

Received: April 2024

Revised: May 2024

Accepted: June 2024

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.3126/jpd.v5i1.67573>

Male migration and its Impact on women in Kapilbastu

Ram Raj Pokharel, Ph.D*

Abstracts

Although males are generally thought to be the ones who migrate internationally, women who were not migrants nonetheless suffer significant effects as a result of the migration of their male counterparts. Left behind women given second-class status in relation to men, this presents both a difficulty and an opportunity. Women who are more capable not only have more independence and overall well-being, but their improved abilities also have a favorable impact on the lives of friends and family. Women are capable of handling situations effectively when given the opportunity to assume responsibility for social, political, and economic facets of life. From this perspective, the primary objective of this study is to identify the variables influencing women's empowerment in Kapilbastu Municipality. Similarly, the secondary goal of the study is to determine how international migration affects the situation of women who are left behind in the study region. From the research region, 50 migrant households and 50 non-migrant households were chosen using purposive sampling method. As per the results of the study, male migration abroad has significantly contributed to their enhanced abilities and increased engagement in outdoor pursuits. They made a lot of wonderful friends, learned a lot about the outside world, experienced sharing, learned how to interact with people outside, and generally had a positive outlook on life as a result of their engagement in outdoor activities.

Keywords: Male migration, left behind, migrant, non-migrant, participant.

Introduction

People used to move from one place to another since human life started. This movement of people from one place to another is simply known as migration. In early period people migrated in search of food and shelter. It is a universal phenomenon for people to move from one place to another corresponding to their needs and wants. Various political, geographical, demographical, climatic and socioeconomic conditions induce people to migrate. Among these factors economic factors plays major role in migration. The motivation behind migration is the desire to relocate in quest of a better life and more economic prospects. Internal and international migration are the only ones that really count in economics, yet migration can also be forced or voluntary, internal or exterior, individual

*Dr. Pokharel is a Lecturer at the Department of Sociology, Patan Multiple Campush, T.U. Lalitpur, Nepal.
Email: ram.pokharel240@gmail.com

or collective, and legal or illicit. It's a multifaceted issue with underlying social, political, geographical, and psychological components in addition to economic ones. It is generally true that economic considerations are the primary driver of migration. While migration falls under the category of demographic phenomena, it differs from other phenomena such as birth and death. Migration is not an event, but a process. (Rajan and Zachariah, 2018).

International migration is now simpler, less expensive, and faster because to recent advancements in communication and transportation technologies. A total of 272 million people are immigrants worldwide, with 17.5 million coming from India, the largest country in the world. (World Migration Report – 2020).

Both advantages and disadvantages can be seen in migration's socioeconomic context. In numerous African, Latin American, and Asian nations, male migration departing from families at the point of origin is the most common type of migration. (Population Report, 1998).

The micro-level effects of international migration and remittances on the social and economic behavior of women who are left behind have received little attention. They are among the main unseen vulnerable groups who were severely impacted by global migration, but there is a dearth of information on the women who are severely impacted by staying behind to care for the rest of the family rather than moving abroad themselves. (Hugo 2000).

Though women who were not migrants are impacted in a fundamental way by the mobility of their male counterparts, international migration is generally seen as a masculine phenomenon. (Gulati.L, 1993).

In a society where women are only considered second to men, it presents both a problem and an opportunity for those who are left behind. Women's empowerment not only improves their personal independence and well-being but also has a significant impact on the lives of others around them, particularly their families. (Sen, 2001).

Migration has an impact on gender norms and can both directly and indirectly effect the process of women's empowerment. The current study makes an effort to connect the socioeconomic effects of international migration at the micro home level with the empowerment of women who are left behind.

Today, migration is one of the most important issues, with its breadth and impact expanding in relation to individual, national, regional, and global development. It is evident that the World Migration Report satisfies the necessity to offer a fair grasp of the complexity of migration. In 2019, there were 272 million foreign migrants out of the 7.7 billion inhabitants on the planet, which indicates that one out of every 30 people is a migrant. The distribution of these individuals is not uniform worldwide. The 2020 World Migration Report updates migration statistics on a global and regional scale for descriptive analysis, and it examines and clarifies complicated and developing migration concerns. There are 52 Percent men and

48 Percent women in this. The age range of 20 to 64 accounts for 74 Percent of working migrants. (World Migration Report, 2020).

