



universität
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MASTERARBEIT / MASTER'S THESIS

Titel der Masterarbeit / Title of the Master's Thesis

**“Female Migration in Circumstances of Gender Inequality.
A Case Study of Maasai Migrants in Tanzania and Kenya”**

verfasst von / submitted by

Anna Tykhonenko

angestrebter akademischer Grad / in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master (MA)

Wien, 2023 / Vienna 2023

Studienkennzahl lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme code as it appears on
the student record sheet:

UA 067 805

Studienrichtung lt. Studienblatt /
degree programme as it appears on
the student record sheet:

Individuelles Masterstudium Globalgeschichte

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Abstract

This thesis investigates female migration in conditions of gender inequality, testing the hypothesis of the latter being a factor facilitating migration processes or precluding women from realising their migration intentions, as well as looking into the living conditions of migrant women and the results of their migration on different levels – for their own potential empowerment, for the families and their power dynamics, and for the community in general in the form of transfer of norms and values etc. The said is done by means of conducting a literature review, as well as using secondary sources and statistical data for the case study. The findings suggest that migrant Maasai women often take female-coded jobs that are precarious and low-paid in nature, they face stereotypes and prejudices due to them being women and coming from an indigenous community and have problems defending their labour rights without formal education and knowledge of languages. However, every individual case is different, and migration is also seen as empowering women and giving them a bigger say in decision-making processes through increased financial input and independence.

In dieser Arbeit wird die Migration von Frauen unter den Bedingungen der Geschlechterungleichheit untersucht, wobei die Hypothese geprüft wird, ob letztere ein Faktor ist, der Migrationsprozesse begünstigt oder Frauen daran hindert, ihre Migrationsabsichten zu verwirklichen. Außerdem werden die Lebensbedingungen von Migrantinnen und die Ergebnisse ihrer Migration auf verschiedenen Ebenen untersucht - für ihr eigenes potenzielles Empowerment, für die Familien und ihre Machtdynamik sowie für die Gemeinschaft im Allgemeinen in Form von Normen- und Wertetransfer usw. Dies geschieht durch eine Literaturrecherche sowie durch die Verwendung von Sekundärquellen und statistischen Daten für die Fallstudie. Die Ergebnisse deuten darauf hin, dass zugewanderte Massai-Frauen häufig prekäre und schlecht bezahlte Jobs annehmen, dass sie mit Stereotypen und Vorurteilen konfrontiert sind, weil sie Frauen sind und aus einer indigenen Gemeinschaft stammen, und dass sie ohne formale Bildung und Sprachkenntnisse Probleme haben, ihre Arbeitsrechte zu verteidigen. Jeder Einzelfall ist jedoch anders, und die Migration wird auch als Stärkung der Frauen gesehen, die durch einen größeren finanziellen Beitrag und mehr Unabhängigkeit ein größeres Mitspracherecht bei Entscheidungsprozessen erhalten.

List of abbreviations

COVID-19 – Coronavirus Disease 2019

FGC – Female Genital Cutting

FGM – Female Genital Mutilation

GBV – Gender Based Violence

HDI – Human Development Index

ILO – the International Labour Organization

LGBTQIA+ – Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, and Asexual people

LMA – Law of Marriage Act

MDG – Millenium Development Goal

MWEDO – Maasai Women’s Development Organization

NGO – Non-governmental organisation

OECD – the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

SDG – Sustainable Development Goal

SIGI – Social Institutions and Gender Index

UN – the United Nations

WHO – the World Health Organization

INTRODUCTION

In the present thesis, I attempt to examine female migration, paying particular attention to gender inequalities as an influential factor when taking the decision to migrate, as well as a factor stipulating certain challenges when working and living in a foreign state, and potentially bringing forward, as a consequence, such changes as empowering women and contributing to enhanced gender equality in the sending and/or receiving area, or vice versa, perpetuating the deeply entrenched gender disparities.

Migration research has long been focused on the movement of men, however, during the last decades we have been witnessing the process of feminization of migration, as well as a significant increase in the body of literature devoted to this issue. The scope of investigation broadened in the 1980s, although it is worth noting that women already made up nearly half of the migrants several decades before that (Jolly and Reeves, 2005, p. 6). Nowadays women more and more often migrate independently and do so as breadwinners, and thus, the phenomenon of feminization of international labour migration implies the fact that the decision to migrate is increasingly taken by a woman alone, without being dependent on decision-makers within the family or community (Sorensen, 2005). Very few studies focus on the linkages between gender inequality and migration, however, there are papers by Baudassé and Bazillier (2014), Fleury (2016), Kenny and O'Donnell (2016), and other scholars, that address the issue from different perspectives and focus on the specific contexts of particular geographical regions.

The objective of this study is to examine the links between independent female labour migration and the modernisation of gender roles and women's empowerment, as a phenomenon consisting of several domains, as well as to investigate a) the causes and the elements of the migration-related decision-making process, b) conditions or the way migration proceeds and is experienced, and c) the consequences and short-, medium- and long-term results of female migration on different levels – for women themselves, for their families and the closest community, and for the wider context of social norms existing in the community, paying particular attention to the present circumstances of gender inequality for that reason. In particular, this research paper seeks to explore and understand how gender and gender relations within families of Maasai people and gender-based expectations and traditional roles both shape and are shaped by the processes of increased female migration in the region.

Therefore, the research question of the thesis is whether, and to what extent and in what ways, migration from states with economic and culture-based gender inequalities is affected by such conditions in the sending country. I aim to discuss this question theoretically, testing the hypothesis of gender inequality as a push factor or a factor impeding female migration, as well as examining the challenges and results or consequences of migration in such circumstances on the basis of the case study.

The methods employed in the paper include induction, synthesis, and non-participatory observation. Moreover, the approach taken in this thesis is hermeneutic and idiosyncratic. As migration is not a “hard system”, the methodological approach in the present thesis is based on interpreting data and collecting various types of information on the topic from different sources in order to achieve a deep understanding of the aspects of assessing migration, applying a feministic approach and theories to the case-study in question, and ultimately, formulating an extensive overview of the influence of the conditions of gender inequality on migration possibilities, conditions, and results for women in the Maasai community and their families, as well as the society in general, with migration possibly enabling a change of gender roles and stereotypes, ways of functioning of households and social systems, and a shift in the tabooed involvement of women in certain areas of human lives, or alternatively, resulting in perpetuation and deepening of social gender-based inequalities and entrenching traditional gender roles by ensuring experiences that are damaging to the more vulnerable female migrants in many ways.

The complexity of migration, the uniqueness of each situation, the need to challenge prevailing, oversimplified or reductionist thinking, and the often conflicting interests and views of costs and effects of migration, all demonstrate the multifaceted nature of this phenomenon and present a challenge in terms of addressing and making sense of the issue. In connection therewith, some limitations of this research include the lack of complex centrally-collected data, absence of personal experience of interacting with the Maasai community that could have been gained through a field trip, given favourable global travelling circumstances and financial ability, and therefore, the need to make extensive use of the existing and rather limited papers of other scholars and NGOs, as well as statistical data and analytical papers of the respective state governments and international organisations. This makes the research in the present paper based on mostly secondary sources of information, which does not, however, make it less unique or useful as a personal project of attempting to understand and comprehensively, and

as wholistically as possible, analyse the migration of women within the selected community and identify and understand the challenges withing their experiences as arising from the conditions of gender inequality, applying in the process the learnt theoretical frameworks and concepts, and demonstrating the ability to choose or develop a feasible research topic and conduct the respective investigation, presenting it in the firm of an academically written master's thesis, which is one of the external aims of the present work. Lastly, in this section, the chosen community for the analysis is another limitation in and of itself, in the sense that it would be helpful to conduct a similar investigation of a wider scope, as experiences of gender-based discrimination in different contexts and the ways in which they affect women's prospects and experiences of migration and the complex set of results thereof, as well as the way they are addressed by governments or non-governmental initiatives on a global level could aid in partially explaining and devising the ways of tackling the said issues, however, analysis on such a scale is a utopic fantasy rather that a realistic project or proposal for a master's thesis.

The work is structured in the following way: the first part of the master's thesis is a meta-analysis of the available body of literature on female migration to and from countries characterised by a relatively higher level of gender inequality. In the research and following synthesis of the findings, I am intending to apply the feminist theory and synthesize the issue from a social-constructivist point of view. I also make use of relevant migration-specific models and frameworks, as the push and pull factors model introduced by Lee in 1966 and the conceptual framework for assessing migration of Puentes et al. (2010), in an attempt to understand the role of gender unequal norms prevalent in the society and the local culture, as well as the resulting pay gaps and other forms of inequalities in the home country as a driving factor of the decision to migrate. The first, theoretical, part, which contains a literature review and a discourse analysis, is then complemented by a case study of female Maasai migrants in Tanzania and Kenya, mostly migrating from respective rural areas to the city of Dar-es-Salaam, in which I address the causes and consequences of such migration applying the aforementioned theoretical framework.

PART 1 – THEORETICAL PREMISES

1.1 Feminization of migration as an ongoing migration trend

In recent decades, we have been observing the process of feminization of migration, as women are now migrating independently and as income-earners. The involvement of women in migration processes is not new, but approximately before the 1980s women were seen simply as spouses who accompanied their husbands or other male family members moving abroad (Tittensor and Mansouri, 2017, p. 11).

Available statistics show that for a considerable stretch of time, approximately from the 1960s, sex ratios in international migration have been near to parity, with 47 out of every 100 migrants being female, and this has remained largely unchanged now (UNDESA, 2020). However, if we look at the regional data, the proportion of migrating women increased in almost all areas, and as of 2020, women constituted more than half of all migrants in terms of migrant stock on all continents with the exception of Africa and Asia (ibid.). One of the main changes also lies in the qualitative shift from women migrating as dependent on their husbands or other family members to women more and more often migrating as breadwinners taking the decision to migrate largely independently.

The drivers of female migration range from changing socio-economic dynamics in sending societies to economic and social development in receiving or host countries, and encompassing ever-changing cultural perceptions of migrant women, as well as rising levels of divorce in some labour-exporting countries (Tittensor and Mansouri, 2017, p. 13). Also, a major indicator of increased female migration is high levels of male unemployment and a demand for feminised job types in receiving countries (Piper, 2008, p. 1292). In particular, women are taking on jobs in gendered welfare states in response to a crisis of care, which is often seeing them take on subordinate roles as domestic workers or pulled into the sex industry, where they often are exploited and abused.

With the economic growth in many regions and individual countries, including Southeast Asia, the Gulf, and other, came the increased demand for unskilled and semi-skilled labour to substitute those who no longer wished to undertake such work, and typically, such work was gendered in nature. This includes domestic and care work, stipulating growth in demand for female migrant workers (Tittensor and Mansouri, 2017, p. 14).

In relation to that, more instructive lenses and shifts in local policy regimes in relation to migration, socio-economic changes in countries, and changing social attitudes towards migrants are required. With the increased numbers of migrant female workers, there is a need for new policies aimed at their protection and integration or education related to their labour rights and other issues. Such policies require more comprehensive studies of female migration in order for them to be evidence-based and informed, and therefore, able to comprehensively address the numerous problematic issues and effectively protect the more vulnerable parts of the population.

1.2 Feminist theoretical approach in migration studies

Feminist theories are the ones I have chosen to use to address my research questions, as logically, they provide the most suitable lens for the analysis due to the nature of the issues described herein. In particular, intersectional feminism, the term first used in 1989 by the American law professor Kimberlé Crenshaw, is of significant importance for the present paper. The author herself defined it as a prism for recognizing the way in which diverse types of inequality typically act together and exacerbate each other (UN Women, 2020). This approach attempts to address overlaps of different forms of inequalities arising from people's social identities, and to see it as a factor giving rise to compound experiences of discrimination, which is ultimately different from a simple sum of different kinds of discrimination one experiences because of their gender, social origin and status, sexuality etc., as it has more complexity and depth in any given context (ibid.). In the context of the case study presented in this thesis, this may mean the combination and interplay of discriminatory practices and perceptions towards Maasai migrants as women, as "tribal" people etc., which makes the issue considerably more difficult to understand and address but helps do it more holistically than when we analyse the conditions of migrant women and migrants from rural communities separately, aiming to then extrapolate the results and get a comprehensive picture of the realities faced by Maasai women choosing to migrate to a large city. As is stated in the UN Women article, injustices must not go unnamed or unchallenged, and this has a particular value in the event of any form of crisis, especially because the most vulnerable people are often left behind when developing responses to a critical or crisis situation, as if one is essentially invisible in everyday life, their needs can be easily ignored by decision-makers giving priority to the wellbeing of the majority. All this has an additional meaning in the unique times we are facing today, namely, the COVID-19 pandemic, which urges us to reconsider and tackle with more rigour the issues of, for instance,

domestic violence, the affected abilities to earn the most necessary and basic level of income and the challenges it presents to the freedom of movement, as well as a number of other aspects that require particular attention.

