determined to leave that place. Fig. 1 illustrates that the decision of about 42 percent of the total out-migrants was taken by all family members, especially the mature ones. Family members discuss thoroughly various negative and positive aspects of migration as well as the cost involved in the process of migration. Finally, based on this they decide whether to out-migrate or not.

Around 29 percent of the out-migrants themselves decided to out-migrate from the study area though they also took permission from other family members. In this case, out-migrants were mainly the head of the nuclear family. Some young people who do not wish to work in their native place for some reasons also were the main decision makers. The third important decision makers in the family were the parents. The decision of around one-fourth of the total out-migrants was taken by parents. In some cases children were very willing to out-migrate, but they cannot take decisions on their own. Sometimes parents insist children to leave their homes because they do not want their children sit idle at home because of certain prevailing situations such as bad company of boys at the place of origin therefore they insist their son(s) to out-migrate for work or study. Out-migration of
about 4.6 percent male out-migrants was decided by their elder brothers. In these cases, the elder brother was the head of the household and he took the migration decision for his younger brothers.

![Fig. 1: Male Out-Migration from Sampled Towns by Decision Making, Bijnor District, 2011](image)

Source: Calculations based on Field Survey Conducted from February to May, 2011

### Social Networking: Source of Information Regarding Migration

Social networks have been commonly accepted to be extremely influential in migration decisions making process. Migrant networks can facilitate migration through providing information on various issues that help in the process of migration (Dolfin and Genicot, 2010). Besides, socio-cultural variables as kinship, tribe, clan, language, caste and religion all play important roles in the decision to migrate as well as influence the direction and pattern of migration (Achanfuo-Yeboah, 1993). Thus, networks are significant to migrant adaptation as networks facilitate the processes of securing employment and housing. Networks may consist of family, friends, people from same caste or religion or others, but are most closely linked to a geographic space. Migrants typically form or join networks with those from their town, district or region (Jones, 2009.). Moreover, networks are very significant determinants in lowering the costs of migration. Social networks play a very crucial role in decision-making regarding the choice of location by migrants. Generally people choose to go to places where they have information about (Epstein and Gang, 2006).

Majority of the migrants maintain linkages with their area of origin through transfer remittances, investments, commodities and information. (Laczko, 2005.).
In present times social networking is said to be playing an important role in determining the direction, pattern and volume of migration. It enhances the process of migration. Today, various means of communication, e.g. mobile phones and various social networking sites have been keeping the people abreast of various locations in close contact and through these media it has become very easy and common to provide information about various opportunities—both social and economic.

Information that facilitate opportunity to migrate is an important aspect to be investigated while probing the process of out-migration from any area. Information plays a primary role in facilitating the process of migration. In the present time with the advancement in the science and technology, communication and transportation, obtaining the information about an opportunity or areas has become much easier, reliable and cheap. Since the advent of the mobile phone, it has become extremely easy for the poor as well as the uneducated people to get information about any opportunity, employer, type of work, people and the area of their destinations. Again, for educated people internet is proving to be very beneficial to obtain information about employment and the area they want to migrate in. However, Mitra and Murayama discussed that social networking is of paramount importance in the context of migration. But social networking is prevalent among the short distance migrants and tends to lose its significance with an increase in the distance between origin and destination with some exceptions among minorities and low castes that tend to pull migration through networking (Mitra and Murayama, 2008).

The respondents were asked how did they (the out-migrants) get information on employment, migration opportunity etc. The result revealed that relatives and friends played the significant role in providing information about an opportunity. Fig. 2 demonstrates that 44.44 Percent of the total out-migrants were informed about migration opportunities by their relatives. Many out-migrants usually remain in close contact with their relatives at the origin and they try to invite their relatives to visit their destination.

Friends also help very much in providing information about the opportunities at distant places. In the study area close to one-third (31.54 percent) of the total migrants were informed about the opportunity by their friends. The third important source of information about opportunities to out-migrate was agents or middlemen. However, this source was specifically relevant in case of
emigration to other countries. Though, a very large proportion of emigrants provide information for their relatives, but most of them being less educated cannot help in getting an employment opportunity in a foreign country and thus actually it is the agent or the middleman who helps in emigration. Thus a tenth of the total out-migrants were informed about migration opportunity by an agent or a middleman. Nearly 7 percent of the total out-migrants got information about the opportunity for migration from other sources. Nowadays newspaper and internet are also important migration facilitating factors. Many people read about an opportunity in the news papers and the internet and thus obtain information about job prospects. However, this source of information has its own limitation that it can be used by educated persons only and by those who know how to operate the internet. But, the new generation is using this source widely and increasingly. Young people tend to join various social networking sites and many of the migrants who are the members of such sites usually post an opportunity on the site and this information is visualised by all his friends or by all the members of a particular group. Only 6.81 percent of the out-migrant’s family members responded that they do not know how out-migrant got information about the opportunity or what is the source behind the migration. From the ongoing discussion it is, thus, clear that social networking has played a very important role in facilitating the processes of out-migration from the study area.

![Fig. 2: Source of Information About Opportunity to Out-Migrate from Bijnor District, 2011](image_url)

Source: Calculations based on Field Survey Conducted from February to May, 2011
Effect of Background Characteristics on Urban Male Out-Migration (Logistic Regression Analysis)

The process of out-migration from a household is motivated by various background characteristics of the households. Therefore, with the help of logistic regression analysis the effect of various background characteristics has been employed to investigate the likelihood of out-migration by religion, caste, type of family and number of male members in the household. In the present analysis, out-migration has been taken as a dependent variable while variables viz. religion, caste, type of family and number of male members in the household have been taken as independent variables. The dependent variable, i.e. male out-migration from a household has been taken in binary form that is ‘1’ for out-migrating households and ‘0’ for non out-migrating households. Independent variables have been used in categorical form. The effect of these variables has been shown on out-migration from a household.

The decision to out-migrate may also be influenced by one’s religion. In India there are various religious groups and each of these is very much different in social and economic background from the other. This ultimately affects the process of out-migration. It has empirically been established that socio-economically Muslims are more backward compared to other religious groups. Therefore, they prefer to send one or more male members to other places for economic security. Urban areas of Bijnor district are predominantly Muslim dominated and the proportion of the Hindu population is significantly lower. The Sikhs community contributes a very low proportion to the total population the district. Therefore, due to low proportion of the Sikh households among the surveyed households, these households have been combined with Hindus households and thus a new category of religion named other has been created for logistic analysis. In other words only two religious categories namely Muslim and others have been used in logistic analysis. From Table 5 it is seen that the probability of out-migration from the households of other religion is 32 percent less as compared to the Muslim households.

Various studies have shown that caste plays an important role in stimulating out-migration of one more male members from a household. In present study it is revealed that the probability of out-migration is very high among the Other Backward Caste followed by the general castes while among the scheduled
caste the probability is the lowest. The probability of out-migration from the other backward castes is 28 percent higher compared to the general caste. while the probability of out-migration from a schedule caste household is about 27 percent less as compared to the general castes.

Table 5: Effect of Background Characteristics on Urban Male Out-Migration from Urban Bijnor: Result of Logistic Regression, 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Background Characteristics</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Exp(B)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Muslims(Ref)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Religions (Mainly Hindus)</td>
<td>0.686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caste</td>
<td>General Caste(Ref)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Backward Caste</td>
<td>1.283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Scheduled Caste</td>
<td>0.735</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Family</td>
<td>Joint Family(Ref)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Type of Families (Mainly Nuclear)</td>
<td>0.680*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Male Members</td>
<td>1 to 2 Males(Ref)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in Household</td>
<td>3 to 4 Males</td>
<td>1.718*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5 and More Males</td>
<td>2.978***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.636</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-2 LogLikelihood</td>
<td></td>
<td>518.777</td>
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<td>Nagelkerke R Square</td>
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Source: Calculations based on Field Survey Conducted from February to May, 2011
Note: *** Significant 1 percent level; * 10 Significant at 10 percent; (Ref) Reference Category;
Dependent variable Type of Household: ‘1’= Out-Migrating Households, ‘0’= Non Out-Migrating Household

Type of family is also one the significant factors responsible for out-migration from a household. Generally, joint families have a larger household size so there is a higher probability of out-migration of one or more members from joint families. In the surveyed households three types of families viz. joint families, nuclear families and extended families have been found. But the extended families constitute a very small proportion of all the families. Therefore, extended families have been combined with nuclear families and thus a new category namely ‘other family type’ has been created for the logistic analysis. The result of logistic regression unveiled that the likelihood of out-migration from households of other families was 32 percent less as compared to the joint families and it was significant
at 10 percent level of significance. This may be attributed to the reason that joint families have higher pressure for sustenance from the limited resources therefore in such families out-migration of one or more male members is preferred.

The number of male members in a household motivates one or more male members for employment, education or for other purposes. The likelihood of out-migration is higher among households with large number of male members. The likelihood of out-migration is about 1.7 times higher among the households with 3 to 4 male members compared to the households with 1 to 2 male members, and this was found to be significant at 10 percent level of significance. The probability of out-migration further increases as the number of male members in the household increases. It is evident that the probability of out-migration from a household with 5 and more male members was 2.9 times higher compared to the households with 1 to 2 male members (reference category); this was found to be significant at 1 percent level of significance.

**Conclusion**

The incidence of male out-migration from various households is very common among the surveyed towns in Bijnor district. Due to strategic geographical location of Bijnor district in relation to other states, inter-state out-migration from the district has emerged as the predominant form of migration which has overshadowed intra-district and inter-district migration. However, urban areas of the district being dominated by Muslim population, international migration to Gulf countries especially to Saudi Arabia is also very significant. Due lack of social and economic opportunities in these towns, male out-migration has emerged as a household strategy for survival. The pattern of inter-state male out-migration from various towns of Bijnor district is directed towards the neighbouring states, especially the Capital of the country-Delhi. However, many other states being very close to the towns of the district also attract a substantial percentage of the out-migrants from Bijnor District. Thus strategic geographical location of the district has played a significant role in driving people from its towns to various developed states. Among the distant states, Maharashtra was the chief destination.

Out-migration of the people from Bijnor district has been primarily stimulated by economic motives due lack of employment and other social opportunities in the urban areas. In other words out-migration of the people is
mainly motivated by push factors operating at household and the town level in Bijnor district. Social networking has played a significant role in facilitating and motivating the people at their origin for migration. Most of the people at the origin obtained information about various opportunities through their relatives and friends and the new generation is in constant contact with the out-migrants through social networking sites via the internet, email and mobile phones. For international out-migration agents and middlemen were the main facilitators. Emigration has emerged as the second most dominant type of migration due to very high concentration of Muslims in urban areas of the district. However, the flow of emigration was towards the Gulf countries especially Saudi Arabia.

Thus due to weak economic base, inadequate industrialization, lack of employment opportunities in the towns of Bijnor district, the male population is forced to out-migrate to other areas therefore, especial efforts should be made to strengthen the economic base, social amenities and facilities in the towns of the district. By doing so these towns will be able to hold and sustain their own population on one hand and will provide the employment opportunities to their immediate rural areas on the other thereby reducing large scale migration towards the large cities and thus will play a major role in the regional development of the area.

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‘Voluntary’ Repatriation of Rwandan Refugees in Uganda: Between Law and Practice-Views from Below\textsuperscript{1}

Ahimbisibwe FRANK

Abstract. Uganda hosts refugees from neighboring countries including Rwanda. By May 2017, Uganda was the second refugee hosting country in the world, with over 1.2 million refugees. In 2003, a tripartite agreement was signed to repatriate 25,000 Rwandan refugees. Only 850 refugees accepted to return and most of them came back almost immediately to Uganda on the grounds of insecurity and human rights violations in Rwanda. Although legal principles and norms exist on voluntary repatriation, they have been violated in the case of the Rwandans’ repatriation. There exists a gap between the legal principles and the practice of repatriation. This article analyzes this discrepancy from the refugees’ point of view by focusing on specific legal principles of repatriation.

