Climate (In)justice: An Intersectional Feminist Analysis of Disaster Management in Antigua and Barbuda in the Aftermath of Hurricane Irma

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Abstract

This article discusses disaster management in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma in Antigua and Barbuda. Vulnerability and resilience of individuals and groups in relation to disaster management are placed within structures such as gender, sexuality, (dis)ability, age and socio-economic status, etc. How stakeholders within disaster management such as the Directorate of Gender Affairs, the National Office of Disaster Services, and District Coordinators, understand and respond to vulnerability and resilience might reinforce or challenge such structures and power relations. This study draws on insights from intersectional feminism to examine which social categories are made (in)visible, and how power relations are reproduced or challenged. It shows that some social categories (age, family status, class and occupation) in relation to gender gain more attention than others (disability and sexuality). The understandings and responses make some social categories that have previously been invisible visible, and heteronormative and patriarchal processes were both reproduced and challenged.

Keywords

Antigua and Barbuda; Climate Change; Disaster Management; Hurricane Irma; Intersectional Feminism; Resilience; SIDS; Vulnerability

Introduction[1]

The term climate change no longer captures the reality, but climate and environmental breakdown is a more accurate description. No corner of the globe is immune to the devastating consequences of the climate crisis. Due to climate change and environmental degradation, disasters are predicted to increase the magnitude and intensity of floods, storms, droughts, and other severe weather events. Since the 1960s, the number of reported weather-related disasters has more than tripled, and some states are more vulnerable than others. Hence, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) face severe hurricanes, floods, landslides, and droughts (Climate Centre 2018; WHO 2017; Ruiz 2017). In less than a decade, the sea level rise and increased weather events could force thousands of people to mitigate SIDS (Steiner 2014). Even though SIDS are among the countries that are least responsible for climate change, they are most likely to suffer from the effects of climate change and become uninhabitable (UNDP 2010). The Caribbean region is one of the most disaster-prone areas in the world, and the threat of hurricanes is an annually occurring event (Enarson and Morrow 1998, 213). As for Antigua and Barbuda, the category five Hurricane Irma made landfall in September 2017, and it was one of the strongest storms ever recorded in the Atlantic. The hurricane destroyed 95 % of Barbuda's infrastructure, and all 1,600 residents were evacuated to shelters and homes in Antigua (ACAPS, OCHA and UNDP 2017, 18-19). In 2020, almost three years after the hurricane, Barbuda remains to some extent uninhabitable (ACAPS, OCHA and UNDP 2017, 5; Boger and Perdikaris 2019).

Environmental degradation and the climate crisis not only affect the planet and biodiversity, but are also a source of great social injustice. The climate and environmental crisis are a structural problem and have emerged from the interlocking systems of capitalism, colonialism, militarism, patriarchy, ableism, xenophobia, and white supremacy. The crisis affects countries, communities, and individuals differently according to their economic, cultural, social, and environmental context. Inequalities do not exist in a

[1] An earlier draft "Climate (in)justice: An intersectional feminist analysis of disaster management in Antigua and Barbuda in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma" was submitted as a working paper to the IAPSS Regional Conference on "Pathways towards climate justice" in 2019, and this article is developed from my master thesis entitled "Leaving No One Behind: A Minor Field Study with an Intersectional Feminist Analysis of Disaster Management in Antigua and Barbuda," which was supervised by Maria Wendt at Stockholm University, Sweden. With deep gratitude and respect, I dedicate this to the individuals who shared their experiences, knowledge, feelings, and ideas, and who took the time to participate in this article. A special thanks to the reviewers as well.

vacuum, and neither does the climate crisis. Disaster and climate management may interact and exacerbate existing injustices and power relations in the society.

Intersectionality is a framework for understanding how gender and other characteristics interact in relation to disasters in a specific context, which in turn shapes people's access to resources and capabilities to be resilient. Thus, climate change is not gender-neutral. The ways in which the climate crisis impacts are experienced and responded to is due to intersectionalities of social difference, particularly gender (Enarson and Morrow 1998, 2-3; Jacobs 2017; UN Women Caribbean n.d.). The vulnerability and resilience of individuals and communities in relation to disaster management are placed within structures of gender, health, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and socio-economic status, etc. An intersectional approach to disaster management can contribute with knowledge and emphasise new positions and linkages that "[c]an facilitate alliances between voices that are usually marginalised in the dominant climate agenda" (Kaijser and Kronsell 2013, 219). The theoretical framework offers an understanding of how gender roles and power structures within disaster management may be reinforced, challenged and negotiated, and it enables to examine what serves as grounds for inclusion and exclusion (Kaijser and Kronsell 2013, 219). Thus, disaster management should strive to leave no one behind. As it will be outlined later in the article, a theoretical and empirical gap exists within the field of disaster research. Thus, the existence of the gap might result in a reinforcement of structures that overlook intersections of power, upholds marginalisation and injustices, and even exacerbates the outcomes of disasters.

Research Problem: The Complexity of Climate (In)justice

Countries which have least contributed to the climate crisis are vulnerable to its impact along with people living in poverty, women, older persons, people living with disabilities, LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual and/or Allies +) persons, minority and indigenous people, young people and future generations (IIED 2019; Chaplin et al 2019). Disasters and the climate crisis do not impact men and women in uniform ways; furthermore, not all women are affected uniformly (UNDP 2015, 10-11). In post-disaster settings, women are more often overlooked as actors of change and stereotypes of women as passive victims result in gender-biased approaches that reproduce women's vulnerability instead of challenging it (Enarson and Morrow 1998, 46, 186; Sultana 2010, 44). Vulnerability is not a fixed characteristic of certain groups of people and it is not derived from a single social dimension of being e.g. rural, poor, young etc. Rather, vulnerability depends on the

structural social and historical practices, processes and power relations that reinforce some people to be more disadvantaged and vulnerable to risks than others. By understanding the environmental crisis in relation to social struggles against racism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism, one can recognise the injustices of power, privilege and oppression.

Simultaneously, in the event of disasters, traditional gender norms that are reinforced by patriarchal values can be challenged and new power dynamics created (Enarson and Chakrabati 2009, 3). It has been shown that women step out of their traditional roles in post-disaster settings, which could uphold the windows of opportunity and change. They result in an emancipation process that can empower women at the local level and build more disaster-resilient communities (Enarson and Chakrabati 2009). Girls and women have developed different contextual mechanisms for strengthening resilience, however these mechanisms are not always acknowledged in disaster management because the vulnerability reduction and resilience building discourse has been influenced and dominated by (patriarchal-) natural scientific and top-down approaches. An intersectional approach can locate the climate crisis within interlocking systems of oppression where girls' and women's situated knowledge is key to solving the climate crisis.

