SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN WOMEN IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA: WORK, MONEY AND CHANGING GENDER ROLES

Patricia Wawira Njuki
BA Communication and Community Development - Daystar University, Kenya
MA in Population and Human Resources – University of Adelaide

Discipline of Geography, Environment and Population
School of Social Sciences
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
The University of Adelaide

Submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
October 2013
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS........................................................................................................i
LIST OF TABLES ..................................................................................................................vi
LIST OF FIGURES ...............................................................................................................ix
ABSTRACT ..............................................................................................................................ix
DECLARATION ...................................................................................................................xii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ......................................................................................................xiii
ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS ............................................................................... xv

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION .........................................................................................1

1.1 Introduction....................................................................................................................1

1.2 Background to the study .............................................................................................3

1.2.1 Gender and migration ...............................................................................................3

1.2.2 Problem Statement ..................................................................................................5

1.3 Research Objectives ....................................................................................................8

1.4 Australia’s migration system ......................................................................................10

1.4.1 Selection of skilled migrants to Australia.................................................................11

1.4.2 Humanitarian Program ............................................................................................13

1.4.3 Family migration .....................................................................................................16

1.4.4 Other migration programs .......................................................................................16

1.5 South Australia as a study area of Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia ...............17

1.6 Overview of the Thesis ..............................................................................................19

## CHAPTER 2: AFRICANS IN AUSTRALIA ....................................................................20

2.1 Introduction....................................................................................................................20

2.2 Defining humanitarian and skilled migrants...............................................................20

2.3 The Sub-Saharan Africans ..........................................................................................21

2.4 Waves of migration from Sub-Saharan Africa to Australia .......................................21

2.5 Data considerations ....................................................................................................22

2.6 Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia at the 2006 Census ..........................................23

2.7 Migration flows: settler arrivals ................................................................................25
2.8 Migration flows: long-term arrivals .........................................................26
2.9 Migrants Characteristics: Sub-Saharan Africans by visa entry ..................30
2.10 Sub-Saharan African Migration by Sex ......................................................31
2.11 Educational Characteristics of Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia ..............34
2.12 Occupational characteristics of Sub-Saharan Africans to Australia ..........36

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK .........39
3.1 Introduction .................................................................................................39
3.2 Reviewing Gender and Migration Theories ..................................................40
3.3 The Conceptual Framework .......................................................................46
   3.3.1 Meso–Societal factors .........................................................................52
   3.3.2 Migrant women and work in Australia ................................................56
   3.3.3 Micro Factors .....................................................................................62
   3.3.4 Transnational practices ......................................................................65
3.4 Conclusion ....................................................................................................74

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY ........................................................................75
4.1 Introduction ...................................................................................................75
4.2 Mixed Methods Research ............................................................................75
4.3 A pragmatic study .......................................................................................77
   4.3.1 Rationale for a Mixed Methods study ....................................................78
4.4 The Research Design ..................................................................................79
4.5 Data Collection approaches ..........................................................................81
   4.5.1 Surveys ...............................................................................................81
   4.5.2 Qualitative Research ..........................................................................88
   4.5.3 Time Use Diary ..................................................................................90
   4.5.4 In–depth interviews ..........................................................................92
   4.5.5 Participant Observation ....................................................................95
4.6 Data Analysis .................................................................................................97
   4.6.1 Data analysis for the quantitative data ..................................................97
   4.6.2 Data analysis for the time diaries .........................................................97
4.6.3 Analysing the in-depth interviews and participant observation field notes 98

4.7 Limitations of the Study ................................................................. 98

4.7.1 Ethical dilemmas ........................................................................ 98

4.7.2 Limitations of sampling .......................................................... 100

4.8 Conclusion ................................................................................... 101

CHAPTER 5: LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION OF SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN WOMEN IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA .................................................. 102

5.1 Introduction .................................................................................. 102

5.1.1 Defining work status ............................................................... 102

5.2 Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia Labour Force Outcomes ... 103

