

How Translocality Shapes Dutch-Cape Verdean Families

The Role of Translocality On the Livelihoods, Identities and Relationships of Dutch-Cape Verdean Families and Their Members

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Abstract

Cape Verde is a country with a rich and long migration history, which has led to the belief that there are more Cape Verdeans that live outside of the country borders than within. Cape Verdean migration flows span across the whole world, meaning that Cape Verdean families often are scattered throughout different places. This dispersion has led to many families maintaining families across between the different places, creating translocal relationships. Not only does translocality influence these families, but also the individual family members. This research therefore sets out to examine the role of translocality for Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members. This is done by focusing on the role of translocality for the actual relationships within these families as well as other types of networks, for the identity formation of the individual members, and for translocal practices that are important for the Dutch-Cape Verdean families. This is done by exploring the views and experiences of several members within these translocal families, both in the Netherlands and in Cape Verde.

This thesis uses a qualitative research design and the primary data was collected through personal surveys in the form of face-to-face conversations and in-depth interviews. To ensure that both the family members that moved away and those who stayed were properly included, the fieldwork was split in two. The first half of the research was carried out in the Netherlands, particularly in Rotterdam, to delve into the perspectives and experiences of the Cape Verdean members that migrated to the Netherlands. The second half of the fieldwork took place in Cape Verde, on Sao Vicente and Santiago. Here, the perspectives of the members that stayed in Cape Verde were researched.

The outcome of this research shows that translocality plays a vital role for the relationships of Dutch-Cape Verdean families. Translocality also has a big impact on the individual family members, through identity formation, different types of relationships and networks, and the translocal practice of remittances.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Point of Departure

Cape Verde is a country with an exceptional history, where migration has played a central role. The country is built up of immigrants when it was first populated in the 1400s by European colonizers and African slaves. The country was created as a product of migration and marginalization, and this remained until its independence from Portugal in 1975 (Carling, 2004). The role of migration extends into recent history because migration has continued to shape the country throughout time. It is frequently argued that Cape Verde has relied on migration for more than a century. The country's geographic marginality, combined with harsh climate conditions has fostered an inherent reliance on migration for its economic and social development (Carling, 2004; Resende-Santos, 2015). The expanse of Cape Verdean migrants is great, and it is argued that there are more Cape Verdeans living outside of the country's borders than within (Carling & Batalha, 2008; Évora, 2013).

The dynamics of migration have shaped a unique context of translocality for Cape Verde. There are many networks between Cape Verdeans that extend across space and into different localities. For the migrant members, different kinds of translocal practices and networks are essential (Gois, 2005; Åkesson, 2008a). Family networks are of great importance to all Cape Verdeans, as it ensures family relationships across distances. Translocality is important for Cape Verdean inhabitants, as it is frequently argued that the translocal practice of remittances is essential for many Cape Verdeans as well as for the economy of Cape Verde (Carling, 2004; Resende-Santos, 2015; Åkesson, 2010). Within translocal families, challenges of distance and resource and mobility inequality are often highlighted. It is proposed that these bottlenecks can create problems within translocal families and among family members (Carling, 2008b; Drotbohm, 2020; Åkesson, 2009).

The Netherlands is one of the countries with a large number of Cape Verdean immigrants, most of them living in Rotterdam. Migration flows from Cape Verde to the Netherlands have a rich history, set in motion by seafarers in the 1950's. In the following decennia, the Netherlands was a hotspot for Cape Verdean migrants, but in more recent years there has been a steep decline in migration flows from Cape Verde to the Netherlands. Despite this decrease, remittances reportedly remain steady, with the Netherlands continuing to be the primary source of remittances to some islands (Carling, 2003; Carling, 2008). Rotterdam is a hotspot for Cape Verdean migrants, and this creates a space of translocality. Besides many translocal family networks, other types of networks exist as well. These networks, often based on cultural identity and heritage, form an important basis for Cape Verdeans in Rotterdam (da Graça, 2010). It is debated whether or not the strong role of Cape

Verdean networks in Rotterdam hinders integration into society. Cape Verdeans in Rotterdam have repeatedly been labeled as 'silent migrants' because they supposedly are invisible, have high employment rates, and focus on homeland practices and identity. However, it seems that this view is not correct and is also changing (Brandellero & Kersbergen, 2022; De Freitas, 2016; Slingerland, 2012). It seems that it is also not true that the high presence of Cape Verdean networks and organizations hinders the integration of Cape Verdeans into the Dutch society (da Graça, 2010).

1.2 Problem Statement

There is a certain discourse used when talking about Cape Verdeans and specifically Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families. This discourse frames the relationships between the migrant and non-migrant members as strenuous, often highlighting specific challenges allegedly experienced between or by specific members. It is for example regularly pointed out that there is an asymmetry of resources between migrant and non-migrant members that leads to a mismatch in the remittances that are being sent compared to what is needed or expected. These bottlenecks create tensions between family members living in different places, straining their relationships. Another element of this discourse, accentuating this view, is that the non-migrants repeatedly get labeled as "left behind".

Cape Verdean translocality in the Netherlands is predominantly described through certain characteristics of strict immigration laws and the view that Cape Verdean migrants in the Netherlands are "silent". This creates a one-sided perspective of the situation, reinforcing certain labels and differences between so-called migrant and non-migrant members. This has a big impact on how the literature portrays Cape Verdean translocality, or transnationalism, and Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families.

Furthermore, when families and networks that span across different geographical spaces are discussed, the term transnationalism is predominantly used. However, even though transnationalism aims to go beyond the limits of national borders, the term is still bound to territorial limits by looking at networks across countries. The term translocality was coined to overcome the limits of national boundaries, by focusing on local contexts and acknowledging that networks span across different spaces and fragmented into interconnected localities. Although translocality adds a meaningful perspective to families, networks and practices that exist beyond the boundaries of countries, the term is often neglected or forgotten in theories of migration and development studies.

1.3 Research Aim

The aim of this research is to explore the overarching role of translocality for Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families and their members. The topics of identity formation, networks and relationships, and remittances are combined to show how translocality impacts these

families. Firstly, it is shown how translocality is embedded in the personalities and lives of individual family members. Secondly, the role of translocality for family relationships as well as other networks is highlighted. Thirdly, the translocal practice of remittances is discussed. However, these elements do not stand alone, but are interlinked and together shape Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members. This is shown by delving into the stories and experiences of translocal family members living in the Netherlands as well as in Cape Verde. By taking into consideration the perceptions of members from both sides of translocal families, an accurate and in-depth answer will be given to the role of translocality for Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members.

The corresponding research question this research aims to answer is:

“What is the role of translocality for Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members?”.

This question will be answered through the following sub-questions:

- “How are the identities of Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families and their members formed?”
- “What are the dynamics of the translocal networks of Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members?”
- “What is the role of remittances for Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families and their members?”.

1.4 Knowledge Gap & Relevance for Development Studies

This research fills a knowledge gap in several ways, while simultaneously being relevant for debates within Development Studies. Research and theories about transnationalism are not scarce, and luckily even the body of literature about translocality is expanding. Transnationalism has also been mapped in the context of Cape Verde. But there are several things to note, however. For instance, Cape Verdean transnationalism has commonly been explored in the context of Cape Verdean transnational family relationships with a focus on remittance flows or familial challenges. Additionally, although Cape Verdean transnational cultural and ethnic networks have been mapped, it has rarely been in combination with transnational family networks. This means that the entirety of transnational networks has been neglected. Furthermore, the body of literature on Cape Verdean transnationalism is aging, often being more than 10 years old. Zooming in on the specific context of Dutch-Cape Verdean transnationalism, there is barely any new research in the last decade. Also the terminology is noteworthy, where all articles and studies about Cape Verdean ties and relationships that extend across spaces and localities focus on the term transnationalism and disregard the concept of translocality.

This research fills a gap in the literature by applying the concept of translocality to the case of Dutch-Cape Verdean families, taking into account not only a few components of translocality or transnationalism, but applying a holistic approach.

Åkesson (2008b) highlights that most studies about migration and especially transnationalism, both in the context of Cape Verde and overall, fail to take into account the perspectives of all relevant parties within transnational relationships. This means that the perspectives of either the migrant members or non-migrant members, notably often the latter, are neglected. The body of literature frequently talks about various bottlenecks and challenges that Cape Verdean migrants might face, but these challenges are often speculations. The non-migrant family members in Cape Verde are often treated as passive bystanders in transnational relationships, labeled as “left behind”. By also giving a voice to the Cape Verdeans that stayed, it will be highlighted which challenges they actually experience in their lives, and how this relates to their family relationships.

This research takes a unique position by firstly taking into account the views of the members living in the Netherlands as well as those in Cape Verde, treating all parties as active members within the transnational families. Secondly, the view that the non-migrants are “left behind” is questioned by giving them the opportunity to convey their own experiences.

1.5 Thesis Structure

The next chapter of this thesis presents the theoretical framework where the relevant concepts and theories are reviewed and aims to provide the context in which this research is situated. The conceptual framework is a tool used to visualize the concepts and elements that make up this research, and shows how they are connected. After that, in chapter three, the methodology will be explained, where the research design and methods are highlighted, as well as the operationalization. This section also discusses the limitations of this research. Chapter four presents the geographical context of Cape Verde and the Dutch-Cape Verdean nexus, its history, and how the concepts are situated within the local framework. Chapters five, six, and seven present the analysis, delving into the results and findings. This study ends with the conclusions that are drawn based on the analysis, and the discussion of the findings in relation to the field of development studies and its contribution to theory.

1.6 A Note of Terminology

One of the issues this research tackles is the dichotomy of migrant versus non-migrant, where the literature often regards the two as mutually exclusive and set in stone. This study does not agree with that duality, because migration journeys are fluid and there are many types of migration journeys. Therefore, when this research uses the terms migrants and non-

migrants to separate the two groups that are discussed, it only regards the current state to highlight whether or not someone is currently a migrant or not.

Secondly, this research regularly uses the terms “Dutch-Cape Verdean families”, “Dutch respondents” and “Cape Verdean respondents”. It is important to mention that this only relates to the current place of residence, and not to their identification or affiliation with a specific place or locality.

Thirdly, this thesis is based on the concept of translocality. However, in many of the sections, predominantly in the theoretical framework and geographical conceptual framework, the similar concept of transnationalism is at the center of attention. This is because, as explained further in the theoretical framework, most scholars primarily use the term transnationalism. Therefore, this term is highlighted first in relation to other concepts, before introducing translocality.

2. Literature Review & Theoretical Embedding

2.1 Identity

2.1.1 Overarching Theories on Identity

The concept of identity is interesting in itself because of its paradoxical meaning. Buckingham (2008) explains that this is the case because identity on the one hand is something unique to every person, but at the same time also something that unites a group by linking them through a similarity (Buckingham, 2008). He says “On one level, I am the product of my unique personal biography. Yet who I am (or who I think I am) varies according to who I am with, the social situations in which I find myself, and the motivations I may have at the time, although I am by no means entirely free to choose how I am defined” (Buckingham, 2008). Stets & Burke (2000) show that it is often useful to not only regard personal identity but also social identity when trying to understand the self. The two are often treated as being inherently different, but they are often intertwined. Both aspects are needed to establish an overarching theory of the self (Stets & Burke, 2000). Buckingham (2008) states that people are not free to choose who they are defined by others. Barreto & Ellemers (2003) also state that external categorizations, or how people are defined by others, can have a certain effect on identity. However, it cannot, according to Barreto & Ellemers (2003) be stated that people always accept the external categorizations that are imposed on them. It is also important to realize that the characteristics that are prescribed to people are not always true (Barreto & Ellemers, 2003).

2.1.2 Cultural Identities

Cultural identity is one important aspect of the self. Hall (1990) explains that there are two ways to view cultural identity. Firstly, cultural identity can be thought of as a shared collective of the true self, which often regards a common heritage or history. The second view is based on the notion that cultural identities indeed are rooted in history, but that they undergo constant transformation. Cultural identity it is not something that objectively exists without being continuously shaped by place, time, and culture (Hall, 1990). Bhatia (2007) argues that traditionally, the mainstream theories on identity were linear and fixed. However, this is very often not the case, because the context wherein cultural identity is shaped is never fixed but constantly changing. He specifies this in the cultural identities of immigrants because they recreate their culture and practices from their country of origin while being surrounded by a new context which also influences them (Bhatia, 2007).

2.1.3 Migrant Identities

Migrant identities are often spoken of in the context of cultural identities, but it encompasses much more, as their identities are influenced by many factors. Another aspect

of identity that is often discussed is ethnic identity. Ethnicity is one of the characteristics that often causes an external categorization by people (Umaña-Taylor, 2011). Ethnicity and ethnic identity are defined as “a common heritage shared by a particular group and will include history, language, rituals, preference for music and food” (Bhugra, 2004, p.133). Ting-Toomey et al. (2000) explain that ethnic and cultural identity can seem similar, but that ethnic identity “refers to the degree of membership affiliation with one’s specific ethnic group” while cultural identity “refers to the degree of membership affiliation with the larger culture” (Ting-Toomey et al., 2000, p.50). Although ethnicity often is an important part of identity, especially for someone that is a migrant, it can be harmful to assume the type of influence or the extent that ethnicity can have on someone’s identity. The level of importance can vary from simply adhering to a certain label or place of origin, to having a strong attachment to one’s ethnic and cultural heritage (Umaña-Taylor, 2011). Madsen & van Naerssen (2003) introduce borders as another aspect that influences migration identities. They argue that borders are meant to set in motion a process of othering, to “signify different identities on both sides of the borders” (Madsen & van Naerssen, 2003, p.62). They go on to say that it is commonly thought that people that cross borders adapt to their new environments and emerge in the culture of their country of settlement. This view is however often not true and their cultural heritage from their country of origin often remains strong and keeps being essential for the identities of migrants (Madsen & van Naerssen, 2003). Because the identities of migrants often are bicultural, or influenced by attachments in both the country of origin and country of settlement, they are regarded as transnational (Madsen & van Naerssen, 2003).

2.1.4 Transnational Identities

Madsen & van Naerssen (2003) argue that cultural heritage and cultural identities from one’s country of origin often remain strong for migrants. But because migrants live in another country, in time it is inevitable that their identities are also influenced by their new surroundings. This leads to a dual attachment and dual identity to both the country of origin and the country of settlement (Madsen & van Naerssen, 2003). Phinney (2000) argues that the amount of people that move across national or cultural borders is increasing and that it is common to go through a process of adjustment to a new culture while renegotiating their culture of origin. It is not as simple as exchanging one culture for another, it differs per person how they adapt to this new context, and the two cultures are often combined and intertwined to create a new sense of cultural identity (Phinney, 2000). In this process, one’s cultural identity becomes transnational. Esteban-Guitart & Vila (2015) also unpack the different processes that can occur when someone moves to a new country and experiences a reformation in identity due to their immergence into a new culture. The outcome of creating a transnational identity, or transcultural identity, is the most adaptive outcome because it

successfully merges the culture of origin as well as the culture in the country of settlement into their identities (Esteban-Guitart & Vila, 2015).

Many scholars see diaspora and diasporic identities as either part of transnational identity theories or as a similar type of identity. One aspect that is often talked about is the thought of an imagined community or an imagined identity. The idea is that these identities are formed through imagined communities are based on a sense of belonging to a community or group that is socially constructed based on an imagined common origin or culture (Bhatia & Ram, 2008; Fazal & Tsagarousianou, 2002; Pries, 2012). Pries (2012) makes a clear distinction between transnational and diaspora identities, where having a strong imagined community is seen as part of a diaspora identity. Diaspora identities refer to “the awareness of the spatial distribution of those belonging to the same group of ‘us’, spread across multiple locations in different states, but with a strong motherland” (Pries, 2012, p.30). Transnational identity is similar to diaspora identity but without a clearly defined motherland. Transnational identity is pluri-local, without a clear center between locales. Others do not see the two as being that different but as diaspora and imagined communities as being part of transnationalism and transnational identity (Fazal & Tsagarousianou; Madsen & Van Naerssen, 2003). Regardless of the perceived relationship between diaspora and transnational identity, it is essential to regard identity not as something fixed, but as something that is created by history and cultural discourses. “We can no longer insist on thinking about culture, race, or gender as contained national boundaries or as reified, polarized entities (Bhatia & Ram, 2009, p.143).