Keywords: Rwandan refugees, Voluntary repatriation, Refugee law, Human rights law, Uganda, Rwanda

1. Introduction

According to UNHCR, “by the end of 2016, 65.6 million individuals were forcibly displaced as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence or human rights violations. Out of 65.6 million, 22.5 million persons were refugees\textsuperscript{2}, 40.3 million Internally Displaced Persons and 2.8 million asylum seekers”.\textsuperscript{3} Developing

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\textsuperscript{2} Out of the 22.5 million refugees, 17.2 million refugees are under UNHCR’s mandate and 5.3 are Palestinian refugees registered by United Nations Relief and Works Agency.

regions hosted 84 percent of the world’s refugees under UNHCR mandate.\(^4\)

The UNHCR’s Annual Global Trends report further notes that, by the end of 2016, Uganda was hosting 940,800 refugees and asylum-seekers, the highest number in the country’s history. Uganda then was the 5\(^{th}\) largest refugee hosting country in the world and the first largest in Africa.\(^5\) By May 2017, this number stood at over 1.2 million.\(^6\) The majority of these refugees come from neighboring countries and the wider region, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Somalia, Rwanda, Kenya, Ethiopia and Eritrea among others. By February 2016 around 17,176 of these were Rwandan\(^7\) who arrived during and after the 1994 Rwandan genocide.

Uganda is a party to international refugee and human rights law which spell out the principles of voluntary repatriation as follows: the 1951 Convention\(^8\) and its 1967 Protocol\(^9\) (principle of non-refoulement)\(^10\), the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees\(^11\) (voluntary character of repatriation, cooperation between countries of asylum and origin, facilitation of returnees by country of origin and no penalty to

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\(^4\)Ibid.

\(^5\)Ibid: 15.


\(^7\)UNHCR (2016), Uganda-Monthly Refugee Statistics Update, February, Available at data.unhcr.org/drc/download.php?id=1216, [Accessed on 22\(^{nd}\) September 2016]. This number reduced from 25,000 in 2003 when the tripartite agreement of voluntary repatriation was signed.


\(^10\)Article 33 (1) of the 1951 Convention calls upon states not to expel or return refugees to countries where their lives and rights would be threatened due to race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

returnees). Other principles are provided in UNHCR Executive Conclusions No. 40 (XXXVI) 1985 (ceasing of causes for flight and return in safety and dignity) and No. 18 (XXXI) 1980 (refugees’ access to information about the country of origin and monitoring returnees at home by the UNHCR).

Uganda has also ratified international human rights law instruments which provide for the right to leave and return to one’s country: the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights\(^{13}\), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination\(^{14}\), the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)\(^{15}\) and the 1981 African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights (ACHPR)\(^{16}\). Other instruments include: the 1966 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)\(^{17}\), the 1984 Convention Against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment\(^{18}\), the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child\(^{19}\), the 1979 Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)\(^{20}\), the 1990 African Charter

\(^{12}\)See Article V of the 1969 OAU Convention.

\(^{13}\)UN (1948), *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (hereafter UDHR), adopted by General Assembly Resolution217A (III) of December 10, 1948.


on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC)\textsuperscript{21} and the 2003 Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (also known as “Maputo Protocol”).\textsuperscript{22}

The above international refugee and human rights legal instruments have been domesticated with the enactment of the 2006 Refugees Act\textsuperscript{23} and other domestic human rights laws including the 1995 Constitution and the 1997 Children’s Act.

Although legal principles and norms exist on voluntary repatriation, they have been violated in the case of Rwandans’ repatriation in Uganda. There is a gap between the legal principles and the practice of repatriation. This article analyzes this discrepancy from the refugees’ point of view by focusing on specific principles of repatriation. Refugee claims are verified by external points of view of stakeholders. The paper attempts to bring into the limelight the views of refugees which are at times ignored in refugee policy making.

Although there has been sufficient scholarly attention to repatriation of Rwandan refugees\textsuperscript{24}, there is little scholarly writing focused on the views and

\begin{flushleft}
23 Section 42 (1) provides for non-refoulement. It states that “….no person shall be refused entry into Uganda, expelled, extradited or returned from Uganda to any other country or subjected to any similar measures if, as a result of such refusal, expulsion, return or other measure, that person is compelled to return to or remain in a country where-(a) He/she may be subjected to persecution on account of race, religion, sex, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion…”.
\end{flushleft}
perspectives of stakeholders on the legal principles of repatriation especially the refugees. This paper lets the refugees speak.

This study is based on two research visits carried out at different intervals in Nakivale and Oruchinga settlements in south western Uganda. The first visit was June 2010 to December 2011. A second visit took place between June to August 2016. The study focused on Rwandan new caseload refugees and used a qualitative research methodology. Semi-structured and key informant interviews, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), observation and documentary evidence were the main research techniques. Purposive criterion sampling was used to select the study respondents, namely Rwandan refugees, Rwandan and Ugandan government officials, UNHCR and NGOs officials, as well as local hosts around Nakivale settlement, Isingiro District. In addition, ‘recyclers’ were identified through snowball sampling. Rwandan refugees and other categories of respondents answered questions on themes like refugee physical security, refugee rights and obligations, voluntary and forced repatriation, local integration, resettlement, the so-called cessation clause and, in general, avenues to find durable solutions. The


25 Rwandan new caseload refugees refer to Hutu that came during and after the 1994 genocide. Before them, Uganda hosted old case load Rwandan Tutsi refugees who arrived in 1959 and the early 1960s. The majority returned to Rwanda after the genocide while a significant number stayed in Uganda.

26 The first visit involved 162 respondents. 1 FGD, each with 12 Rwandans was organized in each of the 3 zones in Nakivale; Base Camp, Juru and Rubondo. In each of the zones, I interviewed 10 refugee leaders. I also interviewed 10 recyclers, 10 Isingiro district officials, 11 Officials from Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), 16 NGOs staff, 10 police officers, 36 local hosts (6 locals from each of the 6 sub-counties bordering Nakivale), 1 expert on refugee studies and 2 officials from the Rwandan High Commission in Kampala. In the second visit, a total of 182 respondents participated in the study. 4 FGDs each with 10 Rwandan refugees were organized in 4 zones of Nakivale settlement; Base Camp, Juru, Rubondo and Kabazana. The 5th FGD with 10 Rwandan refugees was organized in Oruchinga settlement. I interviewed 10 refugee leaders from each of the 4 zones in Nakivale. 10 refugee leaders were interviewed in Oruchinga settlement. Apart from the refugees, I interviewed 16 recyclers (10 in Nakivale and 6 in Oruchinga), 10 new asylum seekers (6 in Nakivale and 4 in Oruchinga), 6 OPM officials (4 in Nakivale and 2 in Oruchinga), 4 Isingiro district officials, 34 local hosts (24 in Nakivale and 10 in Oruchinga), 10 NGOs staff (6 in Nakivale and 4 in Oruchinga) and 2 officials from the Rwandan High Commission in Kampala.

27 Recyclers are Rwandan refugees who have been repatriated to Rwanda but have returned to Uganda claiming human rights violations, insecurity, persecution and inability to recover land and property in Rwanda.

28 The study observed ethical principles in research. The study was cleared by the Office of the Prime Minister and Isingiro District in Uganda. During the data collection exercise, the
analysis further makes use of secondary data, both scholarly articles and grey literature.

The paper is structured as follows. The first section addresses the views of refugees verified by the external points of view of stakeholders on Rwandan repatriation. The paper finally concludes with methodological and policy implications.

2. Rwandan refugee repatriation: Between law and practice-Views from below

2.1 Right to leave and return to one’s country

One of the principles of repatriation is the right to leave and return to the country of origin. The United Nations Human Rights Committee recalled in its General Comment 27 on Freedom of Movement that: “the right to return is of the utmost importance for refugees seeking voluntary repatriation”.29 Even more precisely, the right to return constitutes the legal precondition to realize repatriation.30 In other words, voluntary repatriation presupposes that refugees are entitled to exercise the human right to return to their country of origin. As a corollary of this right, the state of origin is bound to admit its nationals.31

Rwandan refugees observed that they fled due to violence and persecution. The respondents noted that their right to return had been respected. However, the majority argued that conditions in Rwanda did not favor return.

A refugee observed: “In 2003, we were told to go home. We welcomed it and went to Rwanda. The problem is that our country is not peaceful. The fact that we were consulted and facilitated to go home was a good gesture on the part of the Ugandan government and UNHCR”.32 The refugees argued that it was not safe to return. One respondent said, “Each one of us has a right to return to Rwanda. It is our motherland. However, almost all of us feel that it is not yet the right time to return to Rwanda because of dictatorship and human rights

respondents were briefed on the purpose of the study which was purely academic. Their confidentiality, informed consent and voluntary participation were observed and respected.


30 Chetail Vincent, “Voluntary Repatriation in Public International Law”, Ibid.

31 Ibid.

32 Focus Group Discussion, Rubondo zone, Nakivale on 8th July 2010.
violations”. A refugee man noted: “if we don’t want to exercise our right to return, why should we be forced to return?”. Another respondent argued: “I thought that I have freedom to decide whether to return or not”. It was clear that the refugees knew that they have a right to return but were not ready to make use of this right. To them, those forcing them to return home had ulterior motives.

NGOs, UNHCR and OPM officials observed that the refugees’ right to return was respected. This was through signing of a tripartite agreement, consultations, sensitization, registration and transportation. A UNHCR official noted: “We have provided an environment where refugees who are interested in returning are able to do so. We believe that the right to return is a fundamental human right that should be respected. However, a significant number of Rwandan refugees are not interested in return. For us we will continue to support those willing to return”.

2.2 Principle of Non-refoulement

Rwandan refugees pointed at non-refoulement as the most abused legal principle. The refugees were aware that return to their country of origin should be voluntary rather than forced. All the interviewed refugees agreed that they have experienced pressure to return. They stressed that this was a violation of the laws that govern refugees in the world. The following excerpts from the interviews are testimony of their views:

“In 2010, the Uganda Minister for Refugees came here in Nakivale together with officials from the Rwandan government and told us that we had lost our refugee status and had to return to Rwanda. He said that Rwanda was now peaceful and willing to receive us and there was no longer need for us to be here in the settlement. Our pieces of land where we used to grow food for our children were given to Congolese refugees in 2009. Since then life has changed. Our Congolese colleagues continue to harass us telling us to return to Rwanda. In some cases they call us names like murderers, Interahamwe and we feel this is an abuse. Our food rations have been reduced. Our children are hungry and no longer go to school. We are always turned away from hospitals telling us that our medicine is in Rwanda not in Nakivale. Life is very hard and miserable. We do not know what is next”.

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33 Interview with a refugee man, Kigali village, Nakivale on 23rd June 2010.
34 Interview with a refugee man, Kabazana village, Nakivale settlement on 14th June 2016.
35 Ibid.
36 Interview with UNHCR Protection Officer, Mbarara on 20th August 2010.
37 Focus Group Discussion, Juru zone, Nakivale settlement on 30th June 2010.
“When we came here in Nakivale, we were told that Rwandan refugees were no longer wanted here in Uganda and any time we were going to lose our refugee status. We defended ourselves saying that there was no peace for us in Rwanda. We did not understand until we were denied most of our rights through banning cultivation, reducing food rations and other discriminatory practices. We have continued to talk to the Settlement Commandant and UNHCR but they don’t want to listen and have kept a deaf ear. Some of us have contemplated committing suicide by throwing ourselves in the nearby Lake Nakivale. But when we think of our children and their future without parents we see that committing suicide will bring more misery to them. We are here but we are not here”. 38

“We used to enjoy our rights until 2009 when things started to change. They took land away from us. We started getting verbal attacks that we had overstayed in Uganda. They started turning us away from health centers. We know that all this is being done to make life hard and force us back to Rwanda”. 39

“Our rights are being violated by forcing us to return to Rwanda. If you are to understand the matter very well, you find that UNHCR has a hand in sending people back home by force. For instance in Tanzania and DRC, they forced Rwandan refugees to return home. Even in Burundi refugees were sent away by force. When you remained behind they would fire at you. This was a violation of their rights. It looks like now is our turn to return home by force”. 40

“In 2010 they tricked our fellow Rwandans that they were going to give them food rations and inform them of the decision on their application for refugee status. As they were gathered the army and police came and forced them on trucks and drove to Rwanda. We were here and saw everything with our eyes. People died and others were injured while children were separated from parents. They claimed only taking rejected asylum seekers but we know of genuine refugees who were returned at gun point. Was this right? This was illegal returning refugees to a country where they will be persecuted”. 41

One respondent claimed that “Kagame has been pushing ahead to see us being forced to Rwanda. He is on record to have said that Rwandan refugees in Nakivale will have to return home just like they did in Tanzania, DRC and Burundi”. 42

Another refugee man said: “Kagame said on national television and radio that he will

38Focus Group Discussion, Kabazana village, Nakivale settlement on 15th June 2016
39Focus Group Discussion, Rubondo zone, Nakivale settlement on 12th July 2016.
40Focus Group Discussion, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale settlement on 24th June 2010.
41Focus Group Discussion, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale settlement on 10th June 2016.
42Interview with a refugee woman, Juru zone, Nakivale settlement on 24th June 2010.
not rest until all the refugees in Nakivale have returned home. He asked why we are not returning. To him our continued stay in exile meant that we are running away from justice and reconciliation”. It was reported by others that the violation of Rwandan refugees’ rights was very common including forced repatriation. Others also mentioned that their right to voluntary repatriation had been violated because they were forced to go back to Rwanda.