Whereas in other contexts female migration may be further complicated by perceptions of and prejudices towards the migrant women's ethnicity, as in the case, for example, of black or Asian women migrating far abroad, in the case taken for the purposes of this research, it is the attribute of being tribal that comes into play alongside the already underprivileged position – educational, economic etc. – or status of migrant women from the Maasai community. Indigenous people around the world face a heightened risk related to migration due to their reliance on their interactions with the fragile natural environments as a part of the local ecosystem, a general lack of financial resources, and additionally, they are particularly vulnerable when moving from rural regions to the city with relatively lower levels of education and experience of living within an overwhelmingly man-made environment with divergent social rules (Jowell, 2018, p. 704). There are many stereotypes that women from indigenous communities have to encounter in the city, as for example, is revealed in the 2004 study by Ann May and Terrence McCabe, that Maasai people are frequently viewed as cheap labour, and are often associated with such negative characteristics, as disease, drunkenness, and theft (p. 21). Moreover, there are prejudicial beliefs about the jobs that tribal people can take, with Maasai men only being considered suitable for security roles, and women only capable of performing domestic, care, or other similar type of work, characterised by low requirements and low pay.

While in some parts of the world an increasing database of migration statistics is available, and the main problem is deriving sensible interpretations with the emphasis on the relation between migration and the societal context rather than migration in and of itself, in other areas feminist empiricism can improve migration research by quantifying and characterising female migration flows – by facilitating careful documentation and measurement of gendered migration streams that would aid in reducing the harmful over-generalizations with regard to male and female mobility, thus contributing to the perpetuation of existing problems rather than providing data for designing informed policies to tackle them (Altamirano, 1997, p. 4).

The feminization of international migration and the introduction of gender analysis withing migration research, which had its inception in the second half of the 1980s, has highlighted the need for both empirical and theoretical work in this sphere. Making women visible and identifying and emphasising the underlying differences rooted in biological, cultural, societal, economic, and other factors that result in notably different trends and patterns, as well as outcomes of mobility, still remains of great importance for the global research on the topic of migration, but particularly, for the Global South. My research is aimed at analysing gender selectivity, the cultural and economic constraints, partly resulting from the former, in the context of Sub-Saharan Africa and the migration of one particular community, however I also want to mention the findings of my literature review related to the way gender inequality affects migration across different contexts in Latin America, the Middle East, South-East Asia, and some other countries of the African continent, as I believe this to be enriching and informative for the selected case study and for a personal better understanding of the overall topic of female migration in the context of gender inequalities in general.

It is commonly agreed and understood that gender-based traditional divisions of labour, as well as differing social and cultural constructions of female and male identities, influence migration proclivity and possibilities (Altamirano, 1997, p. 6). Women's involvement in reproductive work and a naturally larger number of responsibilities related to taking care of the children, maintaining the household etc. can obviously explain much of the resulting limited mobility opportunities in comparison to men, who also traditionally have greater access to productive resources and more time and flexibility in the sense of having freedom to take risky life decisions and to experiment, in addition to the availability of larger networks due to significantly smaller or no limitations on communication, as well as the general perception of men being more professional still persisting in varying degrees in most cultures. In most contexts, including Western ones, young girls are taught to act safe, and their perfectionism is encouraged by the society, while boys are taught, although together with some toxic masculinity norms and images, standard expectations, and lower emotional intelligence and socially accepted range of emotions, to take risks and be brave, to embrace experiments, partial failures, and imperfections (Saujani, 2016). However, a deeper look reveals more implications of this underlying problem when considering migration. As women are availing of less economic, educational, and other opportunities the migration to a place with a better situation with regard to the ability of women to achieve certain self-realization through employment, studies, or just being independent in a new cultural setting where you can partly

exercise a new identity, does not necessarily lead to empowerment, as one can be unprepared to avail of the new opportunities due to the previous experiences and, thus desired outcome of empowerment can be questionable.

I am aiming, therefore, to contribute to a better understanding of these and some other aspects related to migration of women as happening in the context of greatly unequal gender norms and practices by analysing the individual cases of people in the context chosen, qualitatively, plus verifying the results and understandings with the statistical data and attempting to make sense of the migration figures and the available gendered data of migratory flows, thus, trying to reveal insights concerning the realities of women's mobility prospects, processes and outcomes in the light of the current and historical context characterised by male-dominated and oppressive societal structures. The inspiration and motivation for my research was brought about by my own experiences and rumination about gender roles and identity formation and its further change when exposed to different perspectives and varying views present in a new culture that one emerges in upon migrating. However, I was naturally thinking of whether the results would be the same or at least to some point similarly beneficial, as it feels in my personal case, if a woman was migrating from a place where much greater discriminatory practices and fewer educational and work opportunities are present for the female part of the population, if migration would be to happen in the first place, as the likelihood of it being impeded by socially stigmatised independent living of a woman or the bare financial costs of migration in the light of wage gaps and other hurdles, or the relative difficulties in obtaining education that would allow one to compete for acceptance to international universities and scholarship programmes or access to the job market abroad, is quite high. Such motivation was also related to the general feeling of unfairness from a feminist perspective, and the observation of women being worse-off after migration, enjoying fewer opportunities, especially in the absence of specific policies, like the ones that exist in Europe, aimed at reducing the differences in availing of the opportunities for integration, access to the job market, language courses, and social networks, as women are still faced with security concerns in many different contexts.

1.3 Analytical framework for migration analysis. Focus on gender inequality and discrimination

The theoretical framework for analysing migration in this thesis is based on numerous works, from which the structure of Puentes et al. (2010) remains the dominant one in helping understand and make sense of migration flows. The authors propose addressing migration from the point of four analytical categories or sections – impacts on migrants and their families, impacts on countries of origin, causes of migration, and impacts on countries of destination. Each dimension, in turn, bears the challenge of identifying the relevant indicators for it for any particular case being analysed – while all are important for a comprehensive and balanced analysis of the topic, it is necessary to highlight that the indicators selected and the focus on one or several dimensions are dependent on the specificities of the research and the research questions that await answers. This framework pinpoints the fact that the discourse and decision-making on migration policies often ignore the multitude of causes and impacts of international migration on countries of origin, transit, and destination, as well as their effects on the migrants and their families, the reasons for it being the prevalence of research conducted by scholars from destination countries, and the focus of statistical indicators and datasets on issues that tend to benefit the destination countries (*ibid.*, p. 3).

One of the focal points within this framework is the issue of human rights, which is often off the radar when assessing migration, and in this is particularly relevant for my own research, which arose from the academic interest in the questions of gender inequality and its potential and actual influence on migration decisions and conditions for more than half of the human population. To reach the aim of achieving a maximally comprehensive understanding, the approach should include delving deep into both the root causes and the effects or impacts, visible on different levels, of each selected situation, which is best achieved by combining quantitative and qualitative indicators, that can provide insightful information capable of explaining the realities of migration in a more holistic way.

Coming back to the analytical guidelines and the model framework proposed by Puentes et al. (2010), a number of indicators is suggested by the authors for each of the four dimensions of migration assessment or analysis, which I find useful for the purposes of the present work, of course, selectively paying more attention to specific ones or introducing additional explanatory sub-indicators important for the context of the community being investigated herein, which, undoubtedly, requires a somewhat different set of indicators or their

interpretation as compared to the situation of Latin America, in particular the Mexico-US migratory corridor, which is the focus of the paper, although, it can be claimed that the analytical potential of the system of indicators developed therein is nearly universal and applicable to a wide variety of migration analyses, with modifications and adjustments, as necessary for each specific case.

In particular, the causes of migration, is a dimension often addressed in a reductionist way, with oversimplifications of causal relations via the traditional “push-pull model”, as introduced by Lee (1966), which, nevertheless, still remains a relevant basic framework for understanding the drivers of migration and the directions chosen by people that are moving away from home; however, it is important to emphasize the necessity of taking a holistic stance, which takes into account the structural factors of both sending and receiving countries, that contribute to the initiation and growth of migration and should be given equal consideration. The causes, therefore, include such analytical components or indicators as: economic asymmetries between the countries involved, namely, the relative economic productivity between sending and receiving countries, differences in economic growth, wage differences, labour precariousness in sending and receiving countries, deficit or surplus in labour force, gaps in research and development investments, the last, for instance, not being of great relevance for the case-study within this thesis. This category also incorporates the social inequalities, which can, to a great extent, trigger migration processes, and which, interestingly, remained previously concealed, and became available to be acknowledged by a wide range of households living in conditions of relative poverty and experiencing certain complexly interwoven ways of discrimination, with the advent of the communication revolution, that helped them become aware of an affluent world beyond their own borders, and also provided them, thus, with potential opportunities for improved livelihoods. Such social inequality can be illuminated by quantified indicators, that comprise the Human Development Index (HDI), the Gini coefficient, indicative of income inequalities, as well as indicators of gender inequalities (like the SIGI – Social Institutions and Gender Index – of OECD Development Centre (Ferrant et al., 2014, p. 1)), which any evaluation should consider as at least to a minor degree affecting migration processes, however, being an indispensable for a proper understanding of the migration processes in most contexts.

Lastly, some other causal factors of migratory flows can include policy initiatives of the involved states, historical and geopolitical contexts, and environmental degradation, among

other determinants, the latter being is a strong force in the analysed case of Maasai migration, acting as a push factor, literally forcing people to migrate, and interestingly, potentially bringing positive changes in terms of gender relation dynamics, by means of more equally (with certain reservations) affecting everyone in the community, and stipulating forced migration patterns, that have to include women as independent migrants, which previously used to be a tabooed and non-traditional way of living in the said society.

Within the framework of Puentes et al., the most important dimensions for the case-study within this paper, given the research questions stated in the introduction, are the ones of impacts on countries of origin or the sending community, in this particular case, and the dimension comprising the impacts on migrants and their families. However, the impacts on the sending society are to be limited to the ones related to the socio-cultural changes and dynamics induced by female migration and, in connection therewith, sending remittances or returning home with critically new experiences and a financial situation that theoretically puts them in a position demanding more respect from the male part of the society and family, and thus, the indicators of behavioural impacts (prompted by migration flows in the ways of having an impact on or inducing, for examples, consumerism, gender attitudes, criminal behavior, etc. – and the “social remittances”, which are often uncritically considered as being exclusively positive to the sending communities, and are well addressed by Levitt and Lamba-Nieves, 2010) are of great importance for the assessment of this dimension, that is vital for the purpose of giving answers to the research questions of this work. Similarly important might be the aspect of political impacts, with return migrants’ organizations acting as agents of change or, likewise, diasporas having a say in the political or any other aspect of the public realm of both states they are related to. I am, thus, going to be focusing on this aspect within the impacts on the sending country/society dimension, instead of addressing the entire list of possible, and important for a different scope of analysis, factors, such as the economic impacts of remittances (their contribution to economic growth, to poverty reduction, to macroeconomic stability, impacts on socio-economic inequalities, on inflation etc.), the social costs of reproduction of the migrant force (healthcare, education, costs of upbringing etc. borne mostly by families but relevant for the society as a whole) which is lost in case of them not returning to the home country for the most part of their working age.

With a more human-centric approach, the dimension of impacts of migration on migrants themselves and their families is another central one for this research. According to

the framework of Puentes et al., this part of the analysis should incorporate such indicators, as financial and economic impacts, including, in turn, overall influence over the poverty status for the migrant people and their families receiving remittances, impacts on the wellbeing of families characterised as the “overall improvement of livelihood conditions and living standards of recipient households”, and the indicators of changed perspectives of social mobility, which should necessarily give information for assessing whether and to what extent social mobility might be affected by one’s gender; indicators of labour conditions – wage discrimination of migrant workers and employers, labour precariousness, and the indicators describing the existence of occupational segregation, meaning the dominance of certain sectors or particular, mostly low-paid, jobs being available for or welcoming migrants, and hence, resulting overrepresentation or underrepresentation of the migrant part of the population in specific sectors; human rights-related impacts, including labour rights and information thereon, and access to social services, as well as socio-cultural impacts, in particular, the patterns of the functioning of families and the related influence on children, health status etc.

