



**Gendered Dimensions of Migration:
Material and Social Outcomes of South-South Migration**

Asia Research Institute at the National University of Singapore

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Gendered Dynamics of Migrant Domestic Work in Accra, Ghana

Awumbila, Mariama; Joseph Teye and Joseph Yaro, Centre for Migration Studies, University of Ghana

While recent population census reports indicate that many rural-urban migrants are engaged in low-paid, short-term, and insecure occupations, attempts to examine the livelihoods of migrants in these precarious occupations and how these have been used as a route out of poverty have been very few. Using data collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and non-participant observations at two migrants sending areas (Northern and Volta Regions) and one migrant destination (Accra), this paper examines the experiences, livelihood strategies and wellbeing of migrants engaged in domestic work in Accra. The paper also examines gender dynamics with regard to migration for domestic work. Employing structure-agency theoretical perspectives, it also discusses how migrants domestic workers employ their own agency to counter exploitation. The findings show clear gender patterns of employment in this sector. Male domestic workers are mainly gardeners, drivers and security men, who receive regular wages. Female domestic workers mainly perform multiple tasks, including cooking, cleaning, caring for children. Female domestic workers are more likely to live with their employers and work without any regular salary. In most cases, there are no formal contracts for migrant domestic workers and salary levels are very low. There are instances of exploitation for both men and women, but the men have a stronger agency to negotiate better conditions of work and remuneration than female counterparts. Despite these challenges and the poor conditions under which they work, migrant domestic workers believe that migration has enhanced the wellbeing of their households.

The Gendered Lived Work Experiences of Young Rural-Urban Migrants in Hanoi

Dang, Thao Thi Thanh and Paul Henman, University of Queensland, Australia

This paper looks at the lived working experiences of young rural to urban migrant workers employed in the service and construction sectors in Vietnam. It draws on a larger research project which aims to understand the lived experiences and identities of young internal economic migrants, using three qualitative data sets, participant interviews, participant photos, and field observation, collected in the city of Hanoi. The findings indicate that migration networks were highly gendered. The lived work experiences of young migrants were shaped by their type of occupation, gender, and the workplace settings which can be categorised as 'domestic', 'public', and 'mobile'. While the construction sector was exclusively male migrants, service sector jobs were dominated by females. This paper contributes to the scholarship on youth rural to urban migration through its insights into the gendered lived work experiences of the young migrants.

Gendered Representations of Zimbabwean Unaccompanied Young Female Migrants Negotiating for Livelihood in a South African Border Town

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Migrant children's work is gendered in South Africa. The representations of these children's are shaped by different discourses. The paper explores the intersection between gender and the representations of Zimbabwean independent young female migrants in a humanitarian crisis context. It focuses on female migrant children aged between 15 and 20 years, an age group which challenges social constructions of childhood. It seeks to answer the following questions: How are Independent young female migrants being represented in humanitarian work? What are the local and global discourses which are being used to understand work by independent working migrant female? How and at what moments are these discourses functioning? What are the predominant representations of these female migrant children that aid workers bring to bear on their interactions with them? What are the consequences of those representations on understandings of childhood, gender, social class, children's work as well as the well-being and development of these children? This paper, a product of an ethnographic study in one of South Africa's border lands, used the 'New Social Studies of Childhood' and Norman Long's (1992) actor-oriented approaches as an analytical and methodological approach to unpack the life-worlds of both migrant children and aid workers, sets out to address these questions so as to understand how these representations are helping or constraining migrant female children's negotiations for livelihoods. The paper also provides a discourse analysis of the way humanitarian aid workers refer to (and represent) Zimbabwean unaccompanied young women who migrate to South Africa in the hope of finding employment.