A refugee woman notes: “Even if they stop us from cultivation, we will not return to Rwanda. Our refusal to return home is not connected to land in Nakivale. We would have returned immediately when they told us not to carry out cultivation activities. Our failure to return is closely related to politics, human rights and justice in Rwanda”. In one of the focus group discussions, refugees argued: “We know Kagame is trying to force Uganda to expel us. We know Uganda has no problem with us. We have been living here without harassment from the government. We request President Museveni to resist Kagame’s plan of repatriating us by force”.

The current repatriation of Rwandan refugees going on currently in Uganda cannot be called voluntary. It is indeed forced return as evidenced by ultimatums, verbal abuse and threats, deadlines, anti-Rwandan refugee rhetoric, destruction of crops and huts, restriction of access to humanitarian assistance, denial of refugee status, and starvation. Furthermore Rwandan refugees also face the possibility of invocation of the cessation of refugee status as recommended by UNHCR in December 2011. It is very clear that the threats of declaration and implementation of the cessation clause violate refugee rights and undermine the voluntary nature of repatriation. In circumstances where refugees are not given optional durable solutions like local integration or resettlement, invocation of cessation of refugee status means forced repatriation to Rwanda. These are some of the tactics used by the Government of Uganda to force the refugees to return to their country of origin.

43 Interview with a refugee man, Sangano, Nakivale settlement on 23rd June 2010.
44 Focus Group Discussion, Oruchinga settlement on 29th August 2016.
46 Focus Group Discussion, Rubondo zone, Nakivale Settlement on 12th July 2016.
47 The cessation of refugee status was initially set for implementation by 30th June 2013 and later suspended by government. After the 2016 UNHCR Executive Committee meeting in Geneva, the new proposed date for implementation of the cessation clause is December 2017.
48 The same view is reported by the following reports: Amnesty International (1997), Human Rights Overlooked in Mass Repatriation Report, 14th January, available at http://www.essex.ac.uk/armedcon/story_id/Human%20Rights%20Overlooked%20in%20Ma
Although most officials from government and humanitarian agencies submitted that repatriation of Rwandan refugees was voluntary in nature, some government and NGO officials interviewed said it was forced. An employee of GIZ stated: “I must say that the repatriation of Rwandan refugees was not voluntary. There was indirect force used because UNHCR and Governments of Uganda and Rwanda have argued that Rwandan refugees had overstayed in Uganda and yet their country is peaceful. They therefore should go back home”.49 Another official said “We don’t call the repatriation of Rwandans voluntary. The repatriation of Rwandans is forced as shown by push factors like deadlines to return, ban on cultivation, reduction in assistance, verbal attacks and threats and the recommendation of cessation clause in 2011. All these conditions undermine the voluntary nature of repatriation”.50

There were also threats from government officials putting pressure on Rwandan refugees to return. According to the Refugee Law Project, in November 2004, Moses Ali, First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Disaster Preparedness and Refugees (as he then was), on a visit to Nakivale told a group of Rwandan refugees: “You came here when you had problems at home and we granted you asylum. Today your country is very peaceful, why don’t you want to go home?”51 In addition Christine Aporu, State Minister for Disaster preparedness and Refugees (as she then was), told Rwandan refugees: “Pack your bags and go home. Rwanda is ready to receive you”.52 Such threats from government officials undermined the voluntary nature of repatriation.

In an interview with a Senior Protection Officer in the Office of the Prime Minister in Kampala the issue of Rwanda strongly pushing for repatriation and the cessation clause came out clearly. “Our colleagues from Rwanda have been pushing...
us in our tripartite commission meetings to buy their point of view of declaring cessation clause and forced repatriation of Rwandan refugees. At times we don’t agree with them but we are forced to compromise on our positions and policy regarding Rwandan refugee case load because of the need to maintain good interstate diplomatic relations”. 53 This was confirmed by an official working with the Refugee Law Project: “Obviously Rwanda is strongly pushing other countries to force all Rwandan refugees to return. Kagame knows very well the implications of failure to repatriate refugees outside Rwandan territory. Remember there is an active rebel group opposed to the Kigali government. Who knows Rwandan refugees in Uganda are a recruiting ground for these rebels. Because of national security interests, Kagame has made refugee repatriation one of his foreign policy priorities”. 54

According to an OPM official, “[t]here was a belief that Rwandan refugees were not willing to return to Rwanda because of the accessibility of land in Nakivale. Rwandans were the most productive refugee groups producing good harvests of mainly maize and beans which they would sell and get huge amounts of money. Our Rwandan colleagues (Rwanda Government Officials) thought that by denying Rwandans land, they would be encouraged to return to Rwanda. They asked us to implement this policy of putting a ban on cultivation as a way of encouraging repatriation”. 55 The same view was raised by an official working with the International Refugee Rights Initiative: “Rwanda at first thought that refugees were not returning due to land access in Nakivale. This issue of land was raised in the Tripartite Repatriation Commission and an agreement was reached to stop Rwandan refugees’ access to land. They thought this would encourage refugee returns. However, this policy has backfired since there are no refugees voluntarily registering for repatriation”. 56

According to the Settlement Commandant, Rwandan refugees were relying on food assistance from humanitarian agencies like the World Food Programme. Despite the fact that the ban on cultivation was implemented, few Rwandan

53 Interview with Senior Protection Officer, Directorate of Refugees, Office of the Prime Minister, Kampala on 16th August 2010.
54 Interview with an official of Refugee Law Project, Kampala on 15th August 2010.
55 Interview with Refugee Desk Officer, Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Mbarara on 22 July 2010; Interview with Refugee Desk Officer, Office of the Prime Minister (OPM), Mbarara on 27th August 2016.
56 Interview with an official of International Refugee Rights Initiative, Kampala on 22nd August 2016.
refugees were willing to return. Thus, “we thought a good number of them would have returned home by now but no one is interested in leaving Nakivale”.\textsuperscript{57} The above observations by government officials all confirm the forced nature of Rwandans’ repatriation.

\textbf{2.3 High Commissioner’s assistance to governmental and private efforts in promoting repatriation}

The UNHCR Statute calls upon the High Commissioner to facilitate and promote voluntary repatriation.\textsuperscript{58} The respondents were of the view that the UNHCR colluded with the Ugandan and Rwandan governments in the forced repatriation of Rwandan refugees.

The refugees argued that much as UNHCR has worked closely with the two governments, this was at the expense of refugees’ rights. A number of refugees interviewed pointed out that UNHCR only listens to governments’ views and interests and not to the refugees. For example, UNHCR is said to have participated in the recommendation of cessation clause for Rwandan refugees in December 2011 when it was very clear that Rwanda is not a peaceful country. The majority of the refugees expressed their unwillingness to return home despite the invocation of cessation clause. One of the refugees noted that “UNHCR only listens to governments. It does not listen to us refugees. Why should UNHCR listen to the views of Rwanda that there is peace and stability when we the refugees know very well that this is a complete and open lie? UNHCR should be renamed ‘United Nations High Commissioner for States’ (UNHCS) and not for Refugees”.\textsuperscript{59}

A Protection Officer noted: “The relationship between UNHCR and the two governments of Uganda and Rwanda has been cordial because the three of them had actively participated in the repatriation of Rwandan refugees. They signed a tripartite agreement in July 2003 and this is a legal basis for the repatriation exercise. The three partners have done sensitization of Rwandan refugees together and have shared information on repatriation”.\textsuperscript{60} The above view of the officials was positive about the role of UNHCR contrary to the refugees who saw the organization as being more on the side of states.

\textsuperscript{57} Interview with the Settlement Commandant, Nakivale Settlement on 25\textsuperscript{th} June 2010; Interview with the Settlement Commandant, Nakivale Settlement on 26\textsuperscript{th} August 2016.
\textsuperscript{58} Article 8(c).
\textsuperscript{59} Focus Group Discussion, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale on 24\textsuperscript{th} June 2010.
\textsuperscript{60} Interview with a Protection Officer, Office of the Prime Minister, Kampala on 17\textsuperscript{th} August 2010.
2.4 Cooperation between countries of asylum and origin

The refugees observed that Uganda and Rwanda cooperated in the repatriation process. The two countries hosted each other’s repatriation teams on several occasions. They also exchanged visits and held joint meetings on the repatriation of refugees. A refugee woman noted: “We have attended meetings addressed by officials from both countries. They told us to return home”.61 A refugee man observed that: “the two countries have cooperated in harassing us. They have carried out forced repatriation and plan to implement cessation clause”.62 In a FGD refugees noted that “Uganda and Rwanda have a close working relationship. Rwanda has influenced policies on refugees in Uganda. For example the decision to stop cultivation and forced repatriation is an example of the cooperation between the two countries”.63

An official in the Office of the Prime Minister noted that “Rwanda has cooperated with Uganda in the repatriation of refugees because it wants her nationals to go home. The fact that the two are signatories to the 2003 Tripartite Agreement is enough proof that there has been cooperation between the two countries”.64 An OPM protection officer noted: “Uganda and Rwanda are members of the Tripartite Commission. They meet regularly to share information, update each other and plan for the repatriation of refugees”.65 Other sources have reported on the cooperation of Uganda and Rwanda in the repatriation of Rwandans.66

2.5 Facilitation of returnees by country of origin

The refugees interviewed observed that there had not been enough facilitation of returnees in Rwanda. In fact most of them claimed that instead of

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61 Interview with a refugee woman, Kabazana village, Nakivale settlement on 15th June 2016.
62 Interview with a refugee man, Rubondo zone, Nakivale settlement on 11th July 2016.
63 Focus Group Discussion, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale settlement on 10th June 2016.
64 Interview with a Government official, OPM, Kampala on 17th August 2010.
65 Interview with a Protection Officer, OPM, Kampala on 1st June 2016.
being facilitated to reintegrate in the Rwandan society, they had been harassed, persecuted, imprisoned and even killed. Here are quotes of recyclers (former returnees) about their experiences in Rwanda.

“We went back to Rwanda but found out that our land was taken by a soldier in the Rwandan army. When we asked for our land, my husband was arrested and taken to prison but has never been tried. I know anytime the government will kill him. Fearing for my safety, I returned to Uganda”. 67

“We went to Rwanda in November 2009. Governments of Uganda and Rwanda and UNHCR persuaded us to return arguing that it was peaceful. I found four families living on my father’s land. When I requested for a portion of my father’s land, they told me to wait for ten years. When I refused to accept they took me to prison for two days. One person came and told me that in Rwanda they don’t speak out openly. This person advised me to forget about my father’s land. When I saw that my life was in danger, I decided to come back to Nakivale”. 68

“I did not find Rwanda a peaceful country. There is ‘Umuganda’ which is compulsory for everybody. Another problem is ‘Irondo’ (night patrols) and this is a source of fear for many people. Some people are picked from their homes and taken. At least here in Uganda we sleep till morning without any worry”. 69

The hardships faced by returnees in Rwanda are confirmed by UNHCR in its Global Appeal Report 2011 Update.

“Returnees to Rwanda receive three-month food rations as well as basic non-food items (NFIs), before their transport to their districts of origin is facilitated. But there is also a need for reintegration projects, including skills training, income-generation and livelihood activities. The returnees face extreme poverty, as well as land and shelter issues, lack of medical coverage, a dearth of job opportunities and the need to walk long distances in search of water”. 70

Furthermore, Rwandan Minister for Disaster Management and Refugees summarized the challenges facing returnees as follows:

“(1) Over 60% of returnee households were on permanent aid, (2) 96% needed support to re-build their shelters, (3) 72% had not received any kind of poverty alleviation assistance, (4) 50% of them did not possess any health insurance scheme, (5) 11% of returnees had no identification cards, (6) the vast

67 Interview with a recycler, Juru zone, Nakivale settlement on 30th June, 2010.
68 Interview with a recycler, Kabazana village, Nakivale settlement on 15th June 2016.
69 Interview with a recycler, Kabahinda village, Nakivale settlement on 10th July 2010.
majority of children born to returnees did not possess an adequate birth certificate, and (7) despite access to 12-years basic education the majority struggled to provide their children with school materials and uniforms”.  

