

WP1: Gender Inequality and South-South Migration (SSM)

Co-Investigators:

Professor Kavita Datta, Professor Nicola Piper and Dr Tanja Bastia

Research Context

Gender and migration scholarship has been instrumental in emphasising the co-constitution of gender and migration, as well as the gendering of the migration-development nexus. Spanning over three decades of scholarship, research has documented the heavily gendered nature of the multi-scalar drivers, dynamics and impacts of migration that shape societal transformation. In turn, migratory decisions regarding who stays, who moves, and how resources are allocated, as well as family and wider transnational ties maintained during periods of separation, are shaped by gender norms.

Yet, despite significant advances, several aspects of gender and migration require further theoretical, empirical and methodological interrogation. This work package is underpinned by three key approaches aimed at filling (some of the) remaining gaps.

1. An intersectional and generational approach as a critical lens through which to understand everyday experiences of gender, mobility and migration.

Such an approach eschews essentialist interpretations of femininities and masculinities in favour of intersectional analysis illustrating that the conditions in which migrant women and men travel, live and work are shaped by diverse dis/advantages and social structures such as gender, age, class, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality and disability. In turn, a generational perspective facilitates a dynamic temporal frame documenting how gender norms, values and subjectivities shift across generations. Of particular interest is how migrant status interplays with intersectional gendered positions to produce particular outcomes. We envisage that each corridor will focus on those aspects of intersectional identity which are most relevant to their context.

2. The significance of place and scale in shaping gendered mobilities and migration.

We recognise that gender norms, values and relations vary across different migration corridors in both an intra-regional and inter-regional context. Here our focus is on redressing the bias towards destination countries, to also consider countries of origin through the adoption of a transnational approach and multi-sited and multi-stage research. Furthermore, given that migration journeys are

increasingly complicated such that the binaries of 'origin' and 'destination' may no longer be relevant to all, we will include both pre-migration and post-migration (return), giving equal weight to origin and destination and in-between spaces. In turn, a multi-sited approach will enable an investigation of gendered migration as a continuum from pre-migration, post-migration, return to onward migrations.

3. Multi-sector livelihoods approach to provide a holistic understanding of labour/economic migration.

Livelihood opportunities which potentially enable economic self-reliance and integration, and, if sustainable, provide incentives for reducing onward migration are limited with the majority of migrant women and men labouring in informal, precarious and exploitative jobs. Barriers to these rights intersect around structural inequality, the absence of legal entitlement and documentation, racism and xenophobia, and linguistic and cultural differences. Focusing on work and employment in relation to formal and informal work, we propose to move beyond the attention paid to domestic work in recent years to the detriment of other sectors where female and male migrants are particularly highly represented (such as manufacturing, food processing, agriculture, tourism and service industries).

Research Questions

1. How do gender relations influence migration flows at different levels of analysis?
 - a. **Individual level:** Who migrates? Are there any recent changes in gendered migration flows? How do they migrate and for what type of jobs/reasons?
 - b. **Household level:** What is the sexual division of labour and does make men or women more likely to migrate?
 - c. **Gender ideology/motivations:** What factors shape mobility? What expectations are there of how men and women behave and whether it is acceptable for them to work outside the home or migrate abroad?
 - d. **Hiring and employment practices:** How do labour markets and the availability of jobs locally and at destination shaped gendered access to work/income generating opportunities (quantity and quality)?
 - e. **Intersectional gender perspectives:** What other axes of differentiation/inequality are needed to understand diversity in gendered dis/advantage?
2. What are the consequences of migration for gender inequalities at origin and in destination countries?
 - a. **Economic consequences:** Who receives remittances? Who decides what to do with them? How much do men/ women earn at destination? What type of jobs do men/women access? Are these protected by labour legislation? What type of support is available to them?

- b. **Social/familial consequences:** Is there a reconfiguration of gender roles as a result of migration? Are there any changes in reproductive roles (caring, housework)?
 - c. **Ideological consequences:** Is it becoming more acceptable for women to work outside the home/migrate for work or other reasons?
3. How does the function of social networks – and access to these networks – differ between men and women?
- a. **Establishment and access to networks:** How have men's and women's social networks developed? How do women/men access these networks and for what purpose? Do they draw on them in times of (personal) crises?
 - b. **Types of network:** Do men's and women's engagement, access and participation differ between nationality/ethnicity-based social networks, cross-national social networks and work-based social networks?
 - c. **Reach and scale of networks:** Are men's networks better resourced in comparison to women's? How is this complicated by intersectional identities?

Contact

n.piper@qmul.ac.uk

Tanja.Bastia@manchester.ac.uk

k.datta@qmul.ac.uk