Empowerment is the term used to describe the management approach of giving workers information, rewards, and authority. so they can be empowered to lead, decide, and resolve problems in order to improve output and quality of service. The basis for employee empowerment is providing them with the information, tools, power, chances, and rewards they require to enhance their proficiency and job satisfaction. They must to answer for the outcomes of their actions as well (www.businessdictionary.com, 2022).

The process of bestowing legitimacy, sanction, or a formal warrant on something in order to award power or authority to, authorize—especially in a legal or official context—means empowerment, or the act of enabling someone to perform a given function. Empowerment is the process of giving subordinates the freedom to decide for them (www.dictionary.reference.com, 2022).

The goal of sociological empowerment is to eliminate socially discriminated-against groups' members from decision-making processes, such as those that are based on gender, race, ethnicity, handicap, or religion. Empowerment theory is commonly associated with feminism. In the late 1960s, American feminists championed a movement known as "consciousness rising," often referred to as "awareness rising." To support national economies, achieve internationally accepted goals for growth and sustainability, and raise the standard of living for women, men, families, and communities, it is imperative that women participate actively in all aspects of the economy. The commercial sector is among the most significant allies in the struggle for gender equality and women's empowerment. Several studies demonstrate the benefits of gender diversity for businesses and the unifying power of people with similar interests (en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/empowerment, 2022).

Based on the Calvert women's values, the women's empowerment principles were originally unveiled on International Women's Day in 2010. The Calvert women's principles were initially developed in partnership with UNIFEM, which is now known as UN women. They were first presented in 2004 as the first corporate code of conduct that was exclusively dedicated to advancing, supporting, and empowering women throughout the world (www.unwomen.org/.../womens-empower.. Dec 5, 2022).

Due to men's international labor migration, which forces them to leave their spouses behind to care for family members, these women are forced to take on new tasks in the home. Their new roles come with freedom of movement, certain financial authority, and decision-making in the economy. This results in increased prestige and empowerment (Iqbal, 2014).

However, empowerment is also a process that includes law, community seminars, dialogue, and discussion. Not only is empowerment a process, but it also has an outcome. In order to be empowered, the weak must take the initiative, and this is in line with human norms and values (Molly, 2010).

Bernard has coined the term "feminist Enlightenment" to describe the assaults on the canon of male philosophy by the feminist movement in the academic. (Spindelman, 2021). This "Enlightenment" depicted sexism as a "invisible paradigm" that permeated all aspect of women's life. The attempt to transform traditional academic thought and practice has met with varying degrees of success.

Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to identify the variables influencing women's empowerment in Kapilbastu Municipality. Similarly, the secondary goal of the study is to determine how international migration affects the situation of women who are left behind in the study region.

Methodology

The study depends on both primary and secondary data. The present study was prepared using primary data obtained from interview schedules and secondary data sourced from published books, pertinent literature, and prior research.

Sampling procedure

For the study, the Kapilbastu municipality was specifically chosen. It was chosen for the study because it has the greatest number of male migrants and, consequently, the greatest number of women is left behind.

To choose the sample household, 50 migrant and 50 non-migrant households were chosen purposively. As a result, 50 migrant and 50 non-migrant households were included in the sample. Therefore, this study depends on 100 sample household.

In this study, women are the respondents. The study includes two groups of women. One group of the women is residing in non-migrant families with their spouses, and the other are the women who live alone in migrant households. These ladies fall into a category known as "left behind women," having been abandoned by their spouses as a result of male migration abroad. Women who live with their husbands in non-migrant households are given equal consideration in the study.