2.6 No Penalty for returnees

According to the respondents, especially the former returnees, the Rwandan government was interested in penalizing the returnees for their role in the 1994 genocide. This affected almost everybody whether or not he/she participated in the genocide. They claimed that the fact that one was a Hutu was enough evidence to accuse them of genocide crimes. The following quotes illustrate the returnees’ experiences with regard to penalties faced.

“I have a brother who returned to Rwanda and was penalized for not stopping his dog from eating the dead bodies of Tutsi. This was after failing to get any evidence against him in the participation of the 1994 genocide”.  

“I reached Rwanda and one neighbor accused me of killing his relative. I was taken to Gacaca and forced to accept the charge. I am innocent and don’t know the person they were referring to. I found that people tell lies in Gacaca. I was taken to prison for one year. After coming out of prison I decided to return to Uganda”.

“There is collective guilt for all Hutu in Rwanda. People have been accused of cases they did not commit. Being a Hutu is enough evidence to implicate you in killing someone. I was falsely accused in Gacaca of assisting the Interahamwe kill people in a local church. I denied this accusation and asked them to bring evidence. Two people came out and said they saw me. I don’t know these people and have never seen them. A friend of mine who worked with Gacaca helped me to escape because he knew I was innocent”.

“I don’t advise anyone to return to Rwanda. There are two Rwandas. ‘Rwanda day’ and ‘Rwanda night’. Most people and the world know ‘Rwanda day’ that is peaceful without any problems. However, ‘Rwanda night’ is full of insecurity where people are arrested, tortured and harassed. I was harassed for not supporting the RPF in the 2010 elections. But I said ‘this is how democracy works that everyone has a party of his choice’. After a few days I was accused of promoting the genocide ideology”.

71 Ibid.
72 Interview with a refugee man, Juru zone, Nakivale on 3rd July 2016.
73 Interview with a recycler, Nyarugugu village, Nakivale settlement on 27th June 2010.
74 Interview with a recycler, Juru trading centre, Nakivale settlement on 1st July 2010.
75 Interview with a recycler, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale settlement on 10th June 2016.
However, the High Commissioner of Rwanda to Uganda claimed that “Some Rwandan refugees fear to go home because of their participation in the 1994 Genocide. Certainly when they are repatriated, they will be required to answer some questions”. The High Commissioner’s views are an illustration of the Rwandan government attitude towards the refugees.

Other sources have argued that the Rwandan government is hostile to refugees/returnees and treats them as genocidaires and traitors. This hostile reception to returnees undermines the principle of not penalizing returnees on account of their social group, collective guilt or time spent in exile.

2.7 Return in safety and dignity

According to Guy Goodwin-Gill and Jane McAdam, “the right of safe and free return is important in refugee protection. The countries of origin have responsibility of ensuring that refugees are able to return safely and freely.”

The refugees observed that their return was not safe and that the problem came after reaching Rwanda. They said that UNHCR facilitated their return by providing transport. However, on reaching Rwanda there was either little or no assistance at all from both the UNHCR and the Rwandan government. They claimed that they received equipment like hoes, jerry cans, saucepans and food around the period of 2004 and 2005. These items became scarce afterwards.

In addition, the respondents said that although the journey through Uganda was safe up to Rwanda, they experienced harassment, imprisonment and murder after being settled in their local communities. The majority of former returnees agreed that they escaped from prisons and local communities for fear of being killed. The researcher observed one refugee who was undergoing

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76 Interview with Rwanda’s High Commissioner to Uganda, Rwanda High Commission offices, Kampala on 1st September 2010.
80 Focus Group Discussion, Oruchinga settlement on 29th August 2016.
81 Ibid
82 Focus Group Discussion, Rubondo zone, Nakivale settlement on 12th July 2016.
83 Focus Group Discussion, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale settlement on 10th June 2016.
84 Interview with a recycler, Juru zone, Nakivale settlement on 15th July 2016.
medication treatment. He claimed that he sustained wounds all over his body while in the custody of Rwanda authorities.85

Other sources have reported on the challenges faced by returnees in Rwanda. According to IRIN, returnees were facing difficulties reintegrating in the local communities. Thus,

“Rukomo86 had capacity for 500 people and lacked water and adequate sleeping space, forcing some to sleep in the open. ‘The camp was basically an abandoned facility,’ an aid worker told IRIN. During a visit to the camp on 28 October, a source told IRIN the returnees were held under armed guard”.87

IRIN further notes that:

“Sources told IRIN some of the returnees were struggling to settle in their villages and to be accepted by their former neighbors. Felicien Mutemberezi, 48, a farmer from the northern Gicumbi District, told IRIN: ‘It is a disgrace that some of us are being treated as second-class citizens by our neighbors.’ Most of the people in his community, he added, referred to his family as ‘refugees’ because they had been away for 16 years. He acknowledged that the Rwandan government had provided some housing and domestic requirements, although he had failed to regain ownership of his land”.88

Similar views are shared by UNHCR Rwanda89, Amnesty International90 and Human Rights Watch91.

2.8 Ceasing of causes for flight

The refugees observed that Rwanda is not yet a peaceful country to allow repatriation. The former returnees observed that there are still cases of harassment, torture, imprisonment and murder of Hutu. In fact, the refugees

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85 Personal Observation of a recycler, Juru zone, Nakivale settlement on 1st July 2016.
86 According to IRIN, Rukoma camp is a reception centre for returnees in Rwanda. This is where returnees are kept for some time before being taken to their villages.
88 Ibid.
89 UNHCR, Rwanda Global Appeal 2010; UNHCR, Rwanda Global Appeal 2011.
accused the Rwanda government and the UNHCR of telling them lies about their country. They observed that there was no freedom of speech and anyone who dared oppose the government was looked at as a traitor.

In a FGD refugees argued that: “I cannot return to Rwanda because there is a deliberate policy to kill returnees especially the educated ones because they know we are going to oppose them. We have on several occasions told UNHCR that Rwanda is insecure but it has refused to listen to us”.92 A refugee woman noted: “Rwanda is not yet peaceful. There are still human rights violations, political persecution and harassment. These are not easily seen by outsiders. We Rwandans know very well what takes place inside the country”.93

The general view among the refugees was that the reasons which forced them to flee Rwanda still exist. Although there was no open war in Rwanda, the refugees believed that there was a silent war going on.

Other sources have reported on human rights violations, dictatorship and injustice in Rwanda94. According to these sources the socio-economic and political conditions in Rwanda are responsible for the continued displacement of asylum seekers into neighboring countries. The same sources have warned that Rwanda may explode again.

2.9 Refugees’ access to information about the country of origin

Most refugees noted that they obtain information about Rwanda through videotapes, go-and-see-visits and delegations of Rwanda and Uganda and of UNHCR. However, they observed that they did not get accurate information on the conditions in Rwanda. They claimed that the UNHCR and the Rwandan government told them lies as a way of convincing them to return.

In a FGD refugees noted that: “they brought video tapes to educate us on

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92Focus Group Discussion, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale on 24th June 2010.
93Interview with a refugee woman, Juru zone, Nakivale settlement on 3rd July 2016.
repatriation. They showed us the conditions in Rwanda and how they have improved. However, I was not convinced because they only showed us the good things about Rwanda. We know that inside the rural areas things are different”.95 A refugee man argued that: “The Rwandan government has sent several delegations to talk to us. However, we believe that these government officials have not told us the truth. They only say positive things about Rwanda and this is not true”.96 A refugee woman noted: “We don’t trust the views of UNHCR, Rwandan and Ugandan government officials about the conditions in Rwanda. They always want to paint a rosy picture. We have our own sources that give us correct information about Rwanda.”97

UNHCR and OPM officials argued that they have given refugees accurate information about Rwanda. This was through “go-and-see-come-and-tell visits”, brochures, meeting and engaging refugees, hosting Rwandan government delegations among others. They observed that despite all sensitization efforts, refugees did not trust the information given to them.

One can argue that the refugees themselves know the problems affecting them. When the majority of refugees question the accuracy of the information given to them, the voluntary nature of repatriation becomes questionable. Why would returnees and new asylum seekers continue to flee Rwanda if it is peaceful and secure?

Other sources have reported on the inaccuracy of the information given to the refugees about Rwanda.98

2.10 Monitoring returnees at home by the UNHCR

The refugees especially the former returnees noted that there was either minimal or no monitoring of returnees by the UNHCR. Many claimed that after reaching Rwanda, the returnees were left on their own without any assistance from the UNHCR. A former male returnee had this to say: “Those who go back to Rwanda stay in a place called “imidugudu” – a small town with no land. Here returnees look after themselves with no assistance from either the Rwandan

95 Focus Group Discussion, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale on 24th June 2010.
96 Interview with a refugee male leader, Kigali village, Nakivale settlement on 18th June 2016.
97 Interview with a refugee female leader, Sangano Base Camp, Nakivale settlement on 11th June 2016.
98 International Refugee Rights Initiative, Refugee Law Project & Social Science Research Council, “A Dangerous Impasse”, op.cit; Fahamu Refugee Programme, “Rwanda: Cessation of Refugee Status is Unwarranted”.

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government or UNHCR”. A recycler noted: “I returned to Rwanda in 2004 but we did not get assistance from UNHCR inside Rwanda. The only assistance we got was before we left Uganda. Returnees look after themselves with no assistance and monitoring by UNHCR”.

A UNHCR official observed that the organization is overstretched and may not be able to carry out all its responsibilities. The organization faces challenges of limited funding. This affects its performance in meeting all its obligations. Other sources have reported on UNHCR’s limited monitoring of returnees in Rwanda.

3. Conclusion

This article has argued that although legal principles and norms exist on voluntary repatriation, they have been violated in the case of the repatriation of Rwandan refugees living in Uganda. From the refugees' point of view, there exists a gap between the legal principles and the practice of repatriation. Views from government, UNHCR and NGO officials to a large extent agreed with the refugees’ views.

The insights in this article have methodological and policy implications. From a methodological perspective, more work needs to be done to identify and explore the gap between the official narrative of government, UNHCR and NGOs and the views of refugees who are at the receiving end. Most times, the official narrative supports the view that repatriation is voluntary and done in accordance with the law. All that is presented is how UNHCR, NGOs and government fulfill their legal and moral obligations in the repatriation process. It might be argued that the findings in this article do not correspond with the view that repatriation was done legally. The approach of exploring the views of refugees helps us to understand ‘voluntary’ repatriation from their point of view. There is need for further research on refugees' lived experiences and fears.

From a policy point of view, the insights in this article call for a review of

99 Interview with a refugee man (formerly a returnee), Kigali village, Nakivale on 25th June 2010.
100 Interview with a recycler, Kabazana village, Nakivale settlement on 15th June 2016.
101 Interview with a UNHCR official, Mbarara on 20th August 2016.
how policies and decisions are made with regard to voluntary repatriation. Most
times policies are made by governments, UNHCR and NGOs without listening to the
refugees. The decision to repatriate Rwandan refugees was made by Uganda,
UNHCR and Rwanda when they signed a tripartite agreement in July 2003. More
than thirteen years later, a significant number of refugees have not returned. Some
of those who returned have moved back to Uganda. This raises questions of
whether there were consultations of Rwandan refugees before the repatriation
process started. This calls for a bottom up as opposed to top down approach in
refugee policy making. The approach that involves refugees will help in making
policies and decisions that protect their rights, security, welfare and well-being.

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Ahimbisibwe Frank (2011) Repatriation as a durable solution to the Rwandese refugee problem in Uganda, Saarbrucken, VDM Verlag Publishers

103 Email communication with the Refugee Desk Officer, Mbarara, Office of the Prime Minister on 8th December 2016. According to this official, there are no official statistics of Rwandan recyclers in Uganda.


Legislation


UN (1948), Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Adopted and Proclaimed by the General Assembly Resolution 217A (III) of December 10.


FOCUS: REFUGEES' EXPERIENCES

Underage Syrian Refugee Girls at an Impasse

Rachid ACIM

Abstract. In an article published in the *Atlantic* on 3 June 2015, Alan Taylor wrote that millions of people are migrating because they are “escaping regions plagued by warfare, instability, disasters, poverty, or systemic persecution”, and he added that multiple crises worldwide are driving the record migrations, which include Africans and Middle Easterners entering Europe, Rohingya Muslims fleeing Burma, Central Americans travelling to the U.S., Yemen, Burundi, Somalia, Iraq, and more – all undertaking risky journeys to find better lives. This forced migration is inclusive of Syrian refugees, who are seemingly scattered in diasporic communities in many parts of the world, due to their massive exodus from the civil war that plagued their country. This paper purports to investigate the exploitation of Syrian children, the early marriage, rape and divorce of Syrian girls, whose nightmarish stories unequivocally troubled the journalists in the newsrooms and the layman in the public space. News media, British and American, constitute the mainstay of this enquiry in as much as they invariably shed light on the Syrian crisis and the psychological traumas of Syrian children.