Understanding the reasons behind one’s migration and the way migration proceeds (the selected direction, individual positive and negative experiences and results for the migrants themselves and a broader community) requires accounting for the complex interactions between the interrelated factors of individual agency and macro structures (Ruyssen and Salomone, 2017, p. 4). Thus, by attempting to understand whether women feel treated with dignity and respect and have equal opportunities to lead a kind of lifestyle they would prefer and find desired employment in their area of residence, we can identify the extent to which women can exercise their agency and autonomy, which is contingent upon their sociocultural environment.

In the present master’s thesis I endeavour to focus on gender inequality as a factor influencing female migration, and consequently want to explain that I consider both income inequality or gender pay gap and social prejudices based on cultural norms and traditions of certain societies, with all the varied implications thereof, when analysing the question.

When taking into account gender inequality specifically on the labour market, it is worth citing the definition of the ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958, which defines discrimination as follows: “Any distinction, exclusion or preference made on the basis of race, colour, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, which has the effect of nullifying or impairing equality of opportunity or

treatment in employment or occupation”. Discrimination inevitably leads to inequality at the workplace, however, not all inequality is explained by discriminatory practices, since women often have unpaid duties within their families and may choose to work less to take care of children of family members (Busse and Spielmann, 2006).

The reasons behind why gender disparities of all different kinds (predominantly in the so-called “sticky” domains, like gender gap, health disadvantages, limited agency and representation of women in private and public spheres etc.) persist can be summarised in the form of the following three main factors. Firstly, poor quality of institutions that could ensure equality of opportunity for women and ban harmful practices and traditions illustrating overt discrimination in the household and in the public realm, which unfortunately, is not easy to solve and requires complex and long-term policy investments, which may be easily blocked by interested or biased political actors or other parties involved. Secondly, inability to achieve progress is seen when multiple constraints combine to block the possibility of moving away from gender disparities, as well as serve to reinforce and perpetuate the latter, which can be exemplified with persisting earning gaps and segregation of employment by gender, lack of access of women to education, limited agency in societal voice and in household decision-making. And lastly, the “sticky” domains of gender inequalities are particularly persistent in case they are based on entrenched gender roles in the society and household and related social norms, prescribing responsibilities for care work and unpaid work of maintaining the household, as well as regulating the acceptable occupation, aspirations and any actions for men and women, limiting the latter to a greater degree (World Bank, 2012, p. 13).

Social inequality can be measured in five dimensions: family norms, such as marriage age, parental authority, and inheritance rights; restricted physical integrity; son bias; restricted assets; and restricted civil liberties (Ferrant et al., 2014, p. 3).

In this thesis I mainly focus on the category of labour migrants, putting aside migration for marriage, family reunification, ecological and other purposes, although these reasons often coincide, and the distinction can be unclear or rather irrelevant.

Gender inequality takes place in many forms, one of which is related to education. As has been mentioned in the introduction, not many studies focus on the linkages between gender inequality and female migration. Thus, there is Kanaiaupuni (2000), who in his study of migration from Mexico, states that “educated women experience great gender discrimination

and few occupational rewards in Mexico and, therefore, may be more likely to migrate across the border where they will earn greater wages than they would otherwise” (p. 1337). Pedraza (1991) mentions in addition that “the act of emigrating also becomes a way of escaping total dependence on their husbands” for women in the Dominican Republic (p. 309). The underlying idea of both papers is that gender inequality may act as a push factor for female migration (see also Baudassé and Bazillier, 2014).

Therefore, gender, which appears in the title of this work, is not the only category in focus herein. Taking the intersectional feminist perspective, I address the issues as being influenced by many diverse aspects forming a migrant’s identity profile, and I see gender, for the most part, as a social construct of the practices, notions, roles, stereotypical expectations attributed to women, the culturally stipulated elements of what it means to be a woman and to be feminine, what a woman can do and what actions she should refrain from, as well as, access to tangible (including the mere right of women to own property) and intangible (social and professional networks etc.) resources, all taking place within the wide context of the local power structures, customary norms and hierarchies etc., and partly internalised as a result of long-term practice of the said identity, however, potentially very dynamic if removed from the original context or exposed to a wider one.

I would also want to add the perspectives of non-binary people, not limiting my investigation to the experiences of women, however I have found no information on queer identities within the Maasai community, and in general, being LGBTQIA+ in both Tanzania and Kenya is not legal. In addition to the above, it is natural to take into consideration only the female perspectives in the light of the fact that Maasai society is extremely gendered, with clearly defined roles for each sex (as for example, women being responsible for building the traditional houses and men becoming warriors with all the further implications and practices this entails), and with specific sacred ceremonies and rituals surrounding the life cycles of women and men, which have to be observed according to one’s gender and resulting roles as traditionally understood in the community, as for instance, Enkipaata (senior boy ceremony), Emuratta (circumcision), Eunoto (warrior-shaving ceremony), and also sometimes female circumcision that is technically prohibited, yet still secretly practiced in some communities within Tanzania and Kenya (Maasai Association, 2020).

Furthermore, Maasai community has a hierarchical society, where one’s position depends on the age, sex, and certain other factors, and these structures are manifestly male

dominated, as, for example, women do not even have their own age-set but are treated according to that of their husbands (ibid.). As can be seen from the essential ceremonies and rites of the community, men are prepared to be independent and in charge of decision-making, which is exemplified by the Enkang e-kule (the milk ceremony), that is meant to prepare warriors for the possible harsh environmental conditions that they have to withstand, such as famine etc., train their adaptability and primarily to teach young men to be self-reliant rather than depending on their mothers, that for the most part prepare food for their husbands and the children. Also, Maasai marriages can be polygamous, but this rule is one-sided in the sense that a man can have several wives and have children with multiple women, but a woman cannot.

1.4 Gender inequality: push factor or impediment for female migration – Literature review

The study by Baudassé and Bazillier (2014) is one of the few research papers explicitly linking gender inequality and female migration. The authors set two hypotheses for empirical research – the first one is that gender inequality may be a push factor for the emigration of women. In this case the hypothesis implies that as a consequence of existing gender wage gap, female migration could be preferred to male migration, as the opportunity cost is lower for women due to poor labour perspectives in source countries. Thus, given the unfavourable conditions at home, it becomes preferable for a woman to move abroad for the purpose of earning more income.

The second hypothesis is that gender inequality may serve as a force impeding or hampering female migration, being a part of the selection process. In this case it is implied that the decision to migrate is taken collectively to some extent, and that while deciding upon migration within the family or community, the social norms prevailing in the society may stipulate a “gender bias”. As a result, although such decision appears as irrational, with the possibilities of the given female migrant abroad (expected outcome abroad, the opportunity cost and the level of possible remittances), preference is given to the male population, excluding the female part from migration.

Furthermore, in case there is institutional discrimination of women, entailing lower levels of education of the female part of the population, less job opportunities, in addition to the expected lower levels of wages, females find themselves in less favourable conditions to migrate. Additionally, given the gender wage gap, it is more difficult and cumbersome for

women to cover the substantial costs of migration, and consequently, with no possibility to pay for themselves, women rely on their family members for support and, as a result, they often cannot take the decision independently. Consequently, they find it more difficult or impossible to migrate or prefer to travel short distances (Jolly and Reeves, 2005, p. 12).

Baudassé and Bazillier (2014) come to the conclusion that the empirical data support the second hypothesis implying that gender inequality is a strong negative factor affecting female migration, although it remains clear that both hypotheses are valid and that particular effects of gender inequality are different depending on the country or area, as well as vary in time. Moreover, the authors find that gender equality is positively correlated with female migration, especially for the high-skilled women.

Furthermore, in certain countries the existing cultural norms and perceptions of women in the society stipulate a near ban on independent female migration. For instance, in Nigeria autonomous female migration is tantamount to prostitution (Kanaiaupuni, 2000, p. 1315). Similarly, Islam poses some challenges to the opportunity of a women to migrate independently of her husband or family. In addition to the aspects mentioned above, one must consider that the role of networks is not similar for men and women. Kanaiaupuni (2000, p. 1315) notes that “male-dominated networks serve to exclude women from certain types of jobs and promotions (...), they encourage certain individuals to migrate and to discourage others”. Additionally, Cynthia Enloe (2014) argues that there are female-specific jobs, which are characterized by low requirements for education and skills, and are exploitative, low paid and unregulated, as is the case of domestic work. Many risks are magnified when contracted workers have the status of illegal migrants or perform their jobs without any legal contracts, allowing the employer more leverage to leave workers underpaid whilst subjecting them to both psychological and physical abuse (Tittensor and Mansouri, 2017, p 17).

Indeed, the issue of agency is raised by the contradictory discourses surrounding female migrant policy, which are largely informed by fear of abuse. These discourses present migrant women either as victims of trafficking and abuse, or as heroines for sending much of their salaries home as remittances to help alleviate poverty and boost the economy (*ibid.*, p. 18).

Moreover, the OECD paper authored by Ferrant et al. (2014, p. 4) concludes that higher levels of discrimination in origin countries entail higher levels of female migration,

however, this positive connection of factors works only up to a certain threshold, where very high discrimination appears to curtail women's abilities to migrate.

In recent years, the issue of migration and its implications has become a significant topic of discussion in the context of development. The effects of migration have been brought to the forefront, necessitating careful consideration and implementation of solutions. The historical and still present in some geographical areas prevalence of male international and internal migration has also raised questions about the changes it brings into the lives of women who are left behind. Kar et al. (2018, p. 11) claim that as a result of these processes, women, whose male family members migrate, undoubtedly end up taking on extra responsibilities and duties, both paid and unpaid, as well as additional caring roles (see also Marzo and Atuesta, 2018, p. 15). This also raises issues of food security for households relying on agriculture or pastoralist societies, like Maasai, as many tasks are divided between genders in a way that they complement each other but are not necessarily prepared to swiftly and spontaneously substitute the other for a longer period of time if a need arises. The study of Kar et al. (2018, p. 12), presenting the results of a research on agricultural communities in Nepal and Senegal, also concludes that women who are involved in decision-making on the farm and have greater group membership are empowered, as a consequence of male family member migration, in certain domains, such as having a financial account due to receiving remittances from male family members and being semi-independently in charge of the allocation thereof. However, if remittances are not present or are very limited, spouses of international migrants are at a disadvantage in terms of their empowerment, including less decision-making power over productive activities and agricultural income, as well as access to information. This research, thus, highlights the need for measures such as reducing remittances costs, encouraging female involvement in a larger number of better remunerated activities, and providing female farmers with specialized services to help them improve their earnings and increase financial self-reliance and independence.

Reflecting more on the above-mentioned study, which investigates the results of migration on female empowerment in a way that I, otherwise do not mention in my research, in particular, addressing the consequences of male migration on the lives of women left behind, I want to mention that migration has a profound effect on women's work and empowerment, mainly through the absence of their migrant family members' labour and the influx of remittances (Kar et al., 2018, p. 11). This may place extra responsibility on women to increase

their labour allocation on the family farm in order to maintain an equal level of agricultural or other production or family's main income-generating activity. The authors state that, at the moment, currently available studies have not sufficiently explored how migration might modify the way decisions are taken within a household, which is a large focus of my meta-analytical study, as it is one of the elements of my understanding of empowerment of women, that I want to assess qualitatively as much as possible, endeavouring to answer my research questions. The study of Altamirano (1997, p. 6) also confirms that temporary or long absence of migrant men from domestic space means that women obtain a certain degree of autonomy in fields where they previously did not have it at all or had to consult their partners without being able to take decisions independently, although their access to resources often remains limited.