[2.2 From Transnationalism to Translocality](#)

[2.2.1 Overarching Theories on Transnationalism](#)

The concept of transnationalism has become very prominent in development and migration studies. Transnationalism is a broad term used to describe the relationships and ties migrants have with and within their country of origin and country of settlement. These ties are maintained regardless of distance and country borders. Transnational ties take on a variety of forms like organizations, groups and family relationships (Faist, 2010). Tedeschi et al. (2022) explain that “connectedness across borders, the formality/informality of frequent cross-border activities and practices, and the high intensity and degree of cross-border exchanges are the main characteristics of a transnationalism ‘from below’” (Tedeschi et al., 2022, p.604). They go on to explain that transnationality highlights the agency of migrants and how they take action, make decisions and develop themselves based on social fields from both their country of origin and country of settlement (Tedeschi et al., 2022). Lubbers et al. (2018) state that international migration is transnational by nature and can only be

understood when realizing that it transcends national boundaries. Carling (2008b) explains that the interpersonal ties within migrant transnationalism do not only exceed national boundaries, but also have important functions within both countries of origin and countries of settlement. Migrant transnational relationships are important for all parties within a transnational community as it impacts the development of the country of origin and the ties there, as well as the integration of the migrants in the country of settlement. It is important to realize that transnational connections do not only influence the migrant members but also non-migrants because they interact with each other and influence each other's lives from a distance. It is also important to realize that these relationships are socially constructed and fluid which means that the relationships and the parties involved keep changing (Carling, 2008b).

2.2.2 Diaspora and Transnationalism

Diaspora and transnationalism are terms that scholars regard as either interchangeable or similar. Lacroix (2018) explains that this perception differs because there is no clear definition of diaspora. Therefore, the view on diaspora and transnationalism varies based on the definition of diaspora that scholars use. Faist (2010) explains that although both diaspora and transnationalism refer to cross-border processes, and are regularly used interchangeably, they are different. He states that the term diaspora has become increasingly politicized in its meaning, often being used to show support to a specific political or ethnic group or to pursue nation-state agendas. Transnationalism on the other hand is used to explain "everyday practices of migrants engaged in various activities" (Faist, 2010, p.11). He adds that these activities include solidarity within family networks, the transfer and renegotiation of cultural customs, and other social formations across countries (Faist, 2010). Other scholars define the difference between transnational and diaspora practices differently. A common view of diaspora is when migrants that live outside of their country of origin maintain ties to their motherland. This definition characterizes all migrants that maintain a strong material and symbolic attachment to their country of origin as a diaspora (Pries, 2012; Tan et al., 2018).

2.2.3 Transnational Networks and Relationships

Networks play an essential role in understanding transnationality, according to Herz & Olivier (2014). Social networks are a very important part of transnational practices and need to be taken into account when looking at cross-border practices and social formations. Literature uses several terms to describe and theorize about transnational networks, like transnational social fields and transnational social spaces (Molina et al., 2015). Tan et al. (2017) define it as "multiple interlocking networks of relationships across borders" (Tan et al., 2017, p.3). Lubbers et al. (2018) primarily refer to transnational social fields and say that

transnational social fields and similar concepts “define space socially rather than geographically ... by examining transnational processes unfolding in social networks rather than ones circumscribed within national boundaries. Put simply, transnational social fields offer a framework for understanding transnationality as embedded in social relationships” (Lubbers et al., 2018, pp.178-179). They go on to state that theories and literature about transnationalism rarely specify the type of relationships within networks or social fields, which often leads to a failure to include several types of significant relationships and give an example “non-migrants are typically only included in a TSF on the basis of their relationships to migrants” (Lubbers et al., 2018, p.182). They add that literature also often ignores other aspects of transnational social fields or transnational networks, for example that the relationships within these spaces change in complex ways, which also leads to the networks themselves to change (Lubbers et al., 2018).

Transnational networks often take into regard the networks and social fields of first-generation migrants. Richter & Nollert (2014) specifically study the networks and transnational ties of second-generation migrants. They explain that much of the literature on the networks of second-generation migrants shows that transnational social spaces take away the pressure to decide between the two cultures they often are a part of. They go on to show that children that are second-generation migrants often inherit their transnational networks from their parents but that it is their own responsibility to appropriate them into something useful. If they succeed, these transnational networks can become important resources of cultural capital (Richter & Nollert, 2014). Also Ryan et al. (2015) show that transnational social networks are an important source of social, economic and cultural capital. They state that “social networks are widely recognised as a key source of migrants’ capital, facilitating migration and settlement as well as the maintenance of transnational lives” (Ryan et al., 2015, p.3). These networks are used by migrants to generate and transfer different types of capital in a complex way.

Keles (2015) argues that earlier scholars repeatedly claimed that social capital has decreased and transnational networks have declined due to the increasing prominence of the internet. He does however show that this is not the case and that it often even develops social capital within transnational networks. This is the case because the internet helps facilitate relationships and participation across borders and spaces: “It has re-connected those who were geographically dispersed and share a collective memory, common sense of territorial and ethnic identity. The internet has contributed to new cultural practices and conversations between those who move and those who stay” (Keles, 2015, p.116).

2.2.4 Transnational Families

Within the variety of ways transnational and translocal relationships can unfold, family networks are an important one. The body of literature on transnational families, or transnational kinship as it is frequently referred to, describes these relationships as “families that live some or most of the time separated from each other, yet hold together and create something that can be seen as a feeling of collective welfare and unity, i.e. ‘familyhood’, even across national borders.” (Bryceson & Vuorela, 2002, p.3). Although transnational family networks have existed for a long time, the current mass scale of it, as well as the term itself, is relatively new (Merla et al., 2021; Skrbiš, 2008). The concept arose together with a general focus on transnationalism within migration studies, where a migrant now was seen as someone that manages and preserves relationships and links with several societies and networks. Until this point, transnational family practices were largely overlooked and ignored. Skrbiš (2008) focuses on the role of emotions within transnational families as, according to him, emotions are key to understanding transnational families. This is firstly because it is the emotional ties that link individuals to their families and secondly because migration experiences are filled with emotions, a large part because a migration journey is a process where an individual is pulled away from their existing family structures (Skrbiš, 2008). Another way emotions play a role in border-transcending family relationships is through the notion of family obligations. Merla et al. (2021) explain that there are often obligations of physical, financial, emotional and practical support among transnational families. These types of transnational kinship obligations can lead to conflicts and feelings of frustration, for several parties within a family (Brandhorst et al., 2020; Åkesson, 2008b).

There are many types of challenges that can arise within transnational families. One obvious challenge is the difficulties and emotions that can exist within transnational kinships due to the separation of, and distance between family members (Drotbohm, 2010; Skrbiš, 2008). Another difficulty is the inequality between different members of a transnational family, also called social asymmetries in transnational social relations. Drotbohm (2010) explains that there is often a discrepancy in how the non-migrant members perceive the social, financial and material resources of the migrant family members, compared to their actual resources. Due to this mismatch, the non-migrant members expect a disproportionately high part of the resources their migrant family members have obtained as they “perceive themselves as deserving their portion of material gains achieved by their migrant relatives” (Drotbohm, 2010, p.62). She furthermore adds that the migrant members experience this pressure to the extent that they no longer return to their country of origin (Drotbohm, 2010). Also other scholars emphasize the role of obligation in transnational families, stating that this

can lead to conflict and frustrations between family members (Brandhorst et al, 2020; Åkesson, 2008b).

An increasingly difficult bottleneck is what Brandhorst et al. (2020) call immobility regimes. They state that the role of mobility and having the opportunity to physically care for, and visit transnational family members if needed is important. Financial immobility is one related issue, but increasingly restrictive migration policies and closing borders cause transnational families to become increasingly immobile (Brandhorst et al., 2020). Mobility is described as one of the factors or even duties, that make up a transnational family. Mobility allows for care, both physical and financial, and social reproduction within the family. Due to the increase in immobility regimes, these duties and thereby the transnational kinship relationships can be negatively impacted. Transnational family structures change, which can have a significant effect on the relationships between members of transnational families (Merla et al., 2020; Åkesson, 2009).

2.2.5 From Transnationalism to Translocality

Although transnationalism is acclaimed to be an important term to embody the mobility of relationships and connections across national boundaries, it is also critiqued for several reasons. It is argued that transnationalism has not succeeded in exceeding territorial limits as the term is still used to look at relationships across countries, regarding nation-states as a binding container of social space (Zoomers & van Westen, 2011). Therefore, the concept of translocality was coined. Although it is sometimes used as a synonym for transnationalism, translocality is meant to extend the principles of transnationalism. On one hand, the terms are similar because they focus on “migration, circulation and spatial interconnectedness” (Greiner & Sakdapolrak, 2013, p.373), however, translocality is different because it focuses on local contexts and the context of the actors involved, going beyond the spatial limits of the national borders. Zoomers & van Westen (2011) state that translocality emphasizes spatial connectedness, acknowledging that “many of such so-called ‘transnational migrants’ in fact lead fragmented lives and shift between a number of interconnected localities. Rather than acting in a ‘transnational space’, people operate in a network of different localities” (Zoomers & van Westen, 2011, p.379). The shift towards a translocal perspective is important because it gives room for a bottom-up perspective dominated by context-bound social and local experiences (Greiner & Sakdapolrak, 2013; Brickell & Datta, 2011).

Translocality makes room for an improved view of livelihoods. Scholars often perceive the livelihoods of individuals or households as being geographically bound. However, the livelihoods of people are not only multidimensional but also multi-local. People can have and even rely on, connections and relationships with others across space and locations to

diversify their livelihood opportunities. This can be essential for “their ability to cope with change, and establish secure livelihoods” (De Haan & Zoomers, 2003, p.360). Livelihood and translocality often go hand in hand, which together form translocal livelihoods (Steinbrink & Niedenfuhr, 2020, p.35). Because the subjects of livelihood research often are households, livelihoods are seen as bound to one place. In that sense, migration is neglected as being a part of livelihoods. It is however necessary to break free of this point of view, as many households are translocal (Etzold, 2017; Steinbrink & Niedenfuhr, 2020).

2.3 Remittances

One of the practices that make up transnational, or translocal, families and households, is the sending and receiving of remittances. The body of literature about remittances often focuses on the financial aspect of remittances and excludes other types of remittances in the use and definition of remittances. However, remittances are formed by the “economic, cultural, political and social exchanges” between migrants and non-migrants (Markley, 2011, p.366). The sharing of social and cultural remittances is an important practice among translocal connections, as it strengthens bonds, trust, and social networks, which are important elements within translocal networks and translocal families (Markley, 2011). Financial remittances are however often regarded as the most essential and impactful type of remittance for migrant and non-migrant relationships. These remittances “are the material manifestation of family ties stretched by the geographical distance which migration creates” (Erdal, 2022, p.356). Singh et al., (2012) report that in 2012, financial remittances reached US\$374 billion, which is double the amount of money that is sent in official aid. What is interesting is that remittance flows are more stable than other types of economic flows to developing countries, which the economic crisis in 2008 and the recent Covid-19 pandemic showed (Kpodar, 2022; Yang, 2011). The remittances sent within families and between family members constitute a large part of the overall remittances that are sent. Families send financial remittances in several ways, including steady money flows, extra money for emergencies, or personal or familial investments. The process of remittance sending and receiving is something that holds translocal families together, formed by reciprocity and obligation (Erdal, 2022; Singh et al., 2012).

However, remittances have certain moral dimensions. It can be difficult for migrants to feel morally obligated to send remittances to their families. Feelings of obligations can cause challenges and can impact family relationships (Simoni & Voirol, 2020). However, Boccagni (2015) shows that it often is not the case that the family members that stayed do not offer anything in return: “Left behinds can be a source of social support in several respects” (Boccagni, 2015, p.263).

3. Methodology

This research was conducted between February and May 2023. The first half of this period was spent on research in Rotterdam and the second period on the Cape Verdean islands São Vicente and Santiago. This chapter begins with a conceptual framework and an operationalization of the concepts. This is followed by an overview of the research design, presenting the process and different phases of this research, and the methods and techniques that were used in this research. Lastly, this chapter includes a critical reflection on the limitations, positionality, and potential biases of this research.

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework presents the most relevant concepts of this research and visualizes how they are linked and together form the framework of this study. As portrayed below, in Figure 1, the context of this study is situated around Dutch-Cape Verdean families which are made up of members in the Netherlands and members in Cape Verde. Translocality is the main concept that determines the scope of this research and sets the context in which the other elements are positioned. The relations between the concepts are also highlighted to show how they are interlinked.

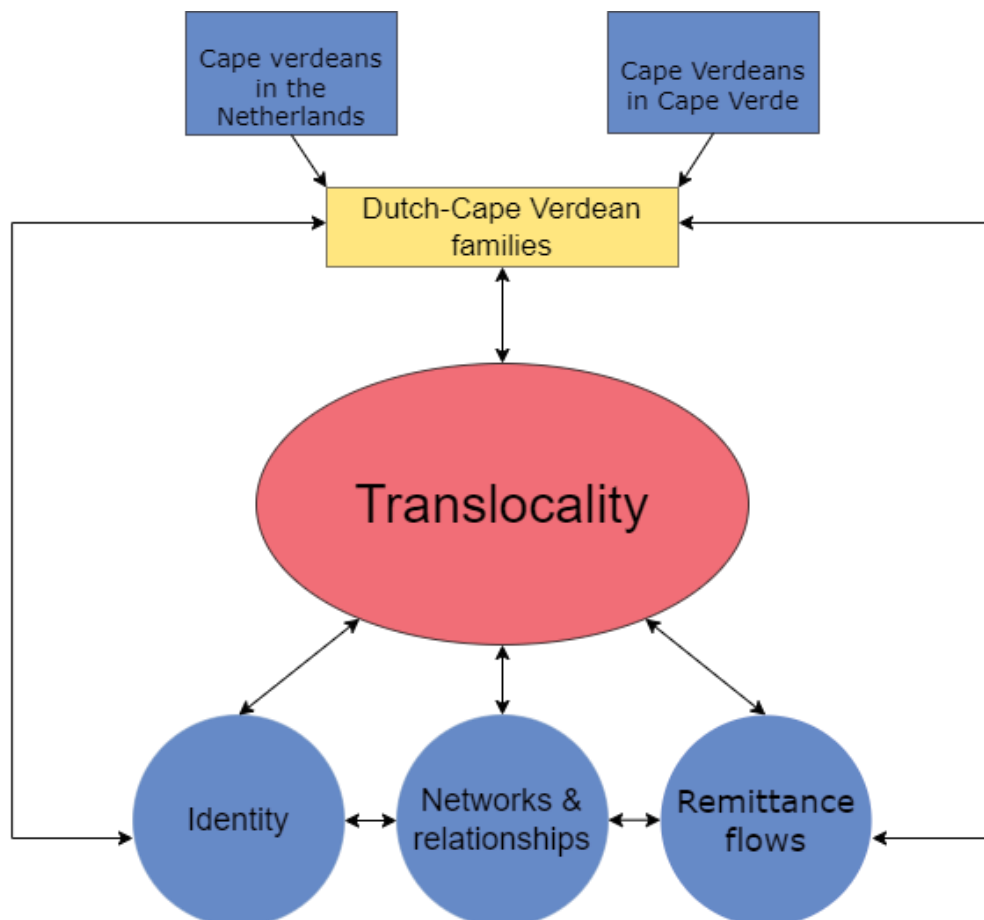


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

3.2 Operationalization

The operationalization of the concepts (see Table 1 below) demonstrates all the concepts that make up this research and presents how these concepts are defined in this research and on which literature this employed definition is based, as well as how the concept is actually measured in this study.