Keywords: Syrian Teenagers; Traumas; British and American Media; Narratives; Positive Discourse Analysis

Introduction

Ever since their appearance media in general, and in particular print media, like magazines, books and newspapers, have focussed on a wide range of topics in different historical contexts, be they political, social, economic, and religious. The coverage of wars, armed conflicts, for example, along with migration and refugee movements, took the lion’s share in the media landscape. Though the media might be biased in its representation of reality because it neither duplicates the world of phenomena as it is, nor reflects human reality by ‘holding a mirror up to society’
(Russel, 2006, p. 188), it presumably propels people to think of and ponder upon certain events that troubled them for so many years. Mishra and Tiwari (2016) maintain that

“The role of media has become very important in shaping present day society. Media is part of life, all around, from the shows one watches on television or the music one hears on the radio, to the books, magazines and newspapers one reads. It educates people about the current issues and it influences public opinion. The general public relies on media to know about happenings in society. Media is often considered as the fourth pillar of the society and the democratic medium of information” (p. 142).

As well as sociologists, discourse analysts and stylisticians, have traditionally emphasized the enormous power of the media in determining how news are produced and received. Back to the 1960s -1970s, the primary focus was on the power of the media (that is, those institutions, organizations and individuals with the power to control the means of text and image production) to ‘manufacture news by means of selection, narrative, ideological interpretation, agenda-setting and so on (qtd in Jonathan and Flam, 2015, p. 90). The media, namely newspapers and magazines, in electronic and in print format, “became important for communicating information” (Kipphan, 2001, p. 6). It performs a myriad of additional functions, which range from education and information to entertainment. Ryan and Conover (2004) opine that the “newspaper is a marvellous compendium of our collective daily lives. It provides information from every corner of the globe, and news from just around the corner – on just about any subject you can imagine: politics, war, sports, business, arts, editorials, advertising, entertainment, weather, and comics” (p. 516).

Newspapers are, therefore, instrumental in bringing up unity among the masses and are, in so far as Mishra and Tiwari (2016, p. 142) are concerned, “the backbone of the nation”. In nation states such as the United States of America and Britain, newspapers are the sine qua non for freedom. Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) strongly supported press freedom when he called for the press reforms and balanced reporting. “Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or newspapers without a government”, Jefferson once wrote, “I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter” (Detrani, 2011, p. 154).

In a similar vein, Williams (2010) noted that “[N]ewspapers have always played an important role in the lives of British people” (p. 1). Many British
newspapers such as the *Sun, Independent, Mail, Guardian, Telegraph* and *Star*, are purchased and widely read per capita than in any other European country. It is not accidental then that American and British newspapers have allotted a large space to the coverage of news about human concerns and problems like poverty, family conflict, religious strife, racial prejudice, and perhaps most importantly, forced migration and refugee crises worldwide. The latter problems, it ought to go without saying, have not only roused the curiosity of the journalists in the newsrooms but they have also provoked the actors of the political scene. Bulcha (1987), in this respect, claims that

“Refugees are one of the major problems facing the international community today. The causes of refugeeism are complex and people flee their countries for a wide variety of reasons. Persecution, for racial, political, or religious reasons, war, famine and starvation, or fear of these phenomena, cause major exoduses which we know are taking place in the world today” (p. 19).

The aims of this paper are twofold: it seeks to examine, on the one hand, the psychological traumas to which Syrian children are exposed along their exodus to other destinations like Jordan and Lebanon, and it showcases the subjugation and the commodification of underage Syrian refugee girls, who are either raped or forced to marriage, on the other. The paper pins down narratives of forced marriage, rape and sexualized violence as concerns minor Syrian refugee girls. International media, British and American, serve as the primary grounding for the present enquiry because they repeatedly shed light on refugee crises in different areas of the globe.

**Methodological framework**

At the crux of this paper lies also the Positive Discourse Analysis (and henceforth PDA) methodological framework, which very often, involves the examination of one or a huge number of texts, with the intention of diagnosing and unravelling certain positive aspects of text and talk such as themes and social change. Discourse analysts have to excavate the good workings of discourse because not all discourses are ideological and political.

If discourse analysts are serious about wanting to use their work to enact social change, then they will have to broaden their coverage to include discourse of this kind – discourse that inspires, encourages, heartens; discourse we like, that
cheers us along. We need, in other words, more positive discourse analysis (PDA) alongside our critique; and this means dealing with texts we admire, alongside those we disliked and try to expose (Martin, 1999, pp. 196-7).

In psychology, trauma has been defined as “A kind of wound. When we call an event traumatic, we are borrowing the word from the Greek where it refers to a piercing of the skin, a breaking of the bodily envelope. In physical medicine, it denotes damage to tissue” (Garland, 1998, p. 1).

Since 1990s, in many Western host states, trauma has tended to become synonymous with the experience of refugees, seen as victims disordered by war and violence (Eastmond, 2014, p. 24). Doherty (2007, p. 182) holds that traumatic experiences associated with the war in Bosnia (1992-1995), for example, impacted badly on the lives of many Bosnian refugees and displaced people. Approximately 25% of Bosnians were forced to leave their homes and resettle in other areas of Bosnia or abroad. Also, during the Vietnam War (1956-1975), which was the most detrimental event in the history of the late twentieth century – a war that instigated several casualties in Southeast Asia, many Vietnamese refugees were coerced to carry with them a trauma history (Huynh and Roysircar, 2006, p. 341).

Arguably, refugees fleeing wars and armed conflicts, are more likely to have high trauma exposure and an elevated rate of stress and chronic depression. In addition to dealing with their past histories, they need to confront various hurdles when they transition into an exotic culture different from theirs. Harding (2011, p. 97) posits that in Syria refugees reported “a high exposure to distressing and traumatic events”. In turn, Kellermann (2009, p. viii) has claimed that the Holocaust contaminated those who were exposed to it. War and trauma are, according to Hunt (2010, pp. xi-x), “unfortunately closely interlinked. Many people who experience war are traumatized by its effects (though many more are not”.

Within contemporary trauma studies, it is believed that the field of trauma is vast; hence, it should not be considered as an isolated phenomenon (Pellicer-Ortin, 2011, p. 37), since it is closely linked to the ethical turn in media that took place decades ago. Media and trauma studies are both interested in and centrally concerned with the afflictions of the individual.

The articles that are selected to address the underlying grievances of Syrian underage refugee girls, most of which cover the refugee crisis and predicament, have been retrieved from news media and quality papers such as The Guardian, The Independent, The New York Times, The Washington Post and The Atlantic.
These media genres, albeit varying in degree of readership and influence, “hold a longstanding and important place in world politics” (Dagnes, 2010, p. 1). Through processes of framing and agenda-setting, these news outlets do “affect how people think about political [as well as human] issues” (Arceneaux and Johnson, 2013, p. 147); they likewise “indicate the interests of the time by the priority they give to news events” (Prucha, 1994, p. 73). They are viewed as the guardians of democracy and crucial in their role “as a watchdog of their governments” (Mabee, 2013, p. 117).

Beyond their immediate goals of attempting to please their audiences and making money, they have other functions that are equally and vitally important for society, “especially in relation to social order, and social change” (McQuail, 2003, p. 119). Whereas, The Atlantic is a U.S-based American news publication that focuses on literary and cultural commentary, The New York Times and The Washington Post are two American dailies, which concentrate constantly and consistently on social ills and injustice at a broader scope. As for The Guardian and The Independent, they are British daily newspapers, which have a say in the international refugee crisis, migration issues and military clashes. The non-random news stories documented here below from these media publications are cut into several pieces, carefully examined and analyzed in terms of the psychological traumas that befell on Syrian minor refugee girls.

Drawing on PDA to media, which suggests that “positive readings of texts are possible and that not all discourses are damaging or negative” (Baker and Ellece, 2011, p. 94), the paper projects into the foreground the Syrian underage refugee girls’ narratives of emotional trauma. PDA focuses on what texts ‘do well’ and ‘get right’. Predicated on this basic supposition, the paper holds that media discourse unveils the dark facets of human communities and it places much emphasis “on hope and change” (Flowerdew, 2013, p. 189); and though it can be critical as it seeks to track, unearth and unmask things that escape human attention, PDA incorporates not only deconstruction but construction as well (ibid.). In the words of Waugh et al (2016, p. 95), PDA thus functions as an alternative to CDA critique of discourse and addresses the need for “a community, taking into account how people get together and make room for themselves in the world. It gives much importance to “liberation, agency, and justice instead of domination and oppression” (Philips, 2014, p. 235).
Syrian underage refugee girls at an impasse

There is no denying that all the media genres in question have covered the Syrian crisis and its repercussions at a local and a global level; relatively, they have provided a succinct documentation of the geopolitical and socioeconomic impasse of Syrian underage refugee girls. The production and circulation of iconic images, news stories, letters to editors, and caricatures about them lay bare the day-to-day anguish and ordeals these vulnerable social group had to pass through in different zones; in fact, several cases of rape, sexual harassment and sexualized violence are covered and reported on in the lives of these displaced teenagers. At different checkpoints from their journeys, they have fallen victims to traffickers, misogynists, and perpetrators of all kinds of crimes. They share one narrative cloaked with a psychological panic, exploitative abuse and deprivation because of the civil war that swept their homeland.

Very often, the sexually assaulted underage girls are forced to marry other relatives of the family like cousins or some members of the community, with the aim of “saving their honour”. This cultural norm permeates the Syrian society, which, like most conservative Arab tribes, does not tolerate rape, sexual behaviour outside the formal institution of marriage. No wonder then that if a female is raped or sexually assaulted, she might be killed by her family, or she might kill herself to save the family’s public self-image. In Jordanian refugee camps, marrying off these girls at a very younger age is viewed as a necessity for these traumatized refugees – an obligation to shun rape, sexual harassment and dishonour from the family; therefore, forced marriage is increasingly becoming a sort of financial investment to Syrian families with little or no income.

As young as thirteen or less, these girls were obliged to marry men ten, even twenty years their senior (Enloe, 2017, p. 26); because of this, they had to drop out of school and be prepared for shouldering the burdens of the house. Many of them are asked to associate themselves with male partners they have never seen or known before. Rahaf Youssef, for example, suddenly found herself a bride to her cousin in the Zaatari refugee camp. Though this form of marriage seemed to be blessed by the two families of the bride and groom, it showcases the risks to which the underage refugee girls are moving into. Indeed, early and forced marriage is a dangerous affair because in such a marriage, all suffer, the couple, the family and the whole society.
Generally, this marriage is a violation of the minor girls’ liberty and security rights; it is outrageous and degrading to them. Mertus and Flowers (2008, p. 94) have argued that the marriage in question “almost always ends girls’ education and leads to early maternity”. Commenting on such early and forced marriage, The New York Times provides ample narrative accounts of Syrian underage refugee girls to underscore their unspeakable misfortunes in such a family gamble.

“The bride-to-be was so young and shy, she spent her engagement party cloaked in a hooded robe that swallowed her slim figure but could not quite hide the ruffled pink dress her fiancé’s family had rented for her. As the Syrian women celebrating her coming wedding to an 18-year-cousin chattered around her in the Zaatari refugee camp, she squirreled herself in a corner, perching up only when a photo or message from a friend popped up on her cellphone. The girl, Rahaf Yousef, is 13” (The New York Times. September 13, 2014).

The families of the minor Syrian brides surmise that early marriage can protect their progeny against sexualized violence, child labor and abuse. This marriage, however, turns a catastrophe because of generation gap and the disqualification of the underage girls to it. Yasmeen Ritaj’s story is also telling since it unravels the wretchedness and tribulation of the Syrian girls even within the confines of marriage. They are frustrated so long as marriage, which is expected to be more of an economic and emotional benefit to them, is another domestic war they are to bear and endure away from their homes; the husbands, who are supposed to impart love, affection and security to them, routinely misbehaved like chauvinist pigs keen on the use of violence against their young traumatized wives. Marriage becomes for them like a hellish penal institution, to which they are confined and into which experiences of disappointment and trauma exacerbated.

