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Moving Women and Family Concerns: Reflections from a Cross Cultural Study

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ABSTRACT This paper is based on data gathered during a comparative (Indonesia and Canada), intergenerational, life story project focused on women's reproductive lives. In this paper we explore the ways in which the reproductive stages in women's lives and their family responsibilities influence both their geographical mobility and the intersection with how they 'move' through the stages in their lives. We first compare and contrast how and when women in the two countries move around geographically, and how they manage to maintain their families in the process. We look at the different reasons women give for moving from their place of birth and at the consequences for them. We then relate this data to a discussion about how women also 'move' through the stages in their lives. We consider how mobility has different consequences for a single woman or for a grandmother, whose children are 'moving away'. Finally, we reflect briefly on how mobility of place relates to generation; how women of different ages and stages understand 'place' both geographically and ideologically.