

Migrant Families: Performing Belonging and participation across private/ public boundaries working

Abstract

This paper explores how migrant mothering ‘kinwork’ challenges private/ public boundaries, giving rise to new conceptions and practices of citizenship. We highlight the potential of participatory theatre methods - specifically forum theatre – for understanding the relationship between mothering, ethnic belonging and citizenship. We also assess the significance of migrant women’s kinship practices within their families and communities for re-framing notions of citizenship (anonymised for review). Our analysis gives particular focus to two scenes developed as part of the participatory theatre project, which took place with a group of ethnically and racially diverse mothers in East London. The first scene entitled ‘Where is my food?’ draws attention to the mothers’ kinwork and reproductive labour operating at the boundaries of the public/ private dichotomy and also highlights gendered household dynamics. The second scene, entitled ‘At the Community Centre’ examines everyday encounters at the community centre, and how ‘cultural work’ as an aspect of the mothers’ kinwork informs inter-generational relations. The paper argues for a more embodied understanding of citizenship in order to broaden understanding of migrant mothers’ kinwork in making new citizens.

Introduction

This paper explores how migrant mothering ‘kinwork’ challenges private/ public boundaries, giving rise to new conceptions and practices of citizenship. We highlight the potential of participatory theatre methods - specifically forum theatre – for

understanding the relationship between mothering, ethnic belonging and citizenship. We also assess the significance of migrant women's kinship practices within their families and communities for re-framing notions of citizenship (anonymised for review). Our analysis particularly focuses on two scenes developed as part of the participatory theatre project, with a group of ethnically and racially diverse mothers in East London. The first scene entitled 'Where is my food?' draws attention to the mothers' kinwork operating at the boundaries of the public/ private dichotomy and also highlights gendered household dynamics. The second scene, entitled 'At the Community Centre' examines everyday encounters at the community centre, and how 'cultural work' as an aspect of the mothers' kinwork informs inter-generational relations. The paper argues for an embodied approach to understanding migrant mothers' kinwork in making new citizens to develop a nuanced understanding of migrant mothers' role in crossing public/ private boundaries with regards to families, communities, and their living and working conditions in Britain.

The Study

The project draws on findings from the AHRC funded study (anonymized). As part of the study we conducted eight workshop sessions comprised of two 'Playback' sessions, where migrant women who participated in our study shared their stories, and these stories were then acted out by professional actors. Following this we organised six sessions of 'forum theatre', where the migrant mothers acted out particular experiences of social problems or dilemmas they themselves experienced. We encouraged other participants to intervene in the scene, taking the role of the protagonist (the mother), in order to change the course of action and create a more desirable outcome. The workshops were led by a facilitator, (anonymized for review)

a trained dramatherapist and included for the Playback sessions, professional actors and musicians. A total of twenty migrant women living in Hackney, East London were recruited through the networks of a carers' group to attend these sessions. These mothers came from ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds, including Somali, Nigerian, Polish, Lithuanian, Turkish, Kurdish, Congolese women. A smaller group of ten mothers continued to develop a short theatre performance based on movement, dance and the scenes developed in the project, and this was presented at the end-of-project conference. The workshops were supplemented with individual in-depth interviews with the mothers exploring methodological issues as well as the substantive issues of their mothering experiences in London. Important topics raised in the research included: mother-child relationships; accessing health and welfare services; experiences of family and migration and policy changes the mothers would like to see. Working with the mothers to co-produce knowledge on these issues, we set out to challenge traditional discourses around migrant mothering which tend to represent them as marginalised, often unwilling or unable to integrate and engage with the society in which they live.