Previous studies have pointed out that there is a tendency for simplification (Djoudi et al. 2016; Gaillard et al. 2017). The gender aspect is reduced to heteronormative binaries of man/woman and where women are generally portrayed as vulnerable victims. The present analysis has been carried out in response to this call, aiming to contribute with knowledge and fill this gap.

The purpose of the article is to examine how social categories are made (in)visible and how power relations are reproduced and/or challenged in the aftermath of Hurricane Irma by focusing on the understanding of and response to the crisis by stakeholders in disaster management in Antigua and Barbuda. It answers the following questions: (1) Which social categories are included (or excluded) in the understanding and response of stakeholders in disaster management? (2) How are gender relations and other intersections of power reproduced, reinforced, or challenged in disaster management?

This article answers these questions by looking at how social categories are made (in)visible, and how power relations are reproduced or challenged via focusing on the understanding of and response to the crisis by stakeholders. Stakeholders such as the Directorate of Gender Affairs Antigua and Barbuda (DoGA), the National Office of Disaster Services (NODS), and Disaster District Coordinators (DDC) were interviewed. The article is structured as follows: the first section presents relevant background of the

context and highlights previous research on gender, intersectionality and disaster management. The second section presents the theoretical framework of intersectional feminism and how it relates to disaster management. This section mainly draws from feminist research that uses an intersectional framework whereas insights from postcolonial feminism, queer studies and critical masculinity studies are presented to show how they enrich and link to the theoretical framework. The third section outlines the methodology for the article, it is followed by a presentation of the empirical findings and analysis in the fourth section, demonstrating the complex and dynamic interactions between gender and different social categories and intersectionalities, which are made (in)visible in disaster management, yielding broader lessons for the concepts and processes of binaries, power relations, agency and stereotypes. This article concludes with presenting avenues for further research.

Background

Antigua and Barbuda are located in the eastern Caribbean and are part of the Leeward Islands, between the Caribbean Sea and the Atlantic Ocean. The country consists of three islands, Antigua, Barbuda, and Redonda. The total population is estimated to be 101,000 (WHO 2018). Antigua and Barbuda are particularly exposed to hydro-meteorological hazards such as droughts and hurricanes. The state has experienced earthquakes, coastal erosion, and landslides. It is estimated that 100 % of the land and 100 % of the population are exposed to two or more hydro-meteorological hazards, and 80 % of the GDP is at risk from two or more hazards (O'Mardre 2017, 125-133).

In September 2017, two catastrophic category five hurricanes, Irma and Maria, impacted the Caribbean region. As for Antigua and Barbuda, the category five Hurricane Irma made landfall on September 6th. Two days later, Barbuda was hit again by Hurricane Jose, and followed two weeks after by Hurricane Maria. For the first time in 300 years, all 1,600 residents from Barbuda were evacuated to Antiguan shelters when Hurricane Jose was estimated to strike the islands (Lyons 2017). Hurricane Irma is one of the strongest and most powerful storms ever recorded in the Atlantic, with winds of 295 km/h. The hurricane destroyed 95 % of all public and private properties and damaged 40 % of the roads in Barbuda (ACAPS, OCHA and UNDP 2017, 18-19). Almost a year after the hurricanes Barbuda remains uninhabitable and newer information stress that the rebuilding process has been slow and there are still challenges remaining regarding lack of electricity and running water, as well as non-functional hospital and bank (ACAPS, OCHA and UNDP 2017; Boger and Perdikaris 2019).

Disaster Management in Antigua and Barbuda

Disaster management mechanism on a national level is managed by the National Office of Disaster Services Coordinating Unit (NODS-CU), which is responsible for the mitigation of vulnerability in the case of natural hazards (O'Mardre 2017, 19, 109) (see Figure 1). NODS is supported by the District Disaster Committees which are established in 17 districts (including Barbuda), and where the volunteers facilitate with the coordination of community resources.

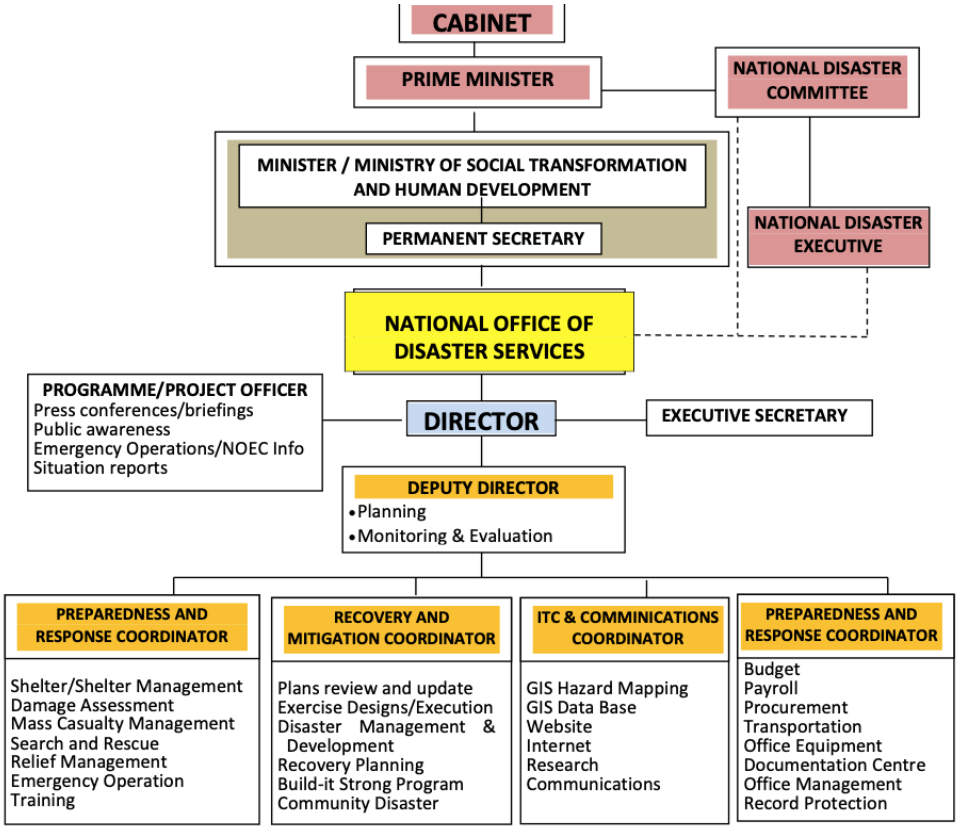

Figure 1 Governance and Structure NODS (O'Mardre 2017, 110)