5.2.1 Occupational Concentration .................................................... 104

5.2.2 Migrant SSA women and employment ...................................... 107

5.3 SSA African women jobs versus skills ......................................... 111

5.3.1 Education and Qualifications .................................................. 111

5.3.2 Pre-migration employment experiences of SSA African women ...... 113

5.3.3 Recognition of Qualifications .................................................. 117

5.3.4 Attainment of qualifications in Australia .................................... 119

5.4 Unemployed Sub-Saharan African Women in South Australia ........... 122

5.4.1 Language ................................................................................. 123

5.4.2 Childcare .................................................................................. 127

5.4.3 Racism and Discrimination ...................................................... 131

5.5 Conclusion ................................................................................... 132

CHAPTER 6: REMITTANCES ................................................................. 135

6.1 Introduction .................................................................................. 135

6.2 The determinants of remittances .................................................. 136

6.3 Remittance sending among Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia 138

6.4 Characteristics of remittance senders among Sub-Saharan African women 140

6.4.1 Education ................................................................................. 140

6.4.2 Length of Stay in Australia ....................................................... 141

6.4.3 Amount of remittances ............................................................ 143
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.3 Policy Implications</td>
<td>207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3.1 Policy implications: women and work</td>
<td>208</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3.2 Policy implications: remittances</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.3.3 Policy implications: Changing gender roles</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.4 Implications of this study for gender and migration theory</td>
<td>216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.5 Implications for Future research</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.6 Conclusion</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>232</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Diagrammatic representation of Australia’s migration program, 2010-2011 .. 10
Table 1.2 Refugee resettlement numbers: Australia and Global Figures .................... 14
Table 1.3 Australia's Humanitarian Migrant Intake: 2000-2011 ............................ 15
Table 1.4 Sub-Saharan African Community in South Australia comparative to Sub- 
          Saharan Africans in Australia ................................................................. 18
Table 2.1 Census Statistics: Sub-Saharan Africans to Australia from 1991-2006, 
          Estimated Population 2010 .................................................................. 24
Table 2.2 Sub-Saharan African countries offshore student visa grants, 2002-2011 ...... 29
Table 2.3 Sex Ratios for Sub-Saharan African Settler Arrivals, 1991-2011 ............. 32
Table 2.4 Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia: Education highest year of school 
          completed by sex .................................................................................. 35
Table 2.5 Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia, post school qualifications ............... 35
Table 2.6 Sub-Saharan Africans and Australian Total Population: Employment Status by 
          sex, 2006 Census .................................................................................. 36
Table 2.7 Occupational Concentration of Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia, 2006..... 37
Table 3.1 Differences between transnationalist practices in the 20th Century and 
          Contemporary Transnationalism ............................................................. 66
Table 3.2 Remittances and other resource flows to Africa ($ Billions) ..................... 70
Table 4.1 Sub-Saharan Africans humanitarian migrant household, South Australia 
          MRCSA clients, September 2005 – January 2009 ........................................ 84
Table 5.1 Sub-Saharan African women in South Australian: Labour force status by visa 
          type ........................................................................................................ 103
Table 5.2 Percentage Occupational Categories Sub-Saharan African Women migrants in 
          South Australia .................................................................................... 104
Table 5.3 Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia: Current Occupation by Visa 
          of Arrival ............................................................................................... 106
Table 5.4 Modes used by Sub-Saharan African migrants to find current job .......... 109
Table 5.5 Mode used by Sub-Saharan African women to find job by major industries 110
Table 5.6 Percentage Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia: Highest 
          Educational qualifications by work status ............................................. 112
Table 5.7 Percentage Sub-Saharan African humanitarian women pre migration employment by work status ................................................................. 113

Table 5.8 Percentage Skilled Migrants Pre - Migration Employment Status specific jobs ................................................................. 114

Table 5.9 Skilled migrants: Pre-migration employment status by employment status in Australia ........................................................................ 117

Table 5.10 Recognition of Overseas Qualifications and Jobs in Australia ........................................ 118

Table 5.11 Sub-Saharan African women course undertaken by visa of migration ...... 119

Table 5.12 Selected Course undertaken in Australia and work ................................................................. 121

Table 5.13 Reasons given by Sub-Saharan African women for not being in the workforce by visa of migration ................................................................. 123

Table 5.14 Percentage Humanitarian Migrants who attended ESL and work status .... 125

Table 5.15 Childcare arrangements by women's workforce status ......................... 129

Table 6.1 Gender variables that determine the amount and characteristics of remittances ................................................................................................. 137

Table 6.2 Percentage of women sending money regularly to Sub-Saharan Africa employment status and visa of arrival ................................................................. 139

Table 6.3 Educational characteristics of remittance senders among Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia by visa type ................................................................. 140

Table 6.4 Remittance sending based on length of stay in Australia by visa type ....... 142

Table 6.5 Sub-Saharan African women remittance senders based on household income by visa type ................................................................................................. 143

Table 6.6 Remittance senders based on marital status by visa type ....................... 144

Table 6.7 Percentage of remittance senders based on Children by visa type ........... 145

Table 6.8 Characteristics of Non Remitters by visa type ............................................. 146

Table 6.9 Use of remittance money sent by Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia by visa type (percent) ................................................................................................. 149

