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Understanding the Aspiration to Stay

A Case Study of Young Adults in Senegal

Kerilyn Schewel

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Abstract

This paper addresses the subject of immobility, an often-neglected dimension in migration studies. It begins with a critical exploration of how the migration literature theorises non-migrants and organises the explanations for immobility offered therein. The concept of 'acquiescent immobility' is introduced to highlight the existence of non-migration preferences regardless of capability constraints. This paper argues that exploring the preference to stay, especially among poorer populations who stand much to gain economically from migrating, reveals the non-economic motivations that influence migration decision-making processes. Drawing on quantitative and qualitative data from the EUMAGINE project in Senegal, the demographic characteristics of young adults who do not aspire to migrate are examined, followed by an exploration of their perceptions of migration and motivations for staying. This paper finds that the preference to stay is generally positively related to being married and having children and negatively related to having only primary level education, while gender, age, household financial situation and rural/urban settings are not in themselves significant predictors of the preference to stay for young adults. In-depth interviews reveal the motivations behind these preferences. These include 'retaining' factors like the desire to be among family and loved ones, to live in a religious environment with spiritual values, the love of Senegal and the desire to contribute to its development, as well as 'repelling' narratives about the difficulties of life for migrants, especially undocumented, in Europe.

Keywords: migration, aspirations, immobility, decision-making, Senegal

Author: Kerilyn Schewel, DPhil student in International Development, University of Oxford, kerilyn.schewel@qeh.ox.ac.uk

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Contents

1 Introduction

The ever-elusive and deceptively simple question animating much of migration research today is, "Why do people migrate?" Since the inception of the academic study of migration, which many argue began with Ravenstein's *The Laws of Migration* (1885), migration theories have evolved and proliferated to explain the different types and patterns of migration from the macro to the micro level. Nevertheless, Jansen's (1969) statement: "Perhaps the question most asked and least understood about migration is 'why do people move?'" remains just as valid today as it did almost half a century ago.

Some argue, and this paper supports the claim, that migration theory will never explain human mobility while maintaining a myopic focus on migration alone. Recent developments in migration theory highlight the notion that migration should be contextualised and understood within broader processes of social transformation (Castles 2010). On the macro- and meso-levels, any attempt to understand why people migrate needs to account for the larger political, economic, social and cultural factors operating within origin and destination environments. On the micro-level, one could argue that any attempt to understand why people migrate, or aspire to migrate, needs to account for the broader life aspirations and motivations of those who migrate as well. However, in order to gain an appreciation of the forces and motivations that animate *mobility*, it is also necessary to understand mobility's often-neglected counterpart: immobility.

In 1981, De Jong and Gardner argued that the field's inability to explain migration was "attributable in a large measure to a failure to ask the question, 'Why do people not move?'" (43). Arango (2000), in a survey of migration theory at the turn of the century notes:

> … the usefulness of theories that try to explain why people move is in our days dimmed by their inability to explain why so few people move. Clearly, theories of migration should not only look to mobility but also to immobility, not only to centrifugal forces but also to centripetal ones. The classic pair 'push' and 'pull' should at least be complemented with 'retain' and 'repel' (293).

Indeed, when studying migration it is easy to overlook the fact that the majority of the world's population does not migrate. Contrary to sensationalist ideas that we live in the midst of a unique "global migration crisis" (Weiner 1995), 97–98 percent of the world's population stay in their countries of origin and this figure has remained stable for decades (Zlotnik 1999). Even when accounting for the larger phenomenon of internal migration, recent estimates show that only eight percent of the world's population has migrated in the last five years (Esipova et al 2013). So while scholars do acknowledge that migration is often pursued by "exceptional people" (Goldin et al 2011), an analytical and methodological "mobility bias" nevertheless remains in the field of migration research.

This mobility bias also frames the public discourse on migration. In recent decades, popular social scientific commentary on migration has become increasingly alarmist (Zolberg 2001). Western countries are portrayed as "beset by massive migration pressures" from the "developing world" (Nyberg-Sorensen et al 2002: 8), and matters of immigration are particularly subject to sensationalist media coverage, popular debate and public opinion (Boswell 2009). The implicit assumption underlying the popular discourse on immigration is that all those from developing countries would flood into Western countries if migration controls were lifted, though there is little empirical support for this claim. The recognition that many people in developing countries do desire to migrate should be qualified with the understanding that, in reality, international South-North migration tends to be highly selective and requires significant resources; many would not have the financial, human or social capital to migrate long distances even should they be allowed to do so (De Haas 2009; Massey et al 2010). Regardless of people's ability to migrate, however, many do not desire to do so (Pécoud & Guchteneire 2007; UNHCR

1979). While the forced migration literature appreciates well that the preference to stay is a real desire among poor populations in developing countries – indeed, the very notion of 'forced' migration assumes the preference to stay – this reality is often left unexplained by the more general migration literature, which seeks to explain migration at the 'voluntary' end of the spectrum (Van Hear 1998).

This paper explores the perspective of Senegalese inhabitants who do not aspire to migrate, thus attempting to counter the mobility bias in academic research and public discourses on migration. For clarification, this is not an argument for a "mobility bias" to be replaced by a "sedentary" one. While I wish to highlight that in the background of global migration behaviour, one finds a widespread context of immobility, it is also necessary to appreciate that migration has been and continues to be a normal part of human society. Individuals, families, groups, and populations have always moved and will continue to do so. In some regions of the world, migration as a livelihood strategy is even normalised to the point where a 'culture of migration' has taken root (Kandel & Massey 2002). Based on the prevalence of migration from certain sending regions, Ali (2007) argues, "people learn to migrate, and they learn to desire to migrate" (39). Nevertheless, even in regions where a culture of migration exists, there are still individuals who do not aspire to migrate.

Senegal is one country in which a culture of migration has been identified (Riccio 2005), providing a particularly salient context to explore non-migration preferences. Data from a recent international research project, *EUMAGINE: Imagining Europe from the Outside* – which investigates the relationship between people's perceptions and imaginings about Europe and their migratory aspirations – is used to address my primary research question: What are the characteristics and motivations of young adults in Senegal who do not aspire to migrate?

2 Non-migrants in the migration literature

In contemporary migration scholarship, there is little focus on those who do not migrate. They are either overlooked, lying in the periphery of researchers' interests, or they are disregarded, remaining difficult to conceptualise or explain. The problem with addressing immobility is, in fact, how ordinary it is. Is staying a matter of choice or inertia? Agency is often conflated with action (Emirbayer & Mische 2013), but to not move, especially when one can, may also be a manifestation of agency. When does staying reflect agency and when is it the result of structural constraints? Methodologically, there are innumerable challenges with simply asking someone why they do not migrate and receiving a simple, straightforward response. Analytically, opening up the question of why people do not migrate becomes so broad that one might as well ask why people do the things they do.

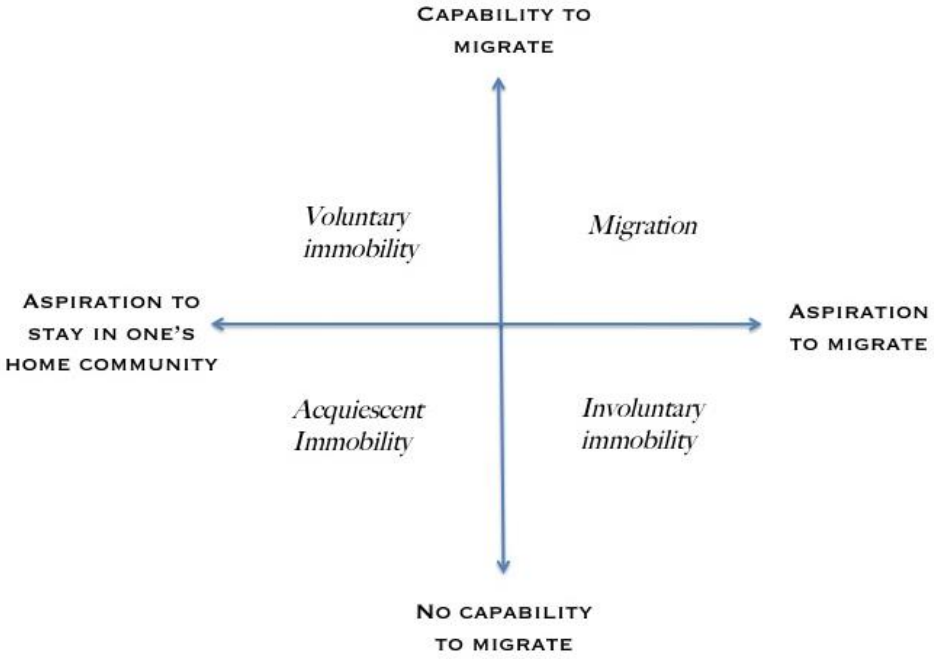
Every social science seeks to explain human behaviour in one way or another. A problem with migration studies is that the explanations for why people move necessarily draw upon a number of social sciences, each focusing on different aspects of social reality, leading to a fragmentation in migration theory along disciplinary lines (Massey et al 1993; Arango 2000). What migration scholars generally have in common, though, is the focus on migration behaviour at the exclusion of non-migration behaviour. As a result, current migration theories largely overestimate migration from poorer to richer countries (Hammar & Tamas 1997), and systematic frameworks to analyse immobility have yet to be developed (Carling 2002; Gaibazzi 2010).

The migration literature generally focuses on structural mobility constraints as an explanation for immobility, whether political or legal (eg the migration control regime; Castles et al 2014); economic (eg lack of financial capital to migrate); social (eg lack of human or social capital; Kothari 2003; de Haas 2009); or cultural (eg gendered expectations for women to stay home; Pedraza 1991; Cohen and Sirkeci 2011). Some research on the experience of immobility in traditional origin countries

highlights its involuntary nature, placing structural constraints, particularly restrictive immigration policies, at the heart of why so many do not move (Carling 2002: 2; Jónsson 2007; Gaibazzi 2010). Very little research explores voluntary immobility, or why people *prefer* to stay in their home countries. For this reason, this paper focuses on elucidating those factors that explain the preference to stay.

But before reviewing the factors found in the migration literature that might explain the preference to stay, the theoretical framing of immobility should be addressed. Building on Jørgen Carling's (2002) aspirations-ability framework, which suggests the migration research should treat the aspiration and ability to migrate separately, there are four mobility categories that arise along the migration aspiration and ability nexus. Carling initially proposed three mobility categories: *mobility* (i.e. having both the aspiration and ability to migrate), *involuntary immobility* (i.e. having the aspiration but not the ability to migrate), and *voluntary immobility* (i.e. those without the aspiration to migrate). I propose a fourth category: *acquiescent immobility,* to describe those who are both unable to migrate but neither do they desire to do so (see Figure 1). "Acquiescent" implies an acceptance of constraints; the Latin origin of the word means "to remain at rest."

