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Gender differences in the role of migrant networks in Congolese and Senegalese international migration

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Abstract

In recent years, a growing amount of research has documented, on one hand, the influence of social networks in international migration and, on the other, important gender differences in the migration process. However, as noted by Curran and Saguy (2001), research integrating both social networks and gender issues in the analysis of migration processes has remained rare. Criticising the general assumption that networks influence male and female mobility in the same way, the few existing studies on this topic have provided empirical evidence of a differential impact of networks on male and female prospective migrants, but also of a differential influence of male and female networks (Curran & Rivero Fuentes, 2003; Davis & Winter, 2001; Stecklov et al., 2008). Using recent longitudinal and comparable data collected in Senegal and DR Congo within the framework of the MAFE (Migration between African and Europe) project, our paper further investigates gender differences in the role of migrant networks. More precisely, our research has the following objectives: first, to assess the extent to which the effect of migrant networks on individual migration propensities varies with gender; second, to investigate whether men and women mobilise different types of network connections for migrating and whether they use these networks differently. Event-history modelling techniques are the main methodological tools of our paper. Our research complements existing scholarship in several respects. First, very little research exists on this topic outside of the Mexico–US migration context and, to our knowledge, no such quantitative research exists for Africa. Second, comparative research between two countries using strictly comparable data and methods provides an opportunity to test the role of context-specific factors on the functioning of networks, such as cultural differences in female autonomy and historical differences in migration trends. Last but not least, this study relies on the use of longitudinal data on social networks collected at the individual level, proposing a new type of measure for approaching the role of networks. It thus takes the opportunity for discussing in detail the challenge of measuring and studying migrant networks. Our research underlines the importance of considering the gender-based character of networks for understanding their internal dynamics as it influences both the perpetuation and the composition of future migration flows.

1. INTRODUCTION

The influence of social networks on international migration has increasingly been documented by recent scholarship (Massey & Garcia España, 1987; Curran and Saguy, 1991). Migrant networks – defined as the set of interpersonal ties linking migrants, return migrants and persons living in the country of origin (potential migrants) – influence migration at different stages of the migration process. By providing information, they may contribute to the decision of migration, the choice of destination and the route of migration. They may also facilitate the integration of migrants upon arrival, and shape migrants remitting behaviour.

Another strand of literature, developing in the last two decades, has shown important gender differences in patterns of international migration. Men and women often differ in their motivations for moving to another country and in their settlement patterns at destination, as the risks and social norms associated with their mobility are different. However, as noted by Curran and Saguy (2001), research integrating both social networks and gender issues in the analysis of migration processes has remained scarce. The effects of networks have been assumed to be the same for men and women alike. This is problematic since the role migrant networks play in men's and women's mobility can only be different given that the costs, risks and benefits of migration differ – or rather are differently constructed – by gender. The few existing studies that have "engendered migrant networks" have so far provided empirical evidence for a differential effect of networks on male and female migrations and suggested several hypotheses as to why this would be the case (Davis & Winter, 2001; Curran & Rivero Fuentes, 2003; Stecklov et al., 2008). However, their findings, which do not always go in the same direction, all rely on the Mexican case study.

In this paper, we use recent longitudinal data collected in Senegal and DR Congo within the Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE) project, to further investigate **gender differences in the role of migrant networks on international migration**. More precisely, our paper has the following objectives: first, to assess to what extent the effect of migrant networks on individual migration propensities varies according to the gender of the potential migrant. Second, to investigate whether men and women mobilize different types of network connections for going abroad or, in other terms, to see which network compositions are the most effective in facilitating migration for men and women respectively. Third, we want to analyze whether men and women are similarly influenced by their migrant network in their choice of destination.

Our research complements existing scholarship in several respects. First, very little research exist on this topic outside of the Mexico-US migration context, and to our knowledge, no such quantitative research exists in Africa. Second, comparative research between two countries, using strictly comparable data and methods, provides an opportunity to test the role of context-specific factors on the functioning of networks, such as cultural differences in female autonomy and historical differences in migration trends. Last but not least, this study relies on the use of longitudinal data on social networks collected at the individual level, proposing thus a new type of measure for studying the role of networks.

The next section provides an overview of the theoretical and empirical literature on the role of migrant networks in men's and women's migration processes and introduces some elements of the Congolese and the Senegalese contexts, in particular relative to the prevailing gender norms and the history of migration flows in the two countries. Section two describes the data and the methodology used in this analysis. Results are presented and discussed in section three while some conclusions are advanced in a final section, together with questions for future research.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The influence of migrant networks on international migration

A major development in the study of international migration has been the acknowledgment of the importance of social networks in this phenomenon. According to the networks perspective, the migration decision is not taken by the individual acting autonomously – as earlier tenants of the neo-classical economic models assumed – but takes place within larger social structures: families, friendship circles and origin communities (Boyd, 1989; Ritchey, 1976). As Tilly (1990) argues: "networks, and not people, are at the centre of the migration process". The focus is thus placed on migrant networks[1], defined as "sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants, former migrants and nonmigrants to one another through relations of kinship, friendship and shared community origin" (Massey et al, 1993: 448).

At an *individual level*, the network hypothesis predicts that people who are socially related to current or former migrants have access to social capital that significantly increases the likelihood that they, themselves, will migrate. The general supposition is that a network connection to a prior migrant can lower the costs and risks of movement and increase the expected net returns to migration. It is argued in the literature that migrant networks lower the costs and the risks of migration by providing information on border crossing and living conditions at destination, by assisting the new migrant with transportation or with accommodation at destination and by (partly) financing the migration trip. On the benefits side, networks can provide information on (better) jobs or refer the new migrant to employers, thus facilitating their economic integration in the host society. A growing number of empirical studies situated at the micro-level[2] have confirmed the network hypothesis: individuals with links to migrants have more chances of migrating (Massey et

[1] Following Ciobanu and Elrick (2009), we propose to distinguish between *migrant* networks and *migration* networks. A *migrant* network is here understood as the personal network (ego-network) of a (would-be) migrant, in other words the individual social relations that she or he develops and that may turn out helpful in the process of migration. These migrant networks extend beyond a given community; they transcend geographical locations as well as social spaces such as communities, families or friendships. By contrast, we regard a *migration* network as the "aggregate of the various personal migrant networks available to a specific group of people, such as members of a particular community". (Ciobanu & Elrick, 2009)

[2] Most empirical studies testing the network theory are situated at an individual level and consist in evaluating the influence of networks on individual migration propensities (see Massey and colleagues, 1987; 1997; 1998; etc; Davis and Winters, 2001: Curran et al, 2003: 2005 for a few examples).This is also the perspective the present paper takes.

al, 1997; 2001) and of choosing the destinations where they have "connections" (Bartel, 1989 ; Jaeger, 2000). Ethnographic evidence going back several decades has similarly pointed to the importance of friends and family in the migration process.