Table 6.10 Percentage of remittance receivers as sent by Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia by visa of arrival ................................................................................................. 150

Table 6.11 Source of income and levels of remittance among senders among Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia by visa type ................................................................................................. 156

Table 6.12 Self-reported financial commitment of Sub-Saharan African women who visit by visa type ................................................................................................. 157
Table 7.1  Sub-Saharan African men in South Australia as partners to survey respondents– Occupations

177
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1 Settler Arrivals: Sub-Saharan Africans by Country, 1991-2011 .......... 25
Figure 2.2 Long-Term Arrivals, Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia, 1993-2011 ....... 26
Figure 2.3 Sub-Saharan African long-term and settler arrivals, 1991-2011 ............ 27
Figure 2.4 Australia: Percentage of Sub-Saharan Africans humanitarian resettlement intake, 2000-2010 ................................................................. 28
Figure 2.5 Visa Type at Time of Arrival, selected Sub-Saharan African countries .... 30
Figure 2.6 Age-Sex Pyramid Settler Arrivals, Sub-Saharan Africans, 1991-2011 ...... 33
Figure 2.7 Age Sex Structure: Percentage Sub-Saharan Africans and the Australian Born at 2006 Census ................................................................. 34
Figure 3.1 Conceptual Framework used in the study of settlement of Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia ....................................................... 48
Figure 3.2 Short term residents departure and returns from Australia to Sub-Saharan Africa, 1993-2011 ................................................................. 67
Figure 4.1: A visual representation of the sequential explanatory design of the study of Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia ........................................... 80
Figure 4.2 Sample of the Time Use Diary ....................................................... 91
Figure 6.1 Household expenditure for humanitarian and skilled migrants – Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia .................................... 159
Figure 7.1 Family Migrants: Sub-Saharan African Born by Age and Sex, 2005-2011 172
Figure 7.2 Departure of South Australian Sub-Saharan Africans Permanent Resident by sex, 1993-2011 ................................................................. 182
Figure 7.3 Australia to Sub-Saharan Africa. Resident permanent, 1993-2011 ....... 183
ABSTRACT

This study provides a gendered perspective on the social and economic consequences of Sub-Saharan African migration to Australia. This mixed methods study draws on a survey as well as in-depth interviews and participant observation of the Sub-Saharan African women in South Australia, as well as analyses of secondary data from the Department of Immigration Movements and Settlement Database and the Australian Census of Population and Housing 2006. It examines three interconnected thematic areas in the migrant women’s lives. First, African women’s labour force patterns based on visa of entry to Australia, show that African migrant skilled women in Australia are able to compete favourably in the labour market and are able to get jobs commensurate to their skills. However the study shows women who enter Australia on humanitarian visas, many of whom have very low human capital endowments, find themselves completely shut out of the Australian workforce.

The second theme provides a gendered perspective on remittance sending practices of Sub-Saharan African women and how these affect settlement outcomes. The study shows that remittance sending does have an impact on settlement of humanitarian migrants with implications for an individual migrants’ poverty and raises interesting arguments for host countries, especially in the area of retirement planning of migrants.

The third thematic area examines gender role changes of Sub-Saharan African migrant women as a result of their migration to Australia. It takes into consideration the increasing “Feminisation of Migration” as many Sub-Saharan African women are the principal applicants leading their family’s migration, and in many cases were the primary breadwinners when their partners were unable to find work. The study also
examines division of labour within the household, especially in regards to domestic work as well as parenting.

The study concludes with implications for migration theory and policy. The study urges that there is need to integrate what is known about migration settlement from different migration theories and perspectives. It draws from a conceptual framework that examines the settlement of Sub-Saharan migrants from a systems structure that looks at the Macro, Meso and Micro factors, as well as transnational factors that affect the settlement of Sub-Saharan Africans in Australia. It urges the importance of recognising skilled women migrants in the discourse on women and work since skilled migration flows of women have largely been ignored in theorising about women in migration. There are important policy implications for developed countries such as Australia. Those unskilled find themselves excluded from the modern industrialised labour market. The questions raised in the section on remittances have important implications for developed countries in regards to their understanding of migrant poverty and policy issues such as migrant retirement planning. While the section on gender roles and gender relations in migration, contributes to gender and migration theory by calling for a change in focus in how gender roles are examined. The study explains that most of what is understood about gender roles has been influenced by western feminist ideology, and urges an understanding of migrant gender roles from a structural perspective taking into account modern migration flows such as the ‘feminisation of migration’. As women become more likely to lead migration flows from developing to developed countries, women are no longer ‘tied migrants’ but rather principal breadwinners for their families and this has enormous implications for theories on gender roles and the wider study of gender and migration.
DECLARATION

I certify that this work contains no material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in my name, in any university or other tertiary institution and, to the best of my knowledge and belief, contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text. In addition, I certify that no part of this work will, in the future, be used in a submission in my name, for any other degree or diploma in any university or other tertiary institution without the prior approval of the University of Adelaide and where applicable, any partner institution responsible for the joint-award of this degree.