“Another teenager, Yasmeen Ritaj, 16, described a similar experience, of initially being wooed, but then being beaten by her new husband. “I imagined it would be paradise,” she said, “but the first time he beat me, I knew there was no future and that this was hell.” A month after the wedding, she became pregnant and then returned to her family after just eight months of marriage, before her daughter was born” (The New York Times. September 13, 2014).

To console each other, the Syrian refugee minor girls, gather together in the refugee camps yielding to narratives of distress and intense melancholy. While some of them were sexually victimized, innumerable others were kidnapped and capitalized on as brides and spouses as mentioned before. Their impoverishment, displacement, and starvation, have all brought about their desperation and
hopelessness. On the grounds of sectarian and political divides, Syria appears to present a grim example of the fate of many children who suffer physical and emotional trauma from violence and displacement (Blanton and Kegley, 2014, p. 448). Unless they are confined to the camps, the female teenagers are sexually harassed, raped or forced to marriage.

The story of Maya, which is somewhat identical to that of Yasmine Ritaj, albeit the two differ quite markedly in motivations and consequences, is a reiteration of the fiasco of the marriage enterprise seeking to subsume underage girls into it even with the parents’ consent. It might be fair to say that this marriage can protect the girls from loss and harassment, but is not the same marriage that enshrines psychological troubles and emotional traumas into these same girls?

In so far as Maya is concerned, Syrian refugee families sell their daughters to survive, but they kill the same daughters owing to the brutality and barbarity of the aged Arab grooms. In her words, this marriage is just for money and motivated by the family’s greediness for a better life; it is not carved by love, nor is it sculptured by reciprocity and spontaneity of feelings and emotions. The Atlantic, elaborating on the psychological traumas of these underage girls on account of forced marriage, highlights, either directly or obliquely, that it is the girls’ right to choose whomever they want for marriage at a fair age. Certainly, Maya speaks on behalf of all Syrian teenagers, who starved to death and took shelter in marriage to safeguard themselves and back up their families, yet they are, in some measure, apprehensive lest this marriage would yield bad ramifications on their lives.

“When we left Syria, we slept in the street, all of us...we had nothing to eat”, says Maya, one of the younger girls. “We ate hunger.” At 14, Maya is the most striking of the group, with unusual light blue eyes in a round face. She says she’s just been engaged to a wealthy Lebanese man from the town, but she’s dreading the union because her future husband is 45 years old. I’m marrying him so things will be better,” Maya says. “I don’t want to get married; I don’t want to have children. I’m only doing this for security. Isn’t it shameful that I’m 14 years old and I have to marry a 45 year-old man?’ I don’t love him, she says, starting to cry. “I can’t even look him in the face” (The Atlantic. May 28, 2013).

The practice of early and forced marriage, undoubtedly, have mushroomed along history, especially during times of war and military clashes. Access to education, health care and leisure activities have been denied to refugees because “they are lumped within the aliens category” (Orchard, 2014, p. 83). They are placed into second-class status and considered as “unwelcome guests”. They do
not study like other children. They do not play and have fun like their peers in the world as they have been overcome by, staggering degrees of isolation, insecurity and anxiety. In some places, they are deprived of supplies of clean water, good nutrition, healthy accommodation, as well as sanitation facilities. In others, they do not have a safe environment for living and survival. According to Balouziyeh (2016), “A significant portion of them have been physically wounded. Many have witnessed bombings, killings and other atrocities that can leave them psychologically wounded. Others have personally experienced egregious crimes of war, forever compromising their innocence. Anxiety, depression and difficulty in trusting others typically haunt these children long after they flee from Syria” (p. 45).

The story of Linda, who made her way from Damascus to Baltimore is another reminder of the double pain, or say the inflaming discomfort sustained by some Syrian mothers, whose agony and whose hardships correspond to many Syrian mothers scattered inside and outside Syria. Their lives, to use Ensor and Goździak’s (2016, p. 2) terminology, have been “reshaped in diverse and significant ways by their experiences of violence and uprootedness”. Though education for her daughters had been her major concern, she would pull them out to protect them from the oppressive machines of the civil war. The Washington Post alerts the international community to the sinister situation of Syrian children due to the anarchic structure and imbalance of the fights.

“One day, my 7-old came home petrified about something she had seen. She told me the soldiers had pulled random students and people from the street and lined them up on their hands and knees, in two rows, in front of the tanks. They were not allowed to move. The soldiers in the tanks threatened to run them over and taunted those who were watching. Before, I tried to ease my daughters’ fear by telling them that things would get better. Now I could no longer say this. After that day, I stopped sending my daughters to school” (The Washington Post. December 4, 2015).

The confiscation of the right to education and security might be conducive to illiteracy and crime. The sonorous words of this refugee mother, which were reported verbatim, are alarming because they incorporate the hoped-for comfortable life the Syrian teenagers awaited, but to no avail. Their hope for a better future is destroyed and their expectations have been thwarted as “many lost parents or their loved ones, suffered injuries, missed years of schooling, and witnessed killing and brutality (Alayarian, 2017, p. 123). In Syria, Jordan and
Lebanon, the lives of this vulnerable demographic group is laden with daily struggles and uncertainty. Obviously, these children are more likely to be kidnapped, abused and forced into prostitution. This occurs mainly because their parents are themselves powerless and helpless as they undergo a wide range of troubles ranging between racism and anti-refugee sentiments.

“My 13-year-old son and 16-year-old daughter look around and see people their age going to school and they feel left behind”, Mrs. Shinwan said. “I fled for their safety, but now they are restless and angry”, she said. “They are telling me they are wasting their education and their future. They want to go back to school in Syria” (The New York Times. October 6, 2013).

Outside Syria, needless to say, horrific stories and tragedies go unnoticed in news media. Of course not all media outlets examined or unexamined in this paper have access to the psychological traumas and sexual violence that swept Syrian underage girls. Those who have fled Syria have reported crimes of sexual violence and sexual torture against family members -- perpetrated by both rebel groups and Syrian armed forced -- to create a fear of “reprisal and social stigmatization” (Davies, 2017, p. 96).

At Dunkirk refugee camp in northern France, for instance, minor girls cannot walk easily to toilets not because the toilets’ locks disfunction but primarily because sex traffickers predate over them days and nights. This adds to the psychological perturbation and paranoia of the minor girls, all of whom were at the mercy of the sex predators. While minor children were viewed as “little steaks”, their mothers were viewed as an easy “prey” for lustful men. The Guardian has focalized the sexual war targeting Syian women and their children in refugee camps, wherein the guardians of human dignity and rights, are themselves, each in its own way, violators of them.

“You see women in a male environment with men that are disconnected from reality, so there are serious incidents such as rape. Women, children, young teens, male and female”. The worker referred to the children as being like ‘little steaks’ because they were considered so appetising and vulnerable to traffickers, of whom dozens are resident on site. One woman travelling by herself said that unaccompanied individuals were viewed as prey: ‘All men see that I’m alone, and it’s the same for the children. Men see me and they want to rape me’” (The Guardian. February 12, 2017).

Sexual harassment, violence and rape are common and systematic at checkpoints, refugee camps and at crossings. The route to Europe or elsewhere is
supposedly controlled by traffickers and smugglers who trade on desperate people asking for asylum or hankering after more opportunities and a rosy life. Like all migrants, Syrian refugee girls suffer “toxic stress”, which impacts on their mental and physical health; nevertheless, they struggle daily to recover from their physical and psychological trauma. The story of the 7-year old Razan reveals and unveils the perplexity and persecution complex of some Syrian girls who fear kidnapping, crying and fighting. They suddenly displayed a longing for a sense of solitude because they did not find in their communities the haven they battled for. Before the erupting of the civil war, Razan lived peacefully with her family, yet her life would become upside-down when she lost her father. The Independent casts some light on the virulent reverberations of the war on the lives of this underage refugee girl:

“After seeing his corpse at the mosque, Razan stopped speaking and became very withdrawn. Her family fled their home following bombardment, only to be displaced more ten times in the same city (...). [S]he showed signs of trauma, becoming terrified of blood and panicking when she saw people crying. Then after losing her mother and sister, Razan became aggressive towards her eldest sister who was caring for her, started bed-wetting, hallucinating and began to have trouble differentiating between fact and fiction” (Independent. March 12, 2017).

While thousands of underage girls preferred silence because of oppression, few spoke about their emotional traumas and harrowing tragedies at home and outside of it. Bana al-Abed (7-year-old) has managed to capture world’s attention by appealing to the new U.S.-president, Donald Trump, “to do something for the children of Syria”. She is by no means the epitome of grit, self-confidence and defiance. That she addressed Donald Trump directly connotes that she becomes not only an icon of change in her social milieu but the harbinger of peace and children’s right in the world over.

“In a letter written to President Trump several days before his inauguration, Bana – currently living in Turkey after her family escaped Aleppo in December – requests Trump’s help and promises her friendship in return. ‘Can you please save the children of Syria?’ the letter states, according to NBC News. “You must do something for the children of Syria because they are like your children and deserve peace like you.” If you promise me you will do something for the children of Syria, I am already your new friend”, the letter adds” (The Washington Post. January 25, 2017).

Bana has become “the Anne Frank of the Syrian civil war”. Whereas, the
first is pigeonholed as a Jewish victim of the Holocaust, the second is projected as a Muslim victim of the continuing genocides that took over Syria. The two girls seem to survive the same narrative of trauma, persecution, as well as rejection. In the eyes of The Washington Post, Anne Frank is also every Syrian girl that pleaded for asylum but was not accepted because of her religious and cultural background. In the discourse of human and children’s rights, both Anne Frank and Bana al-Abed come to play a central role, knowingly or unknowingly, by advocating children’s protection against butchery, injustice and ethnic cleansing. These children suffered the trauma of loss and displacement experienced by their parents “just as the children of Holocaust survivors suffered from their parents’ trauma” (Bickerton, 2012, p. 213). They cannot forget easily their homes simply because they have a collective identity and a similar (his)story that move them back and forth.

Unlike Bana al-Abed, other Syrian children, females or otherwise, are not well-equipped with this will and strong determination to talk bravely and speak out openly of their aching grievances and traumatic frustrations. Indeed, most of them have been silenced and oppressed as their mothers for a long time within their patriarchal society. With such history of oppression and exploitation, these female subjects looked weary, miserable and incapable of change. The civil war added to their injury and trauma, displacing them, threatening their being, and throwing them into oblivion. In fact, the same war contributed to the rise of the ISIS or the Islamic State in the Levant (Lutz and Lutz, 2017, p. 68), bringing Syria up to the dark ages.

At most, these narratives documented above, which could be accurate as well as inaccurate, provides one dimension of the collective traumatized memory of Syrian underage girls, whose lives were torn apart by war, sexual violence, marriage and refugeeism. By covering such heartbreaking stories and experiences of pain, visiting and reporting on scenes of violence and abuse in refugee camps, the reporters in the British and American news media, can themselves “suffer trauma” (Simpson and Coté, 2006, p. 37). They do feel the pain of others and try their best to ease them by writing about them and making them heard by a wide public. In the calamity that struck Syria and Syrian underage refugee girls, journalists and reporters get absorbed in joint work with humanitarians and voluntary workers to protect the rights of individuals and they experience, what Figley (1995, p. xiv) has termed “compassion fatigue”. These are the people, who are overcome by traumatic stress and psychological burdens their emotions oblige
them to carry because of the nature of their noble work; so research should now excavate the trauma symptoms of journalists and media reporters.

**Conclusion**

In nutshell, there are numerous challenges when it comes to mapping out the stories and narratives of marriage, sexual violence and the emotional traumas of Syrian underage refugee girls. The first challenge that might crop up relates to their credibility since, as argued previously, the news media tend to overstate, exaggerate and magnify them to their readership; indeed, it is quite arduous to confirm or disconfirm them. The second challenge relates to the representativeness of these accounts since not all Syrian underage refugee girls underwent such misfortunes along their trajectory to other whereabouts. It is true that several countries have expressed solidarity and hospitality for the uprooted Syrian refugees, but many others have rejected them for political and security reasons: they are not accepted, nor are they welcomed, for the simple reason that they are different others, who hardly fit in the Western context of modernity and civilization. One by-product of such rejection is the very revealing traumatic story and collective narrative of Syrian underage girls resonating along this paper.

**References**


BOOK REVIEWS


Review by Gabriela Goudenhooft

Drawing attention on the refugee and migrants’ crisis in Europe the authors and editors of the book try to evaluate complex implications of the migratory phenomenon not only in terms of security but also on the European identity and on EU institutions ‘and policies’ credibility affected by the recent evolutions. Values, principles and objectives should be revisited as well as the idea of responsibility, conceived both at national and European level on the future developments.

