

Gendered Mobile Practices

Examples from Finnmark, Norway



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Outline of the paper

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1. Main questions

Empirical question:

1. How do women and men practice mobility in fishery-related small coastal communities in Finnmark after the introduction of the fish quota system?

Analytical question:

2. How can gender be understood in an increasing liberal and market oriented fish quota context?

2a: The concept of mobile practices

Inspired by Ingrid Rudie (2008)

Mobile practices are

routinized actions of people's movements from one geographical place to another

Mobile practices can vary depending on different scenes, different rituals, alliances, financial transactions, role plays etc.

The mobile practices can be understood in the light of the persons that acts, the contexts and the perceptions of mobile practices.

2b: Gendered mobile practices

*Gendered mobile practices are routinized actions of women and men (or female and male persons) as they move from one place to another

*Gendered mobile practices appear in different situations and vary dependent on **the contexts** (scenes, different rituals, alliances, financial transactions, role plays etc).

and the practices carried out by the gendered actors

2c: Gender relations

- Focus on **relations between women and men, relations between women and relations between men**

in the light of their structural, political, cultural and economic **contexts**

) : **A situational and contextual approach on the experienced, spoken and observed gender relations** (Barth 1966/1981, Giddens 1977)

2d: Gender identity

a) **With whom do I identify myself as a woman or a man in relation to others in a specific social context**

b) ***Who do others consider that I am as a woman or a man***
(Keesing i Rudie, 1984)

): **Identity as something that is played out differently in various situations.**

Gender is something we do and negotiate about
(,Rudie 1984Butler 1990, Haavind1992)

Gender identities: femininities and masculinities

F.eks. Susan Stanford Fridman (1998):

): **Identity** is something that **resists fixity**

2e Gender contracts

(Forsberg 2001:161)

- Unwritten rules that regulate relations between sexes, and re-create and reform relations as everyday actions within the framework of these local structures.
- Together these various local contracts construct a regional structure.

3a The quota context

National+international level:

Privatization and liberalisation

- Privatisation of fish and other types of common resources: fishquotas (1990) that can be bought and sold (2004 and 2007)
- Liberalisation of fish markets=trade agreements (European Economic Area Agreement (EEA)1994
- International competition on the Whitefish market

3a The quota context, the fisheries and the local level:

Privatization and liberalisation

- *Problems when the quotas were launched because of small quotas
- *Little by little: New forms of fishboat ownership occur: from privately owned boats to share holding companies, with several quotas and boats
- Bankrupcies in the processing industry, centralisation of ownership

3a Finnmark coastal communities in a quota context: Centralisation

- "Fishery related competence work in centres/cities – reduction of the workforce
- Formalized fishery education and training in centres
- Low degree of recruitment to fisheries in the North
- Decline of population/households/associations in the smaller fishery and coastal communities

3b Long tradition for gendered mobile practices in fishery communities up to 1980/90s

- More young women than men outmigrated to work or education
- More young women than men immigrated to gender divided processing work (1950 – 1990), also from Finland and later on also from Sweden
- Fishers «move and commute» as a part of their fishing practices
- * Sami reindeer herders commuted from inland-Finnmark every summer

3c Meaning and identity in the post WW2

Common understanding of the meaning of
mobile practices = silent knowledge (doxa)
and taken for granted:

Young women's outmigration and men's
mobility on fish boats/ merchant marine
= important part of femininity and masculinity
in fishery communities

4a Mobile practices in a neo-liberal quota context after 1990:

Immigration and outmigration

Immigration:

Fewer people are moving into fishery communities with some exceptions:

- *male leaders of fish plant,
- *seasonal workers, men and women, from new foreign countries
- *professional women and men
- * Norwegians and foreigners: Balticum, Poland, Refugees, asylum seekers to the bigger places.

Outmigration: *Young women like before

Heavily increase in outmigration among:

- *Young men
- *Well established households
- households with school children
- households with seniors

4b Mobile practices in the quota context:

Commuting

Commuting from:

- *Boys and girls commute to high school and higher education
- *Adult women commute to high school, higher education and courses of various kinds
- *More women and men commute to work over distances that were considered as impossible few years ago because of lack of jobs and better maintained roads and climate
- * Women and men commute to shopping, health service to partners/wives, kins and friends
- * Women and men commute to leisure activities during weekends, to cabins and holiday in the Mediteranian area

Commuting to:

More Sami reindeer herders from inland-Finnmark buy houses
Kins keep their inherited houses
More tourists and new homeowners

) : The frequency of commuting have increased heavily

5a Migration and commuting lead to changing relations

- **From local to more external, non-local relations**
 - * A smaller population – fewer common arenas and active local relations
 - * Closer relations with kids and kins living elsewhere because of virtual communication, cheaper airtickets lead to more visits etc.
 - * New forms of organizing of local events where migrants and habitants meet (festivals in the summer etc.)
 - * Friends other places in Norway or abroad
 - * Commercialised leisure (with restaurants and friends)
 - * New non-local professional relation through work

5b Mobile practices are problematized

- *The fact that individuals and 'households' move away is **discussed** by members of families, school classes, communities and on municipal arenas
- *Women, men and children **problematize and are worried** about the future of their coastal community
-):Common and well established knowledge about the **consequences** of mobile practices are discussed **among male and female actors** (concerning education, work, leisure, shopping and love) = knowledgeable actors
- **from silent to discussed knowledge locally, = but the gender differences of mobile practices are seldom on the private nor the political agenda**

5c Gender, relations and influence

- Women adapt to a changing labour market, education and leisure opportunities for themselves and household members
 - Fishers adapt to the quota, technical and communication changes
 - In the households men adapt to women and their wishes about where to settle ,what to do, sometimes also how to invest in a new boat
- = on the household level women seem to have more influence on where to settle, holidays celebrations**
- = on the political level many small scale fishers (men) feel they have lost influence**

5d New ways of understanding gender

- The practices and formal and informal talks about the mobile practices give a **wider acceptance for and understanding of what women can do** (new rules/patters for behavior)
- **Women's outmigration is not taken for granted any longer,**
- **The high degree of women's and men's commuting are not yet on the local or political agenda**

5e Gender identity construction in a quota regime

(Seen from the researcher's viewpoint)

Femininity

- *Decisions about where to settle and
- *Commuting could be added to outmigration
as an element in fishery related women's identity
construction

Masculinity

- *Participation in household work
- *Outmigration could be added to communiting
as an element in fishery related men's identity
construction

Mobility and gender contracts

- **Women:** Unwritten and informal acceptance for women's strong influence on settlement, holidays plan and work/education related commuting
- **Men:** Unwritten and informal acceptance that men are away from home, but keep in contact with children and spouse and
- Participate in work at home when returning

6. Gendered mobile practices have consequences on the local communities

- Both women's and men's different mobile practices lead often to less public and locally based activities
- few or no shops, no post office, little or no health service on the spot
- Less activities lead to consequences for the local institutions, their form and content: fewer and smaller households, workplaces, schools and associations
- **): The relations between fishery and community are weaker than earlier**

Are we dealing with steps towards a different community?

- From fishing communities with common arenas and activities
- To a more individualized and seasonal **male dominated** fishery outport
- To a summer holiday place for kins and tourists
- To an investment place for foreign business men from Germany, Poland, (Russia)?