

**INTERNATIONAL LABOR MIGRATION: ITS EFFECTS
ON THE EMPLOYMENTS AND SOCIAL STATUS OF THE
EMIGRANT'S PARENTS**

SAMI ULLAH*

ASAD ULLAH**

Dr. MUSSAWR SHAH**

RIAZ AHMAD***

ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted on “International labor migration, and its effects on the employments and social status of the emigrant’s parents”. The study universe comprised of three selected villages of union council Doag dara, district Dir upper. A sample size of 278 respondents was selected from the universe by using the stratified random sampling technique. Chi-square test was used to ascertain the significance of association between Parental employments and social status of left behind parents. Social status of the respondents was significantly associated with decrease in wage work participation ($p = 0.004$), parents exposure to agricultural activities ($p = 0.020$), more time available for religious activities ($p = 0.000$), parents involvement in income generation activities ($p = 0.000$) and spending more time in political activities ($p = 0.000$). Revitalizing the positive traits of family institution to enhance care giving and comfort to elderly people and reducing their work load, especially in activities that involve physical exertion were the major study recommendations.

Keywords: International labor Migration, Social Status, Parental employments, emigrant’s parents.

Citation: Ullah. S., A. Ullah., M. Shah., and R. Ahmad. 2014. International labor migration: its effects on the employments and social status of the emigrant’s parents.

* M.phil Scholar, Department of Rural Sociology, The University of Agriculture, Peshawar - Pakistan.

** Department of Rural Sociology, The University of Agriculture, Peshawar – Pakistan.

*** Department of Sociology, Shaheed Benazir Bhattu University Sheringal, Dir upper Khyber pakhtoonkhwa – Pakistan.

INTRODUCTION

The migration of the people to different foreign countries in search of employments for the better life of their families, or to flee from dangerous situation like famine, drought, disaster and other natural climates. It is a political, economic and social process which affects the life of migrants, their families, home countries as well as the life of host country's people (Sattar, 2009 and Reyes, 2007). Migration in search of employments are significantly improve the economic standing of left behind family in particular and national economy in general, yet it costs lots of deprivation too (GOP, 2008). Remittances in the form of cash are found as major contribution in assuring a better status to the left behind family members, as they have greater access to money which liberates them from material deprivation, and are helpful in securing better health, and educational survival, sustenance, rehabilitation and reconstruction in response to natural or man-made circumstances. However, the left behind families, especially the parents and wife are burdened with additional responsibilities of caring children (UN, 2011 and Hadi, 1999).

The majority of the existing studies, which focus on the effects of migration on household members left behind, have shown positive impact in both the short run and long run. The household members, who are left behind using migrant's remittances which directly contributes to household income, enables higher investment in business, and facilitate to buying more goods, including education and health inputs. The free time is also available to the parents which are spending in community participation (UN, 2011).

The relationship worked out between the adult children migration and parent's labor force participation by Mendola and Carletto (2009) who investigated that the emigration of children minimizes the paid labor supply of their parents in Albania while raising their supply of unpaid jobs for their families. Binzel and Assaad (2011) find a decline in earnings work for family, but find that parents are more likely to be laboring on voluntary family work for their survival, such as agricultural work for their own expenses.

In the process of emigration parents are more expose to different activities as described by Arif and Irfan (1997) that due to the absence of children parents become alone and more prone in the field of agriculture and business, but however parents found some relaxation in their jobs due to receiving more remittances from abroad. Xiang (2006) founded that the most acute problem of

parents is emotional loneliness, left behind at home in rural China, but not for those who were living with family members. This problem is fundamental and general to all communities that they left their parents socially and economically. The absence of their children parents are compelled to put himself in agricultural activities for their survival

The free time provided by the emigrant's children to their parents as shown by McClelland (1994) the children migration and remittances provides benefits to parent's employments; parental employment is associated with the family health and food environment including the role of fathers. Moreover the emigrants provide more free time to their parents by sending remittances which spending on the participation in private meetings, political and religious activities.

This paper specifically focuses on effects of employments and social status of left behind parents of emigrants. The following method was adopted to reach to the desired objectives.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study universe was the Union Council Doagdara, Tehsil sharingal, District Dir upper, Khyber pakhtunkhwa. More specifically the data was collected from three selected villages of this Union Council i.e., Doagpayeen, Mian doag and Daramdala. A total of 620 parsons had migrated to different destination overseas. The sample of 278 respondents (parents of emigrants) was selected through stratified random sampling technique which was proportionally allocated to sampled villages on the proportionate basis as experienced by Sekaran (2003).

The conceptual framework comprised of two variables i-e parental employments and social status (Table-1). Chi-square test was used to measure the association among variable by the following methodology outlined by Tai (1978) as below

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

Table: 1. Conceptual framework.

Independent variable	Dependent variable
----------------------	--------------------

The Fisher Exact Test was used wherever assumption of Chi-Square, was violated. The relationship developed by Fisher to overcome such violation is given below;

$$\text{Fisher Exit Test Probability} = \frac{(a+b)!(c+d)!(a+c)!(b+d)!}{N!a!b!c!d!} \quad (\text{Baily, 1982})$$

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Frequencies and Percentage Distributions Regarding Parental employments.