The idea of shared values generating a common European citizenship assume the prerequisite idea of common European border delimited not only in geographical and cartographical terms of inclusion/exclusion, but it also assumes “a political, institutional, cultural and social attitude to think ‘European’ in terms of values, principles, interests, regulation, rights and duties” (Moccia, p.12).

The volume edited by Luigi Moccia and Lia Pop, and published by The European University Press Publishing House includes papers of the International Seminar that took place at the University Roma Tre in 27-29 of April 2016.


The management of the migration crisis is reflected by several articles from the book in a multifaceted approach, from different perspectives. Fulvio Attinà and Rosa Rossi are analysing the feedback given by the European citizens on the EU
management in time of crisis and how their response is influenced and influences leaders’ negotiations and the level of imposed restrictions. Several scenarios were depicted by the authors in their effort of synthetizing institutional actors’ management endeavours: the Conventional response, The Mare Nostrum scenario, The EU-Turns scenario and The Fencing-the –EU scenario. Analysing the data, keeping in mind that the situation was perceived often by the EU citizens as “a threat to the interest and values of European countries” (p.45), the authors concluded that it wasn’t possible a viable interpretation of the migration crisis just because of the convoluted decision-making process and the lack of optimal solutions expected from the EU leaders who were “unable to create a common management in harmony (Attinà, Rossi, p.46).

Also focusing on the management of migration and refugees, Lia Pop is bringing the multilingualism issue towards inclusion as a new challenge of dealing with migratory flows on new routes of migration in Europe after 2015. The author is rising a situation that makes migrants and refugees a more vulnerable category: “the linguistic impossibility of communicating their condition” (L.Pop, p.61). The linguistic vulnerability bring into attention New Added Languages, their number being very high due to the new Balkan route of migration, and having political relevance together with New Rare Languages, including a lot of versions of Romani language, requiring adequate strategies in the management of new comers.

The linguistic diversity in Europe and the linguistic dimension of the crisis require resources and an immediate focus on the issue.

A valuable recommendation of the paper is to design a new framework of crisis management and as a part of it “to establish a Common European System of Researching the Rare Languages on the grounds of European Values and Culture” (L.Pop, p.92).

In order to facilitate the integration of immigrants Esther Lopating is focusing on the values of the Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX), the standard tool used in the EU for measuring how well countries are implementing integration policy. The author makes a critical analysis of the MIPEX, showing that it is measuring “implementation policies rather than outcomes” (p.116) and advances the idea of developing a new index of integration for a proper measure of the phenomenon since the old one fail to provide accurate and useful results.

Addressing the risks encountered by the refugees crossing the Mediterranean in search of escape and of hope, Patrizia Palermo is drawing
attention on the human rights connection, on the vulnerability of the right to asylum and implications in situations where one is facing with “violent negation of life” (p.120). The author analyses the legal provisions towards *refoulement* in international waters, laws “on high seas” in the context of Geneva Convention on refugees and the new particularities occurred along the years of refugee crises showing that EU must find instruments to face the “huge mass flows of people fleeing from war zone” because the “refusal of reception, without the possibility of asylum, increases the effects of the conflicts instead of opposing them and undermines any prospect of peace” (Palermo, pp.137-138).

Also focusing on the Mediterranean route of the refugees, Stefania Panebianco put on the balance the humanitarian approach versus border security as two goals which are entrapping the European Union. From data analysis, with a special focus on Mare Nostrum Operation (MNO) results there is a massive and continuing pressure on the EU external borders and this situation requires a rapid intervention but also a better coordination and cooperation at EU level, because EU appears unprepared to face the humanitarian crisis (Pannebianco, p.147). Overlapping migration to insecurity the door was opened to tackle hyper security and for the discourse of the populist and extremist parties with a strong anti-immigration profile at the expense of the humanitarian approach. The legitimate question is how to redress the persistent imbalance and the tension between humanitarian intervention and EU border control?

Exploring the concerns and even fears of European citizens towards refugees, asking about their true hidden aims: *Are they really refugees? Are not immigrants? Are not they terrorists?* Stefan Messmann is drawing attention to an amplified phenomenon: xenophobia in the context of a huge number of displaced people, “around 65.3 million in 2015 across the world” (p.170). The refugee problem depicted in vivid colors by media, but also present in literature, reports, movies and even sports\(^1\) is affecting our daily life and creates a new perspective of approaching European issues.

Migration, with its social function it’s still a question of integration for immigrants and for the authorities and it isn’t an easy undertaking, all the more so as the issue is for the political community to choose for the future whether to be pro or against migration. Of course the reception of refugees requires

\(^1\) The Olympic Committee decided that the XXXI Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro will be named the *Refugee Olympic Athletes* (ROA) (Messmann, p.173)
consideration of multiple perspectives: political, humanitarian, responsibility, policy and law. The reception of refugees is costing a lot and require new financing sources as new taxes, affecting more the European citizens’ life. So the management of reception and integration (they are expected to work and to cover the labor shortage where it is needed on the European markets) is to be a smart one and in proportion of the countries’ economic strength.

Refugee’s crisis dimension has brought changes in EU foreign policy migration inducing a strong connection between the need of internal security and external action. Loredana Teodorescu is focusing on the “external dimension of the European migration policy referring to the integration of migration policies in the EU’s external relations. The main framework for cooperation in the area of migration and mobility between EU and its partners, including third countries, is represented by mobility partnerships, an instrument having the peculiarity that “aims to include the four pillars of the Global Approach” (Teodorescu, p.213). The complexity of the situation and emphasized by the Global Approach is given by many factors, embracing soft and hard law tools, binding and non-binding instruments, facing implementation’s difficulties, a shared competence in the area of migration between EU and Member States, the need of balancing the different components in the migration policy and last but not least the multiplication of involved actors in the external policy of migration.

The second section of the book is addressing the rights and experiences perspective towards migrants and refugee problem. A particular social group and also a vulnerable one targeted within this topic is the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender individuals (LGBTI) as refugee, requiring a special attention. Emanuela Prisciani and Denise Venturi take a look at the relevant legislation as to whether the EU provides for this group an adequate protection in alignment with international standards, besides the Court of Justice of the EU interpretation on the Qualification Directive regarding the inclusion of the LGBTI people under the Refugee Convention. The authors explain that the CJEU interpretation “is in some respects, flawed and at odds with a rigorous legal interpretation of International Refugee Law” (p.259) addressing the risk of creating “an inconsistency within the realm of global refugee’s protection regime, which may well result in a lower standard of protection for LGBTI asylum seekers in the EU” (p.260).

Andrea De Petris article is focusing on the Germany strategy in refugee’s integration as an affordable model to be generalized as a good practice, starting
from measures operating at two levels: disciplining residence permits and grants of asylum and trying to provide adequate instruments for the successful integration in the German social context (p.268).

A required solidarity, regardless its particular extent as “solidarity between Member States, solidarity among peoples, solidarity between generations, and solidarity between the European Union and Member States” or solidarity referring to “different areas of European laws such as: migration, border checks, energy, and the fight against terrorism, humanitarian aid, security and external relations” (De Dominicis, p.289) is needed including a legal basis for the EU legal order. Emphasizing the importance of solidarity, Nicola De Dominicis, is analyzing the relevance of the article 80 of the TFEU, introducing the principle of solidarity and fair sharing responsibility between Member States in the field of border checks asylum and immigration, showing that “solidarity is not only a principle, a spirit or a duty to cooperate for the European Union and Member States; it is also a specific legal basis for adopting European measures to give effect to the principle of solidarity and fair sharing of responsibility, including its financial implications, within the EU migration policies” (p.299).

The agreements and processes regarding the relocation of reception centers in the European Union and also the problem of outsourcing border controls is the subject developed by Marco Omizzolo and Pina Sodano in the light of two important goals of the EU: security and integration. Borders and “meta-borders” are nowadays issues since the flow of migration is increased and new routes, such as the Mediterranean one lead to new patterns in contemporary migratory scenarios, including “turbulent migrations” (p.316). “The European Union’s borders are rapidly moving beyond the geographical borders of the Members States. With the development of the “external dimension” of migration policies, control functions are transferred to private entities, such as transport companies, states outside the European space, candidate for EU membership, or simply locations chosen due to their strategic location on the migration routes directed to Europe” (Omizzolo and Sodano, p.323). The authors noticed that the outsourcing of borders and checks tends to coincide with their relocation, creating “extraterritorial spaces”, moving in the same time the rights at the extent of external collaboration. Reviewing the Rabat process, the Khartoum process, the Partnership Agreement for Malta, the EU – Turkey Agreements and the latest dynamic of migration routes the authors have found there is a profound
contradiction in the relationship between EU origins and desire for advanced security measures and draw attention of the risk of betraying the very founding values of the EU by making weak artificial distinction between economic and forced migrants and possibly generating new conflicts and dramas. They are pleading for a new European ruling class capable of managing the situation and able to transform the EU in a beneficial way for all parties involved.

Irina Pop is illustrating how not only the management of the refugee crisis is important but also the political communication of issue is. The case study is the Romanian policy on refugee and on the messages released through media facing the risk of increasing the political and social extremism by inflammatory representations of refugees. The author points out that the official position toward migrant flow in Romania was very little visible and difficult to decipher in terms of the acceptance or rejection of the refugees, especially because of the political instability in the reference period and highlights a sort of incoherence in messages, contributing to a low public culture of tolerance. She pleads for the necessity of the political communication improvement so that official communication not to be “directed to elites alone but towards ordinary people also” (Pop, p.358), enough to distinguish for example between the new-comers from third countries and understand the drama and the need for protection of the war refugees.

In order to help in improving the management of the current migration flow, Erminio Fonzo, uses the history and memory of emigration in Italy, as long as political choice is limited to stereotypical knowledge, accepting that “history and memory, moreover, could also play an active role regarding refugees, as several occasions – in particular during the two world wars – Italians have experienced the tragedy of exile” (p.372) and more than this, today, about 60.000.000 Italian natives live abroad. Fonzo noticed that local remembrance prevails the national one and in the same time “the regional administrations are more active than the State in strengthening ties”, so there we can find clues and possible strategies to face the issue of negative perceptions and stereotypes against refugees and migrants. Migrants can represent an important contribution both to country of origin and for country of destination, referring not only at migrants remittances, but also by enhance intercultural dialogue, sport etc. and the history of Italian emigration proved it.

Also on Italy is focusing the last article of the book, where Filomena Riccardi presents the idea of new socio-cultural spaces and geographies by
approaching the issues of a new migrant community in Italy, the Chinese, a vulnerable group, in terms of public school actions and educational policies. The author analyses the “conflictual aspect in the patterns of socialization” (p.399), “emerging from the meeting and clash of European culture with different cultures and values of immigrants’ communities” (p.411). The Italian education system, following EU educational policies is financing inclusive education in order to protect the right of education for migrant children, incrementing the differentiated didactic activities, financing special projects, for children with special needs, assisting migrant children in preparing State exams etc. Though, local communities are facing difficulties in facing interaction between migrants an understanding their special needs and this is the reason why migrants are feeling abandoned by the Italian community and local services, the most vulnerable and expose from those migrants being women and children. The author makes useful suggestion in terms of public policies and measures of improving the situation of Chinese migrants in Italy.

All the above mentioned issues highlighted by the scholars whose works were hosted by this book can be read in the sense of a question addressed by one of the editors, Lia Pop: “Which is the appropriate philosophy – The classical one, a reshaped philosophy of treasuring diversity or a new one?” (p.84), and also answered by the other one, Luigi Moccia: “… to stay united by interests and policies, as well as by values, rights and duties, shared in common in the so called area of freedom, security and justice” (p.15).

Review by Lin HSIEN-MING

Before articulating his research questions and theoretical framework, the author discusses the reasons for conducting this research of Korean-American women. Until 2010, there are more than 1.7 million Korean immigrants residing in the United States. As a result, the author is curious about how these Korean immigrants overcome the obstacles in their migration settle down processes? And what is the role of social network site play during migration processes?

Due to the immigrants’ lack of knowledge about the social institutions in the host country, they usually encounter huge challenges regarding how to collect correct information and how to deal with the problems of these social institutions. The book focuses on several social institutions related to migration matters including legal permanent resident procedures, welfare applications, education opportunities, housing facilities, and financial arrangements.

The author shows that when Korean immigrants face obstacles related to the relevant social institutions. Korean female immigrants typically play a significant role of collecting information and helping relatives to cope with such problems. When facing such problems, the author found that Korean female immigrants accustomed to gathering information and requesting for help on the ethnic network sites namely as “Miss USA”. By examining this virtual ethnic community, the author shows that how this virtual community can serve as the information and resource centers to help immigrants get the institutional guidance and emotional supports for their everyday life.