'Aesthetic Labour' in the Emerging Labour market: A Case Study on Female Labour Migrants from North Eastern India to the Metropolitan Cities of Chennai and Bangalore, India

Thampi, Binitha V. and Banti Deori, Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, India

The emergence of new service industries since the onslaught of globalization in India has attracted 'single women migrants' to the sectors such as retail services, hospitality industry, call centers etc. The feminization of labour accompanied by specific forms of aestheticisation accelerates single female migration from North Eastern India to urban centers. Thus, globalization reconfigures stereotypical gender roles and reconstitutes it by inventing a new category called 'aesthetic labour', which is in fair demand in the labour market. Being flexible in terms of duty time and wages, fair skin, proficiency in spoken English etc. qualify them as ideal workforce for services such as retail selling and hospitality. However, a new dynamics of inequality is set in through this process that prioritizes soft skills (the attitude and appearance of employees) when it comes to the selection and performance evaluation in their respective fields, sans their skill upgradation and subsequent upward mobility. The 'Pan Asian' physical appearance that makes their easy entry into the workforce is a central factor that determines their nature of interactions with the members of host community, which often makes them subjected to different kinds of social evaluations and ill treatments. This paper examines the process single female migration from the North-Eastern Indian states to the cities to see how the aesthetic labour market functions, and how these women negotiate and reconstruct their gender roles and identities in the process.

Shaping the Profession: The Politics of Migration and Care-Giving in Contemporary Kolkata

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The question of women's labour has been central to feminist theorising of patriarchy, given that across many cultures women's reproductive labour has been unrecognised and undervalued. And commodified 'care work' has emerged as the new terrain that has called into question the neat division between home and work, use-value and exchange-value and production and reproduction that has generally informed much of the debates on women and labour. Research on the care economy intersects with migration studies leading to academic and political engagements with the highly complex relationship of gender, class, race and ethnicity. Research on migration of Third World women to the First World has recently focused on nurse migration from poorer to rich countries. My paper, based on my doctoral research on nursing in Kolkata, focuses on the effects of migration of nurses to western countries, on the local healthcare sector. This large scale movement of nurses to the west has not been accompanied by an increase in bargaining power of the locally employed nurse. The gendered nature of the labour market, the specific characteristics of women workers and the relationship between markets, gender and politics have ensured that the supply crunch of trained nurses is offset by the employment of a large number of untrained nurses, both in the government and private sector, which is made possible by the increasing informalisation of the formal economy. In this paper I would like to address some of these concerns arising out of linking of two important contemporary debates among feminist scholars: an older debate on feminisation and informalisation of labour and the restructuring of the labour market and a more recent debate on care work and migration studies.

Stuck and Suck: Migration, Service Work, and Masculinity of Taxi Drivers in China

Choi, Susanne Y. P., The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Since the Chinese Communist Party came to power in 1949, it has relied predominantly on the household registration system (hukou) as a means of restricting the geographical mobility of its population. Under the hukou system, which assigned every Chinese citizen a particular place of residence, rural residents were not allowed to migrate to cities and urban residents were prohibited from moving between cities. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, following the gradual removal of barriers to rural emigration, post-Mao China probably witnessed the largest human migration in history. The 2013 national migrant worker survey estimated that there were around 268 million rural to urban migrants. Despite being the central driver of China's spectacular economic growth, rural to urban migrants have been regarded as second-class citizens and marginalized workers in urban cities. Early migration research focused on manufacturing workers, but an increasing number of migrant workers have joined the service sector as waiters, salespersons, security guards or taxi drivers. These jobs pose a particular challenge to male gender identity because some are traditionally considered to be feminine and others are low paid or have low status. The disjuncture male migrant workers in the service sector encounter also stems from the drastic contrast between their dominant position in their rural home and their marginality post-migration. Using ethnography and in-depth interviews with 45 male migrant taxi drivers in South China, this paper examines how gender intersects with migration, rural and urban divides, class inequalities and new forms of domination to shape the work lives of this group of workers and their strategies of constructing a meaningful sense of self amid multiple levels of exclusion.