However, partly due to data limitations, many studies have analyzed migrant networks as an *undifferentiated resource* and assumed their effects to be the same irrespective of their composition and across different groups of individuals. This leads to ignoring, as Neuman and Massey (1994) argue, that "social capital is neither undifferentiated nor discrete, rather it occurs in a variety of quantities and qualities". We follow Portes (1998) and Garip (2008) who argue that the benefits that migrant networks give access to depend on the *attributes of the recipients* (potential migrants) and on *the nature of their ties to sources* (prior migrants).

2.2 Gender relations as a structuring factor of migrant networks

Gender is one of the fundamental cleavages structuring role relations and influencing the nature of expectations and of exchanges in most societies. Gender relations have been shown to shape migration process, as men and women tend to have different migration experiences, different settlement patterns and to maintain different relations to their origin communities (Pessar, 1991 Curran and Saguy, 2001; Curran and Rivero-Fuentes, 2003). As Cerutti and Massey (2001) argue : "In Mexico, who migrates and why is likely to be related strongly to gender and household position. Not every family member is in a position to consider migration as a realistic alternative. Cultural values, normative expectations, and social institutions, as well as historical and structural factors, inevitably shape the range and number of choices." (p: 190)

However, despite these findings, the role of migrant networks has mostly been analyzed from a *gender-blind perspective*. Rare are the studies which do not assume that networks act in the same way and are similarly mobilized by men and women in their migration process. Moreover, few are those who set out to investigate whether the content and "quality" of ties to prior migrants differ according to their gender.

In recent years, however, several studies have integrated a gender perspective to the analysis of migrant networks, most of them based on the context of the Mexican migration to the United States[3] (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994; Kanaiaupuni, 2000; Cerutti and Massey, 2001; Curran and Rivero-Fuentes, 2003; Davis and Winters, 2003), with a few referring to internal migration in Thailand (Curan, Garip et al, 2005). These authors argue that the nature and degree of influence that networks have on individual migration varies between men and women since the costs, risks and benefits of migration are different across genders (Curran and Rivero-Fuentes 2003). Their findings point to several ways in which gender relations may shape the role played by migrant networks in the migration process.

2.2.1 Female migration perceived as more «risky»

[3] Using either the data from the Mexican Migration Project (Massey et al) or the *ejido* dataset (Cord et al, 1998)

First, men and women face different barriers to moving abroad. Typically, women's migration is seen as more risky and women as more vulnerable to various sorts of dangers involved in the migration process. Research has shown that where migration is fraught with higher risks, as is the case with international migration compared to internal mobility, networks of assistance become more salient since they serve to diminish the uncertainty associated with migrating (Davis, Stecklov and Winters 2002). We can thus similarly expect that having an established network of migrants, knowledgeable about the perils of the trip, is more important for women than for men. Several studies in the Mexican or the Thai contexts have found that networks have a stronger impact on women's migration propensities than on men's (Curran and Rivero-Fuentes, 2003; Kanaiaupuni, 2000; Curran, Garip et al, 2005, Davis & Winters, 2001)

Drawing their inspiration from Granovetter's research on the "strength of weak ties", researchers on migration have recently tried to evaluate whether it is strong ties (between close family members) or weak ties (between more extended family members, friends or acquaintances) that are more effective in facilitating international migration[4]. Each can be argued to offer specific advantages. On the one hand, relationships between close family members are characterized by higher degrees of trust, stronger norms of reciprocity and are expected to convey more reliable information. On the other hand, weak ties, connecting people belonging to different social circles, may give access to greater amounts and a wider array of information, potentially opening up a larger range of opportunities at destination. Empirical evidence has not been extremely conclusive in this respect, with some studies finding that ties among household members are more instrumental in facilitating migration (Cerrutti and Massey 2001, Kanaiaupuni 2000, Espininoza and Massey 1999, Massey and Espinoza 1997), while others have found no difference between close family and community ties (Davis and Winters, 2001; Garip, 2008). A reason potentially accounting for these conflicting results is that some of the studies have not considered the gender of the potential migrant and assumed the effects of migrant networks on individual probabilities of migration to be the same for men and women.

However, given the perception that female migration is riskier than men's, one can expect family migrant networks to be especially crucial in their migration, while both type of links may be equally useful for men. As Lindstrom (1991) argues, close family members have a "shield and control function" that is important in women's migration, but not in men's. Close relatives can be trusted more than friends or extended kin to protect the woman and to provide her reliable information, the necessary attention and support. Furthermore, they are also more likely to accept such a responsibility, which may easily become a considerable burden in the context of migration (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). Women would thus tend to migrate only when they have at least a close relative abroad ready to supervise their trip. Research in the Mexican and Thai contexts has so far supported these predictions (Lindstrom 1997, Curran and Rivero-Fuentes 2003, Curran and Saguy 2001, Curran, Garip et al. 2005).

[4] Measures of migrant networks do not include the intensity of the tie, thus the correspondence with Granovetter's distinction is only partial. Usually close family ties are considered to be strong ties, whereas community members are considered as "weak" ties.

2.2.2 Different availability of networks to men and women

However, men and women are not always similarly able to capitalize on their migrant networks. Several studies in the Mexican context have showed that men's migration is generally encouraged and men are able to rely on members of their family to help them in their migration attempts (Davis and Winters 2001). On the other hand, assistance in women's case depends on the type of mobility they envisage. If their project is approved by the family, than the family network is easy to mobilize. However, if women intend to migrate more autonomously, male members of the family are likely to oppose their projects. In this case, women may turn to their female network for help with migrating, thus circumventing the patriarchal authority (Lindstrom 1997, Curran and Rivero-Fuentes 2003). Such findings are reported by Hondagneu-Sotelo (1994) in her research on Mexican migration to the U.S. She shows how married women who want to join their husbands in the States, against the latters' will, managed to do so only with the help of other female relatives or friends abroad.

2.2.3 Gender segregated labour markets at destination

Furthermore, access to female migrant networks may be important for prospective female migrants to overcome not only the social but also the economic barriers to migration. Given that labor markets at destination are often gender-segregated, it is mostly prior migrants of the same gender who can provide the most relevant information and contacts. This is what several researchers have found concerning Salvadoran (Menjivar 2000), Mexican (Hondagneu-Sotelo 1994), and Guatemalan (Hagan 1998) migrants in the United States.

A brief review of the literature has allowed us to point out the gender based character of migrant social networks. Given the findings of several studies, we strongly expect men and women to be differently influenced by networks and to mobilize differ types of networks for migrating. We further expect the role played by networks to vary by their gender composition, as men and women prior migrants give access to different resources. However, the literature investigating these issues is based on only a few contexts, all different from ours in many respects. This raises the important question of the relevance of a gender based analysis of migrant networks in the contexts of Senegal and DR Congo.

