

Inom transnationella och lokala sociala världar

**Om sociala stödutbyten och försörjningsstrategier
bland svensksomalier**

Av

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Akademisk avhandling

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Abstract

Title: **Within Transnational and Local Social Worlds**
– Social support exchange and strategies for earning a living among Swedish-Somalis

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Key words: Social worlds, social support, social network, reciprocity, intensity, durability, welfare regime, transnationalism, diaspora, strategy

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The aim of this study was to describe and analyse the exchange of social support within the social network of Swedish-Somalis within and outside of Sweden. The aim was also to describe and analyse their strategies to earn a living within and outside of Sweden.

The study consists of 23 qualitative interviews with 12 people. Five of the informants are women and seven are men. All have grown up in Somalia and almost all came to Sweden as refugees or through family reunion in the 1980-s and 1990-s. Most of them have an education comparable to the Swedish Gymnasium and some have studied at the university. All of them have been working in the Swedish labour market. They are parents to young children. The datacollection was conducted in 2003-2006. The study also includes participant observations during temporary visits within associations in which the informants took part. It also includes a field visit to London, with two interviews with Swedish-Somalis who have remigrated. The theoretical approach is symbolic interactionism. A central concept within this perspective is social worlds. Concepts used in analysing social support exchange relations are reciprocity, intensity and durability. Welfare regime, transnationalism and diaspora have been used to understand the exchange of social support crossing national borders. Strategy is used to describe actions that aims to earn a living.

The result shows that the informants use strategies not to be dependent on social welfare. One strategy is to look for work in a Somali-ethnic nisch of the labourmarket created by the state. In these formal positions they are supporting other Swedish-Somalis. A second strategy is to be poor rather than being dependent of social welfare. A third strategy is to study, a fourth strategy is to start a business, a fifth strategy is to be passive and follow the instructions given by the authorities and a sixth strategy is to look for work in London.

The transnational and local social networks play an important role in mediating social support and working opportunities. The result shows a bridgebuilding process consisting of two phases. In the first phase the informants are bridgebuilders to other Swedish-Somalis and they are giving practical help, guidance and information about how to navigate in the Swedish society. In the second phase the informants are receivers of guidance and information about opportunities such as new jobs and how to start a business. The bridgebuilders in the second phase are mostly people with a Swedish background.

The informal insurance system in Somalia continues to exist after the migration to Sweden. The consequence of that relatives are spread in different places and live in different social circumstances is that there is an asymmetry within the transnational social network. This leads to daily moral dilemmas regarding who the informants should spend their limited reources on. A collective mobilising of economic resources among relatives in different asylum countries reduces the burden of the informants. A similar kind of collective mobilising is found among co-members of Somali associations and among neighbours with a Somali background. My result shows that fewer nearby living and practically supporting women relatives in combination with new social demands and opportunities in the Swedish society, lead to changed expectations on gender roles and on generalised reciprocity between generations.