Apart from these research questions and curiosities, the author adopts Social Capital as the theoretical framework. According to the theory, social capital has been defined as resources and capacities which embedded in the individual’s
social networks. Moreover, the accumulation of social capital mainly depends on the social networks’ establishment. If someone has more heterogeneous social networks, then he/she may have more opportunities to gain the network resources and social capital than the people who have the homogeneous one. The scholars categorize two different types of social networks. The first type is “weak ties” social network, which consists of the people who don’t have many and highly interaction frequencies with us. The second type is "strong ties" social network, which consists of the people who have highly interaction frequencies and close intimacy with us, for example, our parents, family, good friends and so on. The weak tie social networks can help people to acquire “bridging social capital”, which could assist people to obtain more different resources, information, and supports via the interpersonal relations. On the other hand, strong tie social networks help people to gain “bonding social capital”, which could help people to obtain the emotional support from their relatives and close friends.

In this book, the author wants to know whether this virtual community usage experiences would help immigrants to maintain their interpersonal relationships, and gain social capital? By analyzing the posts of questions and answers on the board of “Life Q&A” on the Missy USA website. The author argues that this ethnic virtual community serves as an important channel for Korean immigrants to improve their understanding of the rules and social institutions in United State. In addition, the author also demonstrates that this virtual community also provides Korean immigrants with the emotional support. From chapter two to six, the author chose different social institutions to examine the arguments of the book.

In chapter two, the author chose the institutions which are related to the regulations of getting legal permanent resident status and naturalization procedures. When the immigrants arrived in the host country, the first and foremost thing to consider is how to get the legal status, which is not only related to how long the immigrants can stay, but also influences how many social welfare resources they could apply. As a result, in chapter three, the author chose some welfare institutions to exam the main arguments of the book. When immigrants face different life challenges during their settlement process, they would like to apply for the social welfare from the government. In this chapter, the author juxtaposed five types of welfare institutions, which are most important for the immigrant, as follow: unemployment insurance, social security, Medicaid program,
food assistance, and public housing. The rules, application procedures, and qualification conditions of these social welfare institutions may be different across states and local areas in the US. Therefore, how to understand well of these practical issues across the different area in the US could be one of the major challenges for most of the immigrants. Moreover, after several years of living in the host country, some of the immigrants would have their own children; as a result, the immigrant may have to deal with the problems related to the educational issues. For the educational issues, the parents and children usually should face the problems for registration procedures, course selection, applying for scholarship or loans, and so on. How to let the children get into a well-reputation school is one of the most important problems of the immigrant family; as a result, the author chooses education institutions to be analyzed in chapter four.

In addition to the social institutions mentioned above, after the immigrants have earned more money and fortune by several years of hard working, some of them may want to have their own house or at least rent a temporary house to make their family lives more stable. Under these circumstances, these immigrants may have to face some practical issues related to the housing matters: for example, home finance, home-buying process, rental housing process and so on. So, the author analyzes the questions related to house institutions in chapter five. In chapter six, the author chooses the financial institutions including banking, insurance, and taxation to exam the arguments of the book.

To examine the arguments of the book, the author downloaded and analyzed the users’ posted messages on the ‘Missy USA’ from January 1, 2012, to December 31, 2012. The total number of messages in this period were 121,297 posts. However, the number of the posted messages were too large to analyze, the author just chose the messages which have more than 100 viewers to be analyzed. According to this selection standard, the final number of selected messages were 2,050 posts.

The author adopted traditional qualitative approach to conduct this research. After reviewing and examining all these posted messages, the author indicated that all these messages could be divided into two main functions: institutional guides and emotional supports.

In these two functions, the author further divided each of the function into different sub-functional types. For the institutional guides, the author indicated that the messages could be categorized in four different subgroups: information
The author believes that most of the messages could be fit into one of the subgroup. Moreover, some of the messages may be categorized into two or more subgroups. The book shows that different kinds of messages play significant roles of providing Korean immigrants useful social institutional information which could be helpful for the immigrants to deal with various practical problems during the settle down processes.

Based on the Social Capital theory, the author claims that by obtaining these useful institutional guidance messages, which provided from other anonymous and the unacquaintance members of the virtual community, facilitating the Korean immigrant obtain the bridging social capital. Furthermore, from the social network perspective, owing to these interactions with other unacquaintance members of the virtual community, the author indicated that this ethnic social network site also helps Korean immigrant to establish more complex weak ties relationships with other unknown online users.

The author discovers that the companions and encourages information are the two most frequently posted on the ‘Missy USA’ website. However, the criticism messages are rarely posted in this virtual community. In other words, most of the emotional messages posted on this social network site are positive emotional supports to the members. In this sense, the author deems that such kind of emotional support from other unacquaintance members could foster the Korean immigrant to gain the bonding social capital.

The main contribution of this book is to show how the ethnic social network site could play an important role of providing the institutional information and emotional support for the immigrants to overcome the everyday life problems. Besides, this book also demonstrated the possibility of the ethnic virtual community could be a place which helping the users create different kind of social network ties and obtain social capitals on the internet.

There is a weakness of the book is the method of data collection. The author wishes to show a positive relation between the social network site usage and social capital accumulation; however, the evidence given in the book is not strong enough, as the author merely analyzes messages posted on the website.

The author did not interview the users of the virtual community to further explore how the online information could really help the Korean migrants to overcome the challenges and facilitate them to build more divergent interpersonal
relationships in their everyday life during the processes of immigration in the host country. If the author could have conducted the interview with these online community users, in so doing, the author could have provided stronger evidence to verify the effects and functions of virtual community and the capacity of helping immigrant to acquire the social capital. The book without providing other kinds of evidence, as a result, the readers cannot know that whether these posted messages on the virtual community could have the real capacity to help Korean immigrant to accumulate the bridging and bonding social capital or not?

**Review by Marius Ioan TĂTAR**

In a high-quality democracy, citizens should not only have equal rights to participate in politics, but these rights should also be used in an equal manner. Low and unequal participation rates might undermine democracy particularly if political engagement is obstructed by structural constraints which can widen and reinforce gaps in terms of unequal political influence between those who participate and those who do not (Tătar 2015b). Persons who vote, contact politicians, sign petitions or participate in demonstrations can make their voice heard in the political arena and their interests have better chances of being represented in the political process, compared to those that do not/cannot participate (Tătar 2015a, Tătar 2013, Tătar 2011b, a). If the factors that hinder the political engagement of different segments of population are based on unequal access to participatory resources and structures, then the terms in which political participation processes take place in a democracy might not be fair (Teorell 2006) inducing a participatory bias that compromises the principles of political equality and inclusion that underlie democracy (Dahl 1989, Verba, Schlozman, and Brady 1995). Thus the political exclusion of different parts of the population raises serious concerns about the quality of democracy. The issues of political exclusion among persons of migrant origin are particularly salient in the European Union given the increasing inflow of foreigners in EU countries. The number of people residing in an EU Member State with citizenship of a non-member country on 1 January 2016 was 20.7 million, representing 4.1% of the EU-28 population (Eurostat 2017). Integrating immigrants and allowing them to participate in the host countries at similar levels as natives constitutes thus a major challenge to policies aiming to build a cohesive society in Europe.
Focusing on three migrant communities, Filipinos, Egyptians and Ecuadorians living in Milan, the book authored by Katia Pilati, *Political Participation in Exclusionary Context*, aims to provide a detailed picture on the effect of a closed political context on migrants’ civic and political engagement. The book is structured into 6 parts (5 chapters and conclusions). In the introductory chapter, Pilati presents the main hypothesis of her study, arguing that the effect of an exclusionary context on political engagement is moderated by two sets of factors: the level and type of individuals’ organizational engagement and the level and type of networks organizations can access. In the second chapter, the author discusses the individual and contextual factors affecting migrants’ political participation. Pilati illustrates how the cultural and structural dimensions of the political context might affect migrants’ participation using the case of Milan. The third chapter investigates migrants’ civic and political participation in Milan, which is also compared with other European cities. The fourth chapter links the involvement of migrants in various types of organizations (i.e. ethnic, pan-immigrant, native organization) to the level and forms of their political participation (i.e. engagement in any political activity, mainstream protest, mainstream conventional activities, immigration-related protests, immigration-related conventional activities). In chapter five, Pilati maps the organizational networks and political engagement of migrant organizations.

Based on both individual (micro) and organizational (meso) survey data collected by a larger team of researchers, the author generally points out the exclusion of most individual migrants and migrant organizations from the political sphere in Milan (p. 75). The study unfolds at different levels of analysis. At the individual level, the book highlights different degrees of political exclusion by comparing patterns of engagement in various forms of conventional and unconventional political activities by migrants in Milan vis-à-vis natives. Evidence on political exclusion is also noted when comparing patterns of migrants’ engagement in Milan with levels of migrants’ political participation in several other European cities (p. 41 and 75). The author uses this finding to suggest that indeed there are effects of political context on migrant participation. At the organizational level, Pilati notes that political exclusion translates into a weak migrant organizational structure, and a limited presence of migrant organizations in the political sphere (p.75). Most activities by migrant organizations in Milan are concentrated on service-delivery and provision, while political activities play a
limited role only (p. 58). The effect of organizational networks on political engagement of organizations depends on the ethnic group considered. Overall, the author concludes that constraints are posed both on the possibility for migrants to get organized in migrant organizations, and by excluding migrant organizations out of the political sphere (p. 75).

The results presented in the book mainly confirm findings of previous studies on political participation in general, and particularly of research on migrants’ participation. Pilati finds significantly lower levels of migrant individuals and organizations involvement in various political activities compared Italian natives, and she pinpoints the exclusionary context as the main factor that hinders migrant political integration in Milan. While the author compares on several occasions migrant participation in Milan and other eight European cities, the focus of this study remains bounded to only one local political context, namely the municipality of Milan. To a certain extent, this approach limits not only the generability of results but also the author’s ability to fully grasp the effects of exclusionary contexts and analytically disentangle it from the potentially confounding effects of other macro variables. By joining the findings at individual and organizational levels, Pilati illustrates three different ways migrants can face an exclusionary context: sub-cultural participation, externally driven participation and the radicalization of the repertoires of action. However since the exclusionary context in Milan is the same for all migrants, political context alone cannot explain why some migrant communities use certain modalities of action and not others. The author resorts to the meso level, namely organizational networks, to explain why some migrant groups are more inclined to use certain repertoires of action. She demonstrates that among Egyptians, links that organizations build with other organizations are crucial for accessing all different kinds of political activities while among Filipinos, isolated organizations or small clusters of ethnic organizations are not likely to facilitate access to the political sphere (p. 58).

While certain types of organizations (migrant or not) generally promote certain types of political action repertoires, it is less clear why some migrant organizations like for instance those of Filipinos and Egyptians in Italy have different strategies to cope with an exclusionary political context in the host country. Migrants’ individual and organizational behavior might be influenced not only by the current political opportunity structure in the host country, but also by deeper cultural patterns rooted in the country of origin. For instance Voicu and
Tufiș (2017) have shown that immigrants’ confidence in political institutions is influenced by two confidence contexts: one from the origin country and one from the host country. As confidence in institutions depends on the values formed during early childhood, the international migrant’s confidence in political institutions in the current country of residency will be influenced by the confidence context from the country of origin (Voicu and Tufiș 2017). In other words, political behavior patterns formed in the country of origin might have lasting consequences in terms of immigrants’ attitudes and behaviors towards the political sphere in host countries. Thus, to fully grasp the effect of political context on migrant political participation, it might not be sufficient to compare levels of political engagement among immigrants for instance living in Milan (Filipinos or Egyptians) with immigrants residing Stockholm (i.e. Turks and Chileans). Migrants in these cities not only face different political contexts, but they also have different origins and cultural backgrounds which should be taken into account. This also has research design implications for the study of political integration suggesting that context in both host and origin countries might influence migrants’ political participation. Moreover, macro contextual circumstances might significantly interact with meso (organizational) and individual level variables in influencing migrants’ political participation. Therefore, multilevel statistical models might be more suitable for assessing the interaction effects between factors situated at various layers.

Overall, the book provides a timely discussion of the intermediary role of organizations in mobilizing migrants’ political participation in exclusionary contexts. Despite several limitations in terms of research design and data collection the book is clearly structured and develops interesting hypotheses that contribute to the scholarly literature and could provide a solid basis for future research.

References


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