The director and activist Augusto Boal (1979) developed Forum Theatre, as part of the Theatre of the Oppressed. The framework and set of techniques is based on the principles of collective empowerment and emancipation. Boal termed the participating audience members *spect-actors*, for the process aims to overcome the boundary between passive spectators and actors and allow participants to practice elements of both roles (spectators and actors) simultaneously. Forum Theatre enables participants to become actively involved in using the theatre as a rehearsal for change in the social world. Participants construct dramatic scenes of their choice based on their personal

experiences and then show the scene to the other participants, who intervene by taking the place of the protagonist and to develop strategies for changing the course of action. This allows participants to try out multiple possibilities for social action and helps to reflect on how individual and collective experiences relate to each other (anonymised). We suggest that by encouraging participants to intervene in the performance to change the course of events, forum theatre becomes not only a critical site of negotiation, but also sites of collective mobilisation and empowerment for migrant communities encountering marginalisation and inequalities across many multi-cultural European nations. Forum theatre methods therefore develop a new approach to interactions between and with others from diverse ethnic groups, and also understandings of everyday multiculturalism. In this project, the methods helped the migrant mothers to articulate the ways in which they actively create new forms of citizenship through their cultural and caring work. The dramatised illustrative moments produced by the participants highlighted and generated the integrative components macro-meso and micro everyday interactions in these women's lives (anonymized for review).

In our study, forum theatre, as a social intervention tool, facilitates the mothers in stimulating their creativity and thinking and to reflect on changes to and within family and community relationships. In doing so, as the below analysis will indicate, the mothers make claims as a citizens subject. The mothers' performances and participation were integral to understanding how they negotiate and contest motherhood and citizenship discourses in their everyday lived experiences.

Negotiating Public discourses of Motherhood, Kinwork and Citizenship

Despite the diverse and divergent mothering experiences and social histories of black and racialized mothers a commonality exists between them which is based on interpreting the social world from a standpoint of gender and racialised subjugation. This embeds the individual and subjective experience of mothering to sociocultural and political concerns of racial ethnic communities (Hill-Collins 1990; authors anonymised for review). As Black feminist scholar, Patricia Hill-Collins (1994:48) observes, inherent tensions exist for racialised and ethnicised mothers in raising children, especially in societies, such as the UK, that seek to denigrate them. The mothering work and practices these mothers engage in reflects 'the dialectical nature of power and powerlessness in structuring mothering patterns and the significance of self-definition in constructing individual and collective racial identity' (1994: 49). The link between 'race', racialization and motherhood encourages particular kinds of mothering work and practices (Stack and Burton 1994). Black feminist scholars, define this work as 'kinwork' (Stack, 1974; Hill-Collins 1994), suggesting that this concept is much broader, theoretically and practically, than simply domestic work and childcare. The 'kinwork' framework reflects the collective labour of family-centred networks across households that sustains intergenerational and transnational responsibilities, and reinforces shared values (di Leonardo, 1984 and 1992; Zontini 2004; Doucet 2009).

'Kinwork' goes beyond privatised notions of caring for one's family. Rather this work is part and parcel of community development. For black and racialized mothers their 'kinwork' recognises that particular types of work around identity formation, cultural

work, empowerment of self and children are critical components of political resistance to racial oppression in society. Consequently, the caring activities and collective labour involves them encouraging their children to develop a positive sense of self, which in turn provide their children with the skills and resources that allow them to resist experience of racism, whilst also encouraging them to 'fit in' within this system (anonymised for review). As our previous studies have shown, many Black and racialized migrant women, are actively engaged in caring for children and young people through their community and voluntary work (authors' references anonymized for review; Hill-Collins 1990). The desire to improve children's educational outcomes, and economic chances, similarly underpin these women's engagement in voluntary work and as 'community workers' or 'community mothers' (Hill-Collins 1990; Mirza and Reay, 2000; anonymised for review). The cultural resources used in racialized and migrant women's mothering practices, in order to foster self-esteem and confidence in their children, constitutes community activism founded on political and social solidarity (Kershaw 2010).