For the purpose of testing the hypothesis of whether female migration in circumstances of gender inequality results in empowerment or mostly ends up perpetuating existing inequalities, it is important to define what empowerment means in this case. The studies on female empowerment in the agricultural sector, namely the survey-based Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI) (Malapit et al. 2015; Alkire et al. 2013), focusing on specific countries – Bangladesh and Uganda – devises a more universally applicable methodology on assessing the empowerment of women in the field. The diagnostic tool aims to identify and pinpoint areas that require special attention from the side of project managers by analysing the components of the disempowerment index to help understand what must be done to achieve the goal of empowering men and, predominantly, women. The analysis of the questionnaire-based research requires decomposition of the index into the contributions of the various specified domains and indicators, every one of which has an assigned weight to it. Namely, the domains in this study include production, resources, income, leadership, and time, while the indicators, that each domain comprises and consists of are as follows – for the domain of production: a) input in productive decisions, and b) autonomy in production; for resources: a) ownership of assets, b) purchase, sale, or transfer of assets, and c) access to and decisions about credit; the income domain is understood through the indicator of control over the use of income (from production activities and another on decisions on other sources of income); the leadership domain in the study is understood through such indicators, as a) being a group member or belonging to a community and b) speaking in public; and, lastly, the time domain comprises the indicators of a) workload and b) leisure (Malapit et al. 2015, p. 4).

This understanding of empowerment can serve as one of the basic frameworks for analysing and qualitatively assessing the rather abstract category of empowerment, providing a catalogue of indicators that contribute to the resulting feeling of empowerment not only in the sector of agriculture, but also elsewhere, with minor adjustments and relevant modifications (such as additions of some elements, extending or compressing the list of indicator, or changing the understanding and meaning of specific domains), or by means of assigning the weight to the indicators differently, according to their relevance for the case in question in a quantitative type of analysis. For the research within this paper, I would also add a family aspect to the leadership domain, as an increased power of decision making within the family, where the defined roles for the two sexes in the traditional and customary understanding and practical ways of living of the Maasai community are most manifestly seen and perpetuated, and to which the leadership characteristics in the broader community come secondary; while the mentioned indicators of group membership and being vocal are relevant for the period of migration and also in the case of later returning home, but appear to be secondary to the family dynamics, given the specificities of the community taken for the analysis.

Thus, through this evaluation, it becomes possible to methodologically assess the areas that are important for empowerment and identify sectors that appear to be problematic for further policy design and administrative decision-making, but also, to simply decompose the abstract and potentially ambiguous category of empowerment for better understanding thereof and for conducting relevant analyses. And therefore, I will be taking the model of Malapit et al. (2015) as the basic guiding structure for investigating the potential empowerment of Maasai women as a result of migration processes to the urban areas.

The study of Todd et al. (2017, p. 310) looking into migration trends in Tanzania, with the question “Gender and Youth Migration for Empowerment?” mentioned in the title, refers to the theory of Demographic Transition (Dyson, 2010), which, in turn, suggests that society evolves towards “modernity” over time, with increases in the productive workforce, women’s “empowerment”, democratisation, and urban agglomerations all contributing to overall economic growth. However, this idea receives a portion of critique from Todd et al., particularly in regard to the notion of “women’s empowerment” in the transition. The results of the 2017 paper indicate that while female migration is more common and occurs with ever-increasing frequency, it often happens within the analysed region of Kisessa, and destinations chosen are typically closer to “home”; and characterised for the most part by motivations for

migration being such reasons as, primarily, marriage, or in pursuit of better household resources. Consequently, it is important to consider whether the trend of feminised migration is genuinely indicative of new gender norms and power structures, or if it simply reinforces existing ones, which is a dominant research question of the present thesis. Increased female migration does not necessarily mean achieving the desired outcomes and pursuits, and female mobility is not always occurring as a result of their individual “rationality”, as might be assumed, since decisions to migrate, especially in developing societies, are social (Todd et al., 2017, p. 310).

One example of this can be the 1971 Law of Marriage Act (LMA) in Tanzania, which was intended to ensure women’s rights in marriage by setting a minimum age and providing a legal framework for divorce, separation, and child custody. Despite its good intentions, the LMA has been widely criticised for its failure to take into account traditional and Islamic customs (important for Zanzibar, where Islam is nearly universal) that still dominate marital decisions. Additionally, the law privileges men over women, allowing for polygamy while not permitting women to establish multiple marriages, and permitting marriage below the age of 18 in spite of the Law of the Child of 2009. Lastly, there is also a certain element of confusion surrounding property division in polygamous marriages (Todd et al., 2017, p. 311; Howland and Koenan, 2014, p. 5).

The Livelihoods Framework offers a more comprehensive theory for migration by advocating a structuration approach. This approach views people as both active agents capable of making rational decisions and possessing a degree of assets, but also embedded within a structural context of risks and institutions. The framework highlights how agency is employed to make a living, ensuring survival and reducing the level of poverty (Rakodi, 2002; Keesides, 2005; Tacoli, 2008). Migration is then seen as a means of connecting different spaces and diversifying livelihoods, with the movement being strategic to ensure resilience. While the literature suggests that migration occurs individually, the cost-benefits of the decision feed back to the household unit (Todd et al., 2017, p. 311).

An important contribution to the current discourse is provided by the paper of Ruysen and Salomone (2017), which explores the two stages of migration, namely, developing the intention to migrate and taking steps of preparation for the move, as affected by perceived and experienced individual gender inequality. The research paper concludes that while women facing unequal treatment and opportunities at home are more likely to consider migrating, the

probability of these intentions coming into practice, as measured in the paper, moving to the following stage of actual preparations, is conditional upon more traditional determinants, namely, dependent on the level of income of the household, obligations within the family, and the effects of the networks in the intended destinations (ibid., p. 1). Thus, a large proportion of female migration desires is never meant to be implemented because of the tangible and intangible manifestations of gender inequalities. The results of the quantitative research also show that gender-related imbalances increase women's proclivity to migrate or at least consider the option of migration, however, at a certain point, with greater gravity of the effective inequalities and discrimination, these factors turn into a determinant preventing women from moving abroad, given the intense gender imbalances in opportunities within the economic and political realm (Loschmann and Siegel, 2013, p. 2). Furthermore, the findings suggest that perceived gender discrimination of individuals acts as a driving force for migration, leading to increased intentions for women to leave the country, however, does not significantly influence the number of women taking actual practical steps of preparation for migration (buying tickets or applying for visas etc.), as this is highly dependent on the financial status of the family/ respective individual and the availability and extensiveness of networks in the intended destination.

The factor of network effect – having family members, friends, or acquaintances in another place, that is one's potentially considered destination for migration – is considered to have crucially large influence for the migration process (see Bertoli and Ruysen, 2018). In addition to that, the network effect plays a considerable role in the stages of both intending to move and taking steps to actualise the intentions, in other words, when the desire to migrate is being translated into concrete plans and initial preparatory actions. This suggests that those women that have relatives or friends outside of their current area of residence are more likely to have the intention to migrate, and that disposing a social network is a privilege facilitating putting those plans into practice (Ruysen and Salomone, 2017, p. 15; Docquier et al., 2014, p. 64).

The role of the network for migrant women facing severe discrimination is multifold in that it provides the aspiring migrant with information, which has additional importance for people with lower educational status and countries characterised by lower levels of development and lower presence of the state institutions in the role of an information source; it also contributes to a safer transfer to the point of destination, might provide for free or low-

cost initial accommodation, contributes to reduced risks, fears and vulnerabilities, ensuring a closer to reality expectation of the experiences awaiting the woman in the destination place (ibid.). In other words, migrants' networks contribute to protect migrants against human rights abuses and can serve as safety nets in periods of crisis, which is especially relevant for the more vulnerable categories of population (Puentes, 2010, p. 18).

In the following section with the case-study, I will look into female migration of Maasai tribal communities in Kenya and Tanzania to understand the factors driving the migration of women to the city of Dar es Salaam, as well as the consequences of such migration on multiple levels, in particular, on individual wellbeing, health and empowerment, family relations or dynamics and wealth, and societal changes and transfers of norms, as well as the conditions in which women find themselves after migrating.

PART 2: CASE-STUDY: FEMALE MAASAI MIGRANTS IN TANZANIA AND KENYA

2.1 Country context

In this chapter, I would like to introduce and examine the case study of Maasai female migrants in Tanzania and Kenya. In this part I mainly focus on rural-urban migration of Maasai women to the city, which is in most cases the city of Dar es Salaam, Arusha – the capital of Arusha region, or some other larger city relatively close to one's home, and look into the circumstances, causes of migration and also how migration influences access to and control over resources among Maasai women.

The countries selected, which was stipulated by the geographical location of the Maasai community, were chosen because of the relatively vast and intensifying migration of women, which is a new phenomenon not previously common in the ethnic group and forced or facilitated by the external circumstances. It is of a great interest for me to investigate a case of female outmigration that is not a norm within the community, however, for a certain set of reasons, is becoming commonplace, and see what this development entails for women and their autonomy, for the families left behind, and in addition to that, to estimate whether there is a changing pattern in terms of the general perception and a wider acceptance of women's ability to migrate and make life choices independently.

When introducing the case study, I find it important to have a few paragraphs on the words used to refer to Maasai traditional community. Namely, the word "tribe" can be seen as somewhat problematic and offensive due to it bearing the connotations of historical violence and colonialism, as well as suggesting the idea of certain backwardness and the higher level of development (based on some questionable criteria) from the side of the person writing. The word has been used to marginalize indigenous communities, failing to recognise their history and their oppression, that are now partly associated with the meaning of the word tribe. According to one of the views, the word "tribe" and the ideas and understandings behind it reflect the widespread but outdated 19th-century social theory, as well as promote a myth of uncivilised African timelessness, primitiveness, and savagery, also having historically been the keystone of European colonial rule (Lowe, 2021, p. 2). It is of great importance to pay close attention to the choice of words and challenge their usage and meaning, as they bear power and reflect prevailing or alternative structures or views, in particular, in the academic literature.

However, it is an ongoing discussion and different view persist, and people from tribal communities and researchers from African countries do use the word tribe themselves.

I am not going to ban the word from the present thesis, while at the same time, will attempt to rely on other alternative denominations, such as (indigenous/traditional) community, Maasai people, kin-group etc., as I believe that interpreting present-day Africa through the lens of tribes reinforces the image of timelessness, reflects the distorted vision of culturally and socially conservative communities with a focus on problematic underdevelopment agenda relative to the Global North.

As has been mentioned, today many Africans themselves still use the word “tribe” when speaking or writing in English about community, ethnicity or identity in African states, which in part may be coming from the English they have learned from the colonial heritage and a smaller focus within academic rigour directed at carefully selecting words and reconsidering their meaning and connotations. Yet today most scholars – both African and non-African – who study African states and societies agree that “tribe” promotes and reinforces misleading and destructive or dangerous stereotypes and distorts the ideas it might benignly try to convey. Moreover, I have also noticed that government reports of Tanzania and Kenya attempt to avoid the use of that word, giving preference to a more neutral one – “community”.

To summarise, the term “tribe” is vague, confusing, and has no consistent meaning. It carries misleading historical and cultural assumptions and blocks accurate views of African realities. For this reason, it can be substituted, for example, by the term “indigenous people”, and one can use the definition of the UN, which reads as follows: “peoples and nations ...which, having a historical continuity with pre-invasion and pre-colonial societies that developed on their territories, consider themselves distinct from other sectors of the societies now prevailing on those territories” (United Nations, 2007), which seems accurate and relevant enough for the Maasai community.

Any interpretation of African events that relies on the concept of tribe is, at best, inadequate, and at worst, misleading. African identities and conflicts are just as diverse, complex, modern, and dynamic as those of other parts of the world, and thus any interpretation of African events must take those nuances into account without resorting to the commonly used oversimplified denominators that are ambiguous, degrading, and disrespectful (Lowe, 2021,

p.1). The use of this word often represents overlooking the dynamism of the communities in question perpetuating them in the role of constantly less developed and lagging-behind peoples.

Maasai is a Nilotic ethnic community that mostly inhabits Southern Kenya and Northern Tanzania. The name of the peoples comes from the Maa language, and thus, Maa-sai is roughly translated as “Maa-speaking peoples”. Although the exact number of Maasai is hard to establish, the population has been reported as numbering 1,189,522 in Kenya in the 2019 census (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2019), while in Tanzania, many sources reference the estimation of 430,000 (Minority Rights Group International, 2018 etc.), which appears to come from earlier reports dated 1993, and must have grown by now to be similar to the respective number for Kenya. In 1992, for comparison, the population numbers were also nearly on par, with 361,947 Maasai people in Kenya (1979 census) and 327,000 people in Tanzania (1987) (Grimes, 1992, p. 282). However, the problem of the lack of actual and comparable statistical data persists, and the actual numbers of the community people remain unknown due to several reasons, such as, for example, the semi-nomadic lifestyle of the community, the fact that many Maasai consider the Kenyan census to be a form of government intrusion and choose not to participate or deliberately provide fake information, and the fact that there are no official reports from the statistical agency of Tanzania (Maasai Association, 2020).