Previous Research

Previous research within the field of disaster management has shown that the gender dimension has been neglected in measures, projects, and research. These works stress the importance of recognising that men and women are affected differently by the event of a disaster, and that disaster management tends to be lacking gender-sensitive measures. It has also been shown that mainstream research tends to be quantitative and influenced by men's practices. In general, women's meanings and experiences have been epistemologically excluded from mainstream research according to feminist researchers, and disaster research confirms this claim (Enarson and Morrow 1998, 143-144). Hence,

"[t]his legacy of unexamined male bias in research, theory, and practice helps

> explain why we have learned as little about men's emotional work during disaster recovery and as about women's physical work. Gender relations and gender power differences remain unexamined, particularly in disaster research and practice […]" (Enarson and Morrow 1998, 4).

Fothergill (1998) stresses that little attention has been given to gender within disaster management. The literature review addressing gender in disaster research shows that several studies were conducted with survey or quantitative methods. These only includes gender as a standard demographic variable rather than applying a gender analysis (Enarson and Morrow 1998, 11-25).

Djoudi et al. (2016) reviewed the literature of how gender is framed using intersectionality as a lens on disasters and climate change research. The authors found that the "feminization of vulnerability" and the discourses of victimisation were reinforced rather than challenged. They concluded that there is a need for more intersectional and critical assessments to reveal agency and emancipation. More understanding is needed on how context-specific impacts of disasters shape and are shaped by existing power relations (Djoudi et al. 2016, 248-250). The lack of research exploring how disasters interact with intersectional systems of oppression and privilege can be compared to what the authors call the 'Vulnerability Olympics' where "[w]ithout embedding itself in societal, local and global inequalities and power relation analysis, research runs the risk of being reduced to a metaphor by simply pointing out the most vulnerable" (Djoudi et al. 2016, 254). Overall, the studies took an additive approach rather than an in-depth analysis of vulnerability and resilience. Arora-Jonsson (2011), cited in Djoudi, states that "[a] feminist response to global climate change must not only challenge masculine technical and expert knowledge about climate change, it must also question the tendency to reinforce gendered polarities, which work to maintain the status quo" (Djoudi et al. 2016, 259).

Gaillard et al. (2017) question the dominant understanding of gender derived from Western practices in Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). Case studies from the Philippines, Indonesia, and Samoa highlight gender minorities' contextual patterns of vulnerability in relation to their marginalised position within society and the endogenous capacities the gender minorities possess. Furthermore, they stress that heteronormative values and norms make non-normative and gender minorities especially vulnerable in disasters where they face stigma, discrimination, and harassment (Gaillard et al. 2017, 430-432).

Moreno and Shaw (2018) examine gender relations changes following an earthquake and tsunami in Chile in 2010. Women's resilience is less documented in disaster research than women's vulnerability. By including resilience as well, it stresses that women

are not solely passive recipients of aid but rather active agents (Moreno and Shaw 2018, 205-207). The authors concluded that disasters could offer windows of opportunities that challenge power relations by building resilience over time; however, more empirical research and theorisation are required (Moreno and Shaw 2018, 221). Le Masson et al. (2016) stresses the importance of not only contextual vulnerability (e.g., how and why men and women are differently affected by disasters) but also contextual resilience and its impact on social relations. The authors highlight that social norms can change in the event of a disaster, for better or for worse. Disasters can open new opportunities where traditional gender roles can be challenged or increase inequalities leaving marginalised groups even more vulnerable (Moreno and Shaw 2018, 6).

The previous research section outlines the need for more contextualised vulnerability and resilience approaches, since existing research lacks sufficient gender and power relations considerations. There are theoretical as well as empirical gaps within the field of disaster research. Thus, by building on and challenging previous research, this article aims to examine how various stakeholders in disaster management understand and respond to vulnerability and resilience in post-disaster Antigua and Barbuda. But also, to generate a deeper knowledge of how stakeholders understand and respond to the layers of intersectional issues and identities, that in turn influence their ability to build a framework that does not further exacerbate the systems of privilege and oppression but rather subvert and overcome them.

Theoretical Framework

In anti-racist and postcolonial feminist theory during the 1990s, the term intersectionality was used to respond to mainstream gender analysis, which often leaned upon binary categories of men/women, and class/race. Even though feminist studies had placed gender in relation to other power structures, the concept of intersectionality, created by Crenshaw (1991), provides a more complex and inclusive ontology (gender *and* ethnicity as opposed to gender *or* ethnicity) (De los Reyes and Mulinari 2005, 15; Crenshaw 1991). It also builds upon the understanding that social categories (i.e. gender, class, sexuality, (dis)ability, ethnicity, and age) are constructed and dynamic. They constantly co-constitute each other, creating unique social relations that vary according to context (Crenshaw 1991; Kaijser 2014, 29-30). This article strategically implements an intersectional feminist approach with gender as an analytical category and its interplay with other intersections to be of importance (ct. Lykke 2009, 106-107). Thus, intersectionality can be described as "[t]he interaction between gender, race, and other categories of difference in individual

lives, social practices, institutional arrangements, and cultural ideologies, and the outcomes of these interactions in the terms of power" (Kriszan et al. 2012, 18). Intersectionality offers a nuanced analysis of power that includes power over others and power with others, meaning that the same subject can experience both power and oppression at the same time (Djoudi et al. 2016, 249-251). Intersectionality offers a nuanced analysis of how an individual's collection of identities interact with privilege and oppression in society, where there are favourable traits that increase privilege and less favourable ones that decrease privilege. An intersectional analysis of disaster management includes acknowledging how systems and methodologies for disaster management intertwine with already established systems of power (AWIS 2020).