The importance of working for the physical survival of children and family is also regarded as a key feature of 'kinwork' among black and migrant women. In a very practical sense this reveals itself in these women disproportionately taking on low-paid, low status, physical demanding; oftentimes illegal and precarious paid work in order to economically provide and care for their family. In ideological sense, therefore their mothering is about establishing the skills, strategies and resources for their children, families and communities to survive and negotiate systems and structures of racialized oppression.

Our study, extends and builds upon this notion of 'kinwork', refracting it through the analytic framework of citizenship. Liberal theories of formalized citizenship focus on the relationship between individual and state. For instance, T H Marshall (1953) proposed that citizenship has developed in steps from firstly judicial rights, protecting citizens from arbitrary state violence, to secondly political rights, such as voting rights, and then finally leading social rights providing social security and solidarity between citizens in a welfare state. Feminist scholarship, including the work of Sylvia Walby (1994) emerged to critique this understanding of citizenship rights as progressing sequentially. Problematically, it is argued, such an account of citizenship takes the male, White experiences as normative and does not pay attention to the effects of hegemonic conceptions of society as structured by a public/ private divide. Protection from arbitrary violence, for example, has not been realized in substantive form for many women who are subjected to domestic violence. One of the reasons for this is the assumption that what happens in the home pertains to the private realm, which in liberal accounts of citizenship is considered a haven from state intrusion. Yet, this conception of the home/private sphere misrepresents it as always being a place of relaxation, which is free from politics, hierarchies and power relations. Crucially, it ignores how gender, class, race and migration status are closely intertwined in constructing notions of the public/ private divide.

Women and children's experiences of hierarchy, power and violence within the domestic sphere are rendered invisible in such a view of the domestic as private haven from politics (Wheatley 2016) . For many women the domestic sphere is not one of relaxation, but the key site of economic exploitation, though their oftentimes unpaid, caring and reproductive work. Therefore, influenced by feminist debates we propose

a more sociologically nuanced understanding of citizenship that encompasses broader notions of participation and belonging and assesses the ways these are mediated by gender, class, race and migration status.

As we have earlier explained, the notion of 'kinwork' contests the public/private dichotomy separating work performed in family/household from paid work performed in the labour market. Many racialized and migrant women also work as part of family businesses, as homeworkers and more recently undertaking more highly skilled jobs in the home (eg as teleworkers, consultants or freelancers) (Phizacklea and Wolkowitz 1995) Therefore, the physical location of their workplace, the home, should not divert attention from their economic contribution (Wheatley 2016). Women's reproductive work in the home can also be a factor differentiating between women. The increasing employment of racialized and migrant women as cleaners, nannies and carers in the home of other more privileged citizens, means that it is often white middle class women who act as point of contact, employers and manager for the paid domestic workers. In this sense, the domestic sphere is also increasingly an intra-gender diversified space of class, power and oftentimes ethnicity.

This intra-gender space also exists in the public domain too. In public discourses, migrant and racialized mothers are often regarded as 'undeserving' recipients of social citizenship, disengaged with citizenship other than to draw on social, health and other public services. In contrast White, and particularly middle class, mothers are regarded as more deserving beneficiaries of social citizenship because they contribute to services and they engage with citizenship by being 'full members' of society. Our analysis, contradicts this claim by illustrating that migrant women's mothering

constitutes an active engagement with citizenship. For instance by bringing up children who feel that they belong to both British and the mothers' home countries, the women are creating new ways of being citizens. In this sense, they are performing 'acts of citizenship', which challenge hegemonic forms, subjectivities and habits of what it means to be a good citizen (Isin 2008). By taking seriously the ways in which migrant mothers destabilise normative understanding of the public-private boundary, we are able to develop more complex notions of how kinwork itself constitutes an element of engagement with citizenship.