Child's emigration abroad is believed to have both positive and negative effects on parent's life. Such parents either are relieved from all economic burdens and free to participate in religious and political activities or enjoy a retired life or they are exposed to physical exertion in form of labor or old age employment. The results on state of parental employment are given in table 2.

Majority, (84.5%) respondents were involved in unpaid family work, while 15.5% were not. This probably is because emigration of children put the responsibility of household chores on their parents. Similarly, 72.7% respondents had decreased wage work participation, and 27.3% respondents had not decreased wage work due to the migration of their children. The results assure that remittances relieve parents from economic worries and decrease their participation in paid work. Same result assessed by Assaad (2011), Children's migration decreased wage work participation of the parents but they were willingly employed in unpaid family work like agricultural activities for own consumption. Moreover 77.7% respondents were exposed to agricultural activities due to children migration, but 22.3% were not exposed to it. Majority of 56.5% respondents had more sufficient time for worships or other religious activities, while 22.3% respondents had no sufficient time. It is clear from the above results that child's emigration is functional in reducing financial constraints however, parents are overburdened with care giving responsibility. A high proportion, of (56.1%) respondents had not availed the opportunities of investing in income generated activities, on the other hand 43.9%

respondents invested in income generation activities. It is like Arif (1999), reported that the remittances are invested in income generation activities, but it depends upon the economic level, migration duration and expenditures. Majority of the respondents 70.9% had no time for the participation in political affair, while 29.1% respondents had more time for the participation in political affair. Xiang (2006) argued that the children employment provide more free time to the old age parents which spent on communal and private activities like religion and political activities. Result showed that children migration gave some relaxation to their parent's employments and occupations through remittances.

Table 2. Frequency and Percentage Distributions of Responses Regarding Parental employments and Social Status

Statements regarding Parental employments and social status	Yes	No
Are you involved in unpaid family work?	235 (84.5)	43 (15.5)
There is decreased wage work for you due to child migration.	202 (72.7)	76 (27.3)
Child migration exposes you to agriculture activities.	216 (77.7)	62 (22.3)
Children migration provide more time for you in Worships (religious activities)	157 (56.5)	121 (43.5)
You avail the opportunities of investing in Income generated activities.	122 (43.9)	156 (56.1)
Are you spending more time in the participation in political affair?	81 (29.1)	197 (70.9)

* Number in table represent frequencies and number in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of respondents

Association between parental employments and social status.

The prevalent culture demands for putting parents and elderly person on high esteemed position. It is believed to be the moral and religious obligation of the youngsters to respect their parents and relieve them from hard work, physical exertion and economic liabilities. Overseas migration is one such endeavor, in this regard, from the youngster to relive their parents from these potential constraints. This also is the major push factors for overseas migration. In return the parents are expected to be relived from their economic responsibility and seek other productive activities for their engagement. To find out the association between the effects of

parental employments due to child migration and social status, the perceptions of the respondents are limited to a few statement are given in the table 3.

A significant ($p = 0.004$) relationship was found between the children migration decreasing wage work participation of parents and social status of the respondents. The above result show that parents minimize his labor force participation due to receiving more money from abroad has greater chances to attain high position in traditional society. The personal investigation of the researcher during the study found that it is the moral religious responsibility to support parents, where children want to send more money to relax the parents from huge bourdon. Altruism of the emigrant children can bring parents to the remarkable position. The above results supported by Assaad (2011), that the children migration and remittances are inversely proportional to the parent's wage force participation rate. Moreover, a significant ($p = 0.020$) association was found between the parents exposure to agricultural activities due to children migration and social status of parents. The amount sent by emigrants is used in purchase of land and mechanization of agriculture, both of which are status symbol in the study areas. The result of such development is an increase in social status of the respondents. These results are supported by Farooq and Javed (2009) that in first time of children migration parents feel loneliness in the agricultural activities, but after some time they feel relaxation due spending more money on agricultural side because they able to afford the agricultural technologies as well as labors. Further a highly significant ($p = 0.000$) association was found between the children migration provide more time for parents to religious activities and social status of the parents. The result suggests that the parents have more time to spend in religious activities. They are doing necessary work by engaging domestic labors as they have money in cash form. Spending more time in religious activities is a source of respect and honor in the society. In addition a highly significant ($p = 0.000$) relation was found between the parents involvement in income generated activities due to remittances and social status of the parents. The remittances sent by children are invested in economic activities like purchase of land, live stock and agricultural activities which are additional source of income and uplift economic status. These results are supported by Arif (1999) that the availing of income generating activities of parents depends upon the children satisfactory level of salary and regularly sending of remittances. Furthermore a highly significant ($p = 0.000$) relationship was found between spending more time in political activities by parents and social status. The probable reason behind, as a personal observation of

the researcher is that rise in position on social ladder due improvement in social status besides wise don and age of the parents is the cause of participation in community based social and political activities. This result is supported by Xiang (2006) that the children employment abroad provide physical relaxation and more free time for their parents, which spent on communal and private activities like religion and political activities. A non-significant ($p = 0.860$) association was found between the parental involvement in unpaid family work due to children emigration and social status of parents. The result is pointing to the fact that the elderly people, irrespective of their social status perform their family responsibilities without economic consideration. It is probably that more money provides relaxation to parents, but habitually they are engage in unpaid family work for long time. This result is supported by Assaad (2011), that the parents left behind are willingly employed in unpaid family work like agricultural activities and other less time consume essential work, for their own consumption.