2.3 Role of the context

Since most studies of the gender based character of migrant networks are based on the Mexican migration flows, there has yet been little scope for comparisons across contexts. Our paper, which uses comparable data on migrations from two different countries, characterized by different migration histories and different gender norms, goes further in this direction and investigates whether and how the gender differences in the role of networks are shaped by the context. Here we

briefly review some aspects of the Senegalese and Congolese contexts that may influence the functioning of migrant networks.

First, the two countries present different political and economic contexts which have shaped different migration flows. While they both gained their independence at the same moment, in 1960, Senegal has followed a trajectory of political stability while Congo has known violent political conflicts. Though richer in natural resources, Congo is facing a poorer economic situation than Senegal and is ranked as one of the poorest nations of the world.

Senegalese international migration has a long and well documented history, going back to the First World War when many Senegalese served in France as infantrymen. The flows intensified after the Independence, particularly towards some African countries experiencing an economic boom (the Ivory Coast, Ghana) and to France, where the expanding automobile industry was in need of workers. From the 1980s onwards, Senegalese turned towards new destinations in the North, such as Italy, Spain or the United States. The Mouride brotherhood[5] plays an increasing role in these new migration dynamics explaining to a certain extent the diversification of destinations (Bava, 2000). Also, while previously most migrants were recruited from villages in the Senegal River Valley, the later period saw a diversification of departure regions, with cities in general, and the capital in particular, assuming an increasingly key role.

The congolese migrations are more recent and less documented than the Senegalese flows. They are to a large extent directed to neighbouring countries, such as Angola and Congo Brazzaville for those originating from Western Congo, where Kinshasa is located, while Zambia is a common destination for migrants coming from Katanga in South-Eastern Congo. Congolese migration to Europe started in the early 1960s, after Congo gained its independence from Belgium. At that time, it primarily consisted of elites moving to Belgium for training (Kagne and Martiniello, 2001). In the 1980s, economic migration gained momentum and, since the 1990s, asylum-seekers have represented a very large proportion of Congolese migrants in Europe. Over the past 30 years the profiles of Congolese migrants and their destinations have also progressively diversified. France became increasingly popular while, more recently, the United Kingdom and Germany have attracted a sizeable share of the Congolese migrants in Europe.

Gender differences in migration patterns more accentuated in Senegal

Despite a more recent migration history, Congolese women migrate more than their Senegalese counterparts, especially towards Western countries. Based on the only data allowing a direct comparison between Senegal and Congo, there is no gender difference in the probability to migrate to a Western country for the Congolese, whereas Senegalese women are 40% less likely to migrate

[5] There are four main Muslim brotherhoods in Senegal : the Tijaniyyah, the Xaadir, the Layene and the Mouride

North than their male counterparts. Both Congolese and Senegalese women are however two times less likely than men to migrate to another African country (Flahaux, Schoumaker and Beauchemin, 2010[6]).

Senegalese women, less autonomous and economically active than the Congolese

These differences in migration propensities may be explained by differences in gender relations between the two countries.

In Congo as in Senegal, women are traditionally subordinated to male authority. In both countries, the positions of social and economic responsibility are undeniably falling on the men (Pilon et Vignikin 1996). Less educated, women are also less present on the labor market where they occupy more precarious jobs. However, the severe crisis that Congo has been experiencing in the recent decades has been operating changes in these social relations. As unemployment rose among men, women found themselves forced to take over their husband's responsibilities, to exit the domestic sphere and take on all sorts of small jobs. The crisis has thus weakened the men's social position and has forced them to accept the economic participation of their spouses, who have gained considerable in social status and decision making power within the family (Mianda, 1996; Bouchard, 2003). While in Senegal as elsewhere in Africa the persistent economic hardships have similarly increased women's role in household survival strategies, on the one hand the crisis has not been as severe as in Congo, and on the other hand, women's economic participation does not have the same sociological meaning. Traditional views about gender roles seem to preserve a stronger hold in Senegal where the ideal model of marriage described by both men and women envisages the man as the sole provider of the material and financial comfort of the family and excludes women from any work obligation (Adjamagbo et al, 2006). A quick comparison of the labor market situation between the two countries based on recent Demographic and Health Surveys[7] show considerable gender differences in activity rates in Senegal[8], while in Congo men and women are as likely to be working.

In all, research from the two contexts seems to suggest that Congolese women are subjected to a lower social control then their Senegalese counterparts and enjoy a larger autonomy manifested in higher labor market participation and an increased propensity to migrate.

2.4 Research objectives

[6] The authors use household data recently collected in Senegal and DR Congo within the framework of the MAFE project. Our paper is equally based on data produced within the MAFE project, though on a different dataset consisting of biographic individual data

[7] The Demographic and Health Surveys are conducted by Macro International in a large number of countries around the world. We used here the most recent ones in the Democratic Republic of Congo (2007) and in Senegal (2006).

[8] Women almost twice less likely to work then men (informal work included)

This paper pursues the investigation of *gender differences* in the role played by migrant networks on international migration. As the review of the relevant theoretical and empirical literature has shown, research stemming mostly from the Mexican and Thai migration contexts brought some evidence in support of a gender-differentiated effect. Here, we propose to extend the theory to a less-studied context, that of international migration from Sub-Saharan Africa. We ask the following questions:

1. To what extent does the influence of networks vary according to the gender of the (would-be) migrant?

H1: Having a migrant network has a greater effect on women's migration chances than on men's

2. Do men and women mobilize different type of networks in order to migrate?

H2: Close family ties are more important than distant ties (friends/extended family) for women's migration, while they are equally influential for men's

H3: Networks work along gender lines (female networks more important in the migration of women and male networks in that of men)

Furthermore, the paper examines how the interplay between gender and networks may *vary across contexts*, as these are characterized by different norms regarding gender and by different migration histories.

3. Are gender differences in the role of networks more pronounced in Senegalese than in Congolese migration?

H4: Gender differentials in the role of network will be more accentuated in the case of Senegal than in that of Congo

3. DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 The MAFE data

This paper uses data collected within the framework of the **Migration between Africa and Europe (MAFE)** project[9]. Drawing its inspiration from the Mexican Migration Project[10], the MAFE survey aims to address the widely-recognized paucity of quantitative data on African migrations (Lucas, 2006).

The MAFE survey design rests on two innovative principles:

1. *A transnational sample*. The project collected data both at origin (among non-migrants and return migrants) and at destination (among migrants) in order to offer a more accurate picture of the migration experience. Surveys were carried out in three African countries: Senegal (2008), DR Congo and Ghana (2009) and migrants from these respective countries were interviewed in France, Italy and Spain (Senegalese migrants); Belgium and the UK (Congolese migrants); the UK and the Netherlands (Ghanaian migrants).

2. *Longitudinal data*. Through a biographic questionnaire, retrospective information was collected on various aspects of the respondent's life: family formation, education and employment, housing, assets, *their own migration trajectory as well as those of their personal network*, etc. The information is generally collected on a yearly basis. In addition, in the origin countries, a household questionnaire collected basic cross-sectional data on all the members of the household aged 15 or over.