In 'reframing migrant mothers' citizenship (anonymised for review) through the lens of 'kinwork' we also raise the question of to what extent citizenship is embodied? Bacchi and Beasley (2002)'s study is quite critical of the limited attention given to embodiment in feminist theorizing around citizenship. Also the instrumental approach adopted by feminist discussion concerning the female body in debates about citizenship. So for example, women's bodies are conceived by policy discourses in terms of ownership, control, rights and protections. With regards to migrant women the normative depictions are of them being 'victims' (eg. genitalia mutilation, sexual trafficking, honour killings, forced marriages). The focus of feminist attention within the policy agenda is concerned with women reclaiming control and rights over their body (Lister,). Alternatively, women are conceived in terms of being objects of political control - for migrant women, this concern is with them raising 'good citizens' and safeguarding cultural and social cohesion through their parenting practices and family values. In this context the focus with feminist debates is on women reclaiming citizenship rights and their position as rights-claiming subjects (anonymised for review).

The notion of embodied citizenship provides a useful starting point for our analysis because it highlights our embodied existence; it emphasises the social relations around movement, communication, touch and sensory materiality, and we are able to listen to the kinds of knowledge our body offers. In policy terms the state empowers and also erodes citizenship. However, it is our bodies that determine the spaces we can or cannot enter; it can shed light on who has control (or lack thereof) of public space; it can similarly determine the type of public and social welfare resources individuals from different groups have access to and the ways they are allowed to access this. Fundamentally, therefore, it raises questions about what shape and form 'full' or 'good' citizen subjects bodies are supposed to take (Gillies et al, 2005). By understanding the women as embodied subjects who embody citizenship and draw on their 'kinwork' to establish claims of rights, belonging and participation we are able to disrupt and problematize normative understanding of citizenship models.

Kinwork resisting everyday acts of racism

The depictions and characterisation of 'bad mothering' who through their deficit 'kinwork' reproduce 'bad citizens' are sometimes explicitly racialized (eg irresponsible black lone-mothers producing rioting youths) but in most cases, they tend to be implicitly racialized (Lewis 2000 and 2004). Public policy has fuelled anxiety about black and migrant families as producing 'feral youths' running wild on the streets; homegrown jihadist terrorists, and encouraging the 'wrong type' of integration within ethnic communities that discourages full citizenship and integration into societal norms and values (anonymised for review). The mothers in our study expressed awareness of the public anxiety and racial stereotyping concerning their 'kinwork'. There was

recognition by some mothers that as racialized subjects they would not be seen as British and their contribution to society through their 'kinwork' not valued or legitimated. This created contradictory and conflicting meanings attached to the ethnic categorisation of Britishness among migrants and their children choosing to accept or reject this citizenship claim. In attempting to explain her daughter's ethnic identity, Mandy a migrant mother of mixed Somalian and British heritage explains:

So even though she was born here and she's got a British passport; no one will ever see her as a British- she's still a foreigner. So I... but I don't mind that, you see... the bottom line is she was just born in a hospital in England but she's still Somali. A lot of people - a lot of my British friends- that are not white British, they might be African or Caribbean but they say ' I'm British'.. but..ermm..I can't discriminate them- it's whoever they think they are. But when you ask my child where she's from or my nieces or my nephews- they'll answer Somali.

Contradictions around claiming or rejecting British ethnic label has been explored at length in various studies on migrant communities (Nandi et al 2015; Phillips 2015). However, at this juncture this feeling of ambivalence concerning ethnic identification must be understood within the broader structural context of racial exclusion, and experiences of racism and racial inequality experienced by migrant communities (Goulbourne et al, 2010). Outlined below, the mothers describe their direct experience of being racially discriminated against as part of an everyday encounter.

Interviewer: Have you been racially discriminated here [in Britain]?

Judyta: Yes. Yes, many times. It happens to everyone [...] If they hear my English they treat me differently. It happened to me because I am from Eastern Europe. Because they see me as not even as second class citizen. In services. HMRC above all. I came to work here, I pay my taxes, and make me feel (showed with a gesture, like she is noone). They are so rude to me on the phone.