Concept	Indicator	Measured by	Literature
<u>Translocality</u>	Practices, connections and relationships across countries and localities	Someone's combined practices, connections and relationships that extend across localities, transcending geographical space	Steinbrink & Niedenführ (2020); Zoomers & van Westen (2011)
<u>Translocal family</u>	Family connections across countries and localities	Families where close relationships are maintained and sustained across countries and localities, transcending geographical space	Bryceson & Vuorela (2002)
<u>Translocal network</u>	Networks that transcend geographical boundaries	Networks that are maintained and sustained by interpersonal relationships across localities, transcending geographical spaces	Lubbers et al. (2018); Tan et al.(2017)
<u>Financial remittance flows</u>	Receiving or sending financial support	Financial support that is sent between acquaintances, friends or family members	Erdal (2022)

<u>Identity</u>	How someone identifies themselves	The way in which someone describes themselves and their relation to the social world	Buckingham, (2008; Chrysochoou (2003)
<u>Livelihood</u>	Means of living	The assets, capabilities and activities someone has for a means of living, <i>the extent to which someone has the agency to change this</i>	Serrat (2017)
<u>(Im)mobility</u>	Experience of (im)mobility	The extent to which someone is free to go or stay in their place of preference	Etzold (2017);
<u>Translocal challenges</u>	Experience of difficulties caused or influence by translocality	The particular difficulties someone experiences in for example their personal life, within their family or networks	Carling (2008b); Vertovec (2001)

Table 1: Operationalization of the concepts

3.3 Research Design

Qualitative research plays an essential role in understanding the complexity of human experiences, behaviors, and social phenomena. In the realm of development studies, a qualitative approach offers a nuanced lens to delve into the lived experiences, perceptions, and dynamics that quantitative methods might overlook (Skovdal & Cornish, 2015). It prioritizes depth over volume, allowing researchers to gain a nuanced understanding of intricate social dynamics, behaviors, and relationships. This approach is characterized by its flexibility, enabling the researcher to adapt and evolve as new insights emerge (Bryman, 2016; Hennink et al., 2020). This is especially an important point of view when exploring the relationships and lived experiences of Dutch-Cape Verdean families because this research

aims to sketch an overarching view, combining the perspectives and lived experiences of the different members within these families. Therefore a qualitative approach was chosen for this research.

3.4 Research Instruments

Within the scope of qualitative research, some methods have been selected to collect the primary data during the fieldwork. Firstly, personal surveys in the form of face-to-face conversations were carried out. Secondly, semi-structured interviews were conducted and make up a large part of the primary data. Secondary data was used as a foundation of this study before the primary data collection took place. These methods together form this research. It is important to note that the personal surveys serve a different purpose than the semi-structured interviews. The personal surveys function as a source of information to grasp the Dutch-Cape Verdean context. However, the semi-structured interviews form the foundation for the analysis of this thesis, where the results are primarily based on the data that was collected during the interviews.

3.4.1 Primary Data

During the 12 weeks in which this fieldwork is carried out, primary data collection was the main objective. This period is characterized by three phases, located in two different countries. The first two phases took place in Rotterdam, the Netherlands where data was collected about migrant members of Cape Verdean families. The second phase took in São Vicente and Santiago, Cape Verde to gather knowledge about the non-migrant members of Cape Verdean families. Although the two phases in Rotterdam overlapped partially, all three stages of the research had their own objectives and were unique in their techniques.

3.4.1.1 Personal Surveys

Phase one took place in Rotterdam where personal surveys were carried out. A total of 47 surveys in the form of short conversations were conducted with Cape Verdean migrants in Rotterdam. None of these conversations were recorded. The aim of these conversations was to get a baseline on several relevant aspects of this research by collecting a broad set of perspectives. The survey zoomed in on elements of personal background characteristics and meaningful relationships and set out to map family networks across different countries and translocal practices like sending remittances. Through a printed map of the world, the translocal networks and practices of each participant were mapped in a visual way to understand their real-life connections across different localities. Furthermore, space was created to talk about possible personal or familial challenges or to share their own personal stories and experiences.

3.4.1.2 Semi-structured Interviews

The second and third phase of this research consists of 23 semi-structured interviews, carried out in the Netherlands and in Cape Verde (see Table 2 for an overview of the respondents).

Name of respondent (pseudonym)	Current place of residence	Place of birth
Antonio	Rotterdam	Praia
Manuel	Rotterdam	Praia
Francisca	Rotterdam	Mindelo
Pedro	Rotterdam	Praia
Joana	Rotterdam	Maio
Luís	Rotterdam	Mindelo
Paulo	Rotterdam	Praia
Nelson	Rotterdam	Santo Antão
Fernando	Rotterdam	Rotterdam
Sandra	Rotterdam	Mindelo
Carla	Rotterdam	Sal
Isabel	Rotterdam	Praia
Paula	Mindelo	Mindelo
Júlia	Mindelo	Mindelo
Helena	Mindelo	Mindelo
Cláudia	Praia	Praia
Miguel	Praia	Praia
Maria	Praia	Boa Vista
Eduardo	Praia	Praia
Vera	Praia	Maio
Domingos	Praia	Praia
Jorge	Mindelo	Santo Antão
Ana	Mindelo	Mindelo

Table 2: Overview of interview respondents

Phase two was carried out in Rotterdam in the form of 12 semi-structured interviews, most of the interviews were recorded. The focus of this part of the data collection shifted towards compiling an in-depth view of the translocal connections and practices of the Cape Verdean migrants in Rotterdam. The aim of this phase was to get a deep understanding of the lived experiences of Cape Verdeans in Rotterdam in relation to their own lives and the role of translocality in their everyday practices and in relation to their family relationships and the

influence of translocality on their various connections and networks. The participants of the semi-structured interviews are a select group chosen during the personal surveys. The most important characteristic on which the survey participants were asked, or not asked, for a follow-up interview was their island of origin, or on which island they had family. The two other characteristics were their level of enthusiasm and willingness to participate in the

Phase three took place in Cape Verde, where a total of 11 interviews were carried out; five in Mindelo, São Vicente and six in Praia, Santiago. Only a small portion of the interviews were recorded. The aim was to gain thorough insights into the lives of the non-migrant family members of Cape Verdean families and to understand their lived experiences when it comes to the role of translocality for their personal lives and familial connections. with the non-migrant members of the translocal families. The participants were predominantly family members of the interview respondents in the Netherlands. A few were connections of other participants in Cape Verde that had lived in the Netherlands prior in their lives but moved back to Cape Verde.

[3.4.2 Secondary Data Collection](#)

Secondary data was primarily collected in the early phases of this research, before the fieldwork was carried out. Secondary data was used to get an overview of the context in which this research is embedded and consists largely of academic articles, country reports, demographical statistics and other publications. The secondary data collection was used to review relevant literature and topics to establish a theoretical and contextual framework for this research. The analysis of this data was used to operationalize the most important concepts for this research.

[3.5 Respondent Sampling Methods](#)

The research population of this study are Cape Verdeans that live in Rotterdam and Cape Verdeans that live on the Cape Verdean islands São Vicente and Santiago. The respondent sampling methods varied per phase of this research. The respondents in Rotterdam were found through the help of Azágua, a Cape Verdean organization in Rotterdam. Azágua recruited all 47 of the survey respondents in Rotterdam. 13 of the survey participants were asked for a follow-up interview, which in turn were asked to facilitate a connection with one of their family members in Cape Verde which is how the Cape Verdean respondents were found.

The aim was to have a diverse group of respondents in Rotterdam. During the first phase of the research (the personal surveys), no specifications on the island of origin were established, to ensure a close representation of the reality. From this group, a portion was

sampled for the interviews. This population was chosen on the basis of the island of origin. The reason for this is that the fieldwork in Cape Verde only took place on the two islands in Cape Verde where the literature reported heavy migration flows to the Netherlands. The Cape Verdean respondents were facilitated by the interview participants in Rotterdam, as they were asked to recruit one of their family members in Cape Verde to be a part of this research. The only requirement was that they lived on São Vicente or in Praia on Santiago.

3.6 Reflection

Every researcher has their own position and frame of reference. It is important to reflect on and be aware of this positionality. There were differences in background and ethnicity between the participants and the researcher, which can create unintended biases. By acknowledging these differences and staying open-minded and humble as a researcher, the influence of positionality has hopefully been constrained.

An important overarching limitation of this research is the presence of language barriers between the researcher and participants. During all three fieldwork phases language barriers arose, although the extent varied. During the personal surveys in Rotterdam, there was a language barrier during several conversations. This led to difficulty in asking follow-up questions to the participants. This barrier was attempted to be bridged by taking extra time to grasp the stories of the respondents and ensure that they were correctly understood. During the semi-structured interviews in Rotterdam, language was an occasional challenge but was also overcome by taking the time to ask extra questions to comprehend the answers of these respondents and understand the stories and experiences that they shared. During the third phase in Cape Verde the language barrier was sometimes more difficult to overcome. In some cases the language barrier was bridged in a similar way as with the respondents in Rotterdam. In other cases where communication between the researcher and participant would otherwise not be possible, a translator was used.

Although the translator was very helpful and made sure that it was possible to conduct the interviews with some of the participants in Cape Verde, it also caused another limitation. The translator that was used was not a professional, which impacted the data that was collected during these interviews. Most of the interviews that were conducted with the help of the translator are noticeably shorter because it was difficult for the translator to convey the answers and stories of the participants in an elaborate way. The translator did also not speak fluent English which sometimes impacted the communication with the researcher. Furthermore, because the researcher did not have direct contact with these participants it

was more difficult to ask follow-up questions because the flow of the interview was perceived differently. This situation led to some elements of the interview to get lost in translation.

Another limitation is related to the selection of respondents. The initial participants for the personal surveys in Rotterdam were found through the network of an organization and its employees. Although initial assurance was made to ask people of all ages, from all islands, and to not select on specific characteristics, it can never be certain that this is actually the case. Furthermore, as stated, the participants in Cape Verde were recruited as family members of the interview respondents in Rotterdam. This means that the Dutch interview respondents selected the Cape Verdean respondents. It is noticeable that the amount of the Cape Verdean respondents that spoke English was proportionally higher than the overall Cape Verdean population. This indicates that the interview respondents in Rotterdam often recruited a family member that spoke English, which causes a bias in the population of the Cape Verdean respondents.

Lastly, because this research is based on the experiences of several members within a family it is possible that certain topics of family relations or challenges were avoided by the participants. In advance, it was expected that this might become a limitation, but none of the participants seemed to find any topics difficult to talk about. It is however important to keep in mind that information can have been omitted without the researcher knowing about it.

4. Geographical Contextual Framework

4.1 History & Migration Flows

4.1.1 The History & Role of Migration for Cape Verde

Cape Verde is an archipelago located off the west coast of Africa. The island group was first inhabited by Europeans, mostly Portuguese, and African slaves in the 1400s. The country was a Portuguese colony until 1975, when it claimed its independence. It is estimated that there are around half a million inhabitants in the country. Due to the dry climate and its volcanic origins, drought is prevalent on most islands (Carling, 2004). Due to the lack of natural resources, agricultural opportunities, and its isolated location, Cape Verde is characterized by its marginality. However, despite these circumstances, the country has relatively low poverty rates compared to surrounding countries as well as a high score on the Human Development Index (Carling, 2004; Ndoye, 2022).

What makes Cape Verde a highly unique country is its reliance on migration. Scholars claim that Cape Verde has survived, and has been able to develop at the rate that it has due to migration flows (Carling, 2004; Gois, 2005; Resende-Santos, 2015). It is believed that the number of Cape Verdeans living outside of the country's borders are higher than the number of inhabitants within the country's borders (Carling, 2003; Evora, 2013). Cape Verdean migration flows were first mapped around the 1800s, but they surely began earlier (Meintel, 2002). Cape Verde's migration history can be categorized in three phases. The first phase began around the 1800s and lasted until 1920s when the US, and especially New England, was the dominant recipient of Cape Verdean migrants (Meintel, 2002). During the second phase which started around the 1920s Cape Verdean migration flows were redirected toward countries belonging to the Portuguese colonial empire (Gois, 2005; Meintel, 2002). The third phase started somewhere between the 1940s and 1960s, and is still ongoing. The main destinations became European countries. Due to the large influence of Portugal on Cape Verde, their former colonizer remains an important destination. Other European countries like the Netherlands, France, and Italy have also become popular countries of settlement for Cape Verdean migrants (Carling, 2004; Gois, 2005; Meintel, 2002).

4.1.2 Migration Flows From Cape Verde to The Netherlands

The migration flows from Cape Verde to the Netherlands started at the beginning of the 1950s when a small number of Cape Verdean men came to the port of Rotterdam, which at that time was the largest in the world. They quickly found jobs as seafarers and settled down. The number of migrants, dominantly male, coming to Rotterdam increased in the 1960s when the first settlers put in motion a 'chain of migration' where they supported and facilitated other Cape Verdeans to migrate to Rotterdam. In the 1970s, aspiring migrants from Cape

Verde faced tightening immigration policies in the Netherlands and the migration flows decreased (Carling, 2008a; De Freitas, 2016). There was still a flow of Cape Verdean migrants to the Netherlands however, this time it was predominantly Cape Verdean women that came to the Netherlands. Women that first migrated to Italy now saw their chance to not only reunite with their male counterpart but also to find better job opportunities in the Netherlands (Carling, 2008a). With time, the image of the Netherlands changed due to the strict immigration policies and worsened conditions for Cape Verdean migrants. Therefore, the migration flows from Cape Verde to the Netherlands have stagnated, and only a few have migrated to the Netherlands in recent years (Carling, 2003). In 2012 it was estimated that there are around 21 000 Cape Verdean immigrants in the Netherlands, with almost all living in Rotterdam (De Freitas, 2016). Notably, due to the chain of migration of acquaintances and family, most migrants that live in the Netherlands come from the Northern islands, also called the Barlavento islands (Carling, 2008a; De Freitas, 2016).

4.2 Identity

4.2.1 Cape Verdean Identity

The view that migration is an inherent part of the identity of Cape Verdeans is shared among many scholars (Carling & Åkesson, 2009; Challinor, 2008; Slingerland, 2012). The identities of many Cape Verdeans are shaped by migration journeys and transnationalism, and they are “marked by a collective looking forward toward other geographical locations where relatives and friends have made a new home, and a collective looking backward – to relatives and friends left behind in what becomes an imagined and desired homeland” (Challinor, 2008, p.84). Although Cape Verdeans are spread out over the whole world, and some of them are migrants and others are not, they all “relate to a shared notion of Cape Verdean identity” (Carling & Batalha, 2008, p.13). For all Cape Verdean migrants, pride for their motherland is manifested in their identity. Gibau (2008) shows that for Cape Verdean migrants, identities are often rooted in transnational and diasporic experiences and practices and that heritage is an important marker of identity and that it brings together Cape Verdean communities instantly (Gibau, 2008).

Another aspect of Cape Verdean identity is Cape Verde’s history, rooted in colonialism. Giuffré (2021) states that Cape Verdean national identity is very important, and started taking shape long before the country’s independence. The identity of Cape Verdeans is significantly shaped by the history of the country (Challinor, 2008; Giuffré, 2021).

Also the geographical location of the country is seen as a marker of identity. Cape Verde constantly faces drought, which has a big impact on the development of the country. This in turn causes famine and poverty. Because of the big impact of Cape Verde’s geographical

markers, this is central to the identity of Cape Verdeans. This is also one of the most important reasons why migration and mobility is intrinsic for Cape Verdeans (Carling & Åkesson, 2009; Challinor, 2008; Åkesson, 2008a).

4.2.2 Dutch-Cape Verdean Identity

Dutch-Cape Verdeans are repeatedly described as “‘silent migrants’: hardworking, traditionally out of trouble, but as a correlation also invisible” (Brandellero & Kersbergen, 2022, p.84). However, scholars also show that the Cape Verdean community in Rotterdam does not agree with this label (Brandellero & Kersbergen, 2022; Slingerland, 2012). Others argue that this image is changing (De Freitas, 2016). It is speculated that the Cape Verdean community in the Netherlands has this label because they have very strong in-group communities, keeping to themselves. Because of the role of Cape Verdean networks, they are self-reliant as a community. Another reason is that Cape Verdean migrants have high employment rates compared to other immigrant groups in the Netherlands (De Freitas, 2016; Carling, 2008a). The identity of Dutch-Cape Verdeans is heavily impacted by ancestry and ‘roots’. It is based on a collective sense of heritage, which ensures the importance of Cape Verdean networks in Rotterdam. Transnational spaces are of great importance to the renegotiation and creation of the identities of Cape Verdeans in the Netherlands (Carling, 2008a; De Freitas, 2016; Krakowska Rodrigues, 2022; Slingerland, 2012).