The community occupies a total land area of 160,000 square kilometres and is made up of 14 tribal groups, including the Kisongo, Purko, Loita, and Mataputo. After the Berlin Conference in 1884-1885, where the European colonial powers divided their African territories up between themselves, Maasailand was split into two areas, one of which was located in the German-controlled Tanganyika and the other – in the British colony of Kenya. While originally the majority of Maasai lands were on the Kenyan side, displacement in the early 20th century to make way for white settlers in Kenya has led to the fact that currently the larger part of Maasai-occupied territory is located in Tanzania. In addition to that, as national parks and game reserves were established on both sides of the border, restrictions on Maasai movement intensified throughout the course of the century (Minority Rights Group International, 2018).

2.2 Female migration in the Maasai community

One of the studies I found was conducted in Dar es Salaam city and Coast region in the Bagamoyo District. It interviewed 400 people in the city and the rural area mentioned (Lulu,

2017). The selection of the study areas was based on the fact that Dar es Salaam is the major commercial and industrial centre, therefore, it attracts a large number of migrants from different parts of the country. Moreover, the relatively good transport system to Dar es Salaam makes it a suitable area for migration with many rural areas having access to it. The Coast Region, in particular, the Bagamoyo District was selected for examination by the author because the majority of Maasai women who were doing business in the city originated from there. However, it should be noted that Maasai pastoralists were originally from the Arusha and Manyara regions but have migrated to other areas including the Coast due to already then existing land pressure and certain other factors (*ibid.*, p. 104).

The land pressure is, first of all, rooted in colonial history but also has a modern-day aspect connected with overall population growth in Tanzania and Kenya and governmental policies for agriculture and urbanization. Before the European settlers arrived to the respective areas, Maasai tribes were occupying a vast territory of fertile lands, however, armed British troops have taken over a large portion of Maasai land in unequal fights. As a result, in 1904, the Maasai signed an agreement, by which they were forced to give up a large share of their best land to European settlers (Maasai Wilderness and Conservation Trust).

Seven years later, in 1911, another highly controversial agreement was signed by a small group of Maasai, where their best Northern land, Laikipia, was transferred to white settlers. It is considered that they were poorly informed of the consequences that such a treaty would entail, and in addition to that, the signatories did not represent the entire tribe. Nevertheless, the agreements significantly affected the community, as with these two treaties, the Maasai lost about two-thirds of their lands, which has now been assimilated and repurposed, including for protected National Parks, and the ethnic group had to relocate to the less fertile parts of Kenya and Tanzania (*ibid.*). It has considerable importance for the community in question for several reasons: Maasai are one of the very few peoples who have largely retained their traditions and most elements of lifestyle in the light of the pressing modernisation, and thus, rely on the availability of vast lands to maintain their way of living. Being semi-nomadic and pastoral, they live by herding cattle and goats and coexist with the local wildlife, which is endangered by the current developments of urbanisation and demographic trends.

Maasai depend on livestock as their major means of livelihood, however, their traditional grazing lands have been shrinking due to the establishment of state farms, government policies of nationalization, land alienation for national parks etc. Additionally,

there have been droughts, livestock diseases, and other hardships persisting in the community. The resulting pressure has compelled the Maasai pastoralists to adjust by migrating to other better watered places in semi-arid areas or to urban areas and cities. The community has also begun to cultivate more crops, in addition to primarily engaging in and relying on pastoralism, as a means of coping with the amounting pressures (Lulu Genda, 2021; Lulu, 2017, p. 103).

The Maasai economy is becoming more and more reliant on the market economy. Livestock products are being sold to other communities in Kenya in order to accumulate money for purchasing beads, clothing, and grains. Additionally, cows and goats are often sold to pay for children's uniforms and school costs. Young Maasai men and women are now frequently seen in Kenya's largest towns and cities selling a variety of goods in addition to goats and cows, such as beads, cell phones, charcoal, and grain, and this entrepreneurial spirit is becoming a new and growing phenomenon in the community's mentality (Maasai Association, 2020).

In general, the Maasai society is a hierarchical one, where one's position within the social and family hierarchy greatly depends, among other factors, on gender. Local traditions allocate tasks that are indispensable for the survival of the family/community and constitute an integral part of the Maasai way of living, to the two genders. Men are in charge of the tasks related to taking care of cattle and performing the role of a warrior, protecting villages from invaders from outside and the dangerous wild animals. Women are performing the traditional role more associated with maintaining the house and providing food and water, in particular, some of their tasks include milking the cows, collecting firewood, looking after children, preparing food and fetching water, as well as taking care of the home and building traditional rather temporary houses out of cow dung (Jowell et al., 2018, p. 704). The male role in the society is more revered and prestigious, and they have the decisive weight and power in almost all decision-making processes. Furthermore, the rural and traditionally geographically isolated Maasai are an ethnic group characterised by lower levels of secondary education as relative to the remainder of the population of Tanzania and Kenya, and absence of formal education is particularly prevalent among the women of Maasai. The Maasai community has some of the highest rates of child marriage, women have to undergo the still practiced in some villages rite of female genital mutilation (FGM) for non-therapeutic reasons and have limited abilities to get educational attainments and literacy, as well as have high levels of poverty with no access to or control over productive or many other resources (UN Women, 2016; Lulu Genda, 2021).

Female migration is a common phenomenon among the Maasai, and it has occurred for several decades. Women began to outnumber men among Tanzanian migration flows in the 1970s (Dungumaro, 2013, p. 46). Women are subjected to specific constraints due to gender inequalities, which include lack of access to and control of available resources like livestock, credit, and land, as well as poverty, marginalization, discriminatory and generally inadequate laws, lack of decision-making power in their families, unjust and unfair cultural practices including heavy workload and, almost above all, lack of education.

While migration is often divided into two categories: voluntary and forced, with voluntary migration being potentially driven by such factors, as an individual's desire for educational advancement or increased economic opportunities, and involuntary migration being the result of climate change, political unrest, famine, or armed conflicts, the distinction between these two types of migration is complex, as many human migrations are driven by a combination of voluntary and involuntary factors (UN-Habitat, 2010), which is also the case for many described cases of migration (especially, female) of Maasai communities. The response of a community to such drivers of migration depends on the socioeconomic condition of the community in question, as well as the individual vulnerabilities and motivations of the members of the community (Black et al., 2011, Jowell et al., 2018, p 704).

The determinants of migration for Maasai women are both pull and push factors like reduction of livestock due to diseases and drought, culminating to difficulties in earning income in the rural areas, the demand for Maasai goods and presence of friends and relatives in the city etc. Available means of transportation also play a role here, as well as conflicts at the household and community levels, which includes the issue of unwanted arranged marriages (Lulu, 2017, p. 107). As a consequence, the deteriorating socio-economic and environmental circumstances in the respective rural areas have compelled Maasai women to break away from traditional norms and move to urban areas.

In part, as it is hard to clearly separate such a complex phenomenon as migration resulting from numerous different reasons into clear-cut categories, a large proportion of Maasai migration could be classified as forced migration due to environmental factors. Overall, indigenous communities are particularly vulnerable to the changes of natural conditions and climate, as they rely on interactions with the local environment quite heavily and depend on coexisting with the nature in a specific way, and, also, since governmental responses to the changes in the climate and nature in general might overlook the impacts on smaller and more

independent communities, leaving them with no comprehensive management strategies. On top of that, governmental actions may themselves put additional pressure on those communities, as has been described with the land pressure from the respective governments of Tanzania and Kenya (see Jowell et al., 2018, p. 703; Maasai Wilderness and Conservation Trust etc.). Therefore, environmental degradations are a particularly important concern for Maasai, that require plenty of land for grazing their cattle and remaining a semi-nomadic community, as required for maintaining their traditional ways of living; and governments in the so-called developing countries often tend to prioritise economic and urban growth and agriculture over fully respecting the rights and ways of living of indigenous communities.

According to Castles (2002, p. 3-4), the causes of forced environmental migration include such processes as desertification, deforestation, lack of water, salinisation of irrigated lands, and depletion of biodiversity, which result from rapid population growth in less-developed countries and global climate change, especially as accompanied by lack of proper governmental response and management coming in the forms of inaction, incapacity, and corruption and also harmful policies, and in turn, those changes on macro-level lead to pressure on land and other resources and exacerbate the consequences of natural and man-made disasters and extreme weather events. However, the author concludes, after analysing opposing views and discourses that environmental determinants are part of complex patterns of multiple causality, where natural and environmental factors are tightly connected with socio-political and economic ones, and that focussing on one cause alone – the environmental factors – might be a misleading, one-sided and oversimplified approach for an attempt to understand the complex processes behind environmental migration (ibid., p. 5).

Analysing the causes of Maasai migration, we can move on the often decisive factor or gender imbalances, as evidence indicates that women who do not feel treated with respect and dignity show a larger incentive to migrate (Ruyssen and Salomone, 2017, p. 6). Jowell et al. (2018), having conducted interviews with rural-urban female Maasai migrants, illustrate the pervasive patriarchal and unequal nature of the society with the following quotation from an interview:

“In the village, women do a lot of work. They are the ones that cook, collect firewood, fetch water, and do the milking. And even after, you are still responsible for the grazing – all these different hard jobs. But the men ..., they don’t have a job, and your husband is not buying

clothing for your kids. ... They don't allow you to go to the market and maybe meet your brothers and talk about your problems" (Jowell et al., 2018, p. 707).

Thus, women, who are overburdened with responsibilities and exhausting housework are left without agency and proportional to their input power in decision-making in most aspects of family and communal life.

In connection therewith, one aspect that relates to the male-female inequality is the experience of violence, including domestic violence, faced by women. Women's vulnerability and ways of protecting themselves in the new environment differ from men's experience of and reaction to violence, whether physical or not. While men may be subject to racist attacks and attacks based on hate or prejudice towards one's origin, social status or any other similar characteristic, they are rarely subjected to attacks from the part of women (Bujis, 1993, p. 6). While beating women appears to be a non-condemned practice within their hierarchical society, for the Maasai community this issue should also involve the consideration of traditions and rituals that normalise certain forms of socially sanctioned violence against women or gender based violence (GBV), in particular, in the form of the harmful and retrogressive practices, like female genital mutilation (FGM) – also called female circumcision and female genital cutting (FGC), marriage and motherhood in childhood, and son preference (Government of Kenya, 2020, p. 5). More than 200 million women and girls alive today have undergone FGM in around 30 countries in Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, and around 4 million more are at risk of being subjected to it every year (WHO, 2022). FGM is rooted in non-medical beliefs that it improves fertility, leads to better hygiene etc., as well as the idea that it may enhance sexual pleasure for men while at the same time suppressing female sexuality, that it helps in preventing infidelity, and, in general, it is often necessary to comply with the demands of religious institutions or for a girl to be accepted by the community after a certain age. Overall, the practice is believed to uphold a girl's purity, honour, and cleanliness and it is used to control women's sexuality as a way to make girls and women more "marriageable", in conformity with the social norms that have been sustained for centuries (Government of Kenya, 2020, p. 20).

It is obvious that such a rite of passage into adolescence involving FGM has detrimental consequences for women's health, as it includes such complications as haemorrhage, infection, sepsis, and death, while long-term loss of sexual pleasure and sometimes function, and depression are also common. Other long-term consequences include infertility, scarring, pains, problems with urinating, and poor obstetric and neonatal outcomes

(ibid., p. 19). There is little data linking migration and FGM, implying that migrating may be considered as a response to the harmful practice and a way to escape it, however, some studies indicate that upon migrating to the urban area and having collected financial resources to feel empowered and feel that they have a say in the society, a number of women come back to their villages to educate people about the dangers of FGM and express a highly negative stance towards this issue and are proactive with helping to eliminate the practice they greatly disagree with and condemn (Jowell et. al., 2018, p. 708). This suggests that migration could be a source of empowering women and giving them the agency to make a different, more informed choice and say no to passing on the practice to their daughters or other girls in the community, and potentially change the prevailing or dominant perceptions in the community, that would be a critically important transformation, as the practice is mostly done realising the physical and psychological damage it causes and the fact that the nationwide banned practice is widely acknowledged or recognised as a violation of children and women's rights, in the interest of social acceptance (Kandala et al., 2019, p. 2).