Due to financial constraints, a nationally representative sample was impossible to attain; instead, the project chose to focus on the capital cities – the Dakar and the Kinshasa regions in the Senegalese and the Congolese case. The total sample in the Dakar area consists of **1143 households** out of which **1067** individuals were interviewed, plus **603 Senegalese migrants**[11] interviewed in Europe (200 in each country). The Congolese sample consists of **992** individuals who were interviewed in Congo and **450** Congolese migrants interviewed in Europe (300 in Belgium and 150 in the United Kingdom). While the origin country samples are representative of the population living in the capital at the moment of the survey, the migrant sample is not random - except for the Spanish sample. A mix of various sampling strategies was used: intercept points, random walking, snowballing, contacts obtained through associations.

For the purpose of this preliminary analysis only the origin country samples will be used (1067 individuals in Senegal and 992 in Congo).

[9] For further information see the project website: www.mafeproject.com

[10] Most studies on Mexican migration to the United States are based on the Mexican Migration Project, a major longitudinal dataset which innovated the method of the ethno-survey.

[11] While the original idea was to obtain a matched sample between the households interviewed at origin and the migrants at destination, this turned out unfeasible in practice. Thus, the migrants interviewed in Europe may come from different regions in Senegal and Congo, though in both cases the percentage of those having lived in the capital is over 75%.

3.1.1 Measuring ego's migrant network: a substantial challenge

One of the innovative features of the MAFE survey is the longitudinal information it collects on the respondents' **migrant network**. Interviewees are asked whether any of their parents, siblings, children, partners have a migration experience (either a past experience or still currently abroad). In addition, they are asked whether anyone else from their more extended family or friendship circle has also had a migration experience and to whom they might have turned (or might turn) for help with migrating. The total constitutes ego's migrant network. The questionnaire suggests a limit of 20 persons, though one respondent named 21 persons. A subsequent module records for each member named by the respondent his or her migration trajectory, with the years and destinations of each move. The respondent should go as far back as he or she remembers, starting from their own birthdate or from the date they met the person (if the member of the network is a spouse or a friend). The relationship to ego, the gender, the year of acquaintance (if spouse or friend) for each member are equally collected.

This information is quite different than what most other studies of the role of networks are based on. Two measures are usually used in the literature. On the one hand, a "household migration network" is generally constructed based on a household questionnaire identifying members of the household with previous migration experience. The measure is however restricted to members of the household and generally only the dates of their last trips are recorded. On the other hand, the "community migration networks" are a simple count of other people who have already migrated from the community. This is often extrapolated from the sampled population (a part of the community) and thus equals the aggregate of all household migration networks. This measure assumes that social relationships actually exist between the members of the community, which may be more or less the case according to the context. Massey and Fussel (2001) have shown that this way of constructing community networks gives no result in an urban setting. Finally, both these measures are static, as they miss the inevitable variation that exists in the community and the household over time, as well as the potentially very complex migration trajectory of the "network members".

We can thus see how the MAFE data introduces a different measure of migrant networks, since the information is directly collected at an individual level. While the intensity of the relationship between ego and each of his or her network members is not recorded[12], it is actual (and not supposed) relationships that the data is measuring. Also, detailed information is collected on all the moves of both the respondent and his or her migrant entourage, thus introducing a much more dynamic measure of networks.

However, the data is also subject to a series of limitations. First, while information is collected on *all* immediate family members with migration experience, irrespective of whether or not they are

[12] We do know however the year when ego met the respective network member, if him or her is not part of the family.

part of the respondent's household (parents, siblings, children, partners), the question which enquires about prior migrants more remotely connected to the respondent may introduce at least two biases in this measure. First, given the retrospective nature of the data and the dynamic nature of an individual's social circle, it is most likely that only those relationships which survived and which the individual maintained up to the time of the survey, perhaps because they were most helpful, will be recorded. Second, the way the question is formulated leads respondents to name only those among his or her friends or extended family who could be most helpful in their migration. Both of these biases may lead to overestimating the effect of this type of networks on migration propensities.

There is a way of estimating the magnitude of this bias. The questionnaire contains a series of questions on whether the migrant received help with taking the decision to migrate, with traveling abroad, with financing the trip or with accommodation at destination from any member of his network, and in particular of his migrant network. A first look at the descriptive statistics shows that only a small percentage of the friends and extended kin mentioned by the respondent offered him or her these kinds of effective help. However, our main interest lies in investigating differences between men and women in the role played by migrant networks. We could find no theoretical reason to expect these biases to vary systematically by the gender of the respondent.

In this paper, we are using only the sample interviewed in the origin country which does not include current migrants. Our analyses are thus based on the migration experiences of the population of returnees, which may be selected on several aspects, including their migrant network characteristics. One could argue that networks may have played differently in the migration of those who returned to Senegal than in the migration of those who are still abroad. In order to estimate the magnitude of this bias, we have carried out complementary analyses on the household data, and found that there is no significant difference in the role networks have in the migration of return and in that of current migrants from Senegal. Regarding the Congolese flows, evaluating the impact of networks on a returnees population only tends to underestimate their effect.

3.1.2 Characteristics of the sample population

Table 1 presents a quick overview of some characteristics of our sample populations[13]. The gender distribution is extremely similar across the two contexts, with women being slightly overrepresented. The education variable has been grouped in three and four categories respectively[14]. In both countries these are based on the level of the last completed class[15].

[13] Sampling weights are used in the descriptive as well as in the multivariate analysis to account for the sampling design

[14] Given the few number of cases of individuals with no education in Congo, these have been grouped together with the primary level.

[15] In Senegal, these are: no education, primary level (anything up to CM2 included), secondary level (up to the last high-school class), tertiary level (any post-highschool institution)

The Kinshasans appear more educated than the Dakarois, which is corroborated with other data (DHS, 2008) A similar percentage of the two samples have had at least one migration trip abroad (around 21% of the men but only 8 - 9 % of the women).

Among those who had migrated abroad at least once, most of their trips had as a destination another African country– migrations towards Europe are a minority, especially in the Congolese sample.

Table 1 : Characteristics of the sampled population (weighted)

	Congo (N=992)		Senegal (N=1067)	
	Males	**Females**	**Males**	**Females**
Number of observations	466	526	491	576
Sex	47%	53%	46%	54%
Education level				
- **None**			19%	38%
- **Primary**	6,7 %	18,2%	39%	37%
- **Secondary**	67,9 %	72,9 %	29%	20%
- **Higher**	25,4 %	8,9 %	13%	5%
% with migration experience	22,7%	9 %	20.8 %	7.8%
Age at first migration	28,2 yrs	29 yrs	27,2 yrs	29 yrs
% migrations to Europe	11,5 %	8,5 %	26%	27%

3.2 Methodology

We start by examining descriptive statistics in order to compare men and women in their probability to have a migrant network, but also in the composition of their networks in terms of gender, strength of the relationship, location and experience of the members. Table 2 gives an overview of these variables and how they are constructed. However, these measures are limited since they give a static view of the network.