4.3 Transnationalism

4.3.1 Cape Verdean Transnationalism

Transnationalism is heavily embedded in the history and identity of Cape Verdeans. Therefore, it is important to map Cape Verdean transnationalism. There is an extensive body of literature about Cape Verdean interpersonal relationships across different spaces, but it is important to note that only the term transnationalism is used, disregarding translocality. It is important to note that the literature about Cape Verdean transnationalism, just as migration, is an old phenomenon with a rich history. Gois (2005) illustrates that “Cape Verde may be a unique example of a state that could be characterized as transnational at the moment of its creation; of a “nation” scattered over many territories” (Gois, 2005, p.263). For Cape Verdeans, transnationalism in the form of family ties and relationships is essential. Cape Verdean migrants and their families have been linked through remittances, the exchanges and sharing of resources, goods and knowledge. Cape Verdeans reportedly have intensive links within their transnational networks and families. Noticeably, the non-migrant members within transnational families are often labeled as “left behind”, indicating that the family members that moved abroad left the family members that stayed in Cape Verde. This

suggests that the members that stayed are to some extent dependent on the members that left, framing their family relationships as unequal (Challinor, 2008; Drotbohm, 2020; Åkesson, 2009). When looking at the various destination country, scholars report that strong transnational networks can be seen where the migrant members always stay connected with their relations in the country of origin. It is usual for migrants to embed homeland practices and values from their country of origin (Gois, 2005; Åkesson, 2008a).

4.3.2 Dutch-Cape Verdean Transnationalism

Dutch-Cape Verdean migrants have strong transnational ties with their communities and families in Cape Verde. Around 60% of the Cape Verdeans report having family members like parents, children and siblings in the Netherlands. (Carling, 2008a). Carling (2003) states that the majority of Cape Verdeans come from the islands of São Vicente, Santo Antao, and some from Santiago. This means that the family connections between Cape Verde and the Netherlands primarily span between these places (Carling, 2003). But not only family relationships are important but also other types of transnational networks. The Cape Verdeans in Rotterdam actively engage in different types of transnational organizations, as shown by da Graça (2010). By taking active participation in these organizations, their transnational networks are significantly strengthened. It is however not the case that participation in national and ethnic activities and communities weakens integration into Dutch society. Cape Verdeans in the Netherlands thereby show that they are transnational by participating in Cape Verdean networks as well as Dutch society (da Graça, 2010)

4.4 Remittances

4.4.1 Cape Verdean Remittances

Remittances are essential for the economy of Cape Verde. Resende-Santos (2015) speculates that economic remittances make up almost 50% of the country's GDP (Resende-Santos, 2015). Other scholars estimate this number to be around 20% (Carling, 2004; Pop, 2011; Åkesson, 2010). Remittances that are sent to Cape Verde are very important for the livelihoods and economies of Cape Verdean individuals, families and communities. To the recipients of remittances, which often but not always are the members that stayed, remittances can seem like the only way of making ends meet. Transnationality plays a vital role in the remittance process. Within Cape Verdean transnational communities, and especially families "remittances play a key role in the making and remaking of ties between migrants and their relatives in the country of origin. The dynamics of transnational kinship are inherently intertwined with the migrants' transfer of their money" (Åkesson, 2010, p.141). Also within Cape Verdean transnational families, remittances have for a long time been an integral

part. The relatives in the country of origin are seen as “left behind” because they experience the consequences of the migrant families that left. Often, this is connected to the support that they receive from the so-called members that left them, because they cannot care for them or support them in person (Drotbohm, 2020; Åkesson, 2009).

4.4.2 Dutch-Cape Verdean Remittances

Within Dutch-Cape Verdean transnational families, remittances are essential. Even though the migration numbers from Cape Verde to the Netherlands have stagnated and decreased, the amount of remittances that Dutch-Cape Verdeans send to their country of origin has not. When zooming in on São Vicente, the largest Northern island of Cape Verde and second largest island overall, the Netherlands is the number one source of remittances (Carling, 2003). Dutch-Cape Verdeans see the sending of remittances as an important transnational practice that they feel proud of, not only on a personal level but with regard to solidarity and tradition (Carling, 2008b).

4.5 Bottlenecks and Challenges for Cape Verdeans

Migration and mobility are essential for Cape Verdeans. Migration has been part of their lives and livelihood trajectories for a long time. Carling & Åkesson (2009) even state that “The Cape Verdean nation is a product of human mobility ... Successive generations of Cape Verdeans have grown up seeing mobility as an intrinsic part of life” (Carling & Åkesson, 2009, pp.123-124). This means that mobility and being able to migrate is part of the livelihoods of many Cape Verdeans. Furthermore, the remittances Cape Verdeans receive are an intrinsic part of their livelihoods (Åkesson, 2008a). However, the mobile, transnational lives of many Cape Verdeans are now being threatened in many places, the Netherlands included. People cannot as easily migrate anymore, and the identities of translocal families are threatened. This is due to the tightening immigration policies and poor treatment of migrants. Cape Verdeans reportedly no longer see the Netherlands as a viable country to settle. This threatens the mobility and livelihoods of Cape Verdean migrants, both aspired and settled, as well as the people they leave behind (Carling & Batalha, 2008; Carling & Åkesson, 2009). This will also have an effect on the remittances that are being sent to Cape Verde (Carling & Batalha, 2008).

5. Analysis: Translocal Identity Formation

This chapter explores the different elements that shape the identities and identification processes of the members of the Dutch-Cape Verdean families. Firstly, the upbringing of the respondents and the role of migration is covered, followed by the views on and influences of the country dynamics to which the different family members are exposed, and lastly, the cultural identities and expressions of identification of the respondents are investigated.

5.1 Upbringing & the Role of Migration

5.1.1 Dutch Respondents

The upbringing of the respondents living in Rotterdam varies. One characteristic they all have in common is that they were raised in a Cape Verdean family. The number of years they have lived in the Netherlands is diverse, but only one participant was born in the Netherlands. A few of the respondents that were born in Cape Verde were however mostly or partly raised in the Netherlands, like Luís who moved to the Netherlands when he was three. Carla arrived in Rotterdam when she was 11. Fernando is the only one that was born in Rotterdam. The rest of the respondents lived in Cape Verde for a longer time, some during most of their upbringing and others into adulthood. Therefore, almost all of the respondents living in Rotterdam have migrated to the Netherlands at some point in their life.

Only Fernando did not migrate, but also his life has been greatly affected by migration. His parents moved to the Netherlands when his mother was far along in her pregnancy, and although he has not experienced migrating himself, he has been greatly impacted by the choice that his parents made to migrate. He goes on to explain that migration has been part of his family's history for generations. His grandfather was a seafarer and already lived in Rotterdam: "He convinced my parents to move to the Netherlands for better opportunities. Because of the connections it was easier for my parents to migrate here" (Fernando, male, Rotterdam). Several respondents conveyed that they already had close family members living in the Netherlands when they migrated there. A few already had had a father that lived there, one woman went after her sister, and another respondent says that his mother already lived in Rotterdam. She already lived in Rotterdam for 8 years before he was reunited with her. She wanted a better life for herself and her family, which is why she moved.

"She always had the intention to bring us to the Netherlands too, but it took a while before that was possible. She needed to have a stable life here first before she could bring us, and it was much more difficult to bring us here than she had expected. I know that it is difficult for people to emigrate from Cape Verde, but I still don't understand why it was so difficult for my mother to be reunited with her own children" (Nelson, male, Rotterdam).

The challenge of not being able to migrate is one that many Cape Verdeans experience. All Cape Verdeans living in Rotterdam or somewhere else outside of the Cape Verdean borders have successfully migrated, but it does not always without difficulties. As Nelson explains, it took his mother eight years before she was able to reunite with her children in the Netherlands. A similar story is shared by Sandra, a woman that migrated by herself to get a better life for herself and her son but found herself in a situation where she could not provide the required documents to bring her son to the Netherlands. After months of putting all her energy into fulfilling the requirements and getting the right documents, she was able to bring her son to the Netherlands. She expresses that she does not regret moving to the Netherlands because it did give her son a better life, but it still makes her emotional to think of the time she was not able to bring her son with her.

The respondents have lived in the Netherlands for a diverse amount of time. They all have in common that migration has shaped their life greatly, with most having actively experienced migration. It is obvious how impactful migration has been for their lives. The search for better opportunities has been a common reason, and many report that they indeed found better opportunities in the Netherlands. Family is a recurring influencer for migration, where reunification has motivated many of the participants to migrate to the Netherlands. Others were motivated to find a better life for their loved ones. Family chain migration seems to be a recurring catalyst for migration. It might be because it is purely an incentive when deciding where to migrate or it could be that having family somewhere facilitates opportunities that otherwise would not exist. Accordingly, many of the participants realize that migration is not a given and that many that desire to migrate don't have the means or opportunity to do so.

[5.1.2 Cape Verdean Respondents](#)

The Cape Verdean respondents have different upbringings. One thing that they all share is that they were born in Cape Verde, although on different islands. Santiago and São Vicente are the most common birth islands of the respondents, but two were born on Boa Vista, one on Maio, and another on Santo Antao. Vera, born on Maio says that she moved to Praia when she was 10 to go to school: "In the beginning, we could not afford a proper house in Praia, so we lived in very poor conditions. But it was necessary for my future to go to a bigger city" (Vera, female, Praia). One woman that was born on Boa Vista explains that she also moved to Praia when she was a child, to her grandmother's house. She explains that her mother decided that she and her siblings would have better opportunities in Praia. Her grandmother took care of her, but she doubts her livelihood became better after she moved to Praia. Because she was the oldest of her siblings, she helped her grandmother get food on the table and take care of her siblings. She remarks that this has greatly impacted her childhood and upbringing. She is still the one that takes care of everyone in the family

because that is how she was raised. A large proportion grew up in the same city that they still live in, often together with other family members. Several report that their family used to live on another island or in another town but that they moved to the city for better resources: “My mother and her family moved here when she was young because it is better in the city. In the past it was even worse than now, in the villages on the smaller islands people lacked a lot of resources” (Cláudia, female, Praia). She adds that it is getting better now, but that it can still be difficult in the smaller places to get the necessary supplies. Many people are still moving to the cities.

None of the Cape Verdean respondents have permanently emigrated from Cape Verde. However, all of their lives have been impacted by international migration. All of them have family abroad, often in several countries. A significant part has one or several of their closest family members abroad, like siblings, parents, or children. That has a big impact on their lives. A woman that has a daughter in the Netherlands says “I understand that she has to be there because it is better there. And of course I am happy for her, but I miss her so much. I just want to be close to her” (Ana, female, Mindelo). Other respondents have experienced their own migration journey. Several studied in Portugal and came back after their studies. Júlia studied in Portugal for 8 years, but says “I went there to study, and this was good for my future. But I always knew I wanted to go back to Cape Verde. Cape Verde is my home, there is not a chance that I will leave it” (Júlia, female, Mindelo). But others lived in another country for a longer period of time. Paula for example lived in the Netherlands for 40 years, from the age of 11, before she recently moved back to Cape Verde. She wanted to move back for a long time, but she says that life got in the way. “We [Cape Verdeans] are welcoming to everybody, we would never turn our back on anyone. We use the term *Morabeza* for this. It is a complex term, I cannot literally translate the meaning to English but it is about generosity, warmth, welcomeness and more. Never leaving someone in the cold” (Paula, female, Mindelo). Also Helena moved back to Cape Verde after living in the Netherlands for more than 30 years. She explains that the desire to give back to Cape Verde became stronger: “When I was 39 I decided that I wanted to move back while I could still participate and give back to the Cape Verdean society instead of moving when we were old and retired” (Helena, female, Mindelo). Eduardo says he got the chance to migrate and study abroad but actively chose not to do so.

“My father saved money for us [his children] to give us the opportunity to study and if we wanted to migrate abroad. I am the only sibling that chose to stay in Cape Verde. Sometimes I regret the decision, who knows what my life would look like if I moved abroad?” (Eduardo, male, Praia)

Eduardo goes on to say that it can be difficult to live in Cape Verde. He has to provide for his family, but even as a full-time teacher, his salary is low. He needs to work very hard to get by, which has a negative impact on his livelihood. He often wonders what his life and livelihood would have been like if he took the opportunity to migrate abroad.

Several Cape Verdean respondents or their families moved to another place for better resources and opportunities, either inside or outside of Cape Verde. This shows that it can be difficult in Cape Verde in general but especially in smaller places to get access to the necessary opportunities. Cape Verdeans do not only resort to international migration to find better opportunities but there is also internal migration between islands and cities for the same reason. The necessity to move somewhere else for opportunities might have consequences for the places that people move away from as well as for Cape Verde as a whole. These places have an apparent need for development and an increase in opportunities. It can however be the case that because of the consistent outflow of people, the rate of development only decreases.

5.2 Views on, and Influences of Country Dynamics

5.2.1 Dutch Respondents

The view that emigrating from Cape Verde is difficult, is a common opinion amongst the respondents and is one of the views that they share about Cape Verdean country dynamics. Many express that there is a big socio-economic gap in Cape Verde, and that it keeps getting worse. The gap between the rich and the poor is growing bigger, and the government is not helping enough to solve this problem. A few even state that the government is actively reinforcing the gap by implementing laws and systems that are beneficial for the rich. The minimum wage in Cape Verde is very low, which assures that people of lower socio-economic classes stay poor.

“The minimum wage in Cape Verde is very low, it is €140. Actually, it just got raised to €150 but that is still not enough. People can almost not afford to get by. I think it is so unfair that the minimum wage is so low, this has a big impact on my family there. It is really concerning me” (Sandra, female, Rotterdam).

Sandra expresses her concerns about her family’s livelihood in Cape Verde because of the political and economic situation in Cape Verde. She is not the only one that is concerned. One man in particular expresses that he thinks the political and therefore also economic dynamics in Cape Verde are unstable:

“I do not understand why so many things in Cape Verde are still so bad. The democracy is still not working well and there have been many political scandals over the years. I think the economy but also the society is not working well because of this. People just become more and more poor while a few are becoming rich. It is a scandal” (Antonio, male, Rotterdam).

Antonio goes on to give the Cape Verdean healthcare system as an example. He shares his experience from 4 years ago when he got very sick while he was in Cape Verde. “It was a disaster, the hospital couldn’t help me so I went to a private clinic. It was too expensive, so after two weeks I had no more money. Luckily I was allowed to travel back to the Netherlands” (Antonio, male, Rotterdam).

The views on Dutch dynamics are prevalently more positive. The view that there are more opportunities in the Netherlands than in Cape Verde is frequently repeated. Many move to the Netherlands for better opportunities for themselves and their family members. Antonio expressed that after the healthcare disaster in Cape Verde, he once again realized how lucky he is that he lives in the Netherlands. One challenge that however keeps reoccurring is that life in the Netherlands is very stressful. People have more opportunities here, but it is also expected that people work or do something to earn these opportunities.

The respondents in the Netherlands mostly have negative views about Cape Verde and specifically its political and economic dynamics. This is quite logical as they all live in a different part of the world now and many migrated because they wanted better circumstances than they experienced in Cape Verde. While some of the respondents report first-hand experiences that shape their views on Cape Verde, many base their opinions on the views of their family in Cape Verde or other sources. This can create a particular perspective. Furthermore, the negative views on Cape Verde coincide with the shared feeling of relief that they were able to migrate to the Netherlands and find better opportunities. Their views on Dutch dynamics have a more positive connotation. They report indeed having better opportunities in the Netherlands, which is the reason many migrated to the Netherlands in the first place. However, since it is also mentioned that there are certain expectations in the Netherlands to earn the opportunities that are available, it might be that the Netherlands causes certain stress or other negative feelings. Therefore, the views on the Netherlands are not two-sided.

[5.2.2 Cape Verdean Respondents](#)

Many Cape Verdean respondents express their concern about the political and economic dynamics in Cape Verde, and several of them feel disadvantaged because of it. Maria works in a supermarket to provide for her children, grandchildren, and siblings. However, she does

not earn much because of the minimum wage in Cape Verde: “I worry a lot about getting by because I often don’t know if I have enough money to provide for everyone. My job doesn’t pay enough, I wish the government would support us more” (Maria, female, Praia). She adds that things are changing in Cape Verde, but they are not changing fast enough. Many are troubled because of the bad economic situation in Cape Verde.

A factor that according to several respondents increases poverty in Cape Verde is the geographical location of the country. “The biggest struggle that this country has is the drought. This limits agriculture and the production of most foods” (Jorge, male, Mindelo). Vera adds that if it would rain more often there would be many more jobs, like in agriculture and production. She also says “then Cape Verde would maybe not need to import so much and that would lower the prices of many things. One of the biggest problems here is that things are so expensive here” (Vera, female, Praia).

