

Migration, family separation and caregiving across borders

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Propositions
accompanying the dissertation

Migration, Family Separation and Caregiving across Borders

A multi-sited ethnography of transnational child-raising arrangements between Ghana and The Netherlands

by Miranda Poeze

1. Within families separated by borders, showing love and affection through the sending of remittances and gifts, long-distance communication and regular face-to-face visits is essential to nurture warm and affectionate parent-child relationships.
2. Flexible and inclusive child-raising norms facilitate and normalise transnational child-raising arrangements and mediate the impacts of family separation for the different actors involved, and as such, provide a useful strategy against tightening migration policies in popular host countries.
3. Gender ideologies prescribe but do not dictate how geographical separation and long-distance care are practiced and experienced by the different actors involved.
4. Alongside gender ideologies, migrants' socio-economic and legal status largely influences care practices, intimate relationships with stay-behind children and interfamilial household dynamics.
5. The migration project and the geographical distance complicate the maintenance of kinship care in different ways. It is through the day-to-day care and kin work, which involves not only the visible, but also the invisible actions – what people do and do not do – that kinship relationships of care work.
6. Transnational lives and exchanges are not free-floating. Rather they are anchored within the institutional contexts of the sending and receiving countries.
7. Transnational studies benefit from methodological approaches that give equal importance to both sides of the transnational relationship.
8. When applying the simultaneous matched sample methodology, exchanging and comparing notes, as well as visiting the other researcher's field site, are invaluable to reach the method's fullest potential.
9. Migration policies that determine who is eligible to enter and under what conditions should not solely be based on what benefits the host society, but should consider the daily lived consequences for those to whom the policies apply both in the host society and the country of origin.
10. Dutch migration policies should facilitate, not hinder, transnational parent-child bonds notably by improving immigrants' labour market position and by facilitating short-term visits of stay-behind children.
11. *Agya bi nu a, agya bi te ase* (when one father dies, another father lives) – Akan proverb.