We continue with a set of descriptive statistics but this time exploiting the dynamic nature of our data in order to trace the timing of our respondent's moves abroad in relation to the moves of their network members. More precisely, we seek to evaluate the part, among men's and women's moves, of "independent" versus "follower" migrations. The former represents moves to a destination where no network members are present while in the latter the migrant follows other members in their migration. Only the sample of respondents with migration experience is mobilized in this part and only their first adult migrations – occurring after the age of 18 – out of Senegal are analyzed.

In a second step, we estimate the effects of different network compositions on the likelihood of migration among men and women. Separate analyses are carried out by gender. Person-year datasets are constructed from the retrospective histories, and individuals are followed from age eighteen to the date of their first migration out of Senegal or the survey date, whatever date occurs first. Poisson regression techniques are used given the low frequency of the event of interest. For the same reasons, we use a repeated events framework, analyzing together all adult migrations of an individual and controlling for previous migration experience. If the individual leaves the country of origin, he or she exits the risk set during the period abroad but re-enters it upon return. The same model is run several times exchanging only the specification of the network variables.

3.2.1 Construction of variables

Dependent variable (event of interest):

- Any migration out of Senegal, irrespective of the destination, occurring after the individual turns 18

Network variables

Our variables of interest refer to the migrant entourage of the respondent at different points in his or her life. Several specifications of the migrant network are tested successively in a series of models in order to answer to our research hypotheses. All migrant network variables are time varying and are measured at time t[16].

Table 2: **List of variables used in event-history analyses**

[16] Similar results are reached when the network variables and other time varying controls are measured at t-1. We believe a combined measure of the two would be the most appropriate, but this is yet to be constructed.

Variables	Categories	Description
Variables of interest : Migrant Network		
Current migrant network (dummy)	No current migrant network (reference)	
	Has a current migrant network	Dummy. At least someone in the network is abroad at time t
Returnee migrant network	Does not have a returnee migrant network (ref)	
	Has a returnee migrant network	Dummy. At least one member of the network has returned in Sen/RDC at time t
Size of the current migrant network	Number of members of the network currently abroad	Continuous
By relationship link	Number of close family members currently abroad	Continuous
	Number of extended family or friends currently abroad	Continuous
	Partner currently abroad	Dummy
By gender	Number men currently abroad	Continuous
	Number women currently abroad	Continuous
Control variables: time-varying		
Age	From 18 years old. In years	Continuous
Year	From 1950 onwards	Cotinuous
Occupational status	Student (ref) Currently working Unemployed Inactive	Time-varying, measured at time t
Family status	Is currently in a partnership	Broad definition of partnership, not restricted to married spouses. Being in a union
	Has children under 6 years old	Dummy
Control variables: time invariant		
Education	No education Primary level Secondary level Tertiary level	Variable constructed based on the last completed class. For Congo, the first two modalities are grouped together given the low number of cases.
Religious belonging	Murid, Tidiane, Layene or Other (Senegal) Catholic, Protestant, Eglise du reveil, Other (RD Congo)	Categorical, 4 modalities

4. RESULTS

4.1 Descriptive statistics on men's and women's migrant networks

The migrant network of an individual, as it is measured in the MAFE dataset, evolves along the years as more of the respondent's family members and friends migrate abroad or return in Senegal/Congo, or as s/he meets new migrants. Given the dynamic nature of the measure, a descriptive static outlook is clearly limited. However, it can give us a first idea of whether there are significant differences in men's and women's access to networks and in their composition.

First, we notice that in both countries, but especially in Senegal, a great majority of individuals knows at least someone with migration experience. Overall, there is less variation in the percentages in Senegal: Senegalese men and women do not differ significantly in their likelihood of having a migrant entourage, whereas a small but significant difference can be noted among the Congolese (71% of men know at least one prior migrant against only 60% of women). However, in both countries there are differences in the *size* of men's and women's migrant networks. Thus, both genders are almost as likely to be related to at least someone with migration experience but men have larger networks on average.

A more discriminating factor is the level of education, which appears positively associated with the possession of a migrant network in both countries, though with a steeper gradient in Congo.

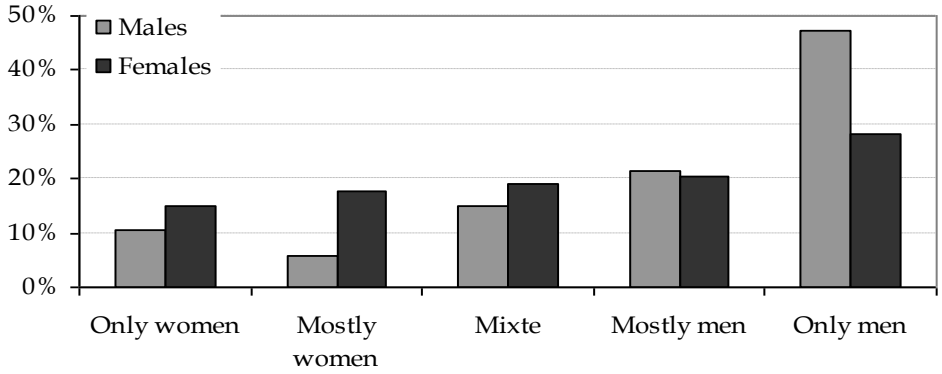
Table 3 : Network characteristics by ego's gender, education level, and migration status

	Congo (N=992)		Senegal (N=1067)	
	Has migrant network	**Average size of network**	**Has migrant network**	**Average size of network**
Gender				
Men	71 %	2,5	76 %	2,2
Women	60 %	1,9	77 %	1,8
Education				
None			66 %	1,4
Primary	52 %	1,5	77 %	1,8
Secondary	64 %	2,1	83 %	2,7
Higher	82 %	3	81 %	3
Migrant status				
Never migrated	62 %	1,9	75 %	1,8
Return migrant	84 %	3,8	87 %	2,9
Total	65 %	2,2	76%	2,1

We pursue the investigation by looking in more detail at the composition of men and women's networks by gender and by type of relationships. First, we calculated the percentage of women

among all the network members of an individual[17]. We find that in Congo men are significantly more likely to have networks exclusively composed of other men and less likely to have exclusively or majority feminine networks (Figure 1). Differences are less marked in Senegal, but go in the same direction. However, both men and women tend to have networks mostly or only composed of prior male migrants.