It is concluded from the above results that overseas employment of children brings relaxation and more free time to parents. Mostly the parents spending free time to participating in public and private activities of the society which is a source of a social status in the society.

Table 3. Association between Parental employments and social status

Parental employments	Attitude	social status		Total	Statistics (P Value)
		High status	low status		
There is decreased wage work for you due to child migration	Yes	147 (52.9)	55 (99.8)	202 (72.8)	$\chi^2 = 8.939$ ($p = 0.004$)
	No	41 (14.8)	35 (12.6)	76 (27.3)	
Are you involved in unpaid family work?	Yes	154 (55.4)	62 (22.3)	216 (77.7)	$\chi^2 = 0.107$ ($p = 0.860$)
	No	34 (22.2)	28 (10.2)	62 (22.3)	
Child migration exposes you to agriculture activities.	Yes	96 (34.5)	27 (9.7)	132 (44.2)	$\chi^2 = 5.960$ $p = 0.020$
	No	27 (9.7)	92 (33.1)	155 (55.8)	
Children migration provide more time for you in worships (religious activities).	Yes	126 (45.3)	31 (11.2)	157 (56.5)	$\chi^2 = 26.277$ ($p = 0.000$)
	No	62 (22.3)	59(2.12)	121 (43.5)	
You avail the opportunities of investing in income generated activities.	Yes	102 (36.7)	20 (7.2)	122 (43.9)	$\chi^2 = 25.361$ ($p = 0.000$)
	No	86 (30.9)	70 (25.2)	156 (56.1)	
Are you spending more time in the participation in political affair?	Yes	76 (27.3)	5 (1.8)	81(29.1)	$\chi^2 = 35.842$ ($p = 0.000$)
	No	112 (3.6)	85 (30.6)	197 (70.9)	

* Values in table represent frequencies and values in parenthesis represent percentage proportion of respondents

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Overseas employments of children bring leisure in time to parents. The free time available to them was not only spent in supervising economic activities but also participating in religions and political activities which was a source of enhancement in social status of elderly people and their family. Revitalizing the positive traits of family institution to enhance care giving and comfort to elderly people and reducing their work load, especially in activities that involve physical exertion were recommended.

REFERENCES

- Arif, G. M. and M. Irfan. 1997. Return Migration and Occupational Change. The Case of Pakistani Migrants Returned from the Middle East. The Pakistan Development Review. Vol.36 (1): 1-37.
- Baily, K. D. 1982. Methods of Social Research. 2nd Ed. New York. Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. P. 408
- Binzel, C. and R. Assaad. 2011. Egyptian men working abroad. Labor supply responses by the family member left behind. Labor Economics, 18(S1): S98-S114.
- Government of Pakistan (GOP), 2008. Economic Survey of Pakistan. Economic Advisor Wing. Finance Division. Islamabad.
- Hadi, A. 1999. Overseas Migration and The Well Being of Those Left Behind in Rural Communities of Bangladesh, Asia- Pacific Population Journal 14 (1): 43-58.
- McClelland, A. 1994. Families and financial disadvantage, Family Matters, vol. 37, pp. 29–33-
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/research/pages/221employment.aspx> (7-4-2013).
- Mendola, M. and G. Carletto. 2009. International migration and gender differentials in the home labor market: Evidence from Albania. World Bank Policy. Research Working Paper. 4900. Washington, DC, USA.
- Reyes, M. 2007. Migration and Filipino Children Left-Behind: A Literature Review Miriam College. Women and Gender Institute.(WAGI).United Nations Children's Fund.(UNICEF). America.
- Sattar, H. 2009. International Migration and Its Impact on Socio-Economic Development in Rural Households in T.T. Singh. Unpublished Thesis. Dept. of Rural Sociology. UAF, Pakistan.
- Sekaran, U. 2003. Research Methods for Business. USA, Hermitage Publishing Services. Series 2007-18.

Tai, Simon. W. 1978. Social Science Statistics, it Elements and Applications. California, Goodyear Publishing Company.

United Nations, 2011. Impacts of Remittances on Poverty and Developing Countries. New York, USA. http://www.unctad.org/en/Docs/ditctncd20108_en.pdf. (verified on March 15, 2013).

Xiang, B. 2006. How far are the left-behind left behind? A preliminary study in rural China Population Space and Place.13: 179–191. DOI: 10.1002/psp.437.