Structural Exploitation of Indonesian Female Migrant Worker: A Home Country's Perspective

Dewanto, Pamungkas A., Bina Nusantara University, Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesian female migrant workers have received a considerably high appreciation from Indonesian people for their significant contribution in generating remittance to the country. The acknowledgement of their contribution is discernable from the way in which the New Order government coined the term '*Pahlawan Devisa*' (Remittance Hero) to honor them. This is still prevalent within Indonesian society until today. Unfortunately, such an appreciation has taken place alongside a growing number of persecutions experienced by these female migrant workers abroad. This raises a new awareness among stakeholders about the idea of providing a better assistance through protection. As a response, the state has designed a set of regulation to better protect these workers. This paper argues that while ostensibly offering a better protection to the Indonesian female works, the new regulation is actually designed to serve the institutional interest of both state agency and private recruiter agency. Based on the qualitative research conducted among the stakeholders involved in the migratory process, this research interrogates the making of the-so-called 'placement and protection' policy and provides a content analysis of the produced regulatory framework. This study contends that the awareness to protect the low-skilled migrants is prone to an exploitation under which the preponderant proponents of placement, the recruiters and officials, maximize their structural gain through the production of regulation.

For a Fee: The Business of Recruiting Female Domestic Workers from South Asia into Private Households in Jordan and Lebanon

Jones, Katharine, Centre for Trust, Peace and Social Relations, Coventry University

Each year a growing number of young women and girls from South Asia recruited into domestic work in the Middle East are subjected to egregious human rights abuses by fee-charging private employment agencies and brokers. Common abusive - but often not illegal - practices include confiscation of women's passports, extortionate recruitment fees that leave women in debt bondage, threats if women want to leave their employers, and physical and sexual violence. With abuses embedded in wider frameworks of gender discrimination, origin and destination governments alike have thus far displayed little inclination to effectively regulate their recruitment industries. While much is known about the extent and nature of the abuse, far less attention has thus far been paid to the recruiters themselves – who they are, how they get into the business, what they earn and from whom, how they operate between the bounds of legality and illegality and are embedded into wider migration industries and systems. This paper presents findings from a major study conducted for the ILO and funded by DfID, which delved into the (legal and illegal) domestic work recruitment industries in and between Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Lebanon and Jordan. Drawing on 180 interviews with recruiters conducted in the five countries, the paper discusses recruiters' competitive strategies including subcontracting, fees and commissions and the 'financial guarantees' offered to employers recruiting women as domestic workers. The paper also discusses how gendered regulations directly influence domestic work recruiters' competitive strategies, and concludes with recommendations for tackling gender-based recruitment abuses.

Gendered Labour Migration Regimes in Singapore: Debt, Precarity and Strategy among Male and Female Temporary Labour Migrants

Platt, Maria, Grace Baey, Brenda SA Yeoh, Khoo Choon Yen and Theodora Lam, Asia Research Institute, Singapore

In the wake of increasingly formalised labour migration regimes across Asia, it has been argued that “gender often structures the forms brokerage takes, as migrant debt, labour rights and visa processes often vary between men and women” (Lindquist et al, 2012:16). As one of Asia’s key hubs for transient workers, Singapore’s migration regime creates particularly gendered streams of labour, especially among lower-skilled occupations, as is apparent in two key sectors – domestic work and construction work. Drawing on surveys with Bangladeshi construction workers (n=205) and Indonesian domestic workers (n=201), as well as in-depth interviews with each group (n= 30 and n=38 respectively), this paper compares gendered issues of debt-financed migration, precarity and risk. Stemming from the high costs of migration, both of these groups undertake debt to facilitate their migration to Singapore, albeit in different ways. Domestic workers typically require no upfront payment, and instead face significant debt deductions in the initial six to nine months of their employment. Construction workers largely finance their migration through upfront payments to agents – much of which is drawn from savings, loans or the sale of major family assets such as land. In this light, we argue that different modes of indebtedness play a major role in shaping gendered relations of dependency that underpin both brokering and employment practices. We also consider how men and women view and negotiate debt in their migration trajectories, as well as the gendered implications of ‘failed’ or ‘disrupted’ migration stints which may lead to accruing more debt. In moving beyond depicting debt as merely serving to constrain migrants, this paper also explores the notion of debt as a key strategy in fulfilling migration goals.