Figure 1: Gender composition of men's and women's networks

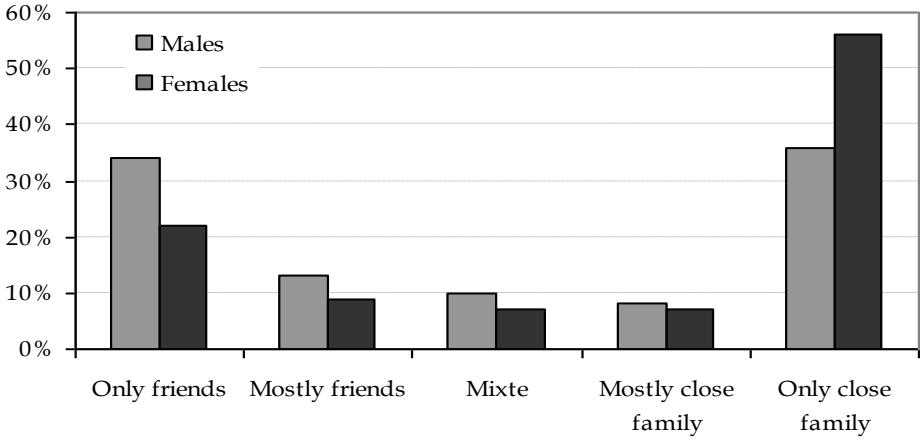


Second, we compared men's and women's networks according to the percentage of close family members they have[18]. In Senegal, the substantial difference between men and women lies in the likelihood of having networks *only* composed of close family members, which more than half of the women are likely to have, against only 37% of the men (Figure 2) On the other hand, women are less likely to have networks exclusively composed of extended family members and friends. Similar results apply to Congo, though the gender differences are smaller. Furthermore, a great percentage of both men and women have either only close family networks or only friends and extended family networks, which might suggest the two are interchangeable.

Figure 2: Composition of men's and women's networks in terms of type of relationship

[17] If ego has a migrant network of 10 persons and 3 of them are women, he will have a network of 30% percent women. We grouped the variable in 5 categories: only women (100%), mostly women (between 99% and 60%), mixte (59% to 41%), mostly men (40%-1%), only men (0%).

[18] Similar calculations as for the gender composition : number of close family members out of total number of network members (including thus extended family and friends)



To summarize, we see some significant differences between men's and women's migrant networks, which lends support to our first hypothesis. Men's networks tend to be larger and are more likely to be exclusively composed of other men and of friends or extended family members. Women's networks are smaller, more likely to be composed of other women (especially among the Congolese) and more likely to contain close family members (especially among the Senegalese).

4.2 Timing of migration: who follows whom?

A first way of apprehending the role of networks in men's and women's migration is to establish the timing of their migration in relation to prior migrants related to them. Following Cerrutti and Massey (2001), we consider that those migrating to a destination where no one from their migrant network is present are moving more independently and freer of constraints, but also perhaps with higher risks and uncertainties, than those who migrate to a country where members of their network are already present. Based on the MAFE data, we can establish the timing of the moves by crossing the dated and longitudinal information on ego's migration trajectory with the similar information on the trajectories of ego's network members[19] (Table 4[20]). As the information is indirectly provided by the respondent and only at the moment of the survey it may not be accurate. However, we consider that while the respondent may make some errors as to the exact dates of migration, s/he will have more chances of remembering the chronological order of the events - whether someone was already at destination before his/her arrival.

[19]The data does not tell us that ego's motivation for migration was to join a particular person in the network already present at destination. It only tells us that at the moment when ego migrated to country X, the person Y of his/her network was already there.

[20] Contrary to the previous set of descriptives, Table 4 only looks at individuals with migration experience. The total N is given by the total number of first adult migrations out of Senegal (N=388)

For a great majority of men in both countries, their first adult migration out of Senegal had as destination a country where no member of their network was present. We called such a move "pioneer" migration, though the term should be understood only in relation to the individual's entourage. Women in both countries were twice less likely to migrate independently, without following someone in their network. They were, on the other hand, very likely to join their partner already abroad, a modality we labelled here "family reunification"[21]. A substantial difference appears however in this respect between the Congolese and the Senegalese women. Half of all Senegalese women's migrations take place to a destination where their partner is already located, whereas only a quarter of Congolese women migrate for the same reasons. No significant differences appear between men and women in both countries as to the percentage joining a close family member (excluding the partner) abroad. Interestingly, a large share of Congolese women (24%) migrate where extended family members or friends are situated, whereas this case is rarely encountered among Senegalese women and less common among men of both nationalities.

Table 4: Timing of migration for men and women

	Congo		Senegal	
	Men	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**
Pioneer	70 %	34 %	76%	37%
Family reunification	4 %	25 %	0,01%	50%
Has close family members	16 %	17 %	15%	15,5%
Has friends/ext. family	10 %	24 %	9%	1,5%
N	136	53	140	59

To summarize, we see different patterns of migration among men and women, but also differences between Congolese and Senegalese women. Women in both countries are much more likely than men to migrate where they have connections, in other words to follow someone rather than precede. The presence of a network at destination appears to be more important for women than for men, which supports our second hypothesis. However, Senegalese and Congolese women do not follow the same persons: while for the Senegalese the reunification with the partner appears the predominant pattern, Congolese women's migrations are equally directed towards destinations where they have friends or extended family members and towards places where their partner is situated.

[21] Though it shouldn't be understood in the legal sense of the term, as the migration of the woman is not necessarily sponsored by her partner

4.3 Multivariate event-history analyses of male and female migration from Congo and Senegal

However, the descriptive analyses do not control for other personal characteristics, such as age, education, partnership and occupational status, which are likely to be associated both with the possession of a network and with the likelihood of migration. Moreover, they do not allow us to estimate the relative importance of different type of network links/compositions on the probability to migrate. To investigate more fully the role networks play in men and women's migration, we estimate gender-specific multivariate models predicting the probability to migrate.

A first series of models analyzes individuals' decision of whether to migrate or not. We estimate discrete-time duration models in a repeated events framework where the event of interest is any migration out of Senegal or Congo, irrespective of the destination[22], occurring after the individual turns 18. If the individual leaves the country of origin, he or she exits the risk set during the period abroad but re-enters it upon return. The same model is run several times exchanging only the specification of the network variables. The reference category remains "to have no migrant networks". Tables 5 and 6 display incidence rate ratios (the exponentiated form of the coefficients) for the various covariates.

4.3.1 The effect of individual characteristics

We start by briefly discussing the effects of the control variables (Table 5). Not surprisingly, for both men and women, migration rates increase with age up to a turning point – around 35 - after which they start decreasing. In Congo the relationship does not appear to be significant. Education does not seem to play a role in Congolese migration, while in Senegal it only affects women's migration propensities, increasing the rates of migration for those having obtained a secondary level – compared to no education - , but not also for those having a tertiary level diploma. It should be considered, though, that most of the migrations in our sample (and especially in the Congolese case) have an African destination, and that education may play a different role when considering migrations towards Western countries. As argued in the literature, higher costs of migration North but also higher expected returns to education positively select migrants on education, while the opposite may hold for migration within Africa[23]. Thus, we interpret our finding of an absence of a relationship between education and migration through the nature of migrations in our sample. Occupational status plays differently for the Congolese and the Senegalese. Among the former, being unemployed substantially increases the odds of migration as compared to being a student, while for women being economically inactive is a highly influential factor of migration. Among the Senegalese, the opposite is found among women, as being a houseewife decreases migration chances.