Insights from anti-racist and postcolonial feminism, queer theory, and critical masculinity studies have contributed to enriching intersectionality in questioning and destabilising social categories and the constructs of 'woman' and 'man' as coherent and stable categories. The construction of women as one homogeneous group with a shared oppression due to the patriarchal system results in women being robbed on their historical and political agency (Mohanty 2003, 23; Freidenvall 2016). Therefore, by acknowledging women as non-essential opens for recognition of agency and change (Kaijser 2014, 37). Privilege and oppression are understood as intersectional rather than additive, and these dynamics are not separate but rather relational (Windsong 2018, 136-137).

Queer feminist studies challenge the mainstream notion of heteronormativity and its stigmatisation of queer relations in society. Heteronormativity emphasises the limitations of having binary categorisations of gender and sexuality and "[s]tress[es] the need to understand gender and sexuality as both socially relational and performatively constructed" (Hines 2010, 114). One example for disaster management could be the reproduction of having households represented in heteronormative and binary family constellations e.g. man/woman. The contribution from critical masculinity studies, positions, and critiques hegemonic power relations of masculinities, aiming to contribute to the disruption of hegemonic masculinity (Lykke 2009, 120-121).

Intersectional Feminist Perspective on Disaster Management

Disasters are socially situated events where both vulnerability and resilience can be revealed, and where the social experiences of disasters reflect and may disrupt gender relations and power structures (Enarson and Morrow 1998, 4). By studying not only actions but also normative assumptions within disaster management, the reinforcement of social categories and power structures that are embedded in everyday practices can be

understood (Kaijser and Kronsell 2013, 428). This means that an intersectional approach can move beyond identifying power structures towards questioning social categories and highlighting what serves as ground for agency around common objectives (Kaijser and Kronsell 2013, 423). This article draws on insights from intersectional feminism to examine which social categories are made (in)visible, and how power relations are reproduced or challenged by focusing on the understanding of and response to crisis.

Methodological Framework

Qualitative research offers an interpretive epistemological position where the emphasis is on understanding the socially constructed world, how its participants interpret it, and how it is responded to. Constructivism being its ontological position, implies that social properties are the outcomes of interactions between persons rather than just something 'out there'. In other words, knowledge is derived from social practices (Bryman 2012, 380; Kaijser and Kronsell 2013, 219-220). Therefore, the qualitative feminist approach will add explanatory depth to the previous conducted quantitative (and qualitative) research (Kleinman 2007).

Data Collection

The empirical material was collected during fieldwork in Antigua and Barbuda carried out for ten weeks between September and November 2018. Interviews were conducted with stakeholders such as DoGA, NODS, and DDCs. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 individuals, as well as a focus group discussion with five participants (see Appendix A). The main body of the empirical material was gathered on the island of Antigua (nine individual interviews in Antigua and one in Barbuda, and one focus group discussion in Antigua). The process of data selection was a combination of identifying key stakeholders and snowball-sampling. The snowball-sampling turned out to be suitable to find people with relevant knowledge and experience in a situation of limited access to the field (ct. Blaikie 2009, 179).

Respondents

NODS is one of the most relevant and central stakeholders in disaster management in Antigua and Barbuda. It is responsible for the coordination and response of a disaster. NODS works closely with other stakeholders and manages how the work should be divided, meaning that the agency has the power to influence the outcomes of reducing vulnerability and increasing resilience.

NODS is supported by the DDCs, which are established in 17 districts, and where volunteers facilitate the coordination of community resources (O'Mardre 2017, 110, 160).

The DDCs were chosen to gain a multi-level data sampling, since they are between the levels of governmental agencies (top-down) and women and marginalised groups (bottom-up). They are in a position where multiple ways of agency and resistance might occur, making them central to generating critical insights and thus greater understanding (ct. Lempert 2007, 85). The DoGA is a relevant stakeholder because as a national gender agency, they take up an important space when it comes to framing gender in disaster management. To generate a deeper understanding of the data, documents, brochures, and organisational reports were collected.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group

The choice of using in-depth semi-structured interviews was based on the pursuit of flexible interview processes. When the interview process is flexible, it emphasises how the interviewee frames and attach meaning to issues and events (Harding 1987). This flexibility also allows interviewees to raise additional or complementary issues. The group interview was carried out with one DDC and their team, in a total of five persons. All interviews were conducted in English and recorded (except for Interview 7 and Interview 9, where the respondents did not give permission for recording), and later transcribed. Furthermore, before and after the interviews, field notes and reflections were written down. Both function as a control mechanism to foster reflexivity during subsequent analysis (see Appendix C for details on ethical considerations, self-reflexivity and limitations).

Data Analysis

During both the interview phase and transcriptions, reflections and thoughts were written down in field notes, and the interview guide was further developed. The empirical material (transcripts, field notes, and some documents) was approached by first reading everything, searching for salient themes, codes, and patterns that would be fruitful for analysis. This was repeated, searching for similarities and differences, different voices, paradoxes, as well as what was *not* said. The themes were then given different colours and functioned as coding for the material. The next step involved comparing the codes and forming them into new themes. The next step was to read through all the transcribed interviews again to see if there were any additional parts that could be coded.

Empirical Data and Analysis

The first theme sheds light on the complex and dynamic interactions, to what extent social categories are linked to gender, and who are made (in)visible in this specific context of disaster management. The overall theme is divided into sub-themes, such as

Heterogenous Categories and *Binaries*. The following theme sheds light on the processes that reproduce and/or challenge power relations and is divided into sub-themes such as *Power Relations and Stereotypes, Agency, Contextual Challenges and Opportunities.*

Heterogenous Categories

The first sub-theme focuses on how the category of *gender* is interwoven with different social categories in terms of vulnerability and resilience. The balance of vulnerability respectively resilience depends on how much attention each part has been given in the answers of the respondents. Although, social categorisations have been divided below into separate sections to facilitate the analysis, it does not mean social categories should be additive and separate but rather mutual, dynamical and linked processes. It can be outlined from the informants' understandings and responses that *gender* categories such as 'women' and 'men' are linked to other social categories, however the extent to which different social categories occurs varies. Consequently, it can be noted that some social categories in relation to gender gain more attention than others in disaster management. The category that *gender* is most interlinked to is *age,* and mostly in terms of 'girls' and 'boys' or 'older women'. Other social categories frequently connected to gender are *family status, class/socioeconomic status* and *occupation*. Social categories of *(dis)ability* and *sexuality* are mentioned to a lesser extent in relation to gender. As outlined below, those who experience the interplays of different power systems might become (in)visible in disaster management, thus the understandings and responses run the risk of becoming fragmented.