The view that the opportunities in the Netherlands are much better than in Cape Verde is widespread amongst the participants in Cape Verde. It is also frequently mentioned that the Dutch government takes care of its citizens. Some express jealousy of the Dutch economic and political situation. But the views on Dutch dynamics are not only positive. Paula lived in the Netherlands for decades before she moved back to Cape Verde says that the primary reason she moved back was because the Netherlands was becoming too hectic for her. Others express having heard that the Netherlands is stressful and that there is a certain pressure. When it comes to the geographical characteristics of the country, it is repeatedly said that the weather in the Netherlands is very bad and that they are happy they don’t have to live in the cold and rainy weather.

The Cape Verdean participants are overall concerned with the dynamics that they experience in their country of residence. Many blame the geographical location of Cape Verde and see it as the root cause of many problems. While their view on the Dutch dynamics is much better and some feel jealous about it, some also express that the weather in the Netherlands is a disadvantage, especially the large amount of rain. This is an interesting paradox because they also feel disadvantaged in Cape Verde because of a severe lack of rain.

[5.3 Country Affiliation & Expressions of Identification](#)

[5.3.1 Dutch Respondents](#)

Cape Verde is a very important part of the identities of Cape Verdeans in Rotterdam. When asked what being Cape Verdean means to them, many used terms like resilience, acceptance, being strong and warm. One respondent expresses that “Cape Verdeans are

warm, welcoming and accepting. Even when people don't know each other they are warm towards each other and make you feel at home" (Carla, female, Rotterdam). Someone else said that "Cape Verdeans are strong people, they don't give up easily. It is part of the Cape Verdean culture to want the best life for oneself and one's family. This often involves migrating" (Francisca, female, Rotterdam). Luís explains that although he was very young when he moved to the Netherlands he identifies strongly with Cape Verde because his parents taught him Cape Verdean values when he was growing up. He has always held his Cape Verdean heritage close to him. Carla, who moved to Rotterdam when she was 11, also conveys that while being in the Netherlands from a young age, she has always been proudly Cape Verdean. She says that although she feels at home in the Netherlands, she will never forget where she comes from. Fernando, who was born and raised in Rotterdam explains that due to a mix of cultures during his upbringing, he has a strong connection to both the Netherlands and Cape Verde. This is because the Cape Verdean culture was, and still is, prominent, in his childhood home while he has been immersed in the Dutch society through school, work and other activities. According to Fernando, identifying with two widely different cultures often is something positive, but it can also be challenging. He describes it as sometimes feeling stuck between the two cultures because they are so different. When considering the participants that were born in Cape Verde and lived there for a big part of their lives, they all strongly convey the importance of Cape Verde for their identity. One participant expresses that he is and always will be a Cape Verdean: "I grew up in Cape Verde and it will continue shaping who I am. Of course I feel part of the Dutch society and the Netherlands feels like my home, but I will forever be Cape Verdean" (Nelson, Male, Rotterdam).

The affiliation the respondents feel towards Cape Verde, and their views on Cape Verdean identity go hand in hand with their views on the Cape Verdean culture. The Cape Verdean culture is described as very warm, welcoming and accepting. "It is very easy to get to know and become friends with Cape Verdeans because they accept new people, they make you feel at home" (Carla, female, Rotterdam). Family is also very important in the Cape Verdean culture, and all the respondents share that they were raised with very strong family values. "I think it is very normal for Cape Verdeans to have a big family, and to be very close to your family. It is not so normal for Dutch families I think, it is really different" (Pedro, male, Rotterdam). Isabel thinks that "the definition for what and who family is differs per nationality. In the Netherlands people would only include a few members in their family but Cape Verdean families include so many members" (Isabel, female, Rotterdam).

Their expressions about the Dutch culture are quite different, however. The view that life in the Netherlands is very stressful is something many Cape Verdeans living in Rotterdam

struggle with: “People have the ability to do what they want here, and the country takes care of you. However it is very stressful here, it’s expected that you work a lot. That is something that I will never get used to” (Joana, female, Rotterdam). Another strong opinion that is voiced on the Dutch culture is that people don’t have time for each other because of their stressful lifestyle:

“I am working here all the time, so I don’t have time for my friends and family that live here. Relationships are different in the Netherlands than in Cape Verde. My friendships here in the Netherlands feel much colder than in Cape Verde. Here people don’t take time for each other, they are too busy” (Paulo, male, Rotterdam).

That Dutch people are cold is a common notion amongst the respondents. Joana further expresses that she misses the warmth and openness in Dutch people. She says “I just want to talk and meet new people, like all Cape Verdeans. But Dutch people often want to be by themselves” (Joana, female, Rotterdam).

All participants that live in the Netherlands report a very strong affiliation with Cape Verde, regardless of where they grew up and where they were raised. Several conclude, and this can be seen in all respondents, that migrating to or living in another place than one’s country of heritage, does not result in a decrease in identification with their country of origin. It is also noteworthy that when asked about their thoughts on Dutch culture, they did not express similar affiliations with their country of settlement. This can imply that living somewhere else than their country of heritage may increase identification with their ancestral home.

5.3.2 Cape Verdean Respondents

All the Cape Verdean respondents identify fully with being Cape Verdean. When asked what it means to them to be Cape Verdean, sentiments of pride dominate. Many specify that Cape Verde has a rich history which they are proud of, and has taught Cape Verdeans to be strong and hardworking: “There are many struggles here, but for us, the positive outweighs the negative. You learn that living with difficulties is a part of it but you try to turn it into something positive” (Ana, female, Mindelo). Other aspects of being Cape Verdean that is heavily shared amongst the Cape Verdean respondents is that Cape Verdeans are warm and welcoming, they will always help those around them: “Cape Verdeans know how to be happy with very little, and even with very little they are always prepared to help and share with others” (Vera, female, Praia). One woman, Cláudia, refers to the Cape Verdean phrase *Djunta mon* to describe the importance of working together to make things better, and never let your closest family and neighbors face a challenge alone. Another phrase that is very important for Cape Verdeans, and is deeply rooted in their identities, is *Morabeza*:

“We [Cape Verdeans] are welcoming to everybody, we would never turn our back on anyone. We use the term *Morabeza* for this. It is a complex term, I cannot literally translate the meaning to English but it is about generosity, warmth, welcomeness and more. Never leaving someone in the cold” (Júlia, female, Mindelo).

Cape Verdean identity is greatly shaped by notions of *Morabeza*, resilience, and collectiveness. This is also deeply rooted in the Cape Verdean culture. Interestingly, the discourse in which the respondents describe the Cape Verdean identity is based on helping and facing challenges together. This indicates that many Cape Verdeans face similar difficulties, which has created an identity dominated by collectivity. According to the Cape Verdean respondents, Cape Verdean culture is built up of the same cornerstones as the Cape Verdean identity, as the latter is significantly influenced by the former. Miguel explains that “*Morabeza* is about hospitality, availability, love, and warmth, which is what the Cape Verdean culture is built on” (Miguel, male, Praia). He adds that “Cape Verdean culture is also built up of influences from many cultures due to migration flows and its rich history” (Miguel, male, Praia). Migration has always played an important role for Cape Verde because many Cape Verdeans have in the country's history emigrated from Cape Verde.

The view that the Netherlands is too hectic can also be found in the views the Cape Verdean respondents have on Dutch culture. Most respondents express they do not know much about the Dutch culture, but some express that they like the Cape Verdean culture better than the Dutch culture. Eduardo says “When I look at my brother in the Netherlands, I realize Cape Verde is better in some ways. Here it is much less stressful” (Eduardo, male, Praia).

The Cape Verdean respondents seem proud of their culture and heritage. Collectivity seems to be a crucial part as well as being strong. This might stem from the difficult dynamics that many Cape Verdeans live in and from the country's history. Also, most Cape Verdean participants seem to have more positive views on the Cape Verdean culture than the Dutch culture. However, they base this opinion on the stories of their family members abroad and not their own experiences. This most likely has an impact on their views.

6. Analysis: Translocal Networks & Relationships

In this thematic chapter, the different types of translocal networks and relationships are explored. Different networks can be experienced differently and hold a different meaning per person depending on their location. This section firstly zooms in on the family connections across localities, followed by other types of translocal networks in and outside of their current country of residence. Not every type of network is important for both the Dutch and Cape Verdean residents, therefore only the relevant types of networks are explored per group.

6.1 Family Networks and Relationships

6.1.1 Dutch Respondents

When asked who is regarded as close family, the Cape Verdeans living in the Netherlands commonly answer that they see close family as their partner, children, parents siblings, grandparents, and grandchildren. Frequently, some cousins or aunts and uncles are also regarded as close family. Close family members are often seen as those with whom they have regular contact, but also the members they grew up with and have stayed close with regardless of location. When asked about who they regard as their family in a general sense, many more members are added to the list. The families of the Dutch respondents are very big and often live in different places. It is very normal for Cape Verdeans in the Netherlands to have family members living in Cape Verde. All the respondents report having several family members that live there. All of them have extended family living there, but many also have at least one, but often several, close family members.

Around half of the respondents living in the Netherlands have parents that live in Cape Verde. Even more have siblings living there. It is often the case that someone has one or both of their parents as well as one or several siblings in Cape Verde. Several even have most of their close family living in Cape Verde. Paulo says “My mother and father live in Cape Verde, but not only them. My sister and brother, all my aunts, uncles and most cousins. And the children of my siblings. All my family actually lives there” (Paulo, male, Rotterdam). The majority does have family members in the Netherlands, whether it is a few close family members or most of them. Antonio explains that almost all of his close family members live in Rotterdam, like his wife, children, and grandchildren. He is one of the few that barely have any close family members in Cape Verde: “Until recently my mother lived in Cape Verde, but she passed away a few years ago. Now I only have my brother and a few cousins. But I am not close to any of them” (Antonio, male, Rotterdam). Others have their family spread out over many different countries. Pedro shares that his mother and one of his brothers live in Cape Verde, but that he has siblings in France,

Portugal, and the US as well as two aunts and some cousins he is close to in the US. He is not the only one that has family in many countries, most of them have close family members, often siblings, and also cousins, aunts, and uncles in other countries like Portugal, the US, and France.

It is important for all the respondents to keep in touch with their family members abroad. All the ones that have close family members abroad report that they regularly talk to these family members. This is most often done through video calls and Facetime. It is very common to call and be in contact with close family every day, or at least several times a week. Many also try to visit their family in Cape Verde every year, which for them an important part of maintaining the relationships. Pedro says “I try to go to Cape Verde every year and when I do usually my siblings that also live abroad go there too. So we try to gather there every year” (Pedro, male, Rotterdam). Cape Verdean families are big, and often spread across different continents. That does however not seem to decrease the importance of family for the Dutch respondents. When asked what the meaning of family is, the answer from all respondents was undoubtedly that family simply means everything: “Family is everything, they are my rock and support. I don’t know what I would do without my family” (Joana, female, Rotterdam). It is mentioned by several respondents that family values are very important in the Cape Verdean culture and that this has a big influence on their views on family. Luís explains that “From a very young age I learned that family is one of the most important things. This is what my parents taught me, and what they were taught by their parents. This is just a part of the Cape Verdean culture” (Luís, male, Rotterdam). Because of the significance of family, many find it very difficult to be far away from some or many of their family members. The Dutch respondents report that even though they often call their families and stay in touch, the distance is very hard. Joana expresses that even though she has been living far away from her Cape Verdean family for a long time, it still makes her sad: “It is difficult, I miss my mother a lot. I sometimes think I am used to it, but I actually think I never will” (Joana, female, Rotterdam). She is not the only one that still finds it very difficult. Also Sandra shares that she misses her family a lot:

“I am in daily contact with my parents and siblings, and I call them several times per week. But only talking through the phone is difficult. I miss them a lot. I don’t regret moving to the Netherlands, but it continues to be difficult to be so far away from them” (Sandra, female, Rotterdam).

While Sandra shares her story, she cries for a short time. But missing her family is not the only challenge that Sandra faces due to the distance. Her mother has Alzheimer and she knows that if something happens to her mother, she will probably not be in Cape Verde on

time. This causes a constant cycle of worrying for her. Several other respondents report the same worries because their parents are getting old and more vulnerable.

Cape Verdean families are translocal in their structure, spread out over at least two countries. Many of the respondents in the Netherlands have close family members in a different country, showing that relationships can stay strong despite the distance. Digital communications and regular visits are however important for many, showing that keeping in touch boosts their translocal relationships. The definition of family is very broad and includes large amounts of people. This shows not only the importance of family but also the importance of community and collectiveness for Cape Verdeans. This idea has not changed after living in the Netherlands for any amount of time. However, they do struggle with feelings of longing due to the distance between them and their family. It can be imagined that this longing is enhanced due to the fact that they are far away from the country they grew up in. Translocality plays an important part in the lives of the respondents in the Netherlands and for their family networks, meaning that their family relationships span across many localities, often far away. It is interesting that family on the one hand is seen as crucial while it on the other hand is normal to live far apart.

[6.1.2 Cape Verdean Respondents](#)

Cape Verdean families are often very big. This is also the case for the families of the Cape Verdean respondents. Most have their closest family in Cape Verde. Jorge explains: “My close family is my parents, siblings, some of my nieces and nephews but also some aunts and uncles. Only that circle consists of many already. Most of them live close by in Mindelo” (Jorge, male, Mindelo). It is common that some family members live on different islands than them: “My daughters, husband and sister live with me in Praia, but I also have a sister living on Fogo, and several family members on Maio” (Vera, female, Praia).

All of the Cape Verdean respondents also have family members in the Netherlands, often close family members. Several of them have siblings in the Netherlands and a few have one of both parents. Helena even has a son, sister, and her mother living in the Netherlands:

“When I was a child, I moved together with my family to the Netherlands, but when I moved back to Cape Verde a long time later, my mother and sister stayed. And now my oldest son also decided to move back to the Netherlands. I used to have most of my close family nearby, now it is split into two countries. At least I still have my husband, daughter and father here in Cape Verde with me” (Helena, female, Mindelo).

Others have close family members spread over several countries. Miguel says he is lucky that he still has his mother, cousins and aunts close by, but that all his siblings have moved abroad. He has a brother in the Netherlands, two sisters in the US and a brother in Portugal.

“It is strange to have your family live so spread out, living such different lives in different parts of the world” (Miguel, male, Praia). Eduardo shares the same sentiment: “I have all my siblings abroad, in different countries even. That means that not only do they live far away, but also their partners and their children, my nieces and nephews” (Eduardo, male, Praia).

For the Cape Verdean respondents, family is everything. Family is described as one’s primary support, safety, and refuge when it is needed. Family always helps each other. Miguel shares that this is the case because he grew up in a close environment with his family: “We are very close, we grew up together and were always together during our upbringing. Therefore it is especially difficult that some of them migrated and now live far away” (Miguel, male, Praia). Distance is perceived as difficult for all the Cape Verdean respondents. Because many of them have close family members that live abroad, the difficulty of distance is a shared experience. “It makes me sad to think about. Even if you do your best to keep in touch it is difficult. You lose a lot of time with them and that affects the relationship” (Júlia, female, Mindelo). Cláudia shares that even though she understands why her family lives abroad, it is still difficult. Therefore, being in contact with family members that live abroad is an important practice. Especially video calling and keeping in touch with close family is essential, and something that everyone does. Several specifically mention that the current technology is very helpful in keeping in contact. However visiting family abroad is not a common practice for the respondents living in Cape Verde, only one, Miguel, says that he tries to visit his family abroad every few years. The fact that most of the respondents are not able to visit their family abroad makes the distance more difficult. Maria describes the feeling of being stuck, even if she had the money to visit her family in the Netherlands, getting a visa is impossible: “I want to visit them but I can’t, I just can’t get a visa. This makes the situation even more sad and frustrating” (Maria, female, Praia). She is not the only one that expresses this problem, also Domingos says that he would want to visit his family in the Netherlands and see his nephews and nieces for the first time, but he has given up on getting a visa. He says “I really don’t understand why it is so difficult to get a visa. Even with all the right papers and documentation it is just impossible” (Domingos, male, Praia).

Family gets its significance from the Cape Verdean culture according to the respondents in Cape Verde and they think that this feeling is shared by all Cape Verdeans. This significance makes it all the harder that a part of their family lives far away. Since the Cape Verdeans are the ones that stayed, it might affect their relationship with their migrant family members, creating a gap. Furthermore, several Cape Verdean participants report not being able to go abroad to visit their families. This can further enlarge the gap and enhance the feeling of distance, when they feel immobile while their family was mobile enough to emigrate.