A substantial lack of analysis can be observed in the area of research, while relatively enough secondary sources are available to make sense of the processes from afar. There is no sufficient statistical data, as well as a lack of papers addressing the issues of female migration in Sub-Saharan Africa and suggesting practical policy improvements and actions that could help improve the results or outcomes and one's personal experiences of migration, as well as the realities of the sending communities or villages. It would have been perfect to conduct interviews to better understand the realities of migrant Maasai women in the city but in this work, I will have to suffice with the interviews and research conducted by other scholars.

As a general rule, women do not have control over resources in most part of Sub-Saharan Africa. The Maasai community is not an exception. Women are still unable to have full power of decision-making since often times they require the approval of their decisions by men – husbands, elder sons, or fathers. The studies suggest that migration enables women to obtain resources independently and use them as they wish, contribute to family-owned resources, thus, gaining more bargaining power, and being able to take and finance decisions about their children, mostly with regard to education, denial of forced marriages etc. (Lulu, 2017, p. 117). It is commonly recognised by the authorities that such practices, as child marriage and motherhood, FGM, and boy preference should be eliminated. Child marriage is a detrimental practice that has a more profound impact on girls than boys; it forces many girls

to prematurely end their education, become mothers when they are not physically and mentally prepared therefor, and exposes them to health risks associated with early pregnancies and childbirth. This practice is a grave threat to the development prospects of young girls, as it prevents them from reaching their full potential and from engaging in activities that could improve their wellbeing. From a human rights perspective, son preference is a harmful practice as it reinforces gender-biased systems that assign a higher social status to men and boys and continuously perpetuate and reinforce it, while at the same time oppressing and devaluing female children. By allowing gender-biased sex selection to take place, it actively prevents the birth of female children and perpetuates the gender inequality existing in society (Government of Kenya, 2020, p. 25).

The main activities conducted by the migrant Maasai women in the city are selling beaded jewellery, traditional medicines, and tobacco. Another significant share works as domestics. The studies reveal a broad range of uses of incomes generated in the city; they are effected through remittances or through actual visits and payment in cash for various services and goods. Women use their money to repair or build houses, because traditionally they are responsible for this role in the Maasai community; also, to meet basic household needs, buy livestock and farm equipment, and buy pieces of land for investment. More than half (52%) of the respondents in the study by Elizabeth Lulu (2017, p. 109) used their income for buying different domestic goods and paying for school expenses for their families in rural areas.

The living conditions of migrant women in the city, naturally, differ, however Jowell et al. (2018, p. 708) describe that mature women having a family and migrating for financial reasons often have negative experiences in terms of potential improvements of their own living situation, while trying to save the money to later bring it to the family and contribute to covering essential and further needs at home. They may often find themselves in conditions of poor hygiene and overcrowding, as the places they are able to afford are predominantly unsanitary. Many women who were making traditional beaded jewellery frequently found themselves selling their goods through a middleman because of their inability to interact with clients without the knowledge of Swahili or English, which often resulted in a diminished financial compensation for their hard work. They also unavoidably experienced a change in their routines, and many complained about the deterioration of their health condition due to the lack of exercise and physical activity, being used to walking long distances to collect wood for making fire or to fetch water (ibid., p. 708). Working often turned out to be exhausting, as

Maasai women were easy to exploit because of their lack of knowledge about proper working conditions, low expectations due to lack of experience of living in the city, and absence of labour unions and networks that could help them defend or fight for their rights.

Nevertheless, in the research conducted by Elizabeth Lulu is indicative of positive improvements in the wealth and wellbeing of families staying home, as a result of female migration, since, in general, migrants' families own more resources as compared to rural ones. The largest difference is in ownership of items like radios and cell phones. High percentage of ownership of such items and a higher percentage of better houses among the families with migrant women reflect an increase in the contribution of migrant Maasai women to family resources (Lulu, 2017, p. 110).

Adding something to the family property and becoming active contributors to their families' economy allows women to increase their access to and control over resources. Also, migration enables them to own resources independently, including productive resources, such as kiosks and other items, and gives them more power in decision-making processes in the family. Culture and traditions do not allow women to own resources because by default they belong to men, however, migration is gradually changing this situation. Migration has given women the power to control and manage resources (for instance, to sell them without prior consultation) in their families and society at large (ibid., p. 114).

Socio-economic changes brought by female migration in the Maasai community include also changes in education for children. Today, more children are attending and completing schools, while in the past girls were stopped from continuing education and forced by their fathers or brothers to get married (ibid., p. 117). Now migrant women can insist on their daughters' completing education before entering into marriage. In general, they add resources to their families independently, and thus, are respected and more involved in decision-making.

Another issue I want to mention here is the integration of migrant Maasai women into communities in the destination city. A study by Ann May and Terrence McCabe (2004) provides evidence that Maasai are perceived as cheap labour, and widely associated with disease, drunkenness, and theft (p. 21). And also, there are prejudiced perceptions about the work that tribal people can perform – for instance, the fact that Maasai men are loyal guards, and women can only work as domestics. They have to cooperate and exist together with other

migrants from their community, since otherwise they risk being excluded from social life. Additionally, Maasai migrants are easy to recognize because they maintain the traditional way they dress while living in the city (May and McCabe, 2004, p. 8), which is especially the case for economic circular migrants that come back home regularly and perceive the city as a temporary and alien place of residence, maintaining the sense of home in the village. Those migrants strongly hold to their Maasai identity, respect their cultural practices and values and are proud to share the beauties of their traditional dress, the Maa language, the local ceremonies, and respect for cattle. Moreover, those women mostly make their living by “exporting” the Maasai culture to the city, namely, by selling traditional Maasai crafts (beaded jewellery etc.) and medicines (Jowell et al., 2018, p. 707). The integration of those migrants is further complicated by the fact that they do not speak Swahili or the English language, which contributes to the sense of isolation from the rest of the urban residents, making them feel home-sick and missing their family and friends/community, and experience nostalgia for their traditional ways of living, which in turn might lead to romanticising the Maasai practices, even those they previously did not agree with, and thinking negatively of their experiences in the city.

Being exposed to new cultural practices and societal structures after moving to a big city, people from indigenous communities experience some influence on their views of the world and of themselves, which might have a strong impact on their ethnic identity. Jowell et al. (2018, p. 704) highlight that transformations related to ethnic identity, especially for people from indigenous communities who tend to have a strong sense of community and vibrant and robust traditional social practices, are important for overall health, as health should be perceived as a holistic concept that encompasses physical, mental, and social wellbeing, according to the WHO. As is shown in a recent meta-analysis of ethnic identity among people of colour in North America, a robust ethnic identity was generally associated with positive well-being; nevertheless, there are some circumstances where a strong ethnic identity can worsen the emotional distress in response to perceived prejudices against one’s ethnic group (Smith and Silva, 2011, p. 44).

The vulnerabilities of migrant Maasai women are, thus, complex and based on overlapping and interconnected identities, namely, those of being a woman, coming from a tribal community, being a person of colour (although this is not applicable in the present case study of intra-regional migration happening within one country or within two neighbouring

states – mostly to the city of Dar-es-Salaam) etc., as well as incorporating, additionally, such factors as lower levels of formal education, lack of experience of living alone and not within a family or as a part of a closely interacting and interdependent community, lack of financial means that could make the journey and one's experiences easier by acting as a means for ensuring access to adequate housing, food etc., and covering the necessary medical care.

One of the most severe issues in this regard is human trafficking (see Leun, 2016). The fact that women are more prone to find precarious forms of employment and engage in substandard work makes them more vulnerable to human trafficking and provides less visibility, as is the case with domestic work, that is largely unregulated and happening without formal contracts (Cranford, 2003, p. 459). This leaves women unable to find more protected and regulated forms of employment, exposed to risks of being exploited, and highly vulnerable to violence from the side of employers or other related people (customers, business partners and suppliers, subcontractors etc.) in the sector of domestic work or sex work, but also when conducting small business, having no insurance and substandard access to financial and banking services to keep the money in a safe way and effect transfers of remittances home.

Given this, research shows that women are more likely to remit bigger sums of money home as compared to men, and therefore, they have even more limited financial means to ensure their own living while also taking care of the family at home, which does remain a moral responsibility for women, even as they move away for work or any other reasons, since cultural roles that are continuously assigned to males and females regarding domestic duties and responsibilities in maintaining a family are internalised. One simply cannot leave such an important aspect of life, as family, and especially, one's own children, if they know that it is not customary to rely on a man to take care of important household and care duties, given their lack of experience and a general lower sense of responsibility. As a result, women prefer to travel shorter distances to stay closer to home, in case their input and care is needed there, and as a rule, women keep stronger personal, economic, and social ties with their relatives and the community in the area of origin, while men mostly suffice with sending remittances, normally smaller in amount (Altamirano, 1997, p. 6).

Here, it is also important to distinguish between types of migration based on the temporary or a more permanent nature of migration. According to the study of Jowell et al. (2018), the most represented factors driving Maasai migration are educational aspirations,

which lead to permanent migrants having a clear sense of their homes being in the receiving/destination city, and family support needs (often resulting in circular migration) of Maasai women have significant implications for how they adapt to life in the city. Permanent migrants, driven by a desire for education, tend to modulate their traditional ethnic identity and integrate more fully into city life, while those who migrate on a more circular basis, motivated by the need to support their family, are likely to remain more isolated and hold to their ethnic identity (Jowell et al., 2018, p. 703).

Identity transformations occurring in the process of migration and integration into the receiving society, are, thus, different for the two types of migrants – the interviews of the same study revealed that it is more common for the more “permanent” and younger migrants to reassess and reconsider the practices prevalent in the Maasai community and constituting their ways of living. The more assimilated migrants coming to acquire education in the city express disavowal of Maasai practices that highlight male-female inequality and may put effort to educate the people in their village, for instance, about the dangers of female genital mutilation that is still practiced in some areas (*ibid.*, p. 708). It is less common, on the other hand, for circular migrants to question the unequal and often harmful practices held in place by a mix of societal forces, the pinnacle or epitome of which is probably the FGM, reflecting discriminatory and stereotypical beliefs about female sexuality, and essentially sheltering women and girls from it and putting them under the control of men, as well as gravely violating their fundamental rights to health, to bodily integrity, to be free from discrimination and from cruel or degrading treatment (Government of Kenya, 2020, p. 19). This may be happening because they find it hard to establish a decent living in the new environment and experience salient feelings of longing for home and community they were detached from, thus, putting up with the dominant ways of living in order to enjoy the benefits that Maasai togetherness gives them, also feeling that they might not have enough authority and power, having always lived with a limited agency, to influence the traditional tenets and practices, especially since they do not have a clear view of what could be a better system, as their life in the city is not the ideal to aim for.

Interestingly, there is little evidence proving that the above two types of migrants interact between themselves and form extensive support networks that could improve everyone’s experiences and access to information, stability, and communal support. The findings suggest that if the two groups of migrant women provided each other with emotional,

informational, and financial (whenever possible) social support, they could, perhaps, all experience improved wellbeing and resilience in the city, given the role that networks can play for migrants, especially those coming from indigenous communities. On the other hand, however, interviews of Jowell et al. (2018, p. 708) show that women coming to the city for financial reasons and having little or no education and knowledge of languages spoken outside of the Maasai community, do have more contacts between themselves but while those provide them with the sense of community and links to the values they cherish at home, such networks are far from being efficient in a diversified way, as many of those migrants struggle to make a living for themselves and experience financial, integration-related and other struggles, so they would not be able to help a fellow Maasai in trouble, neither would they be likely to possess enough information about living in the city outside their own often precarious situation and could not be important sources of practical knowledge for their people (Jowell et al., 2018, p. 709).

This situation also contributes to the isolation of such migrants that are forced to stick to their fellow Maasai people, making it harder to integrate into the urban society, and on top of this, even unnecessary to do so, as they can manage to find a small group of friends from the same community anyway, and, on top of this, they tend to not perceive the city as home, therefore, not adapting to the new environment and keeping their identity unaltered may be a suitable or even preferred option in order not to have to reintegrate once they return (ibid., p. 706).