I give consent to this copy of my thesis, when deposited in the University Library, being made available for loan and photocopying, subject to the provisions of the Copyright Act 1968.

I also give permission for the digital version of my thesis to be made available on the web, via the University’s digital research repository, the Library Search and also through web search engines, unless permission has been granted by the University to restrict access for a period of time.

………………………………………
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

All Glory for this work is to Almighty God - because without Jesus and His unfailing Grace I would never have made it this far.

I would like to thank Professor Graeme Hugo and Dr Dianne Rudd for their guidance and constant support throughout this study. I would like to thank them for helping me in securing IPRS funding for this PhD from the University of Adelaide. Apart from being great supervisors, they were there in very difficult personal circumstances and went beyond their role as teachers and mentors and always offered their personal support and that kindness will never be forgotten. The staff of the Geography department have also been extremely helpful especially Margaret Young and Janet Wall for their assistance with data as well as Christine Crothers for assistance in preparing maps for this study.

I would also like to thank the staff at the Migrant Resource Center of South Australia (MRCSA) for their work in helping me collect data for this study, especially Eugenia Tsoulis and Regina Betts for their assistance and useful insights. I would also like to thank Catherine Cole from African Women Federation of South Australia for her role at the data collection stage and Athina Duot, for her assistance in translating and assisting in the collection of data. My fellow colleagues I could always count on your friendship and support and it meant the world to me. Thanks Judith, Balambigai, Pam, Marcia, Charlotte, George, Raj, Lim, Justin, Christopher, Romy and Michael and everyone else in the department who touched my life in so many ways. Romy thank you especially for reading this study and assisting with editing – you were a true friend.

The support and love within the department was indeed special, I will for always remember that all GEP students and staff arranged my son’s first birthday party – it’s a day I will never forget and Raphael and I will cherish it always, because it was more
than a birthday it was the care and concern that epitomises how much studying in this department was special in many ways.

My research participants, they opened their hearts and their homes and told me their stories of migration and I will always be very grateful. I will always treasure all their stories in my heart, they showed me true resilience and determination to succeed – the true ‘African Women’. I would especially like to remember Constance (R.I.P) who inculcated in me the responsibility of this work. Her words I will never forget her gratitude for being accepted as a migrant and the changes it made to her life and what she hoped for this project will always be remembered. My other friends in Australia and abroad especially Esther and her family, all I can say is God Bless You as words would not be enough to express the gratitude required. Rosemary, Kui, Viola, Gillian, Jane, Kofi, Victor, Luke, John, Samuel and his family, thanks for being there. To Gilbert, Sandra and Rachael for the part you played in my life.

My family, for the constant love, prayers and support, there are no words that can express how much this thesis has come about because of you. Mum, Dad – you took in my infant son to care for -so that this thesis could be complete and you have done such an amazing job with him. I will be eternally grateful to you and Mary for the good work. To Njiru, Roselyne and Winnie, thank you for being my siblings, knowing that I could always get support and love from you in all things material, spiritual and emotional made this process so much easier. To my whole extended family you are all too many to name here but you always sent your love and support and I know of the constant prayers – I am glad to be your ‘daughter’. To my Raphael, my love, you just filled my life with so much joy and laughter and I thank God for you every single day. You are probably the first baby to have journal articles read out to you as bed time stories but you were such a good baby. Love you.
## ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABS</td>
<td>Australian Bureau of Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ASIB</td>
<td>Australian Social Inclusion Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIAC</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Citizenship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIMIA</td>
<td>Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>English as a Second Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV/AIDS</td>
<td>Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOM</td>
<td>International Organisation of Migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IHSS</td>
<td>Integrated Humanitarian Settlement Services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSIA</td>
<td>Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSIA1</td>
<td>Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (first cohort)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSIA2</td>
<td>Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia (second cohort)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRCSA</td>
<td>Migrant Resource Centre of South Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NESB</td>
<td>None English Speaking Background</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Non-Government Organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RCOA</td>
<td>Refugee Council of Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SDB</td>
<td>Settlement Data Base</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSA</td>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN</td>
<td>United Nations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNHCR</td>
<td>United Nations High Commission for Refugees</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>