6.2 Other Translocal Networks

6.2.1 Dutch Respondents

It is very valuable for the Dutch-Cape Verdean migrants in Rotterdam to have a network of other Cape Verdeans nearby. All the Dutch respondents have Cape Verdean friends, and many of them have a very close Cape Verdean network of friends. These networks are experienced as a relief, a place of understanding and trust. Manuel describes it as his therapy:

“I have a very close Cape Verdean friend group, that is very important to me. This group feels like my therapy because during the weekdays we all experience a lot of stress and obligations but on the weekend we get together and we talk about our issues. We talk about our life but also about our family and the things that worry us. I notice that when I talk about this it gets easier to deal with” (Manuel, male, Rotterdam).

Also Carla shares that it helps having a friend group with the same nationality, especially because she lives in a different country than where she grew up. Understanding each other’s background and culture is very meaningful to her. Sandra says “It’s very common that people with the same background are drawn to each other, you share certain values and an upbringing that is different from the place where you live. Because of this there is a special level of understanding” (Sandra, female, Rotterdam). Many also report that they meet up with other Cape Verdeans through organizations and organized events. Several of the respondents are very active in at least one Cape Verdean organization because they find it important to not only give back to the Cape Verdean community but to also create a space for Cape Verdeans to meet. Antonio says that it always has been important for him to stand up for the Cape Verdean community and make everybody feel at home in Rotterdam. Only one respondent describes that he does have Cape Verdean friends in Rotterdam, but that he is not that close with them. Paulo expresses that once in the Netherlands, people change. Also his Cape Verdean friends change when they are in the Netherlands and lose the warmth and acceptance that Cape Verdeans have. “I have Cape Verdean friends here, but I am not very close with them. People don’t really feel like friends here, they feel cold” (Paulo, male, Rotterdam).

Many of the respondents share that they also have networks of people with other nationalities. The majority explicitly mention friends and acquaintances with a Dutch nationality. It is seen as something obvious to have Dutch people in your network. “Of course I have Dutch friends, I am surrounded by them so it is normal to meet them” (Isabel, female, Rotterdam). Carla shares that she has many Dutch friends and notices a difference in her friendship compared to her Cape Verdean friendships:

“It is interesting to me that I also share many values and similarities with my Dutch friends, but that these friendships somehow are different than my Cape Verdean friendships. I think it is because Dutch people and Cape Verdeans are just different types of people which bring out different sides of me” (Carla, female, Rotterdam).

The respondents also have networks with people from other countries than Cape Verde and the Netherlands. Fernando says that he likes having friends from many different backgrounds and adds that he notices a difference in upbringing and life experiences, which he finds very interesting. Others find these networks valuable not because of the differences but because of the similarities in experiences. “I have a broad network of people with different migration backgrounds. They understand the struggles of being a migrant and many of the issues that come with it. That is often a point of connection” (Nelson, male, Rotterdam). Turkish and Moroccan nationalities are often specifically mentioned. A few of the Dutch respondents mention that they have Cape Verdean friends in different countries:

“I am a very social person so I have friends in America, France, Portugal and Spain. Whenever I go somewhere, or I meet someone that is visiting Rotterdam, I often become friends with them. There are always Cape Verdeans to be found wherever you go. We keep in contact through messenger” (Paulo, male, Rotterdam).

Manuel says he also has friends in different European countries. He explains “I don’t see them very often but because of the technology that is not a problem” (Manuel, male, Rotterdam). He regularly texts with his friends abroad, and once in a while calls them. He emphasizes that these friendships are special because of the distance: “When these friends reach out to me it is extra special because they specifically think of me and take time for me. The distance creates an extra form of appreciation” (Manuel, male, Rotterdam). He knows many of these friends from Cape Verde, from before they all moved abroad.

It is very noticeable how important translocal networks and connections are for almost all the participants in Rotterdam. Not only are many active in organizations, but also informal translocal networks are important. It might be that connections with other Cape Verdeans in the Netherlands and in other countries help to stay affiliated with Cape Verde. It is logical that some respondents have connections to people with different backgrounds but with similar migration journeys. It is also obvious that the majority have connections with Dutch people as they are surrounded by them in their daily lives. Translocality plays a role in the connections of the respondents in diverse ways, together stringing a complex web that forms a unique translocal social space.

6.2.2 Cape Verdean Respondents

The Cape Verdean respondents all report that they don't have networks of people that are not Cape Verdean. They don't know people of other nationalities. Eduardo explains that there are very few immigrants in Cape Verde: "I guess there are a few immigrants in the biggest cities, but for some reason I don't really see them. So I don't have any connection to them" (Eduardo, male, Praia).

A few of the Cape Verdean respondents share that they have friends in other countries than Cape Verde. Vera has a best friend in the Netherlands, they grew up together and then she moved to the Netherlands. This friend feels like family because she is a family friend. This friend visits her almost every year and they talk on the phone regularly. Another respondent, Júlia, has one friend in the US that she knows from Cape Verde and another she knows from when she studied in Portugal. She says her connection in Portugal is still a very close friend because they went through many things together in Portugal. "We quickly found each other and got close to each other. We were both new in Lisbon and were relieved to have someone that shared our nationality" (Júlia, female, Mindelo). This friend still lives in Portugal, but they keep in touch through Facebook and facetime. Jorge has a friend that he knows from his childhood that lives in the US: "When he comes here to visit his family, we also catch up and hang out. Then it is like we were never apart" (Jorge, male, Mindelo).

Translocal networks are not prominent for most of the respondents in Cape Verde. That is quite logical as the country has relatively few immigrants. The ones that have translocal connections abroad are significant to them, and these relationships are maintained through contact and visits. This shows that also for these types of connections, contact is important to uphold these translocal connections.

7. Analysis: Remittance Flows

This section sets out to map the characteristics of and the underlying feelings and opinions about the remittances that flow between the members of Dutch-Cape Verdean families. It is important to note that the Dutch respondents only send remittances and their Cape Verdean counterparts only receive remittances. Therefore, only this linear form of remittance flow will be taken into consideration. Also, remittances are not only seen as flows of money but also other materialistic supplies in the form of goods.

7.1 Characteristics of Remittance Flows

7.1.1 Dutch Respondents

A large majority of the Dutch respondents send goods to their Cape Verdean families. These goods are often clothes, medicine, food, and sometimes jewelry and toys. The goods are sometimes sent in boxes, but often in barrels which Cape Verdeans either call a *tambor* or *bidon*. These boxes or barrels are then sent by boat from the Netherlands to Cape Verde. The frequency in which the goods are sent differs. Some describe that they send goods every few months or several times per year. Paulo explains: “I often send tambors to Cape Verde. I actually sent a box a few days ago, this time with an air conditioning and a bike for my cousins birthday. I send everything by ship” (Paulo, male, Rotterdam).

Others only send goods when their family asks for it or as something extra: “I don’t send goods regularly but if there is a holiday or someone’s birthday I will send some gifts and clothes. It is always nice to be able to give something extra” (Nelson, male, Rotterdam). Also Luís says that he usually sends goods during the holidays, but that if they need something he would never doubt to send it. Only a few respondents do not send any goods. Antonio explains that he used to send goods, but that he stopped after his mother died. He does not send any supplies to his brother. Fernando has not ever sent goods.

More than half of the Dutch-Cape Verdeans regularly send money to their family in Cape Verde frequently. “I try to share as much as possible with my family, I often send them money every other month” (Pedro, male, Rotterdam). A few send it less frequently or sporadically. Only three of the respondents, the same that don’t send goods also don’t send financial support to their family in Cape Verde. Luís notes: “I do not send any financial support anymore since my mother died and two aunts died. Now there is no family that needs my support anymore” (Luís, male, Rotterdam). Also Antonio does not send any financial support since his mother passed away. Fernando has never sent money to his family in Cape Verde.

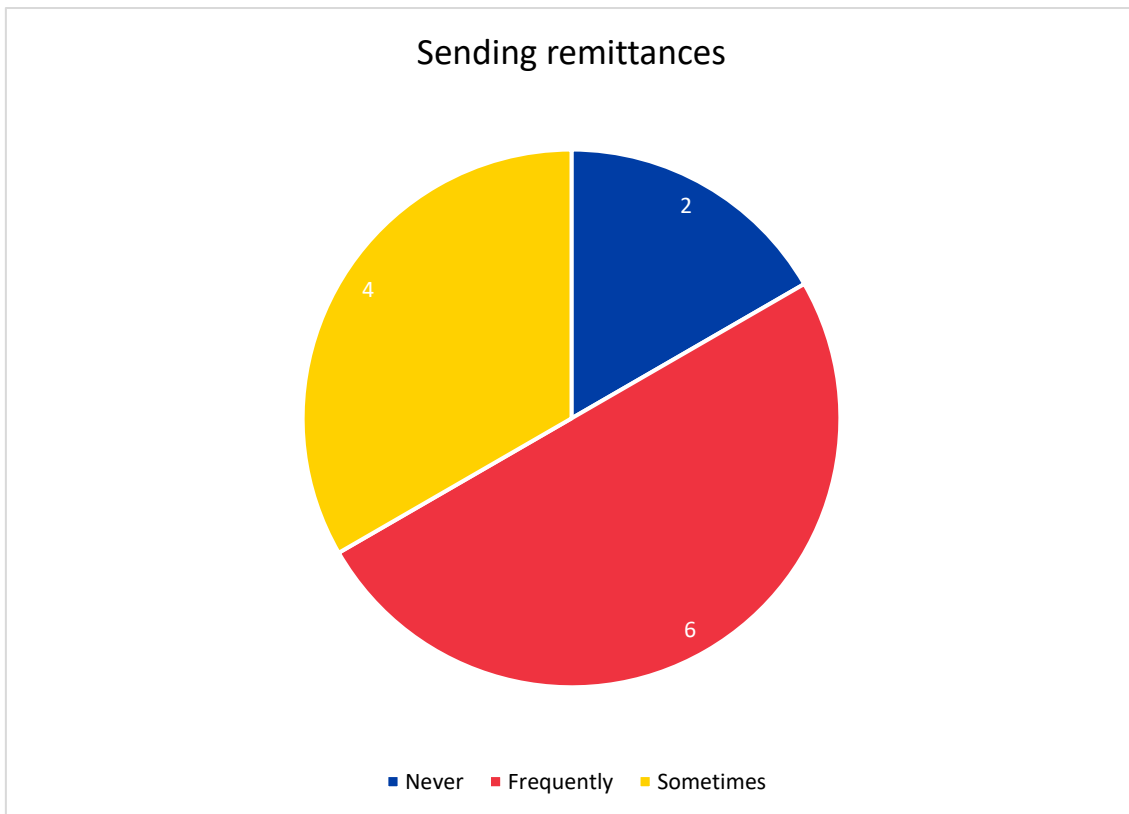


Figure 2: Frequency of sending remittances

7.1.2 Cape Verdean Respondents

Almost none of the Cape Verdean respondents receive goods frequently. Most report that they only sometimes receive goods. A few say that they only receive goods when their family comes to visit. Cláudia says that her sister brings with her goods when she comes to visit: “My sister comes at least once a year and then she brings clothes, jewelry and some food. She used to send it but not anymore” (Cláudia, female, Praia).

Two respondents never receive goods while Maria gets regular support from all of her siblings abroad and Ana also receives goods regularly from some of her family abroad. The majority state that they don’t receive any financial support. A few receive it sometimes but say that their family sends it as something extra when it is their birthday or if there is a holiday. Maria and Ana get regular financial support from their family abroad and express that they need this support to get by. Jorge explains that the financial support that he receives does help: “I don’t think that the money that they send me is super necessary, but it does help me quite much so I appreciate it a lot” (Jorge, male, Mindelo).

Most of the respondents in Cape Verde don’t receive remittances frequently, while the few that do report that it is a necessity for them. This shows that the families of the respondents

only engage in the translocal practice or remittances when it is needed. Furthermore, remittances are not needed by the majority of the respondents in Cape Verde.

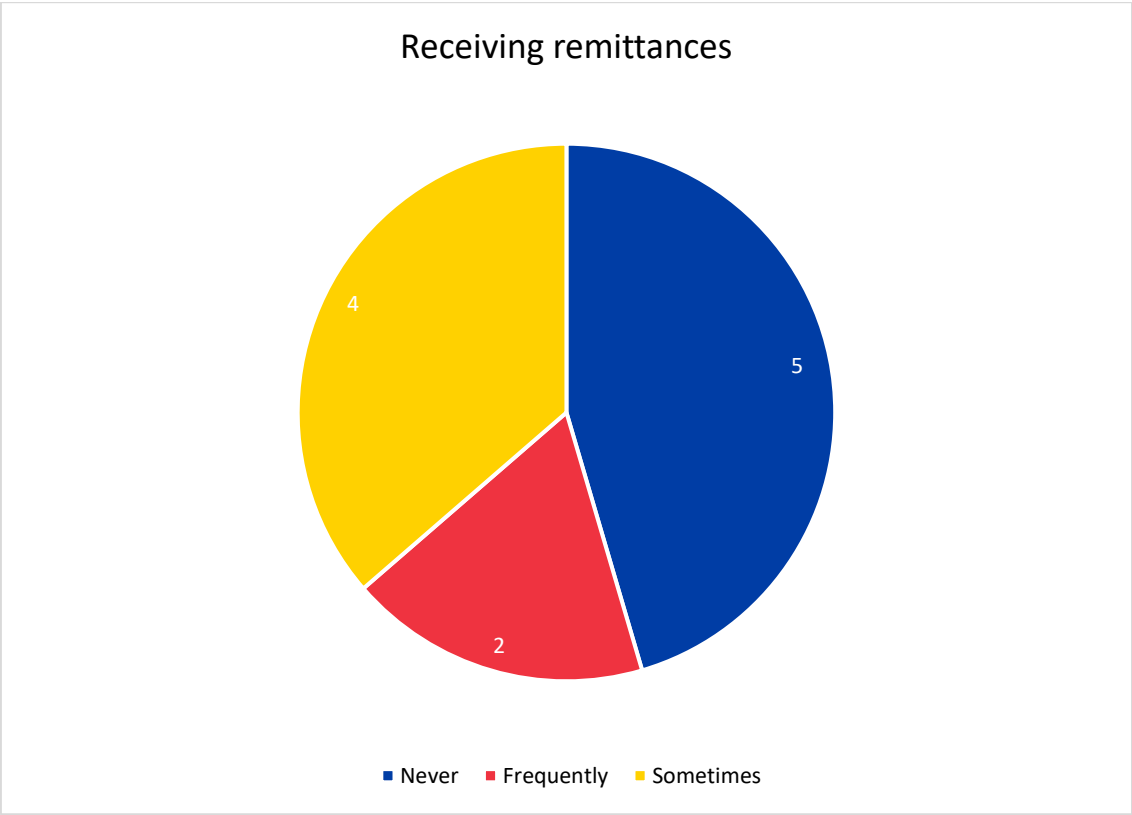


Figure 3: Frequency of receiving remittances

7.2 Underlying Feelings and Opinions About Remittance Flows

7.2.1 Dutch Respondents

There are several reasons why Dutch-Cape Verdeans send, or do not send, support to their family in Cape Verde. Several of them express that they send support because their family really needs it. Paulo sends both goods and financial support regularly and does this because her family, especially her sister, relies on it: "I know that if I don't support them, they don't get by" (Paulo, male, Rotterdam). He adds that he is used to sending so much support to his family:

"I am healthy, and for my standards I have a good life and I have enough. I am not used to the luxury that Dutch people want, so I am able to send more to my family. It makes me happy to be able to help them" (Paulo, male, Rotterdam).

He goes on to explain that a big reason why he is in the Netherlands is to be able to support his family in Cape Verde. "It is not doable for me to support my family enough when I am in Cape Verde" (Paulo, male, Rotterdam). Sandra also has family members that rely on her support. Her mother is sick and needs professional care, but that is very expensive in Cape Verde. She expresses that she is happy that she can support her family like this, but that it can also feel constraining:

"I am not present to take care of my mother, so I can at least support her like this. I would feel guilty if I did not support her in any way. So my support helps my family but it also makes me feel better. It can be a bit difficult, sometimes it can feel straining to have the obligation to send my family money" (Sandra, female, Rotterdam).

Pedro has a similar experience. He says "Because I am not in Cape Verde to care for my mother who is getting old, I send her support instead. It is the only way for me to help" (Pedro, male, Rotterdam). It is however also difficult for him:

"It feels like a big responsibility because I know that living in Cape Verde can be difficult, so I want to help her. But I also rely on my own salary, that sometimes makes it difficult. It is not that my family does not understand, but I want to help my family as much as possible, and if I am not able to do so I feel bad or guilty" (Pedro, male, Rotterdam).