Discussion and Analysis of the study

Respondent's Participation in social activities

Women who engage in social activities are exposed to more people. They can learn a lot from meeting and engaging with people outside of their house. With regard to the social activities, this place takes into consideration the involvement of women outside the home, such as in Aama Samuha meetings and related activities, co-ops, school-sponsored events, and various associations. Engaging in these kinds of activities allows people to unwind from their everyday domestic duties.

Table. 1 Participation of respondents in social activities

| Social participation of respondent | Women in migrant household | | Women in non-migrant household | |
|---|----------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------|
| | No | Percent | No | Percent |
| Manage their home activities and leisure time to participate outdoor activities | 50 | 100 | 41 | 83 |
| Membership in any social groups | 31 | 61 | 14 | 29 |
| Holding position in any such social groups | 9 | 17 | 3 | 7 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024

According to survey results, all of the women who were left behind schedule their free time to fit in outdoor activities. However, just 83 Percent of women in non-migrant households do not make an effort in this regard.

When it came to involvement and membership in other social groups, such as co-operatives, Aama Samuha, or groups of a similar kind, women in migrant homes scored higher (61 percent) than women in non-migrant households (29 percent).

Apart from the participants' engagement or enrollment in these associations, the roles they occupied in different committees were also examined. As a result, it was found that 7 Percent of women from non-migrant households and 17 Percent of women who were left behind held positions in the various groups with which they were associated.

It is clear from the study and survey results that women who are left behind participate in and are more involved in outdoor activities. The notion that their spouses will handle all outside social engagements on their behalf makes women retreat when they are around their male counterparts. Conversely, women who fall behind their male counterparts are compelled to engage in a variety of social activities due to their circumstances. If women in nuclear families live independently, this percentage might be greater.

Management in outdoor household activities of the respondent's

The majority of respondents, whether from immigrant or non-immigrant homes, can do all interior household tasks on their own, including cooking, cleaning, watching the kids, and so forth. Therefore, it was decided to look into the respondent's capacity for overseeing outdoor home activities. Purchasing items, paying bills, banking, dealing with hospital situations, school-related issues for children, and other exterior household tasks are all important. The willingness of women in non-migrant families and migrant households to manage these activities differently is taken into account.

Table: 2 Managing outdoor household activities by the respondents

| Can manage household outdoor activities alone | Left behind Women | | Women with husbands | | Total | |
|---|-------------------|---------|---------------------|---------|-------|---------|
| | No | Percent | No | Percent | No | Percent |
| Yes | 37 | 73 | 9 | 18 | 46 | 46 |
| No | 13 | 27 | 41 | 82 | 54 | 54 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024

According to the study, 46 Percent of the sample as a whole can handle all five outdoor activities, whereas 54 Percent cannot. Just 27 Percent of women in migrant homes rely on others for their daily outdoor activities, whereas the majorities (73 Percent) are willing and handle all outdoor activities independently. Just 18 Percent of women who live in non-migrant homes manage outdoor activities on their own.

There is a noticeable difference in the willingness to manage outdoor activities between migrants and non-migrants, according to statistical testing that revealed a significant difference in the respondents' willingness.

Maintaining the responders' studies after marriage

The continuance of women's studies after marriage has not been mentioned in any of the previous studies about women who are left behind. This is a result of their increased workload from domestic duties including cooking, cleaning, and taking care of the family's elderly and children after marriage. They are not even given time to reflect on their education. Women who marry in young stop their study after marriage.

But recent scene is very different. A recent legal reform mandates that women must be eighteen years of age or older when they get married. As a result, many of the females have the confidence to pursue their education even after getting married after plus two. The rise in Muslim educational institutions for women's education explains the shift in the Muslim community's attitude toward women's education. Due to all of these factors, both men and women now view education differently, and many of them completed their studies even after their spouses left for overseas. Some ladies who had taken a brief hiatus following marriage went back to school. Information about the respondent's post-marriage academic pursuits is provided.

Table: 3 Continuation of studies after marriage by the respondents

| Studies | Left behind women | | Women in non-migrant | | Total | |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---------|----------------------|---------|-------|---------|
| | No | Percent | No | Percent | No | Percent |