[22] However most of the migrations in our samples had an African destination, especially in the Congolese case.

[23] Recent research (Chort, 2010) based on a nationally representative sample in Senegal finds that education is positively correlated with migration out of Africa and negatively[23] correlated with migration within Africa.

More important differences in the determinants of male and female migration are with respect to life cycle factors. Our results for the Senegalese and Congolese populations are in concordance with those of Kanaiaupuni's (1995) and Cerutti and Massey's (2001) for Mexican migration. Marriage initially reduces the likelihood of migration among men but increases it among women. As for the presence of young children in the household: it is a strong deterrent for female migration, while encouraging that of men. Massey et al, (1987) find that it is in this initial phase of family building, when the dependency rate of the household increases substantially, that Mexican men are more likely to search employment up North. These results appear to also hold in the case of the larger Sub Saharan African households.

Table 5: Estimates for control variables on probabilities of migration (discrete-time duration model, Poisson regression, incidence rate-ratios)

		Congo		Senegal	
		Men	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**
Variable	**Category**	**IRR**	**IRR**	**IRR**	**IRR**
Age	Age (continuous)	0.99	1.02	1.37*	1.40*
	Age squared			0.99**	0.99*
Education	*No education / Primary level (ref)*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
	Secondary level	0.74	2.18	0.97	3.91***
	Tertiary level	0.74	2.86	1.03	1.10
Occupational status	*Student (ref)*	*Ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
	Has a job	2.32	5.23*	1.50	0.65
	Unemployed	9.17**	7.32*	0.55	0.00***
	Inactive/au foyer	0.00***	12.30**	0.75	0.20**
Family status	*Single (ref)*	*Ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
	In partnership	0.75	1.33	0.37**	9.85***
	Has children under 6	1.74*	0.41*	2.27**	0.62*
Religious Group[24]	Catholic/ Murid	*Ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*
	Protestant/Tidiane	2.99**	0.74	0.95	1.21
	Eglise réveil[25]/Christian	2.74***	2.94***	0.87	0.00**
	Other	1.09	0.00***	1.28	0.85
Year (period)	Year	1.01	1.01	0.98**	0.96***
Migration experience	*Has no mxp (ref)*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*Ref*
	Previous mxp	3.99***	2.46*	1.82*	2.20
Migrant network	*No current MN (ref)*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*Ref*
	Has current MN	1.36	2.89*	2.78***	12.65***

Survey design and weights are used in the regression
∗ p < 0.10, ∗∗ p < 0.05, ∗∗∗ p < 0.01
Source: MAFE biographic data collected in 2007 (Congo) and 2008 (Senegal)

[24] The first modality concerns Congo, the second Senegal.
[25] Evangelical Church of Christ

Religious belonging shapes the patterns of Congolese out-migration, as Protestants and members of the evangelical Church of Christ have higher rates of migration than Catholics, confirming previous qualitative evidence. In Senegal, contrary to our expectations given the importance attributed to Murid transnational networks by qualitative literature, Murids do not appear to be migrating more than members of other Muslim brotherhoods. As for the historical period of migration, no trend can be distinguished for the Congolese migrations, while in Senegal for both men and women the chances of migration appear lower in more recent years[26]. We controlled for previous migration experience, which could have occurred either before or after turning 18 (since the model is estimated in a repeated events framework). Having migrated before appears as a strong determinant for male migration in both countries; for women, while the coefficients go in the same direction, they are not significant in Senegal.

This first model introduces a simple dichotomous measure of migrant networks: whether or not the individual has family or friends currently located abroad[27]. As expected, all coefficients are positive and most are significant, meaning that possessing a migrant network increases the rate of migration. The most substantial increase appears to be for Senegalese women, while for Congolese men the relation is not significant. This first result seems to support the second hypothesis predicting a stronger role of networks in female than in male migration.

4.3.2 Network determinants of male and female migration from Congo and Senegal

The next series of models (Table 6) explores in more detail the role of different types of network connections in male and female migration. They all control for the variables presented in Table 5.

Given the importance of the reunification channel for women in both countries as noted from the descriptive section, a first regression model aims to evaluate the importance of having a spouse abroad on women's migration chances everything else equal. It also investigates the extent to which the effect of the network is due to a spouse effect. Most previous studies investigating the gender based character of networks do not analyze separately the role of the partner in women's migration, which could lead to overestimating the role of networks. Indeed, our results show that it is the partner whom, within the network, is most influential in women's migration. Having a partner abroad substantially increases rates of migration for both Congolese and Senegalese women, accounting for all of the effect of the network. It also accounts for the positive effect of being in a partnership. Having any other family or friends abroad besides the partner appears to no longer

[26] Again, this is probably driven by the African nature of migrations, and is confirmed by the findings of Flahaux, Shoumaker et Beauchemin (2010) based on the household data, who find that Senegalese migration within Africa has decreased significantly since the years 2000, while Congolese migration within Africa has stagnated since the 1980s.
[27] The variable is time-varying, and is measured at time t (for a longer discussion on the choice of the moment, see section 3.2 on Methodology

significantly influence migration propensities for women. Given the few cases where men migrate after their partners, this variable is not significant for neither Congolese nor Senegalese men.

In light of this last result, the next models all control for the presence of the partner abroad. In model 2 we introduced the migrant network variable as a count rather than a dummy (excluding the partner if this one is abroad). Interestingly, the coefficients for Congolese become significant, suggesting that the simple fact of possessing a network besides one's partner is not sufficient to increase migration chances- the size of the network matters. For Congolese men, having a network of one or two members currently abroad is not significant, whereas networks of three or more are significantly increasing one's chances of migration[28]. For women in both countries, the results of models 1 and 2 suggest that it's either having one's partner abroad or having a large network that increases the probability to migrate.

Thus, our first hypothesis needs to be nuanced: while networks initially appear more influential in women's migration than in that of men's, this effect is to a large extent accounted for by family reunification mechanisms. Once accounting for the presence of the partner abroad, networks do not play a more important role in female migration.

Model 3 further disaggregates networks by the type of relationship between their members and ego. The number of close family members and the number of extended family members or friends are the two variables measuring this composition. Again, the presence of the partner abroad is controlled for, and he or she is excluded from the close family network. The findings support the fourth hypothesis, predicting an equivalent role of strong and weak ties in male migration from both countries. In Senegal, results for women strongly support our third hypothesis which argued for a more important role of close family networks than of more distant kin and friends in female migration. The latter do not significantly affect Senegalese women's chances of migration suggesting that female mobility out of Senegal depends on the presence of close relatives abroad. The opposite seems to be the case for Congolese women, whose migration appears to be significantly encouraged by friends or more distant kin but not by close family members. This could betray a confrontational situation of migration, as documented by Hondagneu-Sotelo, in which women whose project of migration is opposed by their family, turn to their own personal networks outside the household for support.