Not being able to support their family as much as they want, or recently being able to support them less is a reoccurring trend that many of the Dutch respondents experience. They express that it is becoming increasingly difficult to send support to their families in Cape Verde. The main reason for this is that life in the Netherlands has become more expensive while their salaries have not increased. Carla says that she feels guilty about sending less support but that her family luckily understands the situation and doesn't complain about it. Others, however, experience that their family in Cape Verde don't understand the decrease in support. "I try to talk to them when they don't understand. Sometimes they just won't listen and get angry at me. Luckily until now we have always been able to talk it out" (Pedro, male, Rotterdam). There are also some that try their best to uphold the same levels of support: "I try my best to keep sending the same amount of money. That can be stressful, but until now I have managed" (Francisca, female, Rotterdam).

A change in support has also happened for other reasons. Many have switched to financial support instead of goods because it has become too expensive to send goods:

"I used to send a tambor, but now I have to pay not only when I send the box, but my family in Cape Verde also has to pay a lot to collect it, so I have to send them the money to do that. It is better to just send money" (Joana, female, Rotterdam).

Others add that sending goods often is not needed anymore because most things can be found in Cape Verde lately: “Not only is it too expensive, but most things are now available in Mindelo. So my family can buy their own things. That is much more useful” (Francisca, female, Rotterdam). Francisca does think that this might not be the case in smaller villages or the less inhabited islands. Joana confirms this thought: “I still have to send a lot of goods to my family that lives on Maio. Many things are still not available there” (Joana, female, Rotterdam). Some respondents note that there has been a decrease or stop in their support because of the passing of family members.

It is obvious that the practice of sending remittances cause a variety of different emotions and opinions. Several experience both happy feelings and burdening emotions at the same time, which can be confusing. Many experience stress not only because of the sending of remittances, but because of the associated expectations of not only others but also of themselves. It can be imagined that this has an effect on the translocal relationships between them and their receiving family members.

7.2.2 Cape Verdean Respondents

Around half of the Cape Verdean respondents receive support from their family abroad, but only a few express that they actually need the support. Maria receives financial support and goods from several family members and explains that she really needs it: “I am very grateful that all my siblings support me, I really need it. Without it I can not take care of my family” (Maria, female, Praia). The other half of the respondents don’t receive regular support, but most of them also don’t need it. Some do receive some goods or gifts during the holidays or birthdays, which they think is nice. Eduardo says that even in Praia, there is a limited choice of gifts for his daughter, so it is very nice that he can give his daughter unique gifts on her birthday that his siblings have sent him. Therefore, even if he does not necessarily need the goods, he is happy to receive them on these special occasions: “It is very nice of my brother to send his niece something special for her birthday. He does not only send her one gift, but he also sends me some things that I can give to her for her birthday” (Eduardo, male, Praia). Others that receive support on certain occasions express that they are grateful for it but that their family knows that it is not necessary. Still their family sends support, which they think is because of tradition. Miguel says:

“My siblings sometimes send me money or some goods, but I don’t need it. My mother receives more, she doesn’t need it either. But I think my siblings just want to take care of us, it kind of is tradition in Cape Verde. And it is of course nice to receive things” (Miguel, male, Praia).

However, Domingos thinks that his family abroad sends support because of feelings of obligation: “My family sends us support randomly, I think when they have something extra to give. That is very nice of them, but I am afraid that they do it because they feel obligated. I hope they can actually afford it” (Domingos, male, Praia). A few others also express that they sometimes worry that their family sends support while they need the money for themselves: “I think they unconsciously feel obligated and therefore send money sometimes. They say that this is not the case, but I am not so sure” (Júlia, female, Mindelo).

Not only the necessity of support varies greatly amongst the respondents in Cape Verde, but their opinions and feelings about it do too. Many experience feeling grateful, regardless of the level of necessity. But the ones that don't need the remittances as much often feel concerned about their family members that send support. Because they don't rely on support, they can be more objective in the consequences of the remittance flows for all parties within the family.

8. Conclusion & Discussion

8.1 Sub-Question 1: “How are the Identities of Dutch-Cape Verdean Translocal Families and Their Members Formed?”

8.1.1 Conclusion

Members of the Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families experience many similarities in their identity formation. Regardless of their current residence or birthplace, both groups are significantly influenced by their Cape Verdean heritage and background. Cape Verdean culture keeps shaping their identities, which according to them is marked by strong sentiments of resilience, collectiveness, and warmth. Furthermore, the lives of both the Cape Verdean and Dutch citizens have been, and are still, influenced by Cape Verdean country dynamics. Cape Verde lacks opportunities and is seen as politically and economically unstable. This impacted the upbringing of all Cape Verdean born respondents and is still shaping their identities and own livelihoods. The current role of Cape Verdean country dynamics is more prominent for the respondents that live in Cape Verde because of its direct influence. But it also still shapes the identities and livelihoods of Dutch respondents. This is because of their Cape Verdean background, but also because they are influenced by their Cape Verdean family members who still face several challenges due to Cape Verdean dynamics. This causes stress and worry for the Dutch respondents, and it affects their livelihood because they often have to help their family in Cape Verde to deal with these challenges.

Both groups see the Cape Verdean identity and Cape Verdean culture in a very positive way and proudly identify with it. However they also all heavily express their concerns and dissatisfaction with the Cape Verdean political, economic and geographic dynamics. It is interesting to note that the view on the Cape Verdean people and culture is so different from their perspectives on the Cape Verdean country dynamics.

A difference in identity formation between the two groups is that the Dutch respondents are not only impacted by Cape Verdean country dynamics but also by the dynamics in the Netherlands. The Netherlands is perceived as having good opportunities, but on the other hand as very stressful. Even though they are more explicit about the influences of Cape Verde on their identities, being surrounded by Dutch dynamics and culture inevitably influences their identities. Another difference in identity formation is caused by dissimilarity in migration journeys. All Dutch respondents are directly influenced by their own or their family's migration decisions. Their migration journeys all include permanent, or semi-permanent migration. On the other hand, the many Cape Verdeans that also migrated only did so for a distinct amount of time, often for studies. Being able to do so often increased their

opportunities and livelihoods when they returned to Cape Verde. The few that did not migrate also feel affected by that, they report feeling disadvantaged because of it. Most of them still wish to migrate to better their livelihood opportunities, but don't have the chance to do so. This shows that migration, or non-migration has influenced almost all respondents regardless of current country of residence. The dissimilar and even contrasting forms of migration journeys that the participants experience, show the impact of mobility, or immobility. Being mobile brings opportunities, which the respondents that feel immobile can only dream of.

All in all, the identities of the different members of the Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families are shaped by their upbringing, migration journeys, or lack of migration journeys, and country dynamics. For all, their Cape Verdean heritage is essential for their identity. There is however a distinct difference between the two groups, primarily because of the difference in opportunities and livelihood which is caused by migration and their current country of residence.

8.1.2 Discussion of Findings

There is quite a lot of existing literature on identity in general, but also on the identity of transnational families and their members. Scholars argue that cultural and ethnic identity is important, especially for migrants. This research shows similar results, as heritage and the Cape Verdean culture continue to shape the identities of the respondents in the Netherlands. Furthermore, although Ting-Toomey et al. (2004) show that ethnic and cultural identity is different, the Cape Verdeans in the Netherlands don't distinguish between them. Although it is often proposed that the identities of migrants drastically adapt to their country of settlement, Madsen & van Naerssen (2003) disagree and show that the identities of migrants become transnational as both the country of origin and settlement become influential. Despite the fact that the respondents in the Netherlands highlight their Cape Verdean identities, it is inevitable that the Dutch culture has not affected them. Therefore, also their identities can be seen as translocal. When taking the definition of Pries (2013) in regard, the Cape Verdeans in the Netherlands are part of a diaspora because they are a part of a distinct group with a strong sense of a motherland.

The existing body of literature lacks several aspects, however. There is very little to be found about the identities of the non-migrant members of translocal, or transnational families. In the context of transnational families, the focus is always on the collective relationships of families and family members, or practices like remittances that are sent amongst the migrant and non-migrant members. Often, the non-migrant members are regarded without agency or as passive members of translocal families.

The literature about Cape Verdean identity focuses on the collective identities of Cape Verdean migrants, and that this collective identity unites all Cape Verdeans regardless of their current location. Gibau (2008) states that Cape Verdean migrant identities are strongly rooted in transnational and diasporic practices and that heritage plays an important role. This coincides with the results of this research, where the participants conveyed a strong connection to their heritage and translocal identity.

Although the literature about Cape Verdean identity does discuss the identities of both the migrant and non-migrant members of Cape Verdean translocal families, they are always discussed in relation to migration. This means that the independent identities of Cape Verdeans are not regarded (Carling & Åkesson, 2009; Challinor, 2008). Also the identities of the migrant members are researched through a restricted lens, often regarding only the role of either migration, ethnicity, or cultural heritage for their identities (Carling & Batalha, 2008; Gibau, 2008). This thesis regards identity as constantly evolving, shaped by many factors. The respondents of this study have very different impressions of the Cape Verdean dynamics than the literature. Resende-Santos (2015) proposes that Cape Verde is a success story when it comes to development, World Bank statistics report the same (Ndoye, 2022). Contrastingly, the dominant view that emerges from this research is that the political and economic situation in Cape Verde and its development in general is concerning and barely increasing. This shows that the lived experiences of Cape Verdeans inside out outside of the country borders are very different than the statistics. Another way in which this research tries to set itself apart is by abandoning the dichotomy between migrants and non-migrants based on their current place of residence. So many scholars hold on to this dichotomy while the reality rarely is as black and white. This research shows that many Cape Verdean citizens have experienced migration in different ways and that migration journeys can take on many forms, which is an essential perspective for development studies and theories on migration.

[8.2 Sub-Question 2: “What are the Dynamics of the Translocal Networks of Dutch-Cape Verdean Families and Their Members?”](#)

[8.2.1 Conclusion](#)

All respondents report that their family networks are of absolute importance to them. These networks are complex and consist of a web of connections spanning across several places. The narratives that the Dutch and Cape Verdean respondents use to describe the meaning of family are very similar, and see family as the most important thing in their lives, often using words like safety net and pillar. The definition of family is also shared by most, which encompasses not only close family but also extended family, resulting in huge

numbers of family members being included. There is also a shared perception of close family versus the rest of the family, with close family members often being partners, children, parents, siblings, grandparents and grandchildren, and occasionally a few other family members. These are often also the family members that they have the most contact with, and are most prepared to help. All respondents have family members abroad, many also have close family members. There is a notable difference between the two groups however, where the participants in Cape Verde have more close family members in the same country as them compared to the participants in the Netherlands. This is quite logical as the respondents in the Netherlands moved away while the Cape Verdean respondents stayed.

Because all respondents have family members abroad, many of them being close family members, the groups experience distance similarly. The feeling of distance is often marked by sadness and a sense of longing. However, distance does not affect the importance of family for the respondents and despite the distance, the connections between Dutch-Cape Verdean family members remain strong. However, the physical distance between family members is accentuated because it often is difficult to be present during family problems or health issues. Actively maintaining family relationships is however very important to keep the family relationships strong. All respondents that have close family living in other countries keep in touch through videocalls, Facebook, and other types of communication. Visiting each other as often as possible is also seen as an important practice, although it is much more common for the Dutch family members to visit their family in Cape Verde than the other way around. The discrepancy in the ability to visit family abroad can be difficult for the people that feel disadvantaged which stems from the Cape Verdean dynamics. This might have an effect on their relationship with family members abroad, or it can cause negative feelings.

There is a significant difference in other types of translocal networks between the Dutch and Cape Verdean respondents. While both groups to some degree are part of translocal networks, the Dutch respondents exhibit more diverse relationships. For them, Cape Verdean networks in Rotterdam play a vital role. The connections with fellow Cape Verdeans in Rotterdam offer emotional support and provide a space to share issues and experiences.

Several Dutch respondents also value the networks that consist of people with various nationalities and backgrounds other than Dutch or Cape Verdean. Not only do they report finding other nationalities interesting, but many of these connections are also migrants which means that they are able to share migrant experiences. It is also common to have Dutch friends and connections, which they value. In contrast, some Cape Verdean respondents have Cape Verdean networks abroad, but most report that they neither have any type of network abroad, nor any translocal network of other nationalities in Cape Verde.

8.2.2 Discussion of Findings

The literature on translocal or transnational family relationships embodies many similar characteristics as this thesis does. In much of the literature, transnational families are seen as families that are separated from each other and maintain relationships across borders. Bryceson & Vuorela (2017) focus on how the lives of transnational families are shaped by mobility, separation, and challenges, which coincides with several elements of this paper, and the stories that are told in this thesis can provide valuable insights into the theory of transnational families proposed by Bryceson & Vuorela (2017). Merla et al. (2021) show the importance of communication and contact within transnational families, which coincides with the findings of this study. The importance of the internet in maintaining relationships is shown by Keles (2015). Still, the actual importance of keeping in touch to maintain transnational relations is not grasped in the literature but is evident in this research. Distance is, as seen in this thesis, another important element for translocal families. Skrbiš (2008) also found distance and the experience of absence to be common emotions that is experienced by members of transnational families. This thesis is a collection of a variety of elements that encompass transnational families, merging the theories proposed in the existing literature, as well as providing it with new and personal insights, therefore adding updated perspectives on the body of literature that makes up development studies.

This thesis adds several elements to the body of literature, however. It becomes clear that especially the members that live in the Netherlands employ a variety of translocal connections and networks in their daily lives. The different types are not often displayed as a whole, although they together make up the translocal social spaces of Cape Verdean migrants. Additionally, this thesis shows that feelings of immobility become obvious due to translocal family relations. Not only do some of the respondents in Cape Verde feel a gap in their mobility compared to the mobility of their family due to migration, but also due to the challenge that several report not being able to visit their family abroad. This problem is often left out when discussing the challenges that translocal families face. A recurring problem is that the non-migrant family members, or the members that live in Cape Verde, are passive members within these relationships and that they are “left behind” by their families (Challinor, 2008; Drotbohm, 2020; Åkesson, 2009). This is a problematic label, as this disregards their agency and frames them as only existing in relation to their family abroad.

There are very few academic articles about Cape Verdean transnational families. One paper written by Carling (2008) describes not only Cape Verdean transnational families but even Dutch-Cape Verdean transnational families. He focuses on specific challenges, or asymmetries, that affect the relationship between family members. His paper incorporates the views of both the migrant and non-migrant members of the Dutch-Cape Verdean families,

focusing on the relationships between them. However, he concentrates on the effects of asymmetries between the migrant and non-migrant members on their relationship, while this paper aims to understand the whole story. Also in the case of Cape Verdean and Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families, the difference in experienced mobility or immobility is a challenge that is frequently experienced as a problem. Therefore, this research makes an important addition to the body of literature by highlighting this issue.

8.3 Sub-Question 3: “What is the Role of Remittances for Dutch-Cape Verdean Translocal Families and Their Members?”

8.3.1 Conclusion

The remittances that flow within Dutch-Cape Verdean families show the complex nexus between family relationships and material exchanges. These remittance flows are comprised of financial support and material goods and demonstrate a network of support and care, connecting families across geographical distances and localities.

In the Dutch context, the majority of the respondents send remittances. They report that the nature of these remittances is largely defined by the needs of their Cape Verdean family members, ranging from money but also goods such as clothes, food, and medicine. The frequency and amount of remittances that are sent also vary. Some of the Dutch respondents send support several times a year, while others primarily send it when their family asks for it. The recipients of the remittances are most often parents or siblings. The Dutch respondents all express that if their family would ever need extra assistance, they would always provide it to them, especially their close family members. They convey strong feelings about the importance of supporting their family in Cape Verde. Many are happy that they are able to help their family, but most also acknowledge that sending remittances can feel like an obligation. Several send remittances to fill the gap created by not being physically present in their family's lives, or because they feel obligated because of their perceived privilege. Sending remittances also increasingly feels like a burden, because of the rising costs of living in the Netherlands. Some feel burdened because they try to maintain the same level of support and therefore experience financial strain, and others because they reduce their remittance flows which makes them feel guilty.