Age is one of the social categories mentioned the most by the respondents in relation to *gender;* connections to young people are made more often than to older people. References to age are made almost exclusively to distinguish adults from children, such as 'women and men' and 'girls and boys'. When mentioned, older women (and the few cases with older men) are identified exclusively in terms of vulnerability, and not ever in relation to resilience. The possibility for older people to be considered as actors of change is diminished when resilience and agency are not included. This can be compared to Mohanty's (2003, 23) insight that when women are repeatedly constructed as vulnerable, powerless and with no agency to act, the construction of women as one homogenous group is reproduced. Each repetition of constructing older persons as solely vulnerable and powerless risks reproducing a predetermined power position that excludes the fluid and context-specific social status. These dichotomies run the risk of undermining the complexity of power relations and make the experiences and exposures of older people invisible in disaster management (Kaijser and Kronsell 2013, 421).

Other social categories that are frequently connected to gender are *family status, class/socioeconomic status,* and *occupation.* Gender and family status are mentioned both regarding vulnerability and resilience, and almost exclusively in terms of female (single) headed households. Overall, female-headed households are vulnerable due to several factors such as being responsible for the care of family members, especially the children and older people. For example:

> "Women are also vulnerable in the sense of they have oftentimes young children that are dependent on them, and it is also a thing in Antigua and in the wider Caribbean that there is not a lot of males and fathers necessary present" (Interview 1).

Although agency and resilience of single female-headed households are shown in the understandings section (see 'Agency'), there is still a tendency to link vulnerability to the absence of men and/or fathers. The interpretations of female single-households as vulnerable because of the absence of men, can be argued to be general and overlooks context-specific dynamics. When family constellations are described in terms of 'men and women' as the only and static binaries, they reproduce the normalisation of patriarchal and heteronormative processes. This could be interpreted as when the (heterosexual) household is fragmented, the notion of women depending on male protection is strengthened.

When women are described only in terms of being in the absence of men's protection, and when the source of vulnerability is not problematised, the (in)equalities can be interpreted as already constituted instead of being produced through processes of power relations. The construction of women as a unified group based on the subordination of men, risk defining power in binary terms "[p]eople who have it (read: men) and people who do not (read: women)" (Mohanty 2003, 31). Hence, when talking about affected households only in terms of 'men and women' it reinforces heteronormative tendencies of only including (hetero-) men and women as the normal and sole family constellation, leaving everything else to othering. As Galliard et al. (2017, 432) states, "[t]hose who do not fit into this gender binary are stigmatised on the basis of sexuality and gender identity."

(Dis)ability and *sexuality* are given less attention in relation to *gender* than family status, class, and occupation, which runs the risk of making them invisible and/or less prioritised in disaster management. In terms of gender and sexuality (and *gender identities*), the LGBTQIA+ community was referred to differently by respondents e.g., 'LGBT', 'trans community', and 'gays'. 'Women' and 'men' (and 'girls' and 'boys') are mostly described by respondents as binary and the only categories of gender. In relation to 'women' and 'men', no other gender identities are included, it is only restricted with some few references to the

LGBTQIA+ community. This understanding tends to fix some gender identities as abnormal, risking reproducing norms of heterosexual and binary gender identities as superior. This restricts the possibilities of change in power relations and thus makes some individual and group invisible in disaster management. If only some types of oppressions and/or (in)equalities gain attention, the understandings and responses of stakeholders might run the risk of neglecting the interplays of differences in social categorisations and power relations, hence making them (in)visible. According to Kaijser and Kronsell (2013, 421), it might "[e]xclude those who do not fit in these static categories and den[y] social struggle, contestation and the complexity and fluidity of identities."

Binaries

DoGA noticed a great need for dignity kits in the aftermath of hurricane Irma, although different aid products and items were distributed. They provided shelters around the island with dignity kits (toothpaste, soap, sanitary napkins etc.) that women and girls needed. DoGA acknowledges the need and the importance of having a gender lens on disaster management, which made the struggles of women and girls visible. The construction of the group 'women' in the case of DoGA was used for targeting the specific needs of women and girls in a hurricane setting that usually neglects e.g., sanitary napkins for persons that menstruate. This was done without exacerbating normative assumptions of them being victims but rather to shed light on the structures that neglect gender. Another recurring topic is that the larger society connects gender solely to women, meaning that it has become 'women issues' rather than 'gender issues':

> "Sometimes it is hard to bring men to the forefront of gender advocacy and gender issues, and I think sometimes men and the larger society, hear on gender and they tend to associate it exclusively with women" (Interview 1).

Additionally, when gender becomes equal to women, it complicates agency beyond and across social categories. 'Gender issues' include not only those who define themselves to be women but also non-binary gender identities, broadening the understanding of vulnerability and resilience. Furthermore, heteronormative values and norms make non-normative and gender minorities especially vulnerable in disasters where they face stigma, discrimination, and harassment (Gaillard et al. 2017, 430-432). When women are only referred to as being vulnerable or victims, existing (gender) power structures are reinforced (Mohanty 2003, 37-39). Furthermore, when talking about 'women' and 'men' without including differences in heterogeneity, it makes these groups' vulnerability and resilience invisible to disaster management. This also tends to reinforce heterosexuality and gender binarism as 'normal', which restricts the possibilities of change in power relations.

To conclude, some of the findings correspond with previous research. They show that women are portrayed as a single vulnerable group, often in contrast to other groups such as older people, children, and persons with disabilities. The categories that gender is most interlinked to are age, family status, class/socioeconomic status, and occupation. Social categories of *(dis)ability* and *sexuality* are mentioned, but to a lesser extent in relation to gender. If only some types of oppressions and/or (in)equalities gain attention, the understandings and responses of stakeholders might run the risk of neglecting the interplays of differences in social categorisations and power relations, hence making them (in)visible. Intersectional analysis matters; unless we examine the full breadth of diversity of experience in disaster management we risk becoming fragmented and reproduce heteronormative and patriarchal processes rather than challenge them.

