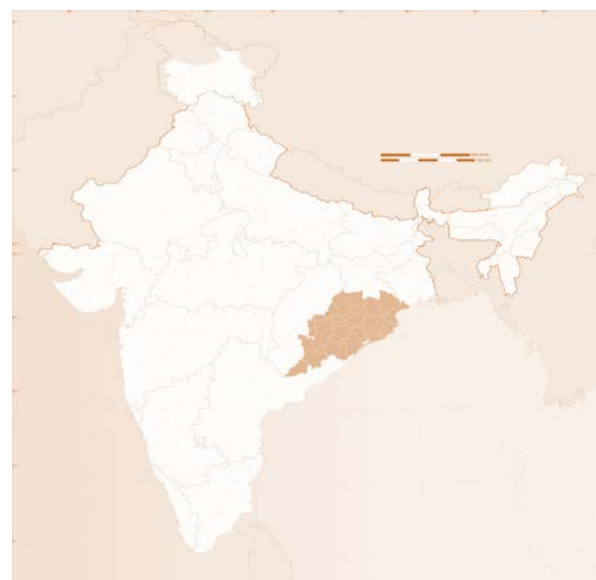


Gender and adaptation in the Mahanadi delta: the implications of migration for women's adaptive capacity



D E C C M A



Giorgia Prati (giorgia.prati@soton.ac.uk)

Geography and Environment, University of Southampton

Supervisors: Emma Tompkins, Julie Vullnetari, Craig Hutton, Katharine Vincent, Natalie Suckall

UNIVERSITY OF
Southampton

Introduction

The growing interest in the climate change-migration nexus has largely focused on understanding how migration patterns may change as a response to climate variability. However, there is a large agreement about the inadequacy of considering environmental change as a single push-factor for human mobility because of the complexity of migration decision-making. More recently the discussions are moving toward the role of migration for resilience and adaptation, especially through remittances. The feedback process of migration on individuals' capacity to cope with climate stresses in the sending areas is rarely explored and even little is known about its interconnections with gender. However, social roles, identities, relations and power are continuously renegotiated through migration with consequences on some of the socio-cultural and economic barriers to adaptation. Yet, migration and adaptation are not gender-neutral processes.

Aim

To investigate the impact of migration on women's vulnerability and adaptive capacity in the home villages