Migration to urban areas provides people from indigenous communities with unique opportunities including educational attainment, access to the different perspectives and views that they were never exposed to before, alternative employment prospects etc., but it also entails challenges such as experiencing discrimination, social isolation, and sexual violence (May and Ikayo, 2007, p. 287). As has been largely described in the theoretical or literature review section, social networks are able to mitigate a lot of the challenges and stresses of migrating women. By fostering interactions between different types of Maasai migrants (in the sense of both female groups with no patriarchal pressure to perform the old roles they had in the community, and general diasporic networks) with the help of NGOs and the civil society initiatives, these migrants could obtain the support they lack. This support might include advice on applying to jobs or starting a business, general tips on living in the city with new societal structures, legal frameworks, and rules by which a society lives, or providing language

assistance in the search for affordable and clean housing, and such support could be granted at no cost from a fellow Maasai in a friendly and unbureaucratic setting. This exchange of experiences and information within any form of a casual platform, would might minimize isolation and loneliness through increased interactions with fellow Maasai, and would facilitate gaining skills and resources to identify and profit from opportunities in the city, and could eventually be beneficial for the host community as well by improving those migrants' wellbeing and employment opportunities and providing a source of enrichment with ideas, cultural diversity and social change, growth, and development. Moreover, such network support would be mutually beneficial for the two types of migrants, as described in the paper of Jowell et al. (2018, p. 709), as the more permanent kind of migrants coming to obtain education and stay in the city with a new life established there could benefit from having a deeper connection to their beautiful and precious Maasai heritage, that regardless of their assimilation in the city, remains the motherland and a home.

Overall, while women coming from a similar background of living in the Maasai community share a number of different challenges, their experiences and integration patterns may be greatly different. Some women adopt the new lifestyles and values that they are exposed to in their place of destination, critically reassessing the ways of living and traditional practices of their community, and potentially coming back to educate the fellow kin-group members and prompt societal changes, suggesting that traditional practices do not have to remain intact if they make no sense for the current times and understandings of genders, and are harmful for women or exemplify a form of patriarchal disrespect towards women as they are, as well as limit the agency they deserve to have as human beings. However, this is the case mostly of educated women that do not migrate only to escape poverty and make some money necessary for their family to survive, and in the latter situation, migration, unfortunately, often serves to reinforce the traditional beliefs by means of these migrants having such negative experiences, as exploitation, having to suffice with unsanitary housing due to financial hardship, lack of community due to being unable to integrate into the receiving society without knowing its language etc. (Jowell et al., 2018, p. 708).

2.3 Discussion

Coming to the part related to the discussion of the findings, it is important to repeat that we can observe the process of feminization of migration in Sub-Saharan Africa and

Tanzania in particular, as women are now migrating independently and as income-earners. It brings many positive changes in socio-economic aspects, empowers women, and endows them with more decision-making power within their families. However, some negative aspects are to be mentioned here. There are less opportunities for women to find work, and the availability of employment for female migrants is generally smaller. Women, particularly the younger ones from rural areas, are migrating to work as domestics. Service jobs such as domestic work, childcare, elder care, as well as agriculture (particularly seasonal work), are female-coded jobs in Sub-Saharan Africa (Masanja, 2012, p. 80). Their wages are low and such employment is often not covered by laws and legal contracts. Lack of education is another serious problem. It doesn't allow migrant women to stand for their rights, as they are simply unaware of and not informed about them, as well as lack the knowledge about the means they could use to effectively defend them. It also is the reason why they cannot avail of many business opportunities, as they possibly could, having completed formal education. Too many women migrants still experience extreme exploitation and abuse. Furthermore, tribal migrants remain isolated from political and social contacts, participating little in political matters.

Rural-to-urban migrants often occupy lower-paying, lower-status positions compared to other residents of a city. Migrant women hold even lower-status jobs than migrant men and are more likely to work in the informal sector of the economy. Given a narrow range of job opportunities for women, some have little choice but to become sex workers. Many migrant women endure downward occupational mobility, a decrease in their skillset, and a shift from paid employment to domestic labour. Consequently, they often end up holding low status both as migrants and as women (Masanja, 2012, p. 91).

A certain benefit of female migration and resulting access to more resources and claiming relative independence is the lowered reliance on men for one's own survival and maintenance of the household. Pauline Peters (1983) describes situations of ill luck that are able to cause irreparable harm to a woman – when “women remain childless, or without children able or willing to help provide a living, or are left without land or cattle by poor husbands who have been disabled, or who have died, absconded or disappeared” (p. 116). The author examines the situation of women in Botswana focusing on female-headed households emerging as a result of labour migration of husbands or otherwise. She states that in Botswana the success of household maintenance and wealth accumulation depends, for the most part, on combining the following three main factors – crop production, cattle rearing, and wage earning.

However, male absence can jeopardize successful farming and stock husbandry. The early stages of household formation, when children are too young to help with cultivation or herding but require income for school fees, medical and other expenses, and when a woman has few resident male helpers, can be particularly vulnerable. If specific calamities (illness, death, recurring harvest losses, or high herd deaths) combine with already low levels of assets or fragile claims to critical resources, so that the household is unable to provide adequate care, education, training, or livestock inheritance to the children, the next generation begins adult life in dire straits and is more likely to follow similar paths of decline.

To summarise the above, Peters comments that “it is possible to discern certain points of vulnerability in developmental cycles, when, given particular economic conditions a developmental phase of disadvantage can feed into an exacerbating spiral and thence into the longer-term intergenerational reproduction of disadvantage” (p. 116). Migration of Maasai women, as explained above, more often than not entails, as a consequence, increased access to productive resources and cash. It allows women to participate more fully in the management of resources of a household and gradually gain more agency, changing the perception of the community and family about the role of a woman in various affairs, and endowing them with the ability to decide, as a result, on such things, as the school education for male and, more importantly, female kids, financing further education of the children, resisting forced marriages for themselves and their daughters etc. These and numerous other consequences coming as a result of independent migration may allow women to sustain themselves even in the unfortunate event of the death of one’s husband or unexpectedly staying alone due to any foreseeable or unforeseeable circumstance, which could potentially completely ruin the life of a woman greatly dependant on her husband or family members. Older women and women from low-income families are especially vulnerable, and their households are the most frequently found in the more disadvantaged category of female-headed households. However, we must not assume that this situation is a direct result of the single criterion of the gender of the household head; nor should we ignore female-headed households that represent either a phase in a different cycle or those that are more comfortably embedded in larger and more prosperous networks (ibid., p. 117).

There is a lack of research concerning wives who are not “relict” spouses, or spouses of deceased partners, and their roles as wives. Conjugal households where both husband and wife are actively involved typically represent the mature stages of the household developmental

cycle and/or the more prosperous strata. In these households, women play a critical role as wives and mothers, often overseeing and providing direct input into crop production, and playing an important but under-recognized role in herd management and decision-making. Furthermore, women are often managing and partnering with their husbands in small businesses such as stores and cafes, though the husband is usually the one with the formal ownership (Peters, 1983, p. 118). These conditions would also greatly affect the ability of a woman to have the funds and understand the upcoming experience of self-reliance, by having been in charge of the tasks that are traditionally associated with the role of one's husband, as well as having experienced being nearly on par with the other, more privileged and respected, gender. Moreover, with low levels of literacy and arithmetic skills among women, it is hard for them to participate fully in the financial management of family or business matters and gain some control over resources they might need. Lack of such essential skills often precludes women from being able to earn like men and be more equal to the representatives of the other gender in other aspects (UN Women, 2016).

Additionally, in all the movements of households and families between village, croplands, cattle-post, schools, sites of wage labour and so on, the wife is a key component, holding the family together and ensuring its continued functioning. She performs the role of “the keeper of the land” and a lynchpin, the relatively stable and less mobile centre, which keeps the family safely in place and around which a new family unit is being formed. By understanding the dynamics of such families, we can gain insight into the broader economic and social roles of women in African societies. Although the role of women in economic and social life has long been overlooked, research has shown that wives in certain families play an active role in the process of accumulation (Peters, 1983, p. 118). These families have not been adequately studied, yet they are closely connected to female-headed households, which have received more attention from researchers. Investigating these families and the women within them is essential for understanding the broader economic and social roles of women in African societies.

Another curious aspect is that of the support of the older generation of women needed for the migrants having a family they leave behind. Though elderly women are often seen as indispensable for urban-based daughters, providing care for their grandchildren and attending to domestic and agricultural tasks, the relationship between the two is frequently fraught with tension. Many of these women complain about being expected to take on the role of mother to

their grandchildren, feeling overwhelmed by the amount of responsibility that is placed upon them (ibid., p. 119).

My findings are in line with the conclusion of Gina Bujis (1996), who, after conducting a number of interviews, supports the hypothesis of female migration in Africa often happening in the context of and motivated by absolute necessity (p. 192). It is worth noting that this necessity, as is presented by gender inequalities, economic and environmental factors in the case of Maasai situation, acts as a trigger for taking the decision to migrate in a broader context of a stigma on independent migration of women. As, normally, women have plenty of responsibilities around maintaining household, taking care of the children and the elderly etc., the decision is weighted against the ability of the family to sustain itself and carry out the roles of the migrant woman. Interestingly, Bujis notes (p. 5) that women refugees and other types of migrants appear to show greater adaptability and resilience than men, which is partly attributed to the fact that they have the responsibility for maintaining household routines and chores that provide them with a work-like occupation in their free time, and also that they are less conscious of status deprivation associated with the failure to find positions that could be comparable to those they had at home, as in most cases the position of a woman in the Maasai society is lower in the hierarchy than that of a man, and while she has crucially important tasks within the family or community, it is not much status to lose (although exploitative working conditions can be hard to compare to the comfort and familiarity of one's local community). In the case of a young woman that has not created a family yet, which happens rather early in the Maasai community, one can say that, generally speaking, unmarried women have more independence in the sense of being able to take decisions without having to consult their spouses and consider their disapproval as a veto, while at the same time her status is thereby complicated, as being a part of a family unit may bring more financial and other sources of stability (unconditional emotional support of a community etc.) and open more options due to this fact. In the section devoted to Africa, Bujis, drawing on the case histories of the interviewed women, shows that they would prefer to remain self-reliant, which indicated a shift in women's perceptions of themselves upon experiencing a different life during migration. In addition, she notes that although the women participating in the interviews were themselves supporting their children and/or parents, they did not count on being taken care of by kin in return (p. 194), which appears to be a psychological tendency related to women needing more stability and control over their lives with little dependence on other people, them being a relatively unreliable source of support, and less reliance of chance, luck and free-flowing experiments,

as compared to men, perhaps, because they have more at stake, being largely indispensable for survival of their children and the kin (p. 185).

Overall, a multi-dimensional approach, incorporating various kinds of characteristics and factors, such as age, generation, rank, class, or a specific position in traditional and customary hierarchy that forms a seemingly unchangeable and indispensable part of the local culture, and gender, could be more beneficial for the research of female migration in Sub-Saharan Africa than the current trend in the analysis of women of either over-emphasizing a general phenomenon like labour migration or basing typologies on a single characteristic like sex.

As can be seen from the case-study and the literature review incorporating studies on other geographical areas with different cultures and traditional views of female roles in the society, the results of female migration, as considered in the light of their gender and what it means for the given society, are quite complex and have both beneficial and negative or even detrimental aspects, whereby they can exacerbate and perpetuate the existing inequalities, entailing resistance to change, fear, and proving that the prevalent judgements about women's inferior ability to sustain themselves are right. Nevertheless, I would argue that the positive consequences outnumber the negative ones and bring along the prospects of a systemic change by bearing the promise of empowering the migrant women financially and psychologically, and challenging the social stigma directed against women's independent migration and self-reliant living in the Maasai community and culture. For this to be continuously true, and to minimise the risks that migrant rural women in Tanzania and Kenya have to face, there is a clear need for support from the side of legal infrastructure. In particular, it is necessary to ensure access to general education for women, professional development courses etc., to facilitate the creation and operation of labour or trade unions, to take measures to identify risks of gender-based violence and offer support/holistically designed prevention mechanisms to minimise unequally larger for women unjust suffering from violence and exploitation. It is particularly important for ranked societies with a clear division between sexes and their prescribed roles to have a view of different ways of understanding gender, that would challenge the dominant worldviews and suggest a concept or just introduce a possible idea of evolutionary (or revolutionary) change. In this regard, migration of Maasai women could potentially lead to this end, eventually and gradually introducing the practical ideas and understandings of a greater equality and why it is important for any given society by at least simply providing a more just

distribution of roles, allowing women to avail of their lifetime opportunities more fully and express themselves through a lifestyle that they can choose without major limitations based on their gender.