Power relations and Stereotypes

In the aftermath of Hurricane Irma, gender relations and stereotypes were both reproduced and resisted in disaster management. Several of the respondents emphasised that men are expected to be 'the protector', 'the breadwinner', and 'strong' after hurricanes. There is a tendency of linking women with stereotypical beliefs of being the natural 'caregivers' that have the responsibility for children and older people. The process of naturalisation of some social categories contributes to homogenise women and treat all of those who belong to the category 'women' sharing natural attributes such as victim, caregiver etc. These categorical attributes, "[a]re often used for the construction of inclusionary/exclusionary boundaries that differentiate between self and other, determining what is 'normal' and what is not" (Berger and Guidroz 2009, 50).

As Mohanty stresses, by assuming that 'women' are an already essentialised and coherent group, focus shift from how women are constituted trough these very structures to be instead placed outside social relations (Mohanty 2003, 40). Some respondents highlight toxic masculinities that derive from stereotypical and normative assumptions in society, meaning that men face pressure when they cannot fulfill these stereotypical roles and seek harmful coping strategies instead, e.g. drinking:

> "Men are very often unable to work after a disaster because they cannot fulfill that breadwinner role so sometimes it can manifest in toxic masculinity, depression or aggressiveness […] One of the issues that we did see post of Barbuda was a lot of drinking and Barbuda is a place where people drink a lot generally" (Interview 4).

By highlighting social *processes* in which masculinities are practiced, it is implied that the social construction of gender is constantly reproduced and performed. Insights from critical masculinity studies suggest an anti-essentialist approach where 'men' and 'toxic

masculinities' are socially constructed in a fluid and changeable process (Lykke 2010, 62). Therefore, by focusing on processes, the anti-essentialist approach opens for the understandings and responses in disaster management to have a more dynamic and relational view on power structures. A prevalent topic mentioned when talking about gender roles and reaching out to different projects, activities, and awareness-raising was the stigmatisation of seeking psychosocial support in the aftermath of the hurricane, especially regarding men.

> "The only thing I would say is that we predominately get women and I guess men do not necessary come as much as they could because there is a stigma attached to men looking to pursuing these types of services or maybe men feeling emasculated by actual having to come and report that they have been sexually assaulted or something along those lines" (Interview 1).

Processes of hegemonic masculinities run the risk of reproducing toxic masculinity, constructing men as striving to be strong and not needing psychosocial support. The processes of hegemonic masculinities thus legitimise the subordination of women and 'other' men (the ones seeking psychosocial support) (Lykke 2010, 64). However, one respondent reflected on an interesting finding during focus group discussions with Barbudians. The men were very open about their vulnerabilities but at the same time they reinforced the image of being the protector:

> "When we went to the shelters in Barbuda, men were very open and vocal about how they felt impacted, some were very open around the fact that they had to use some very unhealthy way to cope with the trauma […] they were also very careful to highlight the role that they had to play in providing reassurances in being the protector […] 'yes I'm being exposed and very open about my vulnerability but I'm also reinforcing my power and dominance in reminding you that I did play a significant role'" (Interview 6).

By also problematising how social constructions of hegemonic positionings claim to represent the normal, i.e. how men can show emotions but under the premises that they also are perceived to be strong and protective, the understanding and response question essential beliefs of what the image of "men" is (Lykke 2010, 63). When focusing on how power relations are articulated in different contexts and 'doing gender', it also includes the fact that these social relations create a naturalisation of dominance and subordination between men, women, and gender non-binary identities (Lykke 2010, 65). Hegemonic power structures uphold not only norms; they also reproduce stigmas of othering or deviancy. However, processes of stigmatisation can also be an act of challenging the status

quo (De los Reyes and Mulinari 2005, 43-45). The exercise of power and heteronormativity reproduces a legitimate order where anyone else "outside" upsets it (Lykke 2010, 60).

Agency

In contrast to previous research, where women are more than often overlooked as actors in disaster management, it is articulated by the respondents that women performed agency rather than being passive victims in the aftermath of hurricane Irma:

> "So, they [women] are going out and basically defying the status quo and learning how to do these things. Learning the skills that are necessary to protect their house, protect their livelihood, protect their family. Ensure that they have resources to be able to provide, to be able to prepare" (Interview 1).

Emphasising agency and resilience of women, to some extent, challenges understandings of binary structures that only include "[p]ossessing power versus being powerless" (Mohanty 2003, 39), and where women are constructed as a powerless and coherent group. In comparison to *Family status,* where women are described to be powerless in the absence of men, the understanding of women as not only vulnerable but also resilient resists the essentialised and fixed notion of women as being powerless. By focusing on women's agency and resilience, these understandings and responses can challenge patriarchal structures and hegemonic positionings.

Contextual Challenges and Opportunities

The understandings and responses of stakeholders in disaster management can challenge global structures that strive for Western norms by questioning power relations of both the subordination and domination roles of the Global North and the Global South. By including the oppressor and oppressed, a more relational understanding of power facilitating change of structures and inequalities can appear. Processes of meaning that systematically marginalise and anonymise developing nations are tied together at the present time. One respondent sheds light to the processes in which colonial legacies still influence the international arena: "Each country they didn't develop on their own they got resources from someone, they got assistance from somewhere" (Interview 5).

When including global structures that produce power differentials and positioning states to strive for the constructed unmarked Western norm in the international arena, normative assumptions such as "[d]eveloping countries (i.e., countries that should seek to 'achieve' the level of the industrialised West)" (Lykke 2010, 53), focus shifts not only to the excluded position but also to how the relations of dominance are constructed and reproduced for the included position (Lykke 2010, 56). Thus, it opens up to analyse 'whiteness' as a power position by making the domination of the West visible. Both

privilege and oppression need to be in focus since they are relational rather than separate processes (Windsong 2018, 137). The critique regarding the lack of representation of people of colour in the international arena challenge processes that counteract emancipation. Processes of essentialism, eurocentrism, and the reproduction of objectification of 'the other', systematically downgrade and marginalise non-Western people, making them invisible. One respondent emphasised the importance of having people of colour represented, especially women of colour:

> "Because I think even this region specifically, it is important for women of colour to see themselves reflected at certain levels, to know that I can get to a point where I am a leading authority on climate change especially for the region because we are so deeply affected by climate change that it is empowering, it is important to have somebody who understands the cultural context and understands all the effects and all that leading these kinds of movement" (Interview 4).