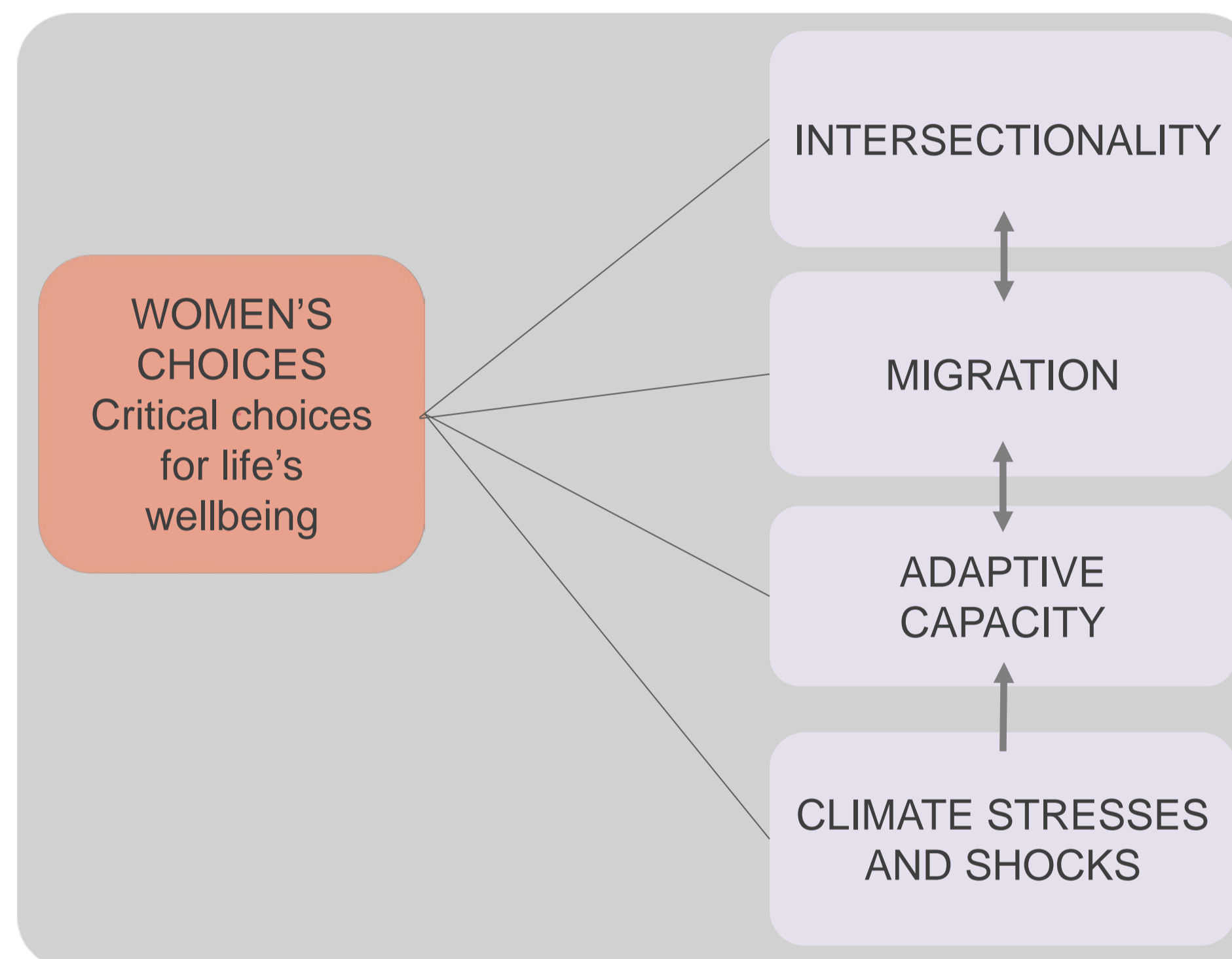


Fig. 2 Conceptualising the relations among the variables for the analysis

Approach

In contrast to traditional approaches that have focused on the binary analysis of men vs. women, this study contextualises vulnerability in the broader spectrum of social identities and hidden forms of oppression in which it is embedded. Therefore, inequalities are explored as arising from the dynamic intersection of **gender, class and caste**.

Mapping out the determinants of **adaptive capacity** (bottom-up)

Understanding the impact of migration on **intersectionality**

Identifying the links between **migration and adaptive capacity**

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS



One-month pilot fieldwork was conducted in Kaitha, Kathuaganda and Pentha villages, in the Kendrapara district of Odisha.

- 32 focus groups using PRA tools
- 10 in-depth interviews with women from different castes
- 10 semi-structured interviews with key informants

Migration is largely characterized by being **internal, ex-post, unskilled, rural to urban and seasonal or circular**.

Destination areas: Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai, Kolkata, Bangalore and Chennai. Only two cases of international migration to the Middle East.

Only men migrate while women remain behind to take care of the family. **Overburden, distress, insecurity and fear of harassment** are common traits of the left behind women.

Migration often becomes the only source of income leading to **risk concentration**. The (joint) household **depend on remittances** for food, health, education and other living expenses. This makes accumulation very unlikely.

Remittances are sent to the head of the household who usually becomes the migrant's mother, father or oldest brother.

When husbands migrate the household often shifts **from a patriarchal to a matriarchal unit** where the mother in law receives the remittances and decides upon the expenditures. **Women's mobility is restricted**.

Some scheduled castes' women showed high levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. **Marital status seems to be a stronger marker of vulnerability than caste**.

KEY IMPLICATIONS

If we are to understand the differentiated impact of migration on the adaptive capacity of those who are left behind, then we need to investigate how migration interacts with intersectional inequalities.



Fig. 1 Women's focus group, Kathuaganda village, Kendrapara