Figure 1. A reconceptualisation of Carling's mobility categories



Voluntary non-migrants are often described as those with resources to migrate but without the desire to do so. One could question, for those who are unable to migrate due to capability constraints, whether their immobility is *voluntary* in the same way as those with the resources to migrate. What often happens is that those without the capability to migrate – generally poorer people from poorer countries—are implicitly categorised as involuntarily immobile. Introducing this fourth category is important to counteract the generalised assumptions about mobility aspirations among poor people in developing countries.

The more theoretically rich term 'capability' is used in Figure 1 instead of Carling's original term 'ability'. De Haas (2003) introduced Sen's (1999) concept of 'human capability' to the migration literature to highlight the role of economic, social, political or human resources or abilities that are necessary for migration to occur. It should be noted that both capabilities and aspirations in this context are not simply something one has or does not have; they are best understood as existing along a

spectrum. Because one's resources and desires change over time, one's place along these two spectrums is not static, but ever-shifting.

Furthermore, mobility and immobility are not strictly distinct at an ontological level. Especially at the level of the household, an individual's migration may be part of the livelihood strategies of those "left-behind" (Stark 1991). De Haas (2003), for example, found that in Morocco, migration has largely been a livelihood strategy of what Heinemeijer et al (1977) called '*partir pour rester'*[1] (de Haas 2003: 99); the migration and remittances of some enable others to stay at home and continue agricultural lifestyles—what they perceive as the 'good life.' Diatta and Mbow describe a similar dynamic in Senegal: "The fruits of migrants' labour enable other villagers to remain at home and consequently not feel constrained to join the exodus" (1999: 246). At the same time, "the mobility of some is made possible by the sedentariness of others" (Agier 1983: 159). As Gaibazzi found when exploring immobility among the Soninke people, "migrants too need people who stay behind and look after their children and their parents, or simply to preside over those social and cultural institutions that make their investments meaningful" (Gaibazzi 2010: 18). Mobility and immobility, then, in many instances, are two sides of the same coin, mutually constitutive and reinforcing.

That being said, not all forms of immobility are part of a household livelihood strategy that involves migration. Drawing on the aspirations-ability framework, there are two potential reasons for immobility in this context: individuals lack the capability to move; and/or staying is a voluntary (or acquiescent) preference. As mentioned above, the first reason is widely appreciated and has received due attention; this paper explores the reasons for the latter.

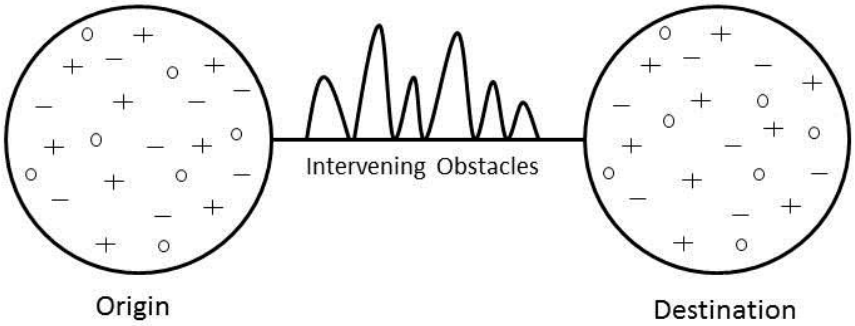
2.1 Literature on factors that explain the preference to stay

The migration literature presents three categories of reasons for the preference to stay: factors that 'retain', factors that 'repel', and what may be called 'internal constraints' on decision-making. Retaining factors are those attractive conditions at home that influence the preference to stay, while repelling factors are those conditions abroad that deter people from aspiring to migrate. Both retaining and repelling factors may be economic or non-economic, and they are often intertwined. The third category refers to more nuanced influences on decision-making at the level of individual psychology, which generally explain the preference to stay as resulting from a *lack* of something – knowledge, information, or even an 'aspirational disposition' (Czaika & Vothknecht 2014).

Though the following review uses the concepts of 'retain' and 'repel' as an analytical framework, I do not wish to espouse a revised push-pull migration theory. Classical push-pull perspectives often neglect migrants' agency, portraying them as passive pawns shifted around the globe by external forces (de Haas 2009). Nevertheless, the concepts of 'push' and 'pull' – often attributed to Lee's (1966) *Theory of Migration* – remain an intuitively resonant part of the migration discourse. Assuming the agency of any migrant or non-migrant, the concepts of 'push' and 'pull' are best appreciated and applied as they clarify those factors that contribute to migration decision-making processes. Often neglected, however, though they were present in Lee's (1966) original theory (see Figure 2), are the countervailing 'retaining' and 'repelling' factors that also play a role in decision-making of migrants and non-migrants alike.

[1] "to leave in order to stay"

Figure 2. Based on Lee's (1966: 50) chart, portraying attractive and repelling factors (+ and –) in both origin and destination regions.



2.1.1 Retaining Factors

The dominant macro- and micro-level migration theories are rooted in rational-choice theory, which frames decision-making in terms of an individual economic cost/benefit analysis. Though social scientists are well aware of the limitations of simple neoclassical explanations, this approach nevertheless continues to dominate migration discourse, policy, and research in the US and EU (Massey et al 2002; van Houtem & van der Velde 2003). This approach says that if benefits outweigh the costs of migration, we can expect migration to occur; likewise, if costs outweigh benefits, we can expect people to stay. When costs and benefits are framed in strictly economic terms (eg income-maximisation), this framework often fails to explain real-world migration trends. Migrants neither universally migrate to areas where the highest income can be obtained, nor, more interestingly, do many migrate when it would be economically beneficial to do so (Hammar & Tamas 1997).

In response, some scholars have articulated the positive value of immobility to explain why staying makes economic sense. DaVanzo (1981) introduced notions of 'place utility,' or territorially restricted capital. Straubhaar (1988), Fischer (1999) and Fischer et al (1997) describe how 'location-specific advantages' tie people to places over time. They develop knowledge, skills, and relationships specific to a particular place or firm, thereby acquiring 'insider advantages,' like opportunity, career, and leisure assets that would be lost by migrating. In general, the longer someone lives in a place, the more economically embedded they become, and indeed, life-cycle perspectives confirm that older people are less likely to aspire to migrate or carry out their mobility plans (Faist 1997; Kley 2010), however life cycle perspectives suggest this is just as much for reasons of social embeddedness as it is for economic reasons.

Another response to the inadequacy of rational-choice models and its ideal homo economicus has been to broaden the goal of income-maximisation to 'utility-maximisation'. However, the concept of utility, which can theoretically encompass any factor that contributes to one's overall well-being, is so broad that it becomes meaningless (De Haas 2014). 'Utility-maximisation,' then, is only a helpful concept when it is deconstructed to clarify the economic and non-economic factors that contribute to it.

The non-economic goals and values that also animate decision-making remain critically understudied. Though Sjaastad (1962), an early migration economist, explained that both "monetary" and "non-monetary" elements may be included in cost/benefit models, "in most applications, [non-monetary factors] are not regarded as key factors" (Haug 2008: 587). This is partly a result of a mobility bias in migration research. While non-economic aspirations motivate migration as well,[2] it is easier to

[2] For example, the desire for an urban life style or prestige, the thirst for adventure, curiosity and freedom (May and Skeldon 1977; de Haas 2009) can all motivate migration – from both developing and developed countries – but remain understudied.

overlook them because they are often coupled with economic motivations. But looking at those who stay, especially when immobility is not economically rational, forces one to appreciate underlying non-economic influences. Understanding the motivations behind the preference to stay, then, provides insight into the broader aspirations at play in migration-decision making. As De Jong and Fawcett note, "A motivational basis for not moving is fundamental to generalisations about the characteristics of those who move and those who stay" (1981: 30).

Three non-economic factors emerge from the literature that help explain the preference to stay: (1) a feeling of attachment to one's homeland and/or commitment to its development; (2) religious or spiritual values; and (3) the presence of family and community at home.

While there is little empirical study of the role of commitment to one's home country as a reason for staying, Albert Hirschman's seminal work, Exit, Voice and Loyalty (1970), provides a widely used theoretical foundation for explaining migration and non-migration. Migration as 'exit,' or leaving behind a dissatisfying environment, has been given the most attention in migration studies. 'Voice' generally refers to an alternative option to 'exit': people stay in their country, voice their discontent and work for change there. The third, more neglected concept is 'loyalty,' which in the migration context may refer to those who stay because they are either silently submissive or wholeheartedly accepting of their imperfect reality.

A second underappreciated influence on migration decision-making is the role of religion. The vast majority of the world's people believe in God, and religious beliefs significantly influence their everyday life and decision-making. An emerging body of literature explores the role religion plays in how potential migrants decide to go or stay (Hagan 2008; Portes and Rumbaut 2006; Levitt 2003). Hagan and Ebaugh's (2003) research in Guatemala provides one illuminating example: Pentecostal pastors act as critical counselors to those considering migration, advising migrants to postpone or cancel their trips "if the emotional hardship for the family is perceived as being greater than the potential economic benefits of migration" (ibid. 1152). Personal prayer and guidance rooted in spiritual principles can have a strong and particular influence on the decision to stay.

Much more appreciated than the role of 'voice' or religion in migration decision-making is one's social ties to. Ritchey (1976) first presented the "affinity hypothesis," which states that the presence of friends and family is a valued aspect of life that constrains migration (389). Several studies confirm this idea: married people are less likely to move than singles (Fischer et al 1997); if a spouse is employed, there is an even greater reluctance to migrate (Mincer 1978); and generally speaking, marital status, the presence of children, and personal social ties, when incorporated into migration decision-making, increase the probability of staying (Fischer et al 1997; Lauby and Stark 1988; Briody 1987; Molho 1986).

In some ways, the "affinity hypothesis" clashes with theories like New Economics Labor Migration (Stark 1984; 1991) that portray migration as a risk-sharing or income-diversification strategy of families or households. Fischer et al argue that there is a difference in to what degree the "affinity hypothesis" holds depending on whether one considers migration from the 'North' or 'South':

> With respect to migration originating in the North, family and group considerations are often likely to be an obstacle to migration and therefore to reduce migration propensities. In the South, motives of risk spreading, lack of capital-market access and of information, etc. are more likely to be decisive for migration decisions. Therefore (depending on the social group concerned and contrary to the North) family and group considerations are likely to increase migration potential in the South (Fischer et al 1997: 73).