Representation is crucial for emancipation, not only due to the (un)equal power relations between the Global North and Global South but also to distinguish differences of resistance. According to De los Reyes and Mulinari (2005, 93), "[b]y articulating a counterstory is a way to overcome distorted subjectivity and the right of problem formulation." Therefore, a relational understanding of power and counter-stories stresses processes that make subordination, excluding women of colour and upholding hegemonic structures of whiteness possible. It also allows for questioning formations of meaning that naturalise how one perceives the world. One contextual challenge that disaster management faces refers to the exploitation of 'third world women' by the international community and stakeholders that came in after the hurricane:

> "I think that a lot of time when international agencies are coming in with an agenda, not that it is a bad thing but you really cannot treat all the countries the same and treat all the populations the same, you need to provide service within the context." (Interview 2)

This understanding problematises the international community's practice to treat women as a homogenous and static group with identical interests, rejecting context-specific and dynamical intersections. A generalised notion of subordination that connects women runs the risk of reproducing power differentials rather than challenging them, thus reproducing the construction of 'third world women' (Mohanty 2003, 21-30). By including the oppressor and oppressed, a relational understanding of power structures can be generated and challenged. The so called 'white saviour complex' reproduces the exploitation of women:

> "So, one come in as the saviour, saving the day, it must stop because it's not useful for anyone […] we have to stop taking pictures of people crying we're not in the 1980 anymore. We need to look at people of how they are being resilient and how people are bouncing back because people don't want to see pictures of themselves like this, it is real exploitation." (Interview 7)

This understanding brings attention to the fact that focus should be in shifting dialogue, how stories are framed, and what each country is doing for themselves rather than having 'the West' come in and save the day. The West's 'saviour' role denies agency of the ones being 'saved' and appropriate women's rights movements' work, but it also generalises non-western countries and places 'the West' in the centre of attention. Therefore, this understanding challenges the notion of global inequalities and 'saviour complex of the West' by questioning them to be unproblematic and already constituted, in relation to the structures that uphold Western domination. Thus, the focus on processes and the inclusion of subordination and domination generate deeper contextual understanding with transformative potential. In comparison to intersectional feminism, not only does feminism claim to explain the (in)equalities but also to change the (un)equal gender system (De los Reyes and Mulinari 2005, 88).

Even though the hurricane brought challenges and exacerbated (in)equalities, it also functioned as a window of opportunities. The disruption of gender roles allowed for the creation of empowerment, where power relations can be challenged (Moreno and Shaw 2018, 209). The hurricane opened opportunities for events and projects that in normal conditions might not have taken place. For instance:

> "We [DoGA] were not that present in Barbuda before the hurricane, it sort of came as an opportunity, unfortunate conditions but we had an opportunity to expand our work to Barbuda. One of the things that we did, we mapped out a referral pathway for Barbuda because there were a number of persons who went back over to live so we wanted to ensure that they were safe and felt empowered to make a report if anything happened especially for sexual violence, we wanted to ensure that prevention was key" (Interview 6).

Respondents emphasised how the opportunity to establish a referral pathway in Barbuda opened up pathways for conversations and dialogues around gender-based sexual violence (GBSV) and scale up the psychosocial support services. DoGA recognised the need for a safe space where boys can talk about issues and vulnerabilities they might face. Men Engage Summer Institute (MESI) was a pilot program that took place in the summer

2018. The camp engaged boys in critical topics such as gender, mental health, toxic masculinity and GBSV:

> "Talking about how they feel, talking about how well they negotiate certain things in society, talking about masculinity, understanding the harmful masculinities, their performed masculinities and moving towards more positive masculinity" (Interview 6).

The program is a crucial step towards fighting gender inequality especially after the hurricanes where new issues might be created, and old ones reinforced. MESI is a way of resisting stereotypes of hyper masculinity, creating spaces for young boys and men to engage. The approach of the camp has an agenda that deconstructs and problematises social categories and intersections that occupy hegemonic positions.

Concluding Discussion

Which social categories are included (or excluded) in the understanding and response of stakeholders in disaster management? Some of the findings correspond with previous research. The findings show that women are portrayed as one vulnerable group, often in comparison to other groups such as the older people and children. The categories that gender is most interlinked with are *age, family status, class/socioeconomic status* and *occupation.* Social categories of *(dis)ability* and *sexuality* are invoked to a lesser extent in relation to gender.

Furthermore, the interpretations of female single-households as vulnerable in the absence of men are generalising and overlook context-specific dynamics. The construction of gender categories such as 'women' should be anti-essentialist, heterogenous and fluid to facilitate political agency or otherwise some social categories might run the risk of become (in)visible in disaster management. Not only are family constellations described in terms of 'men and women' as the only and static binaries, but they also reproduce the normalisation of patriarchal and heteronormative processes. Moreover, gender identities are restricted with some few references to LGBTQIA+ community, and there is a tendency of simplification, whereby the aspect of gender is reduced to heteronormative binaries of man/woman, creating fixed essential categories. The varying attention given to social categories actualise the problem of 'oppression Olympics' where these categories compete against each other for recognition. Consequently, if only some types of oppressions and (in)equalities gain attention, stakeholders' understandings and responses run the risk of neglecting the interplays of differences in social categorisations, hence making them (in)visible.

How are gender relations and other intersections of power reproduced, reinforced, or challenged in disaster management? The understandings and responses both reproduce and challenge gender

relations and stereotypes. The expectation that men and women are expected to perform different stereotypical roles in society when a disaster struck was challenged and reproduced in disaster management. Even though it can be interpreted as a focus on dynamics and change, this coincides with talking about patriarchal structures and norms as *traditional*. Such formulations do not include how (in)equalities are reinforced in present times, neglecting the processes in which hyper-masculinity and patriarchy can be challenged. Focus on processes becomes visible in relation to masculinity, particularly toxic masculinity. This focus allows for the understandings and responses in disaster management to have a more dynamic and relational view on power structures. The understandings and responses of stakeholders in disaster management in Antigua and Barbuda challenge the stigmatisation of men seeking psychosocial support through questioning, and emphasise the premises under which it is acceptable and implement actions that resist toxic masculinity, e.g. MESI. The project functions as a tool to resist and challenge stereotypes within disaster management and contribute to mitigate hazards.

When the understandings and responses within disaster management and humanitarian aid stress that privilege and oppression are relational rather than separate processes, focus shifts to how the relations of (Western) dominance are constructed and reproduced. Thus, it opens up the room to analyse 'whiteness' as a power position by making the domination of the west visible. A focus on domination and sub-domination processes and relational understanding of power enables contextual understanding that has transformative potential and thus facilitates change.