Reflections on Gender Patterns of Migration in Zimbabwe: Understanding Remittance Behaviour and Social Networks: The Case of Chivi, Hurungwe and Gwanda Districts

Mutopo, Patience, Upenyu Dzingirai and Loren Landau

A gendered dimension of migration has not been treated with primacy in Zimbabwean scholarly debates; most of the work has centred on the importance of remittances and portraying the male face of migration. Yet, this issue raises important innuendos into the whole subject on migration and economic well-being of rural households, in an economy bedevilled by economic and political challenges. This created an influx of female migrants going to South Africa, changing the migration matrix. An expose of gendered experiences and norms of migrants is provided. The study was based on qualitative approaches of data collection that involved, ethnographic accounts, focus group discussions and in depth interviews with the migrants and their families. The data was collected between April - July 2013, with a sample size of 120 households. The importance of kinship networks in the process, the role of faith based organisation such as churches in the migration process, the use of remittance by the men and women migrants in their places of origin is examined. Our analysis buttresses the importance of social, economic and symbolic assets. Our theoretical reflections centre on the gender analysis. We decipher how the activity and control profiles that are created by households become a central force in the remittance sending patterns and also how decision making processes are arrived by the men and women as they remit back to Zimbabwe. The importance of creating migration gender based policies and gender disaggregation of data in the process is reflected upon.

Gendered Practices and Expectations of Remittances: Evidences from Bangladesh

Rashid, Syeda Rozana, University of Dhaka and RMMRU, Bangladesh

This paper examines remittance behaviour of the households of short-term labour migrants through the lens of gender. Taking Bangladesh as a case, here I argue that remittances impact domestic relations by creating divergent interest and expectations among members. Highlighting the newer forms of gendered practices evident in male and female headed households, I have also demonstrate that the sending, receiving and spending of remittances may vary across gender. The case studies of male and female migrant households also confirm that remittances shape, change and strengthen dominant gender roles and relations. The aim of bringing the Bangladeshi case into the broader discussion on remittances and development is to suggest that the underlying contradictions and the contestation that inform the gendered practices of remittances should be considered by states and development agencies while they formulate and implement policies towards mainstreaming gender in migration.

Male Migration and its Implication on Child Educational Inputs in India

Das, Dhiman, Asia Research Institute, Singapore

In this study, I plan to examine how male migration affects the relationship between poverty and gender in the Indian context, particularly its effects on child educational inputs. Migration is usually associated with improvement in income and higher autonomy of the mothers with positive implications on allocation of household resources towards children. However, it is also possible that remittances may not be substantial due to the low skill level of the migrants as well as the nature of their work contracts and poverty may still induce gender bias in resource allocation towards child human capital. In addition, woman's autonomy may be mediated by other factors like the household structure, with no significant effect on autonomy (in extended families) or higher autonomy along with additional constraints (in female-headed households). I use the nationally representative India Human Development Survey to study the implications of migration on educational expenditure among children 6-11 and 12-18 years and work participation among the older age-group. To examine the gendered nature of these parental decisions, I further compare estimated marginal effects between the female and the male child in the migrant and dual parent families. Preliminary results indicate that migration increases expenditure only among younger children, though not significantly increasing the probability of work among older children, compared to dual parent families. On the other hand, there is significant discrimination against the female child in expenditure as well as work, among older children in migrant families. These results have important implications on emphasizing migration as a way out of poverty in developing countries.

Migration, Muslim Women and Social Reproduction of Gender Inequality

Wahid, Ishret Binte and Mohammed Kamruzzaman, BRAC, Bangladesh

Does international migration have a role to reproduce unequal gender relation in a patriarchal society? How does it make such role? How does it further implicate people's religious as well as cultural practices? These are the questions have been addressed in this paper. It takes the case of Bangladesh, a South Asian Muslim majority country with millions of international labour migrants to different Middle East and Gulf countries including Saudia Arabia, United Arab Emirates and Bahrain. This international migration makes very positive financial contributions to the migrants and their families at origins, mostly in rural villages. The paper makes it focus on social outcomes, especially on household's gender relations with such migration. Taking up the idea of 'social remittances', it argues that these migrants, mostly men, experience with range of 'Islamic' norms and practices in destinations, and send back those to origins for religious obligations. These norms and practices largely include discouraging female household members, especially wives, to earn or go outside without purdah in line with the perceived 'Islam'. The paper explains that such 'social remittances' encourage the female household members to be 'good' Muslim women; however, reproduce gender inequality between women and men.