The idea that family ties constrain migration from the North and motivate migration from the South touches on a mobility transition hypothesis offered by Zelinsky, who posited that a distinctive feature of migration that emerges in "advanced societies" are "noneconomic motivations" (Zelinsky 1974: 144; 1971). Similar to a Maslowian hierarchy of needs, the idea is that non-economic factors become relatively more important in decisions to stay or go once basic economic needs have been fulfilled.

What both Zelinsky and Fischer et al convey is that economic motives dominate migration from poorer countries while non-economic motives dominate migration from wealthier countries, and this implicit differentiation continues to permeate the discourse on migrants today (Berriane et al 2013) By analyzing immobility in poorer countries, however, this seemingly simple duality is made more complicated. When the preference to stay is present despite economic reasons to go, one is forced to explore the non-economic values that are also part of migration decision-making and motivate the decision to stay.

2.1.2 Repelling factors

Just as push complements pull, repelling factors complement retaining ones. Repelling factors refer to the negative perceptions about migration that influence migration decision-making, and are often, though not always, communicated through migrant networks. The role of migrant networks on decision-making has been studied mainly insofar as it facilitates migration and influences destination-selection (Epstein and Gang 2006; Epstein 2008; Haug 2008). But within this literature, there is also evidence for negative feedback mechanisms. Migrants facing difficult work or living conditions in one destination may persuade aspiring migrants to choose another, or persuade friends and family at home not to migrate at all. The media is another potential source of negative perceptions about migration. The difficulties and dangers of migration are espoused through "sensitisation" or information campaigns by origin or destination countries to try to dissuade migration (Carling & Åkesson 2009; Riccio 2005).

Like retaining factors, repelling factors may also be categorised as economic and non-economic. Economic repelling factors include negative feedback about job opportunities elsewhere. If a labor market becomes saturated or a destination country's economy declines, migrant networks might discourage potential migrants from choosing that destination (Epstein 2008). There are also the significant financial costs of the migration journey—insurmountable for some—which could otherwise be invested in local opportunities.

Non-economic repelling factors highlighted in the literature include the stress of leaving home (Epstein and Gang 2006), the danger and risks of the migration journey (Sladkova 2007), and the general insecurity that arises from navigating a new country and culture where migrants may face racism or xenophobia from local populations. Garnder's research, rooted in the particular context of northern Bangladesh, suggests another potential repelling factor may be the perceived moral deprivation of Western countries:

> Although the wealth of Britain is admired, it is not, however, British society to which people aspire. Western culture is not seen as desirable, but as amoral and heathen. Many people believe the West to be plagued by sexual immorality, alcoholism, divorce and a lack of familial duty and authority (Gardner 1993: 9).

2.1.3 Internal constraints on decision-making

Alongside the 'retain' and 'repel' factors offered above as potential explanations for voluntary or acquiescent immobility is another set of explanations that may be described as 'internal constraints' on migration decision-making (Fawcett 1986: 10; Desbarats 1983). Just as external capability constraints

impede the *ability* to migrate, 'internal constraints' on migration decision-making impede the development of the *aspiration* to migrate. While I find these explanations potentially problematic and paternalistic, they are nevertheless important to highlight as they contribute to the framing of non-migrants in the migration literature. The following details various 'internal constraints' that arise from the migration literature, including the concept of 'a threshold of indifference,' an underdeveloped 'capacity to aspire' or 'achievement motivation', and risk-aversion.

Migration decision-making is made under conditions of imperfect information (Epstein 2002). Simon (1982) first introduced the concept of 'bounded rationality' to explain why people do not make economically rational decisions, arguing that knowledge and time constraints are an important limitation of any decision-making process. Van Houtem and van der Velde's (2003) build on this idea in their attempt to explain unexpected levels of immobility in the EU despite free mobility. They introduce the concept of a 'threshold of indifference,' arguing that most workers do not consider seeking work across the border because of an "attitude of nationally habitualised indifference" (100). For many people, their consciousness of livelihood possibilities stops at the border; the idea of going abroad simply does not meaningfully enter into the decision-making process.

The ability to think beyond the border is closely related to notions of 'achievement motivation' (Haberkorn 1981) or the 'capacity to aspire' (Appadurai 2004) in migration literature. The 'capacity to aspire' is described by Appadurai as a cultural capacity, which enables one to envision, plan, navigate and achieve a better future. Wealthier or more educated people tend to have it, he says, while poorer people tend to lack it. Appadurai (2004) argues the "capacity to aspire requires strengthening among poor communities" (13) and should be mobilised to enable groups of poor people to exercise 'voice.' Though the 'capacity to aspire' is conceptualised as a capacity that can be built, its earlier counter-part, 'achievement motivation' describes individual dispositions. More recently, Czaika and Vothknecht (2014), when investigating the relationship between aspirations and migration among Indonesian internal migrants, conclude that even when accounting for factors such as age, education, and socio-economic background, migrants have a unique predisposition for higher aspirations that distinguishes them from their non-migrant counterparts. From this perspective, one explanation for why people prefer not to migrate is that they lack 'achievement motivation' or have an underdeveloped 'capacity to aspire'.

Risk-aversion is another internal and dispositional trait found in the migration literature to explain the preference to stay. Though difficult to measure, risk-aversion and its impact on migration behaviour have been noted by researchers from the field's beginnings, including Lee (1966) and Mabogunje (1970). Fischer et al (1997) suggest that most people are risk-averse and to some degree prefer what is well-known, which discourages migration behaviour. De Jong and Fawcett (1981) see such risk aversion as a problem to be overcome. They say "education is probably more important than wealth in improving the ability of migrants to take risk" (26).

The discourse on these 'internal constraints' as reasons for staying are not at the forefront of the migration literature; they often only make their way into migration discourse on an implicit level. While there are insights to be gained, the characterisation of non-migrants is potentially patronising. The first problem is that general life aspirations are often conflated with the specific aspiration to migrate. When this happens, those who do not develop or act on the aspiration to migrate are understood as lacking the general capacity to aspire – a fallacious conclusion. In fact, Appadurai (2004) described the 'capacity to aspire' and 'voice' as going hand-in-hand, suggesting that the preference to stay and exercise 'voice' signifies a strengthening in the 'capacity to aspire.' Second, and relatedly, the discourse on risk-aversion, achievement-motivation, and the 'capacity to aspire' is animated by an implicit capitalistic ideal. The *homo economicus* – in this case a particularly bold and mobile entrepreneur – remains the standard by which non-migrants, particularly those in poorer countries, are judged. This is

another reason why the non-economic motivations of non-migrants are particularly important to highlight.

Table 1. Summary of Literature Review on the Reasons Why People Prefer to Stay

Retaining	Economic	- Rational choice theory - "Location-specific advantages" accumulated over time
	Non-Economic	- 'Voice' - 'Loyalty' - Religion - Family and community ties
Repelling	Economic	- Job opportunities in potential destination - Financial costs of migration
	Non-Economic	- Stress of leaving home - Dangers of the journey - Xenophobia & Racism - Moral depravity
Internal Constraints on Decision Making		- 'Threshold of indifference' - Lacking 'achievement motivation' - An underdeveloped 'capacity to aspire' - Risk aversion

The above review, summarised in Table 1, helps frame the following empirical analyses. The mobility categories focused on include voluntary and acquiescent immobility, or those people who prefer to stay, regardless of their capability constraints. Using EUMAGINE's survey data, I begin by identifying and describing the characteristics of those young adults who do not aspire to migrate from Senegal. I then use qualitative analysis to explore their motivations, and the degree to which the factors highlighted in the above review are relevant or applicable to explain the preference to stay in the Senegalese context.

3 Senegal and EUMAGINE

Senegal, located on the Western coast of Africa, gained its independence in 1960 and is today considered one of the most stable countries in the region. Despite relative peace, poverty rates are high (47.6 percent) and economic growth is slow, averaging just 3.3 percent since 2006 (World Bank 2014a). In a largely agrarian economy, regularly recurring droughts since 1968 coupled with a withdrawal of government support to the farming sector has led to what has been deemed a "rural exodus" (Riccio 2005: 101; Diop 2002). Senegal seems to have relatively high rates of internal and international migration, though statistics vary widely. The World Bank's Global Bilateral Migration Database estimates 336,000 international migrants were living outside of Senegal in 2000 (foreign born; 39.5% female), while Fall et al (2010) estimate some 2 million of the 12 million total population were living abroad in 2010.[3]

Migration is not new to the Senegalese, nor is it restricted to a particular social class. Various ethnic groups within Senegal – estimated to be around twenty today (Danielle 2007) – have always moved across West Africa, many pursuing trans-Saharan trading opportunities. Likewise, migration to Europe has deep roots. France established its first African trading posts in Senegal in 1624, long before it colonised the country. Senegalese began migrating to France as seamen after WWI (Diarra 1968), then as low-skilled workers actively recruited to meet labour shortages during post-War reconstruction,

[3] It is unclear whether the second and third generation were included in this approximation.

and as intellectuals seeking further education in Paris (Daff 1999 cf Fall et al 2010). Since 1974, however, increasing migration restrictions transformed these legal migration routes into increasingly clandestine ones, and in more recent years, migrants risk dangerous journeys across the desert or sea to reach European shores.

In many regions across Senegal, the prevalence of and attitudes towards migration suggest a 'culture of migration' has taken root. Mondain & Diagne (2013) argue that migration is "an almost obligatory rite of passage among young men, and a central part of the everyday lives of the populations" (512); the motivation to leave, they argue, is less about fleeing misery and poverty and now more about achieving social prestige. Riccio (2005) describes international migrants as "symbolic push factors" (102) in Senegal. They display their wealth through remittances or return and thereby influence others' imaginations about migration and success abroad. But the desire to migrate is not only materially driven. Migration is described as *l'aventure* (an adventure) and complements certain aspects of the Senegalese identity. For example, Leopold Sedar Senghor, a poet and first president of Senegal, encouraged the Senegalese spirit of *teranga*, an openness to the world through dialogue with others, through both emigration and the acceptance of immigrants into Senegalese society (Fall et al 2010).

Despite increasing migration restrictions, and even efforts on behalf of the EU to convince Senegalese people to remain at home – in the early 2000s, the EU launched a campaign across Senegal with the slogan "*pour s'en sortir n'est pas nécessaire sortir*"[4] (Riccio 2005: 110) – migration nevertheless continues and remains an aspiration of many young Senegalese. Boat migration from Senegal to the Canary Islands peaked in 2006, to the resounding slogan *Barca ou Barsaq* ('Barcelona or death') (Hernández-Carretero 2008), only to be met by increased sea patrols and enforced repatriation agreements (Ifekwunigwe 2013).