Female migration flows to major cities in Tanzania are significant, although not addressed well enough by policies and researchers. Women began to outnumber men among rural-urban migrants in Tanzania in 1970. The numbers are higher now – statistics published by the UN Population Division (2008) indicate that female urban migrants outnumber male urban migrants in Tanzania by more than 10 percent.

Generally speaking, we still live in a relatively patriarchal society, where different forms and elements of the patriarchal structures persist, and migration studies only recently devoted attention to female migrants. Despite opportunities, they are still the ones that are experiencing the economic, social, and institutional burdens of the gender gap produced by the society (Enloe, 2014). Indeed, despite the fact that females may have access to jobs while migrating there is a strong feminization in their jobs, as can be confirmed by the case study, showing that female migrants are stuck in some kinds of jobs typical for women.

Some policy recommendations would include the following actions:

- National governments need to retain an intersectional approach when developing policies aimed at female migrants. Immigration law, labour law, and gender legislation need to be examined collectively to determine improvements that could assist female migrants' living and working conditions.
- More varied economic options will reduce the economic insecurity of female migrants and allow them to claim and better negotiate their rights. Policies to support women's engagement in higher-earning activities should be developed and enacted, and a deeper understanding of the factors behind women's low participation in the labour market in general, as well as them occupying positions that are underpaid or engaging in activities with low added value should be necessary for this end.
- A deeper, more comprehensive and consistent research and centralised statistical data collection should be implemented to facilitate informed decision-making and respective policy development and to continuously monitor the situation and identify trends.
- Efforts should be made to collectivise women's informal work into worker organisations or trade unions that can better represent their situation and foster information

exchange on a formal and informal level through trainings and organised events/lectures, as well as by means of creating a platform for communication and peer network formation. Skill training for female traders and literacy outreach should be developed to raise awareness of workers' rights and aid in professional development.

- Specific policies relating to domestic workers should consider introducing more variable types of leave that recognise the need for regular family visits home, especially where female migrants have young children.

- Efforts should be made to reduce the wide variance in wages that domestic workers receive for the same work.

- An overall improvement in access to education for young girls and programmes aimed at improving the levels of adult literacy and providing access to basic professional training are necessary, as it is the defining factor of their experiences when migrating and is crucial to improve their prospects at home; literacy and other skills will allow them to access more job opportunities and not be at the mercy of decisions of the male members of the family (Jowell et al., 2018, p. 709).

- NGOs should be supported to provide information, support, and engage in advocacy work for hard to reach and stigmatised female migrants such as sex workers. An example of this can be the Maasai Women's Development Organization (MWEDO) – an organization supported by UN Women that provides trainings on entrepreneurship, business formalization, and land rights, and assists Maasai women with administrative and bureaucratic procedures, like obtaining a passport to travel abroad or legal certificates proving their ownership of land (UN Women, 2016).

- The access to financial services should be widely and complexly improved and the flow of international and internal remittances should be facilitated by, depending on the existing conditions, making it possible (through establishing or improving a suitable banking system, and encouraging private financial companies to extend their activities and competition), easier (micro-trainings, client support officers at the institution, user-friendly interfaces of online systems combined with the overall digitalisation agenda should be considered), and cheaper (Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10 aims to reduce the cost of remittances to three percent by 2030 and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than five percent, which sets a quantitative indication of the desired maximal costs, however, there are cases when the only possible way to transfer the remittances is in cash through people one

knows, which stipulates a reliability concern, or through travelling home, entailing the costs of the trip and longer waiting times on the side of the family) (Kar, et al., 2018, p. 12).

Sub-Saharan African countries need to institutionalise the collection of data on internal, intra-regional, and international migration and endeavour to keep track of the number and characteristics of their nationals emigrating abroad. And as such, further efforts to reduce gender disparities from various parties involved – government, civil society, and NGOs, as well as individuals and family structures – are needed to improve the lives of women (as evoked in the MDGs) and to empower them to pursue their mobility intentions in a safe and protected way, which may in turn become a source of development, female empowerment, and change (Ruysen and Salomone, 2017, p. 33).

On the international level, it is also recognised that success in managing migration must be anchored in collaboration between sending, transit, and receiving countries, as well as in reducing the push factors that prompt it in the first place. There is a need for a more comprehensive treatment of migration in terms of targeted policy, as well as on the conceptual level, given that there is no formal multilateral institutional framework towards global migration governance.

However, it is possible to define a “facilitative multilateralism” mostly focused on the refugee-travel-labour migration framework where there are several formal and informal institutions, involving state and non-state actors, where the latter includes also the private sector. Both state and non-state actors are concerned to find ways to manage migration in a manner that enables them to maximize the benefits and minimize the costs of mobility (Betts, 2011, p. 13).

The UN, for instance, as a formal institution, encompasses many branches and bodies and the institutionalized cooperation mostly happens through it. Since the landscape is complex and fragmented, many institutions are not directly dealing with global migration governance but are doing so indirectly, as is the case, for instance, of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

It is important also to take into account all levels of governance, where interactions both on the horizontal and vertical level, including relationship between different actors, are crucial. Moreover, it is important also to refer to the specific levels, whether local, regional, national or international, in order to address targeted policies and actions, where the context of the country or the region with differing socio-economic, legal-political and cultural-religious

dimensions, as well as historical background and geographical landscape, are some of the most important aspects.

Lastly, I find it important to address and slightly cover the changes brought by COVID-19 to the issue of migration of women in the context of the case study and in general. The pandemic generally leaves migrant women more vulnerable, as they usually depend on their meagre earnings for living and helping their families. Apparently, restrictions on movement both intra-regionally and internationally, affect women who have already migrated since it is harder for them to visit their families and bring remittances without having to pay a fee for sending it, especially when families at home do not have proper access to the banking system; it has also affected women planning to migrate as they may prefer to stay with their families to care about them, and economic decline is, in addition also a huge factor implying less job opportunities (Adhikari, 2020).

It also goes without saying that self-employed female migrants doing petty businesses are not protected either and are left significantly more vulnerable in these circumstances. I have mentioned the fact that domestic service workers often work without contracts and thus can easily be exploited, especially when they are not aware of the rights they have and the ways to defend them due to the lack of formal or any other relevant education (Dungumaro, 2013, p. 56). With meagre payments and no paid sick leave, they are highly affected by the instabilities brought by the still ongoing pandemic. On top of that, this situation also entails more unplanned expenses and leaves a significant economic burden on all migrants, especially on the less protected female ones.

CONCLUSIONS

In this master's thesis I have made an attempt to investigate female migration and its connections with gender inequality in different forms persisting in the society. The main conclusion I have come to, even though it is necessary to mention that individual migration experiences are largely diverse, is that in the majority of cases within the analysed case-study, gender inequality serves to a large degree to perpetuate inequalities, as job opportunities for migrant female workers are often gender-coded. Such jobs include domestic or care work (ranging from cleaning services to elder care, childcare, and other types of similar occupation) as the main employment sector for low-skilled migrant women, and this area is characterised by low wages, lack of formal contracts regulating employment conditions, and no proper protection from exploitation and abuse.

All this can be characterized as a negative feedback loop, since the discriminatory social institutions that women seek to escape restrict their agency, thereby inhibiting their ability to migrate (Ferrant et al., 2014, p. 9). In this way lack of education due to institutional discrimination and gender-related socio-cultural norms of the society stipulates limited employment opportunities for women, as well as their inability to stand for themselves appealing to the legal rights of employees. Similarly, relatively small financial resources that women have (if they do have the customary right to possess resources at all) in societies with a large gender wage gap, make it harder for them to cover the fixed costs of migration and thus, take the decision to migrate independently (Baudassé and Bazillier, 2014, p. 23). Additionally, bargaining power of women is likely to be smaller, not only because of traditions and cultural norms, but also because of their lower share in the household or community aggregate level of income (ibid.).

Gender discrimination is increasingly being recognized as a key factor in understanding female migration. Although strides have been taken globally to reduce gender disparities, women generally still lack fundamental freedoms and basic opportunities, which could potentially affect their migration decisions and behaviour (Ruysen and Salomone, 2017, p. 3). It is unclear, however, whether these restrictions act more as a push or a pull factor. On one hand, the restrictions may encourage women to leave their home countries or communities. On the other hand, the same restrictions may actively prevent them from doing so due to the effective gender gap (Hugo, 2000; Loschmann and Siegel, 2013). On practice, many women intending to migrate or considering moving as an option are prevented from doing so by such

factors and personal circumstances as financial constraints affecting the ability to cover the initial costs and have a safety cushion for the uncertainties presented by migration, as well as due to extensive family obligations, lack of educational or professional training or health issues (Esipova, 2011). These and other related factors can be analysed and treated as results of various forms of systemic discrimination of women, and paradoxically, the consequences of such disparities in opportunities for representatives of different genders may turn into a force not allowing women to migrate due to stigmas and taboos, educational disadvantages, family reasons etc.

When taking the decision to migrate, in most societies with a certain degree of gender imbalances there is a selection bias that often precludes women from migrating due to prejudices and a general perception that only men should migrate independently. However, one cannot exclude that both selection bias and the push effect play a role in the process, and it is possible that in some countries, the push factor may be higher than gender inequality as an impediment of female labour migration (Baudassé and Bazillier, 2014, p. 37). The decision to migrate itself is not a momentous change and has been shown to involve several steps, not all of which are observable and measurable, but the most important are the two identified as a) intending to migrate and b) preparing for migration (Paul, 2011). While for women experiencing gender imbalances and discrimination it is more probable to want to migrate, research demonstrates that their ability to realize those migration plans, or the likelihood that migration intentions eventually become materialised, is consistently lower than that of men due to gender-specific costs and constraints, as women are facing a larger gender gap in labour market participation, as well as a lower level of education and the overall bigger severity of gender inequalities in the socio-political environment (Ruyssen and Salomone, 2017, p. 5).

The case study presented in the thesis shows that female migrants in Maasai communities choose to overcome the traditional restrictions on independent female migration partly due to the unfavourable external conditions faced by the ethnic group. While such migration improves the position of women with regard to their bargaining power in the family, the resources they own and can use as they prefer, which implies overriding dependency on male decision-makers, there are certain challenges they have to encounter. The female-coded types of jobs are often the only possibility for the employment of such migrants (Enloe, 2017), they often face exploitation or contractual slavery, as well as psychological and physical abuse at the workplace (Tittensor and Mansouri, 2017, p. 16).

There are many factors explaining additional vulnerabilities of migrant women. These include the fact that domestic work is generally not covered by employment laws and thus, there are no legal contracts regulating worker-employer relations and mutual rights and obligations. Migrant domestic workers are hidden from the public, more susceptible to abuse, and less able to associate with others and integrate into the society. Such isolation makes it more difficult to become aware of their rights or create or join unions. Other such factors include inadequate access to resources and information, no reliable access to health care and overall vulnerability to violence and lack of protection measures (Fleury, 2016).

These factors have certain implications for policies and programs. Education level improvements, government policies aimed at eradicating institutional discrimination and regulating the domestic sector of the economy are all highly necessary to reduce the vulnerability of female migrants and end the cycle of female migration often only perpetuating gender inequality.

In general, I would argue that the experience one gets from migration can, if supported by the necessary infrastructure (legal, transport, housing situation etc.), and given the possibility of finding one's way into professional or other social networks and the luck of finding a support group of friends or colleagues, whether accepted or not by the community a woman leaves, be a formative and life-changing experience. It is necessary to support women living in gender-unequal settings with the opportunity and ability to get a break from the vicious cycle of inequality and suppression, however small and seemingly insignificant it might be, which can in turn allow them to fight their way through the unfair societal norms and gradually change the perception of the community regarding the female role and place in the world, limiting the ability to self-realization and personal growth.

Migration, however, is clearly not to be mistakenly understood as a panacea, as it can bring ambiguous results, and might be an unrealistic solution for everyone, and just assuming that everyone migrates, and everyone gets the same empowering experience, changing in continuation the underlying universally present worldview beliefs in the entire community, bringing thereby a new world order characterised by and based on an entirely fair towards all genders system of views, is a utopic understanding. And yet, migration, I argue, can be seen as a viable tool for achieving the resolution of gender-based problems emanating from the previously omnipresent patriarchal and male-oriented unjustly exclusive systems that still persist in differing degrees in all parts of the world in various forms and domains.

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