Masculinities, Remittances and Failure: Narratives from Far-West Nepal

Maycock, Matthew, University of Glasgow, UK

Migration from Nepal to India is a major issue in contemporary Nepal, with a wide range of consequences for performances of masculinity (Maycock, 2012, Sharma, 2007). Remittances and the associated pressure to send or bring money home, are a central part of the gendering of migration within this context. Despite the expectations on those who migrate, many men are not able to remit to the levels expected of them. This is largely as a consequence of the relatively high cost of migration and the instable work in the informal sector that many Nepali migrants to India are engaged with. Consequently, this is bringing into question the cost/benefit analysis of migration for many families, and the extent to which migration remains a viable income diversification strategy. Failure to remit will be contextualized within the wider 'failure' of performances of gender (Butler 1990). Furthermore, this paper will focus on how Nepal to India migration is leading to various forms of consumption that are changing masculinities. Here I focus on the ways in which mobility is one way of achieving certain gendered forms of consumption, which emerges as conferring a masculine advantage for those who are able to migrate. The pressures to consume in certain ways, further undermines the ability of many men to remit to the levels expected of them. Methodologically the paper is based on multi-methods approach within an ethnographic framework, undertaken in a village in far-west Nepal close to the Indian border, in 2009, 2011, 2014 and 2015.

Against the Odds (media clips)

Chatterjee, Debika and Pooja Sanghavi, Mumbai Mobile Creches, India

Mumbai Mobile Creches is a non-profit organization that has engaged with migrant construction workers' communities for more than four decades providing their children holistic care – safety, health, nutrition, and education through provision of day care facilities on the construction sites. 'Against the Odds' is a collection of short media clips that narrates experiences of five women who migrated from rural areas of India to various construction sites of Mumbai and completed a yearlong teacher training course with MMC against all odds. Women narrate their experiences of empowerment and their journey towards becoming independent, active, and confident stakeholders in the migrant construction workers' community. In essence, these media clips document migrant women's struggles as they further their education and participate in the formal economy.

After Ram Left Home: Visual Ethnography of the Nepali migration to Japan

Kharel, Dipesh, University of Tokyo, Japan

Within the context of transnational migration, this ethnographic film tells a story of Ram who migrated to Japan 3 years ago from the mountainside of Nepal. He's been working as a nan maker at a Nepali restaurant in Japan. Ram had to pay US\$ 20,000 to a Nepali restaurant owner for a work visa to enter Japan. His family received a loan from their relatives with the commitment of paying back them later with an additional 20% interest. Beside the cause and process of Ram's migration, the film will show the social consequence for his life and his family in Nepal since he migrated to Japan. The film depicts the dreams and realities underlying family relationships in rural Nepal. The longer version of the film "Playing with Nan" has already been screened more than 40 international film festivals around the world and has won several awards, most remarkably the David Plath Media Award 2014 and the Best Student Film Prize at the Royal Anthropological Institute Festival of Ethnographic Film in 2013.

The inclusion of the category of "skilled labor" in Japanese immigration law in 2004 provided the grounds for Nepalese to work legally at Nepali restaurants in Japan. There are already more than 3000 Nepali restaurants in Japan, and that number is still increasing. During my fieldwork, I was surprised to learn that from a single rural Nepali village, Malma (a village of 4,500 residents), more than 1500 Nepalis had migrated to Japan to work in Nepali restaurants. Furthermore, I was surprised to know that each of these immigrants paid US\$20,000 to the restaurant owners to get work visas to enter Japan. Utilizing the video camera as a research tool to record the daily lives of Nepali immigrants in Japan and the migrants' family life in Nepal, the purpose of the film is to explore: Why did they decide to migrate to Japan even though they had to pay US\$20,000, and how could they afford to pay this money? What have been the social consequences for their lives, their families, and their villages since they migrated to Japan? What are the impacts of the remittances on their family and village at the micro and macro levels?

From Zero to Hero: Strengthening Social and Economic Remittance as Strategy to the Empowerment of Indonesian Women Migrant Workers

Wulan, Tyas R. and Sri Wijayanti, Jenderal Soedirman University, Indonesia

This film describes a success story about some Indonesian women migrant workers, who after finishing their contract as migrant workers have started up activities in Indonesia. Now they become a hero for their family and their community because of their activities, such as being an entrepreneur, novelist, teacher, activist who empower and advocate for other migrant workers, etc. By watching our film, we hope people will change their mind about migrant workers to avoid that they are always stigmatized as "ex-servants", by showing how they may become agents of change in their community.