Nevertheless, a simple "culture of migration" narrative tells an incomplete story. Riccio's research suggests the narratives around migration are not uniformly positive, but rather ambivalent: "a mixture of envy and scorn" (2005: 112). Migrants are both revered for their wealth and criticised if they become too Western, losing touch with God and core Senegalese values like solidarity, hospitality and dignity.

Within this context of widespread migration aspirations, migration restrictions, and both positive and negative perceptions of migration, it is particularly interesting to focus on those who do not express migration aspirations. Who are these individuals and what are their motivations for staying?

4 Characteristics of those preferring to stay: Quantitative analysis

From 2011 to 2012, the EUMAGINE research project collected survey data and in-depth interviews on migration aspirations and perceptions about human rights and democracy at home and in Europe (encompassing measures as diverse as overall quality of life, women's rights, and education) among young adults in four regions of Senegal—three predominantly rural areas: Darou Mousty, Lambaye, and Orkadiére, and one urban setting: Golf Sud in Dakar. While responses from these four regions, further detailed in Appendix I and Fall et al (2010), are not generalizable for the country as a whole, the different contexts allowed for a diversity of perceptions and aspirations to be expressed (Hemmerechts et al 2013).

[4] This is a play on the meanings of "sortir/s'en sortir," roughly translating to: "To sort out one's life it is not necessary to leave."

The EUMAGINE project surveyed 500 participants in each of these 4 areas using a random walk procedure to identify households, with modified randomisation procedures for rural areas, totalling 2000 respondents in all (see Ersanilli 2012). A randomly selected member between the ages of 18 and 39 in each household was interviewed using the EUMAGINE questionnaire in French, Wolof or Pulaar.

The purpose of this first analysis is to explore the demographic characteristics of those who do not aspire to migrate (the voluntary or acquiescent non-migrants) in Senegal. The relationship between migration aspirations and basic characteristics like gender, age, marital and family status, education, and perceived economic conditions are outlined here. The hypotheses to be tested are as follows:

1. International migration statistics generally show an underrepresentation of **women** among Senegalese migrants; estimates range from 18.9 percent in 2002 (ANSD 2011) to 39.5 percent in 2000 (World Bank 2014b). I therefore hypothesise that women will be more likely to express the preference to stay than men.
2. Life cycle perspectives predict that as people **age**, their social and economic ties to a place become stronger and they are less likely to migrate (Faist 1997; Kley 2010); therefore, I predict that older people should be more likely to prefer to stay in Senegal than younger people.
3. While the impact of **education** on migration aspirations is mixed, the 'capacity to aspire' hypothesis discussed earlier predicts that education increases aspirations more generally, which some suggest will translate into the aspiration to migrate (De Jong and Fawcett 1981; de Haas 2009; Czaika & Vothknecht 2014). I predict those who are less educated will be more likely to prefer to stay.
4. Drawing on the "affinity hypothesis" and research regarding **family** ties (Ritchey 1976; Fischer et al 1997), I expect those with spouses and children to be more likely to express the preference to stay.
5. Finally, classical push-pull theory predicts that those with the better **economic conditions** are more likely to prefer to stay; while aware of the limitations of this perspective, this is the hypothesis that will be tested here.

4.1 Operationalisation

It is difficult to capture the aspiration to migrate through a survey. The EUMAGINE questionnaire approached this challenge in three ways. Respondents were first asked, "Ideally, if you had the opportunity, would you like to go abroad to live or work during the next five years, or would you prefer to stay in Senegal?" To discern whether respondents had any concrete plans to move, those who said 'yes' to the first question were asked about their preferred destination and whether they would try to migrate there in the next five years. Finally, respondents were also asked to consider a hypothetical scenario – "If someone were to give you the necessary papers to go to Europe, what would you do? Would you stay here or go to Europe?" – to try to understand migration aspirations in the absence of a significant capability constraint. For the general results considered here, those who answered that they would prefer to stay in Senegal to the first question are treated as having the preference to stay.

Regarding demographic variables, education was measured by the number of years of formal schooling. Traditional Koranic schooling was accounted for as a separate variable. Economic status was measured according to the participants' perceived household financial situation. While the survey included questions about participants' economic situation (eg the number of rooms in their household or their primary source of income), there is no clear-cut way to objectively capture participants' total wealth or resources. Therefore, participants were asked, "Which of these statements best describes your own present living conditions?" and chose from four responses: "I can buy only the things that I need"; "I cannot buy all the things that I need"; "I can buy everything that I want"; "I can buy most of the things that I want."

4.2 Results

Of the 2000 survey respondents, just over one-quarter expressed the preference to stay in Senegal. This number increases substantially to 58.8 percent if one also includes those who may have expressed the aspiration to migrate, but do not have any plans to do so in the next 5 years – in other words, those who *expect* to stay in Senegal for the coming future (see Table 1). This discrepancy between the *preference* to stay and then those who have no *intention* to migrate is important to highlight, as people's aspirations to migrate are often being used as general indicators of how many will attempt migration. However, this analysis reveals that aspirations and intentions to migrate (or stay) are not the same thing.

Table 1. Percentages of those with the Preference to Stay

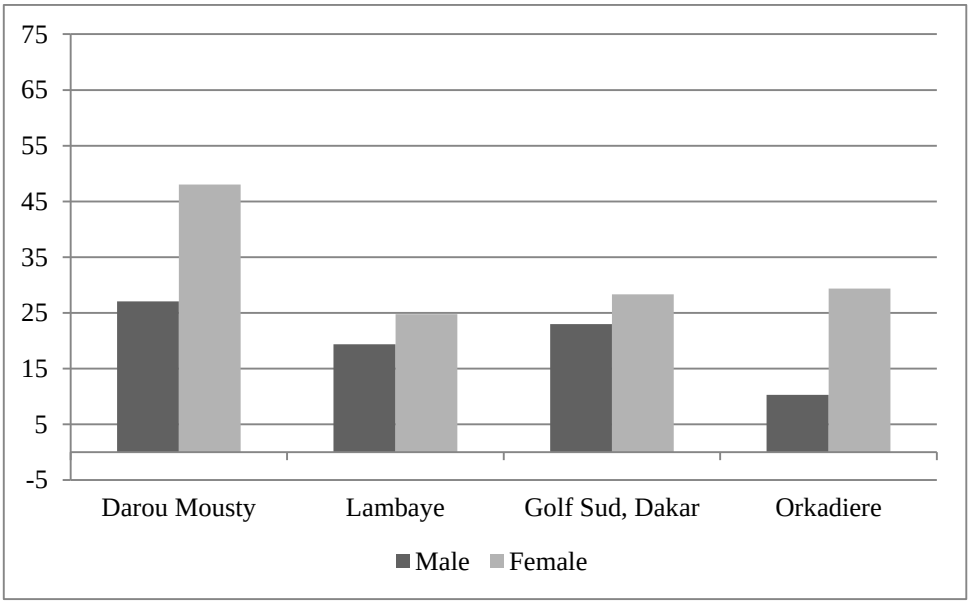
Region	General Preference to Stay	Desire to Stay Even if Given Papers	No Intention to Migrate in the Next Five Years*
Darou Mousty	39.8	33.1	64.4
Lambaye	23.4	23.7	61.6
Golf Sud, Dakar	26.2	14.2	54.8
Orkadiéré	21.2	15.1	54.2
Total	27.7	21.5	58.8
N	2000	1990	2000

*This includes those who expressed the preference to stay in Senegal plus those who have no plans to migrate in the next 5 years even if they expressed the aspiration to do so.

Cell format: percentages; Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04/2014, unweighted data

There are interesting regional differences, particularly higher rates of the preference to stay in Darou Mousty compared to the other three regions. These regional differences are further explored through an analysis of more specific demographic characteristics and their relationship with the preference to stay.

Graph 1. The preference to stay by gender and region (%)

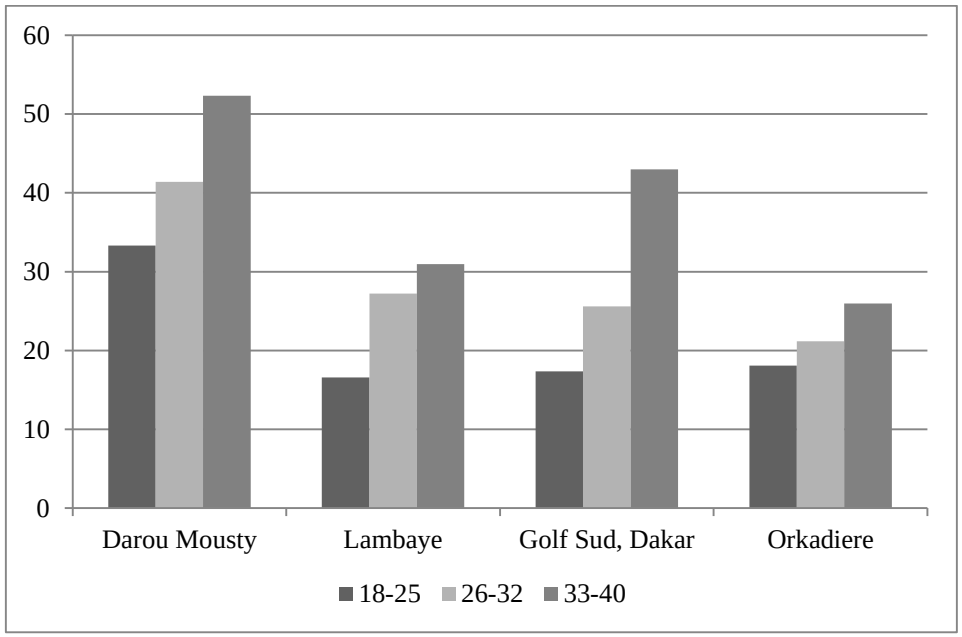


Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04.2014, unweighted data

Graph 1 shows that women in every region have higher rates of the preference to stay. The largest gender gaps are in Darou Mousty and Orkadiere, possibly due to more entrenched norms

regarding women's immobility there. Lambaye, however, also a rural area with strong religious traditions, does not show as stark gender gaps, suggesting these gaps are not simply explained by a distinction between rural-urban or traditional-modern settings.

Graph 2. The preference to stay by age and region (%)



Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04.2014, unweighted data

Graph 2 depicts the relationship between age and the preference to stay. Indeed, for each region, a clear pattern emerges, such that the preference to stay increases with age. This seems to confirm lifecycle perspectives that predict increasing preferences to stay as one ages. The preference to stay is also higher among married respondents and respondents with children as compared to unmarried respondents or those without any children residing in their household (Table 2), suggesting family ties are also related to increased preferences to stay.