The receivers' perspective provides another view on remittance flows within their Dutch-Cape Verdean family. Although remittances are beneficial for many, they are not always perceived as a necessity. Some recipients report that they heavily depend on remittances for their livelihood, while others view it as a tradition or bonus instead of a necessity. The difference in degrees of need amongst the Cape Verdean recipients shows the difference in

socio-economic levels, suggesting that not all families equally depend on these remittances. When looking at the necessity of support and level of education, it is clear that the respondents with a university degree depend significantly less on support, and also receive less.

8.3.2 Discussion of Findings

The role of remittances for transnational families is widely researched. Erdal (2022) describes the role of remittances for transnational families as a material manifestation of family relationships across borders that are created by migration. Some studies focus on the numerical aspects of remittance flows while others, like this thesis, investigate the underlying factors of this practice amongst transnational families (Russell, 1986; Singh et al., 2012; Yang, 2011). This thesis builds on the existing literature about remittance flows within translocal or transnational families by adding personal experiences and opinions on the matter from both the view of the sender and the recipient of the remittances.

Cape Verdean remittance flows have been mapped in several studies and articles (Drotbohm, 2020; Pop, 2011; Åkesson, 2010; Åkesson, 2009). The literature that focuses on Cape Verdean remittance flows lacks several elements that this thesis has. For example, the existing literature on translocal Cape Verdean remittance flows does not consider the views of both the senders and the receivers of remittances, therefore neglecting the overarching story. This means that this paper does not only contribute to the knowledge about Cape Verdean remittance flows in general, but adds a significant contribution due to the consideration of both the family members that send remittances and the ones that receive them. This creates a more nuanced view of remittances and the role that it plays for the lives of translocal families, as well as the relationships of the different family members. The scholars that zoom in on remittance flows between translocal Cape Verdean families use a discourse where the receivers of remittances, or Cape Verdean residents in general, are in dire need of support from their family abroad (Resende-Santos, 2015; Åkesson, 2008b, 2009). Furthermore, this discourse frames the receivers of remittances as “left behind”, indicating not only that the members that receive remittances are passive and without agency, but also that they are reliant on their family that sends them remittances (Drotbohm, 2020; Åkesson, 2009). This is contrasting to the findings of this research, where most Cape Verdean respondents do not need support, certainly not as much as often is assumed, and are not passive but active translocal family members. It is critical that this discrepancy between reality and common assumptions are highlighted, to ensure that the developmental framework is updated.

In sum, remittances play a central role in Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal family dynamics, serving not only practical but also symbolic purposes. Remittances function as a tool of support, while simultaneously reinforcing family relationships and feelings of connectedness across localities and geographical borders. However, sending remittances often entail both positive and negative emotions, which can have an impact on the translocal family relationships. It becomes apparent that there is a big discrepancy in the perception of needs between the Dutch and Cape Verdean respondents. The senders of remittances are often under the impression that their family in Cape Verde, and Cape Verdeans in general, need their support. However, many of the respondents in Cape Verde convey a quite different story where they don't need as much or any support. The participants in the Netherlands hold on to the view that used to be, and Cape Verdean traditions still play a part.

8.4 Research Question: "What is the Role of Translocality for Dutch-Cape Verdean Families and Their Members?"

8.4.1 Conclusion

The role of translocality for the Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members can be seen through a variety of factors. Translocality has an impact on the identity formation of the different family members, but its influence might be even more visible in their family relationships and other types of networks and by the remittance flows within the Dutch-Cape Verdean families.

Although members of the Dutch-Cape Verdean families experience many similarities in their identity formation, the role of translocality does differ. For the Dutch respondents, translocality is an influential part of their identity because they physically moved to a different locality through international migration. Because of this translocal migration journey, their livelihoods significantly changed. The majority report that they migrated to find better opportunities, in which they succeeded. Due to an increase in opportunities, their livelihoods have drastically changed. However, the role of migration has influenced several Cape Verdeans as well, either by internal migration or temporary international migration. They too underwent translocal migration from one locality to another to improve their livelihoods. Others are mostly influenced by non-migration.

There is no doubt that family is of utmost importance to all respondents. Family in general is very valuable, but close family is seen as the most essential. These are the family members the respondents are in regular contact with and are most prepared to help. The role of translocality within the families is unquestionably prominent. All Dutch-Cape Verdean families extend across various locales and places, and many have not only extended family

abroad but also close family members. The distance between family members is perceived as a challenge, causing grief and longing. Many of the respondents express sentiments of sadness to be far away from a part of their family. This does however not affect the importance of these family members, or family in general, and the family networks remain strong. For the Dutch respondents, the role of other types of translocal networks is apparent. For them, having translocal networks in Rotterdam and abroad is substantial, and offers them a place of comfort, understanding, and acceptance. These connections are meaningful specifically because of the translocal nature of these networks; sharing a nationality and background while being in another country. Cape Verdeans do not have the same experiences with translocal networks. Some respondents have translocal connections with other Cape Verdeans abroad, but none have any translocal networks in Cape Verde.

Remittance flows are translocal in their nature, making up a big part of the family relationships of Dutch-Cape Verdean families. These material exchanges of financial aid and goods connect families across geographical localities in different ways. The remittance flows are linear, with the Dutch respondents sending the remittances and the Cape Verdean respondents being on the receiving end. While some respondents on the receiving end do indeed rely on support, most do not. This causes a discrepancy in the perceptions between the family members as this has often not been realized by the family abroad. Still, many respondents in the Netherlands send remittances due to family traditions and expressions of love, which represents the significance of remittance flows for translocal family relationships.

Translocality plays a significant role for Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members. This can be seen not only by looking at the different components of identification, networks, and remittances separately, but translocality connects these elements and highlights how they together shape Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members. Family relationships, and in the case of the Dutch respondents also translocal networks, have a great effect on the identities of the respondents. It is not a coincidence that the Cape Verdean culture is so important to them and that they frequently engage in Cape Verdean networks and connections in Rotterdam. By taking an active part in these translocal networks and maintaining Cape Verdean connections in their country of settlement, they reinforce their Cape Verdean identities. Furthermore, the Cape Verdean country dynamics that shape the identities of all respondents are connected to remittances. The Cape Verdean respondents sometimes experience a negative impact of current Cape Verdean dynamics and therefore need remittances to get by. The livelihoods and identities of the Dutch respondents are in turn affected when they send remittances to their families in Cape Verde. The degree to which the Cape Verdeans need support is highly correlated to whether or not they had the opportunity to study abroad. This shows a direct connection between the level of mobility and

the level of need of remittances. Lastly, there is a strong connection between Cape Verdean translocal family relationships and remittances. Remittance flows are not only seen as an important tradition for Cape Verdean families, but many still benefit from this material exchange. Therefore, remittance flows keep shaping and intensifying family relationships. All in all, the different components of this research collectively show how translocality forms Dutch-Cape Verdean families and their members.

8.4.2 Discussion of findings

The overall contribution of this thesis to the existing literature is multifold. Each sub-question has its own contributions to existing theories. The way in which identity formation is approached in this paper, looking at not only the collective identities of Dutch-Cape Verdean family members but also their individual identities, is relatively a unique perspective that is often neglected. Also, the factors that are taken into consideration are different than that of other studies, aiming to get an overall picture of the elements that influence the process of identity formation. This adds a new and unique perspective and therefore enriches the developmental framework.

Because there is an extensive body of literature about transnationalism and transnational families, many of the findings of this study build on existing theories of transnationalism. However, because the elements that are discussed in this paper bring together elements from many other articles, this paper contributes to the existing literature by combining the views of other theories. In addition, the views and experiences of actual translocal family members are enhanced in this study, adding real-life stories to theoretical theories. Something that is relatively unique for this study and therefore is an important contribution to the existing literature is the focus on translocality instead of transnationalism, especially in regards to the specific case study of Cape Verdeans.

This thesis builds on the many articles written about remittances and the existing theories. Because it takes into account the experiences of both the sender and receiver of remittances, which is rarely done, it makes a significant contribution to the world of development studies. Also because this thesis shows different results than existing studies, it adds an updated perspective on the topic, especially on the topic of remittance flows in Cape Verdean families. In general, the existing literature about the remittance flows of Cape Verdean families takes on a different angle than this study, which creates a more nuanced view of the role of remittances for Cape Verdean translocal families.

This thesis also makes several overarching contributions to existing literature. The selected case study of Dutch-Cape Verdean families living in both the Netherlands and Cape Verde is uncommon, which makes it especially important to shed light on this specific group.

The perspectives that this study has chosen, by including the stories of migrant members in the Netherlands as well as the non-migrant family members in Cape Verde, are also unique and very valuable. The story that this research aims to tell adds valuable insights into this topic. The so-called non-migrant members of Cape Verdean transnational families are repeatedly labeled as “left behind”, suggesting a certain passivity. However, this research shows that the family members that stay in Cape Verde neither feel nor are neglected by their family abroad. The notion that they are left behind is therefore not correct. Cape Verdeans in the Netherlands are frequently labeled as “silent migrants”, suggesting that they are not only disengaged from Dutch society, but are invisible. This research clearly demonstrates that the Cape Verdeans in Rotterdam do indeed engage in Dutch society through many types of networks and connections while they are not silent nor invisible. This label is something the Cape Verdeans in Rotterdam do not agree with, and hopefully, this view stops. This research is clearly necessary to break stereotypes about both the translocal family members in the Netherlands and in Cape Verde. This is necessary for the evolution of development studies and studies on migration. Furthermore, shedding light on not only the individual members of Cape Verdean translocal families, but also the networks and family connections that are important for them, as well as the role that remittances play gives a new and important view on the topic of translocal Cape Verdean families. By looking at the link between these factors and how they interact, a unique overarching contribution is being made.

One big difference between the existing body of literature and this thesis is the terminology. Within development studies, transnationalism is an important and widely used term. However, this research joins the movement within the development world where the concept of translocality is applied instead. Translocality goes even further than transnationalism in neglecting national borders as restricting containers. Translocality is built on the notion that local context matters, and that families and migrants are not connected between countries, but between interconnected localities. Neither the identities, practices, nor networks and relationships that are researched in this thesis are nationally bound but span across many different localities and contexts. Hopefully this thesis, by its specific use of terminology, can help create a transition that is important for both migration studies and development studies in general.

This thesis shows that translocality plays an essential role for Cape Verdean families. Translocality impacts their family relationships, networks, individual identities, and livelihoods. By viewing translocality as the glue that unites the elements that make up Cape Verdean families, this paper illustrates its central role for many Cape Verdeans and Cape

Verdean family members. This is an important addition to the existing literature on translocal and transnational families, specifically Dutch-Cape Verdean families.

8.4.3 Suggestion for further research

This research shows that the many dominant views about translocal families and their members is outdated, or lacks several aspects. Therefore, further research is needed on these topics. For example the discrepancy in notions of remittances between on the one hand the receivers of remittances and on the other the senders of remittances as well as the theories on the matter. It needs to be explored how it is possible that the views on remittance necessity differ that much, while the actual receivers of remittances, or the people that are supposedly in need of it, report that this is indeed not the case. A bottom-up approach is needed to understand this issue, as one of the problems currently arises because of the top-down view where country statistics are shaping the current views.

Another discrepancy that needs further research is that of the perceived Cape Verdean political and economic development compared to the statistics and literature about Cape Verdean development. While the reports state that Cape Verde is a success story when it comes to recent political and economic development, the findings of this research show an entirely different, predominantly negative view. It needs to be further investigated where this discrepancy comes from and why the lived experience of Cape Verdeans reports entirely different results than the data.

The findings show that on the one hand, the Cape Verdean country dynamics and development are seen as lacking, negatively impacting the livelihoods and socio-economic situations of the Cape Verdean inhabitants. However, the findings also demonstrate that Cape Verdeans need less support and remittances from abroad than is expected. Further research is needed to understand the dynamics of this issue.

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Appendix A: Personal survey questions

1. Waar bent u geboren? Hoe lang heeft u daar gewoond?
2. Hoe lang woont u in Rotterdam/hoe oud was u toen u naar Rotterdam verhuisde?
3. Waarom bent u naar Nederland verhuisd?
4. Bent u alleen of met andere naar Nederland verhuisd
5. Bent u werkende? Zo ja, wat is u baan? Zo nee, wat was u baan?
6. Heeft u familieleden in Rotterdam?
7. Heeft u een hechte band met u familie in Rotterdam/Nederland?
8. Heeft u een hecht Kaapverdisch netwerk in Rotterdam?
9. Heeft u familieleden op andere plekken in Nederland, zo ja waar?
10. Heeft u familie in Kaapverdie? Zo ja, welke familieleden wonen in Kaapverdie?
11. Waar in Kaapverdie woont u familie?
12. Hoe vaak heeft u contact met u familie in Kaapverdie?
13. Hoe vaak bezoekt u u familie in Kaapverdie?
14. Gaat u naar Kaapverdie om andere redenen dan een familiebezoek?
15. Stuurt u spullen naar u familie? Zo ja, welk type spullen? (Medicijnen, kleren, eten, etc.) Naar welke familieleden stuurt u deze spullen?
16. Stuurt u wel eens een ton naar u familie? Naar welke familieleden stuurt u een ton?
17. Ontvangt u spullen van u familie in andere landen? Zo ja van wie en welke spullen ontvangt u?
18. Geeft u financiële steun aan u familieleden? Zo ja, aan welke familieleden?
19. Ontvangt u financiële steun van u familie? Zo ja, van welke familieleden?
20. Investeert u in een huis, project of iets anders in het buitenland? Zo ja, waar investeert u in en op welke plek?
21. Wilt u ooit (terug) verhuizen naar Kaapverdie?
22. Heeft u familieleden die op andere plekken wonen dan in Nederland of Kaapverdie?

Appendix B: Interview guide in the Netherlands

What are the networks of Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families?

General translocal networks

- In which countries do your Cape Verdean relatives and friends live that you speak to regularly?
- What do you mean to each other?
- How do you experience the distance?
- How do you maintain these relationships?

Family networks

- What does family mean to you?
- Can you tell me about your family?
- Where does the family that is most important to you live?
- How do you maintain these relationships?

What is the role of remittances for Dutch-Cape Verdean families?

- What is the role of sharing in your family?
- Are goods sent in your family?
- Is money sent in your family?
- How do you feel about this?
- Has this changed recently?

What are the challenges and bottlenecks experienced by Dutch-Cape Verdean families?

- Has your livelihood changed recently? (explain livelihood)
- Does this affect your family?
- How mobile are you? (explain mobility)
- Has your mobility changed recently?
- Does this affect your family?
- How mobile are your family members?
- Do you experience difficulties in your life?
- How does this affect you or your family?

Appendix C: Interview guide in Cape Verde

Icebreaker questions

- What does being Cape Verdean mean to you?
- What should I really know about the Cape Verdean culture?
- If money was no object, what would you be doing right now?

Who are the members of the Dutch-Cape Verdean families?

- Where were you born? How long did you live there?
- Have you ever lived somewhere else?
- Do you work? What is your job?
- What is your favorite thing to do?

What are the networks of Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families?

Family networks:

- What does family mean to you?
- Who do you regard as your family?
- Where does the family that is most important to you live?

- Do you have family members abroad?
- How do you feel about the distance?
- How often are you in contact with these family members?
- What is the role of migration for your family?
- What is the role of migration for Cape Verdeans?

General translocal networks

- Do you have a Cape Verdean network abroad?
 - o Do you have friends or acquaintances living abroad?
- What do these connections mean to you?
- How do you know them?
- How do you maintain this network or relationships?
- How does the distance influence these relationships?

What is the role of remittances in Dutch-Cape Verdean translocal families?

- What is the role of sharing in your family?
- Do you share with your family abroad?

- Are goods and resources like clothes, medicine, food etc. shared between you and your family members abroad?
- Are tambors or bidons sent between you and your family abroad?
- Is money shared, or sent, between you and your family members abroad?
- What is your role in sending or receiving these resources?
 - o How do you feel about this?
- Have the flows of resources recently changed?

What are the challenges and bottlenecks that Dutch-Cape Verdean families experience?

- ➔ Livelihood: your way of living, including your own choices to make a living and factors from outside that influence this. About whether or not you live the life you want and if you could change it if you wanted
 - What is your livelihood/way of living?
 - Are you satisfied with your livelihood?
 - What factors influence your livelihood?
 - Is your livelihood different than that of your family members (abroad)

- ➔ Mobility: The freedom to be in and go to the places you desire
 - What does mobility mean to you?
 - Are you satisfied with your mobility?
 - Do you experience challenges in your life?
 - How do these challenges impact you or your family?