MoVE (method:visual:explore)

Vearey, Jo, Elsa Oliveira and Greta Schuler, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

MoVE is a project housed at the African Centre for Migration & Society (ACMS) that focuses on the development of visual and other involved methodologies to research the lived experiences of migrants in southern Africa. Our approach aims to integrate social action with research, and involves collaboration with migrant participants, existing social movements, qualified facilitators and trainers, and research students engaged in participatory research methods. This work includes the study and use of visual methods - including photography, narrative writing, participatory theatre, collage - and other arts-based approaches in the process of producing, analysing, and disseminating research data. These approaches to research facilitate story-telling and self-study, incorporating various auto ethnographic approaches. Central areas of investigation relate to issues of social justice in relation to migration, with a specific focus on sexuality, gender, health, and policy.

To date, projects have been conducted with LGBTIQ asylum seekers, migrant men, women and transgender persons engaged in the sex industry, informal settlement residents, inner-city migrants and hostel residents. These projects have culminated in a range of research and advocacy outputs, including community-based exhibitions, public exhibitions, engagement with officials and outreach into multi-media forums.

Individual and Social Correlates of Mental Well-being among Foreign Domestic Workers in Singapore

Wessels, Anja, Truls Østbye and Jolovan Wham, Humanitarian Organization for Migration Economics, Singapore

Foreign domestic workers (FDWs) are indispensable to many households in Singapore and make important contributions to the economy and community. However, they work and live within strict legal and institutional constraints and are vulnerable to exploitative structures and oppressive working and living conditions. This poses threats to their mental well-being, which is influenced by individual characteristics, socio-economic circumstances and the broader environment. Due to the lack of topical generalizable data, the study aim was to assess relationships between mental well-being (measured using the Brief Symptom Inventory BSI), and individual characteristics and social circumstances of FDWs in Singapore. Cross-sectional data was collected via convenience sampling from 670 employed FDWs from the three major sending countries, Indonesia, the Philippines and Myanmar, using a self-administered questionnaire in three languages (English, Bahasa Indonesian and Burmese). Overall, more than one-third (36%) of the variation in FDW's mental well-being in Singapore can be explained by the following variables: A perceived integration into the employer's family and a high satisfaction with working in Singapore and are positively associated with mental well-being. On the other hand, homesickness, existence of debt, chronic physical illness, language-related communication barriers and sexually abusive behavior by the employer or employer's family are negatively associated with FDWs mental well-being. FDWs from the Philippines are at higher risk than FDWs from Myanmar or Indonesia of developing mental health related problems. Based in the findings, we will provide recommendations for key stakeholders and the broader community on improving the mental well-being of FDWs in Singapore.

Gendered Impacts of International Migration on Poverty and Family Unity: A panel study from Indonesia

Sugiyarto, Endang, University of Sussex, UK

The paper uses panel data of Indonesian Family Life Survey (IFLS) to examine gender dynamics and poverty impact of international migration. It considers diaspora and divorce rate to show the social cost. The poverty impact is based on poverty status before and after migration. About 89% of migrants are workers, 53% are women and 47% are men. The gendered selection is in line with demand, work nature and cost. The women are mostly from West Java, followed by East Java and West Nusa Tenggara, while the men are from West Nusa Tenggara, East Java and Central Java. Most women are Javanese (42%) while the men are Sasak (41%). The women mostly went to Saudi Arabia (43%), Malaysia (29%) and Singapore (7 %) while the men migrated to Malaysia (77%), Saudi Arabia (10%), and South Korea (5%). About 22% of migrants are household head and husband/wife, 57 % are children and the rest are other household members. The prolong separation made 18 % of married migrant divorced. The migration has helped reduce poverty with men experienced more than women, i.e. 18 compared to 17 percentage points. Divorced household experienced less poverty reduction of only 14 percentage points. More pro-poor migration policy is needed to reduce migration cost and promote family reunion.