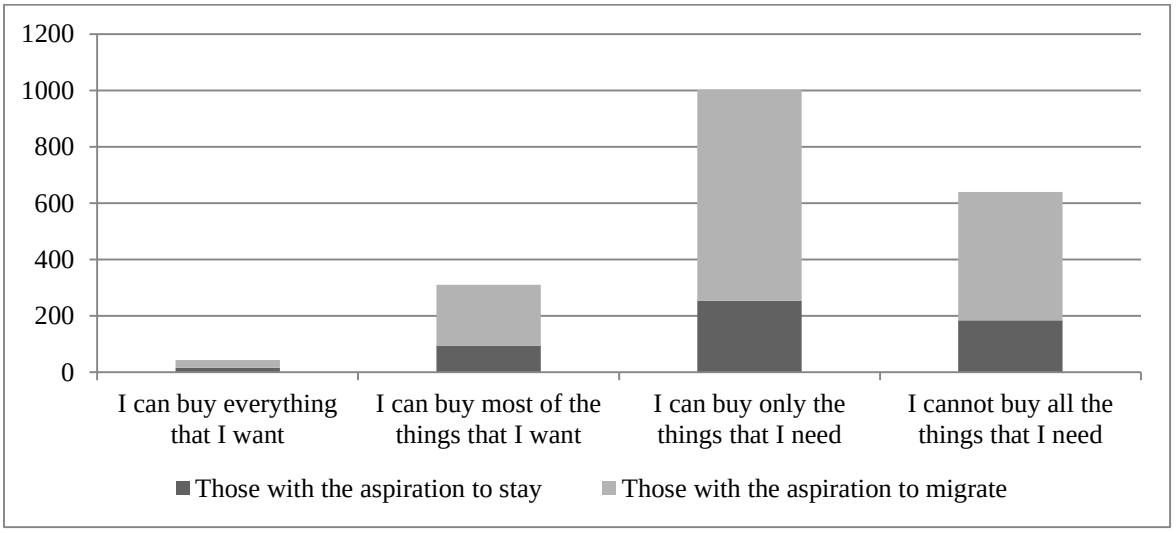
Table 2. Percentages of those with the Preference to Stay by Family Status

Region	Unmarried, No Children	Unmarried, with Children	Married, No Children	Married, with Children
Darou Mousty	21.4	66.7	40.0	48.7
Lambaye	14.3	14.3	22.2	30.1
Golf Sud, Dakar	19.2	45.5	25.7	37.1
Orkadiéré	11.4	9.1	17.4	29.5
Total	16.9	26.8	26.7	36.5
N	764	56	217	961

Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04/2014, unweighted data

The vast majority of respondents viewed their economic situation as having significant financial constraints. Half have no surplus income, while close to one-third are not able to meet their existing needs (see Graph 3). There is no clear relationship between the preference to stay and any one of these groups; the percentages of those who prefer to stay ranged from 25 to 36 percent. However, the very fact that almost one-third of those among the poorest category express the preference to stay lends tentative support for the concept of *acquiescent immobility*.

Graph 3. The Aspiration to Go or Stay by Economic Situation



Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04/2014, unweighted data

Regarding education, Table 3 details the percentages of those with the expressed preference to stay according to educational level. The majority of respondents in every region except for Golf Sud had no formal schooling (see Graph 4), which makes it difficult to identify any clear trends between the preference to stay and each successive level of education. However, the substantial percentage of those without formal education in rural areas who prefer to stay in Senegal lends tentative support to the concept of *acquiescent immobility*. Those without access to formal education likely overlap with those who lack the resources to migrate internationally, and yet many prefer to stay anyway.

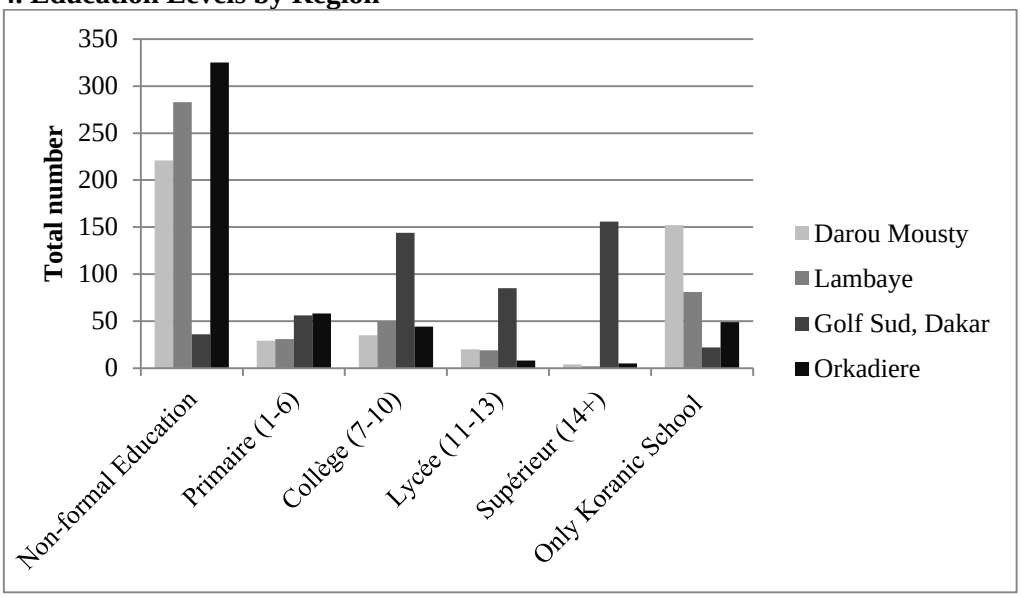
Table 3. Percentages of those with the Preference to Stay by Education Level

Region	None (0)	Primary (1-6)	Secondary (7-13)	Tertiary (14+)	Koranic Only
Darou Mousty	45.7% 221	27.6%	34.6%	25.0%	24.1%
N		29	55	4	152
Lambaye	26.9%	12.9%	8.7%	100.0%	21.4%
N	283	31	69	2	81
Golf Sud, Dakar	30.6%	14.3%	27.1%	27.6%	31.8%
N	36	56	229	156	22
Orkadiéré	25.2%	6.9%	17.3%	20.0%	12.4%
N	325	58	52	5	49
Total	31.2%	13.8%	23.7%	28.1%	15.5%
N	865	174	405	167	304

Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04/2014, unweighted data

While these analyses begin to paint a picture of the characteristics of those young adults who prefer to stay in Senegal, further multivariate analyses are required to uncover confounding variables and to tease out whether or to what degree these demographic and regional differences are significant. A logistic regression analysis was run, with results detailed in Table 5. The data is weighted to control for clustering and stratification in the survey design.

Graph 4. Education Levels by Region



Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04/2014, unweighted data

Table 5. Logistic Regression Model of the Preference to Stay; Odds Ratios Reported (Standard Error in Parentheses)

Explanatory Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Region				
Golf Sud, Dakar	Ref.	Ref	Ref	Ref
Darou Mousty	1.22 (0.45)	1.13 (0.53)	1.17 (0.43)	1.07 (0.48)
Lambaye	0.69 (0.31)	0.66 (0.34)	0.68 (0.30)	0.63 (0.32)
Orkadiéré	0.41* (0.18)	0.41 (0.20)	0.39* (0.16)	0.37 (0.18)
Urban	1.05 (0.22)	1.10 (0.25)	1.05 (0.22)	1.10 (0.25)
Individual Characteristics				
Sex (Female)	1.29 (0.21)	1.30 (0.22)	1.26 (0.20)	1.27 (0.21)
Age	1.02* (0.01)	1.02 (0.01)	1.03* (0.01)	1.02 (0.01)
Family				
Unmarried, No Children	Ref	Ref	Ref	Ref
Unmarried, Children	2.23* (0.87)	2.33* (0.91)	2.25* (0.85)	2.34* (0.89)
Married, No Children	1.67* (0.42)	1.70* (0.42)	1.69* (0.41)	1.70* (0.41)
Married, Children	2.66*** (0.49)	2.74*** (0.52)	2.66*** (0.47)	2.72*** (0.49)
Education				
None		Ref		Ref
Primary		0.39*** (0.09)		0.41*** (0.10)
Secondary		0.87 (0.25)		0.85 (0.24)
Tertiary		1.07 (0.42)		1.00 (0.37)
Koranic		1.08 (0.23)		1.07 (0.23)
Economic Situation				
Cannot buy what I need			Ref.	Ref
Can buy only what I need			0.77 (0.15)	0.80 (0.16)
Can buy most of what I want			1.03 (0.22)	1.03 (0.22)
Can buy everything I want			1.39 (0.58)	1.34 (0.55)
Constant	0.10*** (0.06)	0.11** (0.07)	0.12** (0.07)	0.14* (0.09)
F (design df = 77)	10.10***	10.37***	10.00***	10.72****
N	1906	1906	1906	1906

* p<.05, ** p<.01, *** p<.001; Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04/2014; weighted data.

The logistic regression analysis reveals that the two most significant predictors of the preference to stay include one's family status and educational attainment. Those who are married, and particularly those with children living in their households, are much more likely to prefer to stay than those who are unmarried and without children. Regarding education, an intriguing trend emerges. Those with primary education are significantly less likely to prefer to stay in Senegal as compared to those with no education. However, the influence of secondary and higher levels of education on the preference to stay remains unclear; those with higher levels of education do not show significant differences compared to those without any formal education, nor do those with traditional Koranic education. This suggests that those who are the least likely to prefer to stay in Senegal—or those who are significantly more likely to aspire to migrate—are those young people who have had only a few years of formal education at the primary level. This complicates the expectation that those with higher levels of education will have greater aspirations more generally and thus show greater aspirations to migrate. Rather, there appears to be a more nuanced relationship between education and the aspiration to go or stay that merits further investigation.

Contrary to hypotheses and expectations from the observations in Graphs 1 and 2, neither gender nor age is significantly related to the preference to stay. Though women in every region showed higher staying preferences, these gendered differences are not significant when controlling for the other factors included in the regression models. Similarly, though the preference to stay consistently increases with age in each region, these differences become insignificant when controlling for education. While this suggests that education is a more important influence on the aspiration to migrate or stay than the effect of age according to life-cycle perspectives, it should be remembered that only a portion of the "life-cycle" was surveyed here, namely the period between ages 18 and 39.

Regarding region, neither rural/urban settings nor the specific regions themselves show significant differences in the expressed preference to stay, with the exception of Orkadiéré where the aspiration to migrate is higher as compared to Golf Sud. However, this difference also becomes insignificant when controlling for education. Finally, the reported household financial situation is also not significantly related to the expressed preference to stay in either model, suggesting one's economic situation in itself is not the most important predictor of whether one aspires to migrate or to stay.