Some of the results are in line with previous research (ct. Galliard et al. 2017). Social categories of sexuality and gender identity have been neglected in disaster management, here they are given less attention than the other social categories, yet they are visible to some extent. Heteronormative and patriarchal tendencies are still influencing disaster management and stigmatising individuals and groups. As Moreno and Shaw (2018) emphasise, women's resilience has been less documented in disaster research, whereas it has been shown in responses and understandings that there is a prevalent focus on agency, resistance, and resilience of women, even though they are described more often in terms of vulnerability than men. This highlights the construction of women as solely victims to be challenged. Although, without having a relational, dynamical and complex understanding of social categories and power relations, the understandings and responses of stakeholders in disaster management run the risk of becoming fragmented and thus reproducing heteronormative and patriarchal processes rather than challenging them.

A well-informed understanding of structures of vulnerability and resilience in disaster management is one of the first steps towards mitigation and emancipation. However, the results presented in this article generate a dilemma or insoluble conflict between the need to make social categories visible and the risk of essentialise those categories. Therefore, constantly emphasising the category of 'woman' runs the risk of reinforcing fixed and unchangeable gender identities. Thus, it cannot reach beyond the power order of gender, whereby "[g]ender is produced as well as uncovered in feminist discourse" (Mohanty 2003, 108). On the one hand, the focus on making social categories visible runs the risk of reproducing inequalities. On the other hand, the invisibility of those social categories runs the risk of obscuring inequalities. The article does more than provide an answer to empirical questions; it also aims to generate knowledge that questions structures such as heterosexism, class, racism, sexism. Calling out those structures and making the dynamic and contextualised *intra*-action of agency, resistance, and inequalities visible is part of the transformative potential of intersectional analysis.

This article is a relevant contribution to disaster management research since it highlights how the understandings and responses of stakeholders in Antigua and Barbuda visualise some social categories that have previously been invisible. This contributes to a more contextualised understanding that can facilitate change. Future research could examine disaster management from an intersectional feminist perspective, starting from women's experiences and marginalised groups' everyday struggles. This type of study has the possibility and transformative potential to fill a research gap, as well as being relevant for mitigating hazards, challenging the status quo and leaving no one behind.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Table of Research Participants

	Date	Position	Duration	Organisation/Agency
Interview 1	2018-10-04	Programme Officer and Gender & Climate Change Focal point	45 min	The Directorate of Gender Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda
Interview 2	2018-10-10	Representative from the Directorate of Gender Affairs	60 min	The Directorate of Gender Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda
Interview 3	2018-10-16	Director of the National Office of Disaster Services	80 min	The National Office of Disaster Services, Antigua and Barbuda
Interview 4	2018-10-23	Representative from the Directorate of Gender Affairs	60 min	The Directorate of Gender Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda
Interview 5	2018-10-25	Deputy Director of the National Office for Disaster Services	120 min	The National Office of Disaster Services, Antigua and Barbuda
Interview 6	2018-10-26	Acting Executive Director of the Directorate of Gender Affairs	60 min	The Directorate of Gender Affairs, Antigua and Barbuda
Interview 7	2018-11-06	Representative from UN Women	30 min	UN Women Multi-Country Office Caribbean, Barbados (Skype)
Interview 8	2018-11-08	District Disaster Coordinator	120 min	National Office of Disaster Services, Antigua

Interview 9	2018-11-15	Deputy Disaster District Coordinator	30 min	National Office of Disaster Services, Antigua
Interview 10	2018-11-17	District Disaster Coordinator and the team (Focus group, 5 persons)	45 min	National Office of Disaster Services, Antigua
Interview 11	2018-11-27	District Disaster Coordinator	30 min	National Office of Disaster Services, Barbuda

Appendix 2: Interview Guide

Date, time and place:

Name:

Background

- Tell me a little bit about yourself?
- How come you joined XXX? / How come you became XXX?

Climate Change

- What changes in the climate and weather have you observed over the last couple of years?

Vulnerability

- Which groups and/or individuals in the community would you say is most vulnerable to climate change? How are they vulnerable? Why do you think they are vulnerable?
- In relation to what you said earlier, which groups would you say were among the most vulnerable of last year's hurricanes in Antigua and Barbuda?
- In general, how did the work of XXX look like in the aftermath of hurricane Irma in Antigua and Barbuda?/How did the work look like for you in XXX?
- Where there any particular groups that were targeted? Do some groups face stigma or barriers when accessing this type of service? If yes, what and how?
- How was it to work with national and international agencies?
- Which challenges or resistance did XXX face in post-disaster settings?
- Have there been any opportunities in post-disaster settings?

Resilience

- To what extent have women and marginalised groups been included or having a say in the different projects or measures?
- Can you give some examples of what people expect from men and women in post-disaster settings? Are there any differences?
- Is that something that has changed/challenged the status quo after the hurricanes?
- In your opinion, what are the main challenges or barriers that needs to overcome in order for a community to be resilient?

Ending Questions

- What is the best achievement you have seen so far in your work?
- What do you think about the future?
- Is there something that you would like to add to the interview?

Thank you so much!

Appendix 3

Ethical Considerations

Informed consent is important, and participants should be briefed about design, possible risks, obtaining voluntary participation, and the purpose of the research project (Kvale and Brinkman 2015, 95-97). In line with The Swedish Research Council's Ethical Guidelines (Vetenskapsrådet undated), before starting all the interviews, the respondents were informed about the article's purpose, that their participation is voluntary and if they wanted, they could interrupt the interviewer during the interview or contact her afterward if they changed their minds.

Self-reflexivity and Limitations

The researcher should strive for reciprocal relationships based on mutual respect and confidence between interviewer and interviewee. This requires that the respondent's worldview comes first, not the researchers (Bryman 2012, 399; Scheyvens and Leslie 2000). Reflexivity should be applied to all stages of the research, from the beginning to the end. The researcher's role needs to be critically examined since research is "[s]tructured by both the researcher and the research participants" (England 1994, 250), meaning what is being studied is the 'betweenness' of the world interpreted by the respondents and mine (England 1994, 251; Davies 2008; Gustafsson and Johannesson 2016). Therefore, this article views the interview as a process where both the interviewee and interviewer contribute to knowledge construction.