A further aspect of the network composition is investigated in model 4, using two count variables, respectively the number of men and of women in the network, partner excluded. In Senegal, the only useful network resource for men are other men, supporting the fifth hypothesis. For women, both prior male *and* female migrants appear to increase their migration chances. Neither hypothesis 4a nor 4b are thus validated, results pointing to a cumulative and not mutually exclusive role of female and male networks. The importance of male networks for both men and women could be explained by the more established nature of male networks in international mobility, as argued by

[28] Ratios increase 2.47 times for Congolese men if they have a migrant networks of 3 or more persons (compared to having no current migrant network), while for women the coefficient is positive and similar but not significant. Results not shown in this model

Kanaiaupuni (2001) in the case of Mexican migration to the US. Given their longer migration experience, migrant men are likely to be more resourceful and more knowledgeable about migration risks and opportunities. While this would be helpful for both men and women candidates to migration, men would especially gain from the experience of prior male migrants since the latter can give them information on jobs at destination. While prior female migrants bring no added value for male candidates to migration, they appear to be useful resource in female migration, *in addition* to male networks. These results support previous qualitative evidence about the gender segregated nature of the labour market at destination and about the importance of same-sex networks in connecting newcomers to jobs (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). More puzzling are the findings from Congo, where both men and women migrants are useful network resources for men, while only prior male migrants significantly increase female migration chances. In line with our previous explanation, this could point to female networks being more established in international migration out of Congo, which is not necessarily the case. Further investigation of this aspect is needed.

Table 6: Estimates for migrant network variables on probabilities of migration (discrete-time duration model, Poisson regression, incidence rate-ratios)

		Congo		Senegal	
Variable	**Category**	**Men**	**Women**	**Men**	**Women**
Model 1 : Partner abroad					
Migrant network	*No current MN[29] (ref)*	*ref*	*ref*	*ref*	*Ref*
	Has current MN besides partner	1.33	0.85	2.77***	1.57
Partner location	*Partner in Sen/RDC*	*ref*	*ref*	*Ref*	*Ref*
	Has partner abroad	1.8	12.98***	3.22	28.77***
Model 2 : Size of the current network					
Network size	MN size	1.18***	1.18*	1.27***	1.34**
Model 3 : Type of relationship					
Type of links	Number close family members abroad	1.19***	1.21	1.27**	1.54***
	Number friends/ ext. family abroad	1.16**	1.17*	1.28**	0.75
Model 4 : Gender composition					
Gender	Number of men abroad	1.13*	1.32*	1.34***	1.46**
	Number women abroad	1.25***	1.11	1.07	1.31*

Models 2, 3 and 4 all control for having partner abroad and thus exclude the partner from the size of the network, the number of close family member and the number of men or women abroad (depending on the gender of individual)
Survey design and weights are used in the regression
* p < 0.10, ** p < 0.05, *** p < 0.01
Source: MAFE biographic data collected in 2007 (Congo) and 2008 (Senegal)

[29] We sometimes use the abbreviation MN for migrant network

5. CONCLUSION

Overall, our results confirm the general hypothesis of this study, that gender structures the role played by migrant networks, and advance our understanding of their functioning. First, descriptive statistics have shown that while men and women have a comparable access to migrant networks, their networks differ in size and composition. Men's networks tend to be larger and are more likely to be exclusively composed of other men and of friends and extended family members. Women's networks, on the other hand, are smaller and for a great majority composed only of close family members. While they also tend to be more feminine, the differences are not always extremely significant. These differences give a first indication as to which networks are the most relevant for each gender.

Next, we compared the timing of men's and women's migrations with respect to moves of their network members. In both countries women were two times less likely than men to move "independently" to a destination where no member of their network was located. However, while the largest share of migrations amongst Senegalese women appeared to be for family reunification purposes – they were joining their partner at destination – Congolese women were just as likely to migrate for family reunification as they were to go to places where more distant relationships - friends and extended family members – were located. Otherwise, in both countries, women and men were as likely to migrate to places where close relatives were located.

Finally, multivariate event-history analyses were carried out to investigate into more detail the differential effects of network compositions on men's and women's migration, while controlling for various other factors. At first sight, networks appear as much more influential in women's migration than in men's, corroborating previous scholarship on networks in Mexican migration. However, when we disaggregate the network and distinguish the spouse, we see that this is principally due to a large impact of the partner's migration on female mobility. Behind a "network effect" lies thus a "partner effect" that, once accounted for, leaves networks not much more influential in women's than in men's migration.

However, even after accounting for the presence of one's partner abroad, significant differences in the *type* of ties influential in male and female mobility stand out. First, migrant networks influence in a very similar way male migration from both countries. Senegalese and Congolese men rely just as much on close family ties as they do on friends and more extended family members. Male networks are the only influential connections among Senegalese men, supporting the hypothesis of a gender segmentation of the labor market at destination. However, Congolese men equally rely on their female networks to migrate - the reasons for this need further investigation.

In contrast, we can see interesting differences between the two countries in the role played by migrant networks (excluding the partner) in women's migration. Confirming our second hypothesis, Senegalese women rely only on close family members to migrate - their migration appears thus to be strictly controlled by their immediate family circle. On the other hand, for Congolese women their friendship and extended family networks are also playing an important role in their migration.

Both female and male networks however influence Senegalese women's migration chances, but further investigation is needed to establish whether they fulfill complementary functions or whether they act as substitutes Also, given a larger sample, we could test whether they are useful for different types of moves: whether female networks facilitate autonomous female migration, conflicting with the family's views, while male networks chaperon family-driven female mobility.

Overall, gender differences appear more pronounced in the Senegalese case, confirming our last hypothesis. This could be explained by higher barriers to female mobility, due to a stronger hold of traditional gender norms and lower levels of female autonomy in Senegal than in DR Congo.

Most previous studies are limited to an investigation of the role of household networks, which they can rarely disaggregate further, and of an extrapolated measure of community networks. Our study tried to also take into account a larger social circle of the individual –family members who are not household members, friends or acquaintances – who have been shown by ethnographic research to differently influence men's and women's migration behaviors. It also disaggregated further within close family networks and distinguished between the partner and the rest of the members, revealing thus the crucial role of the former in Senegalese women's migration. Though our network measure is not without biases and fails, some interesting differences in the role played by different type of ties have been revealed, some confirming previous research in other regions, some pointing in a different direction which needs further investigation.

Further analysis will be conducted to include the European samples of Senegalese and Congolese migrants. This would allow us to distinguish between migrations to Western versus African destinations, as we could expect the role of networks to vary as well. We will also be able to further distinguish between single and married women and include other measures of networks such as the experience and geographical dispersion of their members.

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