4.3 A one-phrase reason for staying

The above quantitative analyses reveal some characteristics of those who prefer to stay in Senegal, but offer very little about why they wish to do so. One unique question in the survey, however, offers a glimpse into their motivations. After answering the question, "If someone were to give you the necessary papers to go to Europe, what would you do? Would you stay here or go to Europe?", the EUMAGINE survey asked "Why?" Interviewers had a few lines to write down respondents' exact responses. While these short responses are very limited in their ability to capture the complex individual and social realities that give rise to the aspiration to go or stay, they are nevertheless the only question that directly addresses motivation in the survey. These answers offer initial insight into the reasons that people give to explain or rationalise their preference to stay. Answers are detailed in Table 6. Unique responses (eg "I am handicapped") were not included. The proposed categories should not be taken as rigid but rather suggestive of overall themes.

Table 6. Some reasons offered for why people prefer to stay in Senegal

Reason for Staying	Examples	Prevalence
Family reasons	*I want to stay with my family; To raise my children; To see to my parents*	214 (50.0%)
To Work in Senegal	*To work; To work in my country*	78 (18.4%)
Attachment to or Love of Senegal	*I love my country; I prefer to stay in my homeland; I want to stay in my country*	29 (6.8%)
They would give their papers to someone else	*To sell the papers and stay here; Give the papers to my son*	12 (2.8%)
Gender issues	*My husband would not agree*	11 (2.6%)
Perception of difficulties abroad	*Life is difficult in Europe*	10 (2.4%)
Lack of resources to go	*Problems with resources*	8 (1.9%)
To stay in Senegal to study	*To finish my studies*	7 (1.7%)
Not knowing Europe	*I do not know anything about Europe*	7 (1.7%)
Commitment to Senegal: 'Voice'	*To serve my country; My country needs young people to develop it*	5 (1.2%)
There is no need to migrate	*We can find here whatever there is there*	5 (1.2%)
Risk aversion	*"L'aventure" is risky.*	4 (1.0%)
Religious reasons	*To be close to my "marabout[5]"*	4 (1.0%)
No desire to travel	*I don't like to travel*	4 (1.0%)
Preference for another destination	*I prefer to go to South Africa*	4 (1.0%)
The peace in Senegal	*There is peace*	2 (0.5%)

Source: EUMAGINE dataset 04/2014; Examples are translated from French to English by the author

Confirming the regression findings, what immediately stands out is the high prevalence (50 percent) of family motivations – whether to be with a spouse, children, or parents – as the reason for staying. It is difficult to know to what degree family reasons overlap with other categories, like gender norms, for example. The response "I do not want to travel without my husband" may suggest the positive value placed on being with one's husband or it may suggest the perception that it is not permissible for a woman to migrate alone. As another respondent said, "I am a woman, I am not allowed to travel."

After family, the reasons given diversify significantly, and provide support for both economic and non-economic retaining and repelling factors. Economic reasons (eg "to work") are vague but substantial (18.4%), and may overlap with other categories like attachment to Senegal. "I want to work in my country", for example, has both economic and non-economic connotations. Attachment to or love for Senegal was the third most common category of responses. The other categories of responses were so few, that it would be more worthwhile to turn to the interview data to explore them further.

The following section analyzes the in-depth EUMAGINE interviews to add "social texture" (Lindley 2007: 3) to the quantitative analyses and one-phrase motivations covered above. While many questions emerge from the quantitative analysis, they cannot all be addressed through the qualitative interviews. The next section focuses on the categories proposed in the literature review as frames for analysis; it explores the main retaining and repelling factors present in the interviews, as well as the degree to which the literature's suggested 'internal constraints' on decision-making are applicable in the Senegalese case.

5 The motivations for staying: Qualitative analysis

Complementary to the quantitative survey, the EUMAGINE project collected eighty semi-structured interviews in Senegal. The purpose of the interviews was to obtain greater insight into 1) people's

[5] A religious leader or teacher of Islam

perceptions about life in their locality, 2) their imaginations about Europe, 3) their perceptions about migration, and 4) their personal migration aspirations. Between June 2011 and January 2012, research teams interviewed twenty informants (separate from those who completed the survey) in each region. The interview guide is included in Appendix II. Each interview was conducted in the local language or French and later transcribed into French. The quotations included here were translated into English by the author.

Of the eighty interviews, thirty-two informants did not aspire to migrate. The following analysis focuses on what insights these 32 interviews (11 from Darou Mousty, 1 from Lambaye, 6 from Golf Sud, and 14 from Orkadiéré) offer into the reasons why people prefer to stay in Senegal. The region, age, sex, education, employment status and migration experience of the informants who prefer to stay in Senegal are detailed in Appendix III. The characteristics of these informants are not reflective of those who expressed the preference to stay in the quantitative survey. Informants here tend to be older, more highly educated and are imbalanced in their representation across the four regions. For example, based on the survey responses, Orkadiéré has the lowest percentage of individuals who prefer to stay in Senegal, but it has the highest number of interviews with such individuals. A significant limitation of the data considered here is that the perspectives of those without formal education – a large percentage of the population in the rural areas – remain largely unheard.

5.1 'Retaining' & 'repelling' factors

The main retaining and repelling factors mentioned are non-economic. No one described economic motivations alone as a reason for staying. Rather, the reported desire to work and "succeed" in Senegal was often related to the non-economic gains that accompanied that decision, which included family ties, religious values, and the desire to contribute to the development of Senegal. These non-economic retaining factors were often inseparable from 'repelling' ones. Because the interviews focused on understanding perceptions about Europe, Senegal, and the aspiration to migrate, Senegal and Europe were often directly or indirectly compared; Senegalese realities were often described *in relation to* how it might be in Europe. Therefore, though 'repelling' and 'retaining' factors are easily separable on an analytical level, they were often inseparably entangled throughout the interviews.

5.1.1 Family and community ties

The desire to stay with one's family—one's parents, spouse or children—emerged as a dominant motive for staying in Senegal. For one informant from Orkadiéré, the advantages that come from staying all revolve around family considerations:

> The best is to stay, because you have three advantages. The first is that you work in your village or nearby… to be next to [your] family. The second advantage is that at the end of each month you see to the needs and the problems of your family. That is good. And finally, you are close to your spouse. You can have many children… If you are abroad… even if you have a lot of money, you do not have peace of mind and you are deprived of many things like the love of your children and your loved ones. But if you stay in the country, you will not have such problems. For me, to stay at home is better. (34102)

If people leave, another informant noted, they cannot see to the education of their children: "There are advantages as there are disadvantages in migration. Concerning the financial benefits… it is considerable. But this is not enough, because an emigrant cannot instill some of his values in his children. They cannot educate their children" (31117). The traditional values and religious environment of Senegal were mentioned as one of the benefits of raising one's children there. For example, "As the

father of the family, I see that being in a religious city (Darou Mousty) brings many advantages. It allows certain guidance to be transmitted to one's child." (31107)

5.1.2 Religion

The benefits associated with living in a religious environment were greatly valued by many with the preference to stay in Senegal. Europe was frequently associated with moral degradation, and negative perceptions about its influence on migrants' piety and virtue acted as deterrents to migration. One informant from Golf Sud describes:

> Some succeed [in Europe], others sell drugs and get caught… The people… lose all their virtue. They become uprooted... We are Muslims and the religion prohibits us from drinking alcohol [and] smoking marijuana, but there, if you do this, you put your faith into question. Truly, I have succeeded here in Senegal. (33111)

Informants used the word "uprooted" (*deraciné*) to describe migrants who lose touch with the spiritual aspects of life. As one man from Orkadiéré describes, *"People say that over there, people do not pray at work. You can stay a whole day without prayer. This is not good for a Muslim, even if you earn billions."* (34110)

More broadly, religion influences participants' world-views. It is clear from the interviews that for the majority of informants, faith is an inseparable part of how they make decisions and perceive realities past, present and future. Some even explain their preference to stay as a submission to God's will for their lives. One young man from Lambeye describes his hope for a future in Senegal, but his ultimate submission to the will of God, whatever that may be:

> That which pushes me to stay here, it is me who knows it… [But] I just say what I want… I also do not know what God will decide. He could also make it such that one day comes when I will leave. Because everything lies with God… Your life, it is "drawn upon your brow". (32118)

Finally, the "marabout," or religious leaders, were described as having an influence on migration, but none mentioned a religious leader actively encouraging people to stay. In Darou Mousty, anyone who wished to immigrate into the area had to ask the marabout's permission. In Orkadiéré, one participant describes how a local religious leader actively encouraged emigration: *"Like Cheikh Oumar said, 'emigrate and you will have the advantage"* (34115).

5.1.3 'Voice'

Informants—young and old, more or less educated, and in each region—expressed the desire to contribute to the development of Senegal as a motivation for staying. What it meant to '*contribute to'* or '*invest in*' the development of Senegal remained vague in many cases, but unlike the connotations of struggle or political protest associated with Hirschman's term 'voice,' the desire to stay seems rooted in the economic contribution one makes by staying in Senegal. While voicing their dissatisfaction with socioeconomic and political realities in Senegal, 'exit' was not the desired response. One 19 year old from Darou Mousty with a college education, a stepbrother abroad and currently unemployed, describes his preference to invest what he can into Senegal rather than in migration:

> R: If I had the cost of a ticket, I would invest it here because it is said that if you emigrate, it is because where you came from is not good.
>
> **I: Why do you say you want to stay here?**

R: I prefer to stay to work in my country for its development.

I: How do you understand [the fact that] that people leave the country to emigrate?

R: They think that it is better over there. But according to me, if everyone stays and works, the country will progress. (31108)

While migration was often described as a way to help one's family and country, a strong counter-narrative also emerged, suggesting migration may harm Senegal's development 1) if migrants place individual and family needs over collective ones, and 2) if everyone leaves.

Regarding the first, one informant from Darou Mousty describes: "I know that there are emigrants who have achieved for themselves individually, but not collectively. I do not think they have reached this stage" (31113). Some say migration has cultivated a sense of individualism that hurts the collective progress of the country. For example: "Attitudes have changed and the solidarity that was here no longer exists. Today, with the new generation, there is not longer this solidarity. It is every man for himself and God for all. We no longer eat together and share nothing." (34107) This phrase, "every man for himself and God for all,"[6] was repeated by many.

Regarding the second, though many were not opposed to the idea of migration in general, they were concerned about the idea that every young person desired to leave and in so doing, had given up on ('*quitter'*) Senegal. One unemployed 20-year-old woman with a college level education and a father living in Italy, described her belief that people should to stay in Darou Mousty: *Each person should stay at home and invest there. This can render Darou more sustainable. If everyone leaves, it is not good. We must stay and develop our country.* (31114)

This desire for change and advancement in Senegal seems to be related to a sense of hope that individual and collective progress is actually possible. One 22-year-old male tailor from Lambaye, with only a few years of Koranic education, expressed this hope: *How [do] I see it, [that I do] not want to leave? [*he laughs*]… Ah, what you just said, it's complicated… No, I just have hope, I have hope, as I truly have faith, that if I stay here, whatever I want over there, I can find here* (32118).

In addition to 'voice', others express a love of Senegal or 'loyalty' to the country that animates their desire to stay there. This loyalty is not necessarily blind, but as one return migrant from Golf Sud describes, results from a love for that intangible something that they associate with their land and culture: *"When you see how the people live over there, you realise the value of your country. You tell yourself that even if you country is not developed, at least there is a zest for life and for me, this is the basis of life"* (33120).

5.2 'Internal constraints' on decision-making

The 'internal constraints' on decision-making described in the literature review include the concept of an 'indifference' to livelihood possibilities elsewhere, an underdeveloped 'capacity to aspire', lack of 'achievement motivation' or an 'aspirational disposition', and risk-aversion.

The 'threshold of indifference' argument—or the idea that people do not migrate because they do not meaningfully consider economic opportunities beyond their border—is not applicable in the case of Senegal, where a number of informants described the characteristics of a 'culture of migration.' International migration appears to be a widely recognised and normalised livelihood strategy, regardless

[6] "chacun pour soi et Dieu pour tous"

of whether one lives in a rural or urban community. As one informant from Dakar describes: "*The people here only have one aspiration, which is to go to France… People here believe that the only chance for them to succeed in life is to leave the country. It has become an obsession"* (33120). Another from Orkadiéré described:

> Young people do not have jobs… They leave school very early and at a certain age they prefer to leave for 'l'aventure' (migration)… There is only the work in the fields and that sector not longer gives anything… This is why the young people, if they reach the age of 17 or 18 years, think only about going to migrate. (34107)

Given the widespread aspiration to migrate—supported by the survey findings—the idea that people who wish to stay are 'indifferent' to migration as a livelihood possibility is not a convincing explanation for the Senegalese case.

People are also aware of the conditions of migrants abroad, including the negative aspects of life in Europe, particularly for undocumented migrants. One participant described: *"Illegal immigrants live in inhumane conditions. They are sick, weak, homeless and persecuted everywhere. So I think that it is not worth it"* (31113). The narrative that Europe is difficult was present in both those with and without friends or family abroad. Some described the unattractive work conditions there; others cited racism and the cold weather, among other reasons, for not wanting to go to Europe, with much more negative attitudes towards undocumented than documented migration.

These negative or 'repelling' narratives reach beyond those with immediate migrant networks. One youth from Orkadiéré, without family contacts abroad, explains:

> The immigrants come back [and] they only speak about horrible things over there. I don't know if it is only to discourage those who are here or what. What I understand from their mouths is that life is difficult, they are limited – they only recount horrible things. We do not have immigrants in our family to know exactly what it is [laughs]… I only understand that life in Europe is not easy. (34101)

Others cited the media as a source of these 'repelling' narratives:

> R: Some succeed there, others sell drugs and get caught and this is shown on television.
>
> **I: What is shown on television?**
>
> R: The people who lose all their virtue. They become uprooted. (33111)

Informants also cited the dangers of the migration journey itself, particularly when embarking without papers. As one informant from Lambaye describes:

> **I: How do you find the situation with the pirogues?** [7]
>
> R: No, the pirogue situation, I am not against it… if someone has decided to leave in the canoes, if you have the courage to do it, you have peace of mind, you can overcome it and go! But me, I will not leave in those. Even if someone paid me to do it, I would not.

[7] A pirogue is a small boat that is used by undocumented migrants to make the trip from Senegal's coast to international destinations, like the Canary Islands.

I: Ah really?

R: I do not even think about it.

I: Because…

R: It is not safe! It is not safe! [More quietly] It is not safe. (32118)

Whether or not these individuals are more "risk-averse" than others, as some literature suggests, they do seem to be aware of the hardships entailed in the migration journey, and these 'repelling' narratives appear to support the preference to stay in Senegal.

5.2.1 The capacity to aspire

Finally, the claim that those who do not aspire to migrate are those who lack 'achievement motivation,' an 'aspirational disposition,' or the 'capacity to aspire' is contradicted by the relatively well-educated individuals who prefer to stay in Senegal and show significant ambition for individual success and collective development there. A university student from Dakar is one example: *"In university like in other things, there are the people who only want to succeed abroad. My philosophy is that I am Senegalese. I want to succeed in Senegal, [and] help my parents here. This is what my uncle did. He studied and succeeded here, and I want to follow in his footsteps"* (33111). While this informant cites the motivation to help his parents, others hope to use their education to contribute to the collective progress of Senegal. Those who express this 'voice,' discussed previously, are in many ways manifesting the capacity to aspire; as Appadurai (2004) said, 'voice' and the 'capacity to aspire' go hand-in-hand.

The fact the informants expressed these high aspirations may be related to their educational backgrounds; almost all of the informants had some degree of formal education, most secondary school or higher. There was no information on their socioeconomic background. Therefore, it was not possible to support or contradict the hypothesised link between poverty, lack of education, and an underdeveloped 'capacity to aspire,' using the limited qualitative interviews here.

An interesting perspective that did emerge, though, was that it might be those who aspire to migrate, in fact, who lack the 'capacity to aspire.' One 25-year-old from Golf Sud laments what he describes as an "*obsession*" with migration as *"the only chance for [people] to succeed in their life."* Though not against migration – he is a return migrant himself – he bemoans the degree to which people have given up on Senegal:

> I have learned one thing, [that] if you do not take responsibility for your life, no one will take it for you… It is a question of mentality… 'The country, the State does nothing for me. The State does nothing for me. It's unlucky.' This is the refrain, which comes back every time. 'The State does nothing for us. The State does nothing for us.'… The Senegalese State does not do enough. The Senegalese people do not do enough. This is why it never moves forward. The Senegalese people should make an effort and the State should make an effort for there to be common ground… For me, the important thing in life is to believe in something, and to believe in your country, in its success. (33120)

This informant's perspective suggests that "exit" can be an easier option than *"taking responsibility for your life"* and striving for change at home.

5.2.2 An additional element: Gender

Another factor that arose, particularly among informants from Darou Mousty and Orkadiéré, are gendered norms that stress the expected immobility of women. One male informant from Orkadiére describes:

> **I: And regarding the emigration of women, what do you think?**
>
> R: Me, I find that it is not normal. A woman should be married and stay at home. But today we speak of equality between the sexes, but the woman cannot be equal to the man. (34108)

Similar comments were common, espoused by men and women alike. One woman from Darou Mousty described, "Women do not have many rights. The father of the family leads, [and] the woman does not have a voice." The interviewer asked, "And this does not pose a problem?" She responded, "Not in my opinion." (31102).

However, there were also individuals in both regions who do not share these views, and in fact believed that women had made great progress in terms of rights. This was particularly noted regarding their more recent ability to work; as one woman from Orkadiéré described: *"Before we said that only men were capable to work. With the changes, women work like men. Everything that men do, women can do. Everywhere a man works, a woman can work"* (34105). This being said, she also noted that very few women emigrate.

In the migration literature, gender is often described as an external, cultural constraint on mobility, but gendered norms around immobility also to enter into individual preference formation and may also be conceived of as an 'internal constraint' on migration decision-making. These gendered norms and expectations around immobility are not distinct from, but likely intertwined with other non-economic factors explored above, such as family ties or religious values as reasons for staying.

5.3 Summary of motivations to stay

While like push and pull, retain and repel are simple analytical distinctions, they were closely and complexly entangled throughout the interviews; perceptions about Senegal were often described in comparison to life abroad and vice versa. The manifold and overlapping 'retaining' and 'repelling' factors described in the interviews both validated and contested the reasons for staying from the literature review.

As the migration literature and initial survey findings predict, family ties and obligations were regularly cited as reasons for staying in Senegal. However, in addition to family ties were other features of life in Senegal that were valued over the economic gains that could be achieved through migration, such as a religious environment in which to raise one's children and maintain one's own virtue and piety. This love of Senegal was also complemented by a desire to achieve individual and collective progress there. While many saw migration as a means to contribute to Senegal's development, a notable number preferred to exercise 'voice' by staying and working in Senegal. These individuals challenge the notion that those who prefer to stay necessarily lack the 'capacity to aspire.' What the above findings highlight, rather, is that those who do not aspire to migrate value elements other than economic gain alone.

Regarding the 'internal constraints' described in the migration literature, the qualitative data clearly indicates that those who prefer to stay were well aware of migration as a livelihood option, its potential gains and drawbacks, and the better or worse destinations. Their awareness of difficulties of

life abroad, especially for undocumented migrants, dampened the aura of life in Europe and likely contributed to the expressed preference to stay.

One internal constraint that was not highlighted in the literature review is the gendered expectation that women should stay at home. As an external cultural constraint, these gendered norms would predict that men, or those with power, somehow enforce the immobility of women. However, some qualitative interviews suggest that gendered expectations may also be conceived of as an 'internal constraint,' for example when one finds that some women in Orkadiéré and Darou Mousty hold the view that women are unequal with men and their place is only in the home. For some women, then, the possibility of migrating may not enter into decision-making as a viable or condonable livelihood strategy.

The notion of gendered norms and expectations as 'internal constraints' is not new to the broader gender studies literature, where it is well established that, as Mahler and Pessar describe, "People are socialized to view gendered distinctions—as for example in the definition of male and female tasks—as natural, inevitable, and immutable" (2001: 442, citing Ferree et al. 1999; Glenn 1999; Kandiyoti 1988; Lorber 1994; Scott 1988). Indeed, social norms, including those around gender, are crucial elements of any decision-making process (Ajzen 1988; De Jong 2000). However, few have explored the role of gender at the level of individual migration decision-making (De Jong 2000), and this remains an area for further exploration, particularly as it relates to the preference to stay.

That being said, the discourse on gendered 'internal constraints' can easily slip into a devaluing of non-economic motivations; in other words, a gendered preference to stay is not necessarily a result of oppressive external or internal constraints. Non-economic motivations—like the desire to stay with one's children—are also legitimate preferences in their own right. As Lutz (2010) argues, a gendered perspective on micro-level decision-making processes challenges the ideal *'homo economicus,'* and "promises to show a multiplicity of motives other than purely economic ones for pursuing or refraining from migration projects" (2010: 1659).

6 Conclusion

Many migration theories, in particular neoclassical and push-pull, implicitly assume that the aspiration to migrate is more or less linearly correlated with poverty levels; push factors are the greatest for the poor, and the potential income-gains that migration brings are substantial. Because of this, migration theories tend to overestimate population movement, especially from lower to higher-income countries (Hammar & Tamas 1997). They naturalise or take-for-granted economic preferences and motivations in migration decision-making, while non-economic motivations are more often described as a luxury of the relatively affluent, who migrate for "values, pleasures, self-improvement, social and physical habitat, and general life-style" (Zelinsky 1974: 144; Benson & O'Reilly 2009).

Any analysis of decision-making around migration needs to recognise first the agency of every potential migrant and secondly, the complexity of the social circumstances that may or may not give rise to the aspiration to migrate, regardless of socioeconomic status. Migration decision-making in any case involves the weighing of both economic and non-economic 'push' and 'pull' factors, and just as importantly, as this paper demonstrates, countervailing 'retain' and 'repel' factors.

An exploration of immobility, particularly the factors that contribute to the *preference* to stay, has much to contribute to the study of migration decision-making more generally. Exploring the preference to stay, especially when migration is economically advantageous, necessitates an examination of non-economic elements. Building on Carling's (2001; 2002) mobility categories, which include *migrants*, *involuntary non-migrants*, and *voluntary non-migrants*, this paper provides

theoretical and initial empirical support for the introduction of a fourth mobility category: *acquiescent immobility*, or the state of preferring to stay in one's homeland even though one does not have the capability to migrate. *Acquiescent non-migrants* lack the choice to stay in the same way that a voluntary non-migrant, with the resources to migrate, does and yet they, nevertheless, prefer to stay.

Some may argue an acquiescent non-migrant's preference to stay can be explained as a post-hoc rationalisation of their immobility. Indeed, psychological research shows that human beings need to create narratives to justify their behaviour and life-situations. In 1908, British psychoanalyst Ernest Jones, wrote: "Everyone feels that as a rational creature he must be able to give a connected, logical, and continuous account of himself, his conduct, and opinions, and all his mental processes are unconsciously manipulated and revised to that end" (166). While it has yet to be fully addressed as it relates to migration behaviour and preferences, rationalisation is likely an element at play in people's explanations for their immobility.

Nevertheless, rationalisation is not a sufficient explanation for the preference to stay, because everyone does it, migrants and non-migrants alike; the decision to go is rationalised by migrants just as the decision to stay is. Furthermore, rationalisation does not explain why we find *acquiescent non-migrants* and *involuntarily non-migrants* under similar capability constraints. Why does one person who is unable to migrate prefer to stay while another in similar circumstances aspires to migrate? This distinction between *acquiescent* and *involuntary* non-migrants is an area for further investigation and more nuanced research.

Similarly, the empirical distinction between *voluntary* and *acquiescent immobility* remains unclear. It is probably not possible to identify a "capability threshold" for migration when it can occur in a variety of ways: documented, undocumented, or forced. Nevertheless, an analytical distinction is important to highlight the fact that not all people who lack the resources or capability to migrate – generally the most deprived in low and middle income countries – desire to do so, even in places like Senegal where aspirations to migrate are widespread.

There remains a paucity of research on immobility in the migration literature, but it has much to contribute to migration theory, understanding, and discourse. This paper focused on the preference to stay as a way to widen the discourse on migration aspirations and decision-making to include non-economic factors, yet it is only an introduction into a subject that would benefit from more focused attention. One of the greatest limitations to the data used here was its narrow focus on *migration* aspirations. Research on migration aspirations needs to be expanded even further to include the broader life aspirations, hopes, and motivations that contribute to the particular aspiration to migrate or stay. Just as migration is best understood as embedded within broader processes of social, economic, political, and cultural change, so too is the aspiration to go or to stay best understood when embedded within the broader life aspirations of individuals.

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Appendix I. Further details on EUMAGINE regions

Darou Mousty is a largely agro-pastoral area with a young population of roughly 24,000 in the region of Louga; over 50 percent in the area are under 20 years old (Fall et al 2010). Its economy centers on cattle and sheep breeding and peanut and cowpea production. Darou Mousty is an important religious center close to the holy city of Touba. The majority of inhabitants are Sufi Muslims, and the local authorities are the "marabout" (religious leaders). The volume of international migration from the area is high; it is commonly said, "there is no family without (a) migrant in Darou Mousty" (Fall et al 2010: 36).

Picture 1. The four research areas in Senegal from the *EUMAGINE* research project: Golf Sud, Lambaye, Darou Mousty & Orkadiéré

Image from Google Maps

Lambaye is another rural area in the region of Diourbel with a population of approximately 30,000. Religion is also a strong presence in the region. Many children attend Koranic education instead of the more formal French educational system. Also under the shadow of religious centers like Touba, many leave Lambaye for religious cities or other urban centers. Lambaye's isolated location and environmental conditions have led many to believe that human development is almost impossible there (Fall et al 2010).

Orkadiéré, located in a river valley in the northeast of Senegal, is another largely rural area dependent upon subsistence-agriculture and cattle-breeding. The area has experienced significant drought and, due to its peripheral location, is largely neglected by national development plans. Approximately 1,000 of the total population of 32,500 live abroad. Many believe that Orkadiéré would not exist if it were not for migrants' remittances and development assistance (Fall et al 2010).

Finally, Golf Sud (Guédiawaye) offers a contrasting urban environment. It is a densely populated area, which houses students and city workers who travel daily into Dakar, the political, economic, and cultural capital of Senegal. Located between the suburbs and the city, Golf Sud is comprised of poor housing projects and luxury apartments alike (Fall et al 2010). Dakar is both a destination for internal and international migrants, as well as a transit stop for those on their way to Western countries.

EUMAGINE Interview Guide for Semi-Structured Interviews

Version 2011-09-21

EUMAGINE
Imagining Europe from the Outside

Main topic	Opening questions	Possible sub-topics
1. Perceptions of life in the locality We are interested in how informants perceive life in their own locality? What do they see as positive and negative aspects of living in the locality?	*Please tell me about how it is to live in [locality].*	**1. The content** • *Good and bad aspects* • *Jobs, schools, health care, quality of life* • *Insecurity, corruption, crime* **2. The population** • *Differences between men and women* • *Differences between age groups/generations* **3. Changes over time**
2. Imaginations of Europe We are interested in how informants imagine Europe, whether they have very vague or highly specific ideas, what do informants see as positive and negative aspects of life in Europe.	*What do you think of if you hear the word Europe?*	**1. The content** • *Good and bad aspects* • *Jobs, schools, health care, quality of life* • *Insecurity, corruption, crime* **2. The population** • *Differences between men and women* • *Differences between age groups/generations* **3. Comparison** • *Differences between countries within Europe* • *Life for immigrants in Europe vs. native Europeans* **4. Changes over time** **5. Desirability/difficulty of migration to Europe**
3. Personal migration aspirations We are interested in how informants perceive migration as a possibility for themselves? Apart from the general ideas about migration (topic 2), how do they see this possibility in their own lives?	*Ideally, if you had the opportunity, would you like to go abroad to live or work some time during the next five years, or would you prefer staying in [this country]?*	**1. The content** • *Reasons for wanting to go/stay* • *Desired destinations* • *Attitudes to different types/conditions of migration* **2. Social influence** • *Being encouraged by others to go/stay* • *Encouraging others to go/stay* **3. Changes over time**
4. Perceptions of migration We are interested in how informants perceive migration as a possibility for people in their locality. In which circumstances is migration seen as valuable, desirable, illusory, worthless, etc.?	*Some people say that going abroad is a good way of obtaining a better life. Others disagree. What is your opinion?*	**1. The content** • *Reasons for going/staying* **2. The population/social influence** • *Differences between men and women* • *Differences in opinions about migration* • *People encouraging/discouraging each other to go* **3. Changes over time** **+ Insights from survey results for the RA**

KEY GUIDELINES

Encourage informant to talk at length and provide their own perspectives.

Follow up with additional questions or probes.

Introduce new topics by referring to what the informant has already said.

Show that you are interested! Make informants feel that what they say is interesting and important.

Avoid questions that can be answered with yes/no.

Avoid letting informants feel that they don't know enough.

GENERAL PROBES

- *Could you tell me more about that?*
- *What did you mean by […]*
- *Would you mind repeating?*
- *You mentioned […], please tell me more.*
- *Can you give any examples?*
- *Why do you think that is so?*
- *So, what you are saying is that […]?*

Appendix II. EUMAGINE interview guide

Appendix III. Information on informants from EUMAGINE's interviews

Region	Identification	Sex	Age	Education	Employed?	Migration Experience
Darou Mousty	31101	F	35	Primary School	Yes	None
	31102	F	32	Baccalaureateccalaureat + EFI training	Yes	None
	31103	M	38	Secondary School	Yes	Family or friends
	31105	F	27	SECONDARY SCHOOL + IT training	No	Family or friends
	31107	M	35	BACCALAUREATE + 2	Yes	Family or friends
	31108	M	19	College	No	Family or friends
	31110	F	19	College	Student	Family or friends
	31113	M	19	College	No	Family or friends
	31114	F	20	College	No	Family or friends
	31117	M	34	BACCALAUREATE + 2	Yes	Family or friends
	31119	M	39	CEPE	No	Family or friends
Lambaye	32118	M	22	Koranic School (a little)	Yes	Family or friends
Golf Sud, Dakar	33103	M	26	PC1 / UCAD de Dakar	No	Friends
	33108	F	33	Not listed	Yes	Personal
	33111	M	20	BACCALAUREATE	No	Family or friends
	33114	M	28	BACCALAUREATE + 5	Yes	Friends
	33119	F	24	BACCALAUREATE + 2	No	None
	33120	M	25	MASTERS	No	Personal
Oukadiéré	34101	F	22	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	None
	34102	F	37	SECONDARY SCHOOL	No	Family or friends
	34103	M	38	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	Personal
	34105	F	29	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	Family or friends
	34106	M	30	BACCALAUREATE +2	Yes	Family or friends
	34107	M	39	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	Personal
	34108	M	39	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	Personal
	34110	M	39	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	Personal
	34112	F	37	SECONDARY SCHOOL	No	Family or friends
	34113	F	32	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	Family or friends
	34115	M	39	SECONDARY SCHOOL	No	Personal
	34118	M	30	SECONDARY SCHOOL	No	Personal
	34119	M	39	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	Family or friends
	34120	M	38	SECONDARY SCHOOL	Yes	Family or friends