In the above example, Judyta, a migrant mother of Lithuanian describes examples of encounters with racism. Judyta highlights that one of consequences of having a racialized identity within normative models of citizenship and public discourses of the family is that migrant individuals are ascribed a 'non-citizen' status, and denied full access to social citizenship despite many, including Judyta, contributing towards the UK economy through full labour market participation. Our data indicates that the mothers understood both the overt and the more subtle forms of racial discrimination. Judyta's comment '*they are so rude to me on the phone*' reveals the way in which these racist encounters present them as everyday racial acts of micro-aggression in the public domain. Rudeness and hostility, at the hands of members of the public (including other minority groups) and when dealing with health and social care professionals, whilst the mothers were carrying out their kinwork, was an experience shared by many mothers in our study. As Gamila a migrant-mother from Somalia reflects

In Britain it is equal opportunity even though some people are rude. (...) There was a discrimination about my scarf. There was a Chinese guy with a wheelchair and he passed and slapped my child. He said that I touched him

with the pram. He said to me that you people are funny. We wear the scarf [hijab], it is a piece of material, it is part of our culture. They bully us especially Somali women who wear the scarf.

This shows how the participants in this study feel they are routinely denied recognition as equal participants in the public sphere, and instead racialization is a defining aspect of their experiences of identification as conditionally British, and in everyday life as well as in encounters with state and other institutions.

Kin-work enabling participation in the public sphere

The study yielded rich insight into the way that interlocking structures of race, gender, alongside class move the women's kinwork beyond dichotomized notions of the public (male) and private (female) sphere of the family, challenging dichotomised gendered roles. In the scene entitled 'where is my food', we explored this gendered dynamic.

The theatre facilitator showed a scene developed in previous work with migrant families (anonymized), which became the starting point for participants to intervene and change the course of events. The scene is set in the family home and focuses on an argument between the 'wife', who is attending English language classes, and her 'husband' is challenging her continued attendance of these classes, arguing that she should be looking after the children and him instead. The 'husband' is demanding 'Where is my food?' and the participants take it in turn to step into the scene as the 'wife' to engage with various strategies – including being combative, cajoling, providing

reasoned arguments – in order to convince their ‘husband’ that she should remain in the class. We were able to observe after each intervention what was happening between the husband and ‘wife’, and each time a participant stepped onto the scene and tried out a different strategy. In this Forum Theatre scene, we see a range of strategies to bring about the desired outcome, for the ‘husband’ to agree to the ‘wife’ attending the English classes. The dialogue that emerged out of the scene between the husband and ‘wife’ brings them into a dynamic communication process, creating different solutions.

During the workshop scene we also explored conflict and tensions within spousal relationships, arising from the experience of migration to a new country. The difficulties of adapting to a new language environment, navigating the challenges of bringing up children in an unfamiliar environment and also being confronted with difficult access to the labour market, where many migrants face the devaluation of their skills and work experience from the home country, as well as racism, are all factors setting the context for this scene. Migration requires an adjustment to new ways of doing things, often exacerbating ontological insecurity, and therefore the work of establishing a stable home life for themselves and their families constitutes one of the important ways in which migrant mothers enable their families and themselves to participate in wider society (Gedalof 2009). This is becoming even more pertinent in times of austerity where divestment from social and welfare services renders the work of home making a private responsibility (Jensen and Tyler 2012, Lonergan 2015). The participants’ interventions generated awareness of how the mothers’ kinwork might challenge social constructions of work and family as separate spheres by equipping family members, in this scene, the ‘husband’, with the resources and skills (eg English

language skills), to eventually improve the family's education and future career prospects. As a social intervention tool, forum theatre helped the mothers to stimulate their creativity and thinking in contesting the place between public/private and between the oppressed and the oppressor. In particular, this dialogue also generated valuable insight around migrant mothers constitute themselves as citizen subjects through their kinwork. It also legitimated knowledge of these mothers concerning the importance of paid work and unpaid domestic activities in contributing to the family household. Such an analysis is important because their subordinate location in society, at the juncture of their gender, racialized and migrant status, makes them especially vulnerable and their contribution to the family and economy is not recognised as important. This scene, we suggest, empowered the mothers by allowing them to reflect on and negotiate patriarchal structures and power relationships informing their kinwork, and its relationship to the family and nation state. During the interviews when we asked the mothers to reflect on this scene, two of them described the following:

Some husbands are selfish. The mothers have to look after the children, clean the house. 'I don't care, where is my food?' [...] scene was very good for mothers to think and talk what they can do about it. In [the scene] they showed how the husband calms down, how to understand the wife. And they show how to sort the relationship out. [Mandy in the role as wife], said you come [to ESOL classes], you find a job, you learn the language. It is very good (Judyta).

In most of families, ladies are like slaves. So I think it's good for them and you know get more information because they can fight with these problems in real life (Gamila).

One of the mothers, Mandy, who performed the role of the 'wife' in the scene similarly recalled her successful intervention into the scene to create an engagement between 'husband' and the 'wife':

The husband was shouting and saying 'why did you go to the centre to learn English?'. So I just explained to him, "you know when you get your job, you're going to be busy and when the kids grow up, I'm going to have to stay at home and help them with their homework, in order for them to succeed, you know, one of us has to be at home teaching them" and then I said to him, "I think, while you are looking for a job, they do men's classes, why don't you come and join me, so you can do men's classes to improve your English at the same time"; so I was encouraging him because I think he was feeling disheartened I think about the fact that he's the man and he can't get a job and ermm, so, yes, I was encouraging him, so I turned the situation around to him and then he was stuck for words...

This scene with the interventions and reflections it gave rise to, shows how migrant mothers' work of home making, and caring within the family is constituted by the power relations of gender, race, migration and class. Yet, it also shows, how these power relations affect both the 'private' relations between spouses, as well as the possibilities to participate in public spaces of education and work. Within this complex power relationship, mothers face the challenge of balancing their caring work within the family alongside their desire to invest time and energy in themselves, in this case, through learning English. In the interventions in the forum theatre scene, participants

rehearsed arguments and strategies for claiming this space and right to care for themselves vis-à-vis family members' demands to focus their care on their husbands and children.

Community Engagement and Mothering

During the workshop, another element of mothers' kinwork at the boundary of the public/private was explored through the mother-daughter relationship. The scene, introduced by the facilitator, showed the mother and daughter in a migrant community centre. While this scene was introduced by the theatre facilitator, the participants quickly took ownership of the scene and developed it by giving it their own experiences and meanings. The 'daughter' feels bored and wants to leave as quickly as possible. The 'mother' would like the 'daughter' to take part in an event at the community centre and tries to persuade her to stay. However, both are confronted by criticism from others at the community centre. Our analysis suggest that underpinning this concern of the mother for her daughter to remain is the fear of moral judgement from community members. During the scene, the 'community members' comment on the daughters' clothes as 'too tight', they criticise her for not speaking 'our' language and for behaving in a rude way to her mother. This culminates in the reproach that the daughter does not respecting 'the culture' and that the mother failed to bring her up properly. These comments are all examples of the dominant policy rhetoric of surveillance, judgements around 'good mothering', informing mothering practice. However, rather than emanating from the state, in this instance, it is a reified version of ethnic community which articulates a normative vision of good mothering.

Whilst the 'mother' is aware of this cultural narrative of 'good mothering' she is at the same time in the scene demonstrating a protectiveness of her daughter from the critical community members. During the various interventions into this scene, participants took the role of 'mother' to engage in various strategies to try and persuade her daughter to remain at the centre. This included for example, bribery and incentives (eg the purchase of mobile phone credit or even a new mobile phone), establishing time boundaries for the daughter to remain at centre – eg spend 1 hour maximum, explaining to the daughter why it matters to the mother to be part of the ethnic community. Other strategies included the 'mother' establishing relationships with the daughters' peers at the centre to motivate her to feel more at ease and therefore engage with her co-ethnics at the centre.

During the scene the mobile phone as a prop, and acting as a cultural signifier of adolescence, was central in a number of ways. Firstly, the mobile phone was used as a 'prop' by the daughter to create a barrier/defence mechanism against the criticism directed towards her by 'the mother' and community members. Conversely, it also provided an important prop for 'the mother', acting as way for her to engage with daughter by entering her space, bringing mother and daughter together. The phone in this context, provided a means through which private intimate and emotional kinwork are performed in public spaces. The mobile as a prop also provided the means through which the mother and daughter were able to enter into dialogue and negotiation with each other. In this latter context, the mobile phone as a prop gets enacted in quite an instrumental and strategic way: to entice daughter to remain at the community setting by incentivising her to get new phone or related apps.

In interviews the mothers reflected on the scene linking it back to their own experiences of mothering. Some expressed concerns for their children's welfare

Gamila: One day in the community scene I got upset and I forgot that I have to speak in English and I started talking in my language. 'Sit down' I said to the daughter (they laugh). I was thinking all the time if my children become teenagers they will become like that? It made me worried.

Malika: It is worrying, how will you feel if your daughter talks to you like that, 'Talk to my hand'? (They both laugh)

Yet, while these participants acknowledged the difficult situation portrayed in the scene, others regarded the possibilities to intervene more positively and valued the way it could foster through their kin-work inter-generational exchange and learning between the mothers and their children:

People give you different ideas: some gave choices to the teenager, others tried to calm them down and said 'Don't worry we'll sort it out', some gave money. I now got ideas about how to challenge [the children's behaviour]. When you have young children, somehow you don't understand it. Normally our people who come from back home and their children grew up here, it is different, but at least we find here how to challenge our children. (Natasza)

Inter-generational exchange and learning, as a form of kinwork, was regarded as a reciprocal process, with both mother and daughters learning from each other. Reflecting on her own mothering experience, Judyta, reflects how her daughter has encouraged her to be more tolerant and accepting of other people's cultures and multi-cultural values, But it was the workshops which allowed her to reflect and gain further understanding of ethnic and cultural differences

[My daughter] is so accepting and now I am accepting of all cultures. And maybe from being [at the workshops], I know things from other cultures and their behaviour or how Muslims are behaving or how anyone is behaving. That's why I became more accepting and I understand them and it's great.

The scene prompted the mothers to reflect on way their children did not always understand the struggles and hardships they as mothers go through as low status migrants to provide for their family. At the same time the interventions empowered the mothers to make sense of generational and cultural tensions, whilst also valuing the importance of their own economic contribution in sustaining these inter-generational relationships. The following quotations provide an indication of this:

Judyta: I am working and I know how hard it is to survive and my daughter for example, she is saying now, I have to buy her everything, everything [...] She's not going wrong, if I can compare [her to] the kids from other families who already at this age have babies and have tried drugs and alcohol and smoking. She's really not going out, she has no boyfriends. So from the other side I am

thinking I'll give everything what I have for her, I will help her [...] But it's really hard for me.

Interviewer: So, what is difficult, is it that you don't think she understands how difficult it is for you to help her?

J: Yes. She doesn't understand. She thinks everything will come [easily] like this. Here [in the UK] everything is easier for them. Here my child who is 15 years old wants a mobile phone for 300 pounds. Here they see one child has a mobile phone, they don't think about how the parents get this money.

The scene brings into sharp focus the way in which these mothers are reframing notions of citizenship by regarding their 'kin-work' as an investment in the future. They reflect on how the differing parenting skills performed during this scene could be used to build relationships with their children to progress through teenage years into adulthood. What was very apparent in their constructions of motherhood was the enduring nature of the mother-child bond, in ways that did not exist when describing other intimate relationships, as highlighted by Gamila below:

The children never finish but [spousal] relationships if they are broken they can finish, but with the children can never finish that's why I want to work on the relationship with children. You will always be a mother.

This scene in the community centre brought into sharp relief that migrant mothers' kinwork extends beyond the domestic sphere. Yet, relationships with other members of the ethnic community cannot be assumed to be supportive. On the contrary, women can be called upon to conform to ethnically specific ideals of good mothering. Women

can at times feel caught in the middle between their children's desires and the normative demands of 'good mothering' in specific ethnic community settings. The interventions they practiced in the scenes aimed at improving communication and understanding with their children and mediating between them and other community members. This finding is in contrast with public views of migrant mothers as strongly invested in bringing up their children as part of an ethnic community, while ignoring their children's desire to be part of wider British society. The scene also brought into relief the struggles of mothers to provide economically for their children, showing how the child(ren)'s desires for consumption, in this case exemplified through the mobile phone, become a central aspect of mothers' and children's negotiations of belonging. The scene highlights the issue of belonging to neighbourhood and community spaces, and sheds light on the way that mother and daughter have different relationships to community settings and may use and view this space differently as a result of generational differences.

Yet it is also important to recognise that as racialized gendered citizens migrant mothers are both simultaneously hyper-visible whilst also being hyper-invisible within the same space, and they are subject to shared forms of surveillance; exclusionary practices and feelings of (un)belonging as a result of gendered racialized identity. The notion of belonging should therefore be understood with this broader structural context of not belonging because it influences their relationship to locality and ability to realise and access their social rights. Migrants experience 'different modalities of belonging to the nation (anonymised for review); passive belonging is acceptable but them actively enacting belonging or expressing who should be allowed to belong is given any legitimacy (anonymised for review). Influenced by Yuval Davis (2011), (author)

criticises dichotomous approach to belonging or not belonging. Instead she highlights different degree of belonging involving multi-variant factors such as social location, emotional attachment and identification to their ethnic/cultural grouping cultural value system by which they judge themselves and others against.

Conclusion

The mothers' performances and participation were integral understanding how they negotiate and contest motherhood and citizenship discourses through everyday 'kinwork'. Utilising Boal's techniques of forum theatre in the workshops, allowed us to capture the complex and nuanced ways in which these women embody citizenship through their 'kinwork' and acts of care in the public as well as private domain. We also developed further insight into the more practical day-to-day examples of 'kinwork' that represent acts of citizenship in their everyday lives. By sharing their experiences to make claims, we also reveal these mothers location as claims making subjects, who are enacting citizenship.

Forum theatre operated as successful intervention tool with the mothers because it enabled them to look upon everyday life, raise awareness of collective and share experiences of common social problems in order to offer a space to rehearse alternative courses of action. It legitimated the knowledge of these mothers recognising and valuing the importance of their reproductive labour and contributions to the family household and British economy. Such as analysis is important because their subordinate location in society, at the juncture of their gender, racialized and migrant status, makes them especially vulnerable in British society, where their

contribution to the family and economy is not always recognised or valued within mainstream public and policy debates. The significance of the embodied aspect of citizenship became particularly clear in the ways in which they had to balance conflicting desires and demands of 'kinwork'. The concept of 'kinwork' is central in highlighting how migrant mothers' work of caring for their families enables them to engage with wider society, e.g. through education and work. Yet, contrary to hegemonic presentations of migrant mothers' embodied citizenship as fixed to the role of victim, the study showed how they engaged with a range of strategies of challenging their oppression along gender, racialized and classed power relations. The study found that migrant women's work of creating a form of belonging within the family and as members of the community, is an aspect of creating new understandings of citizenship beyond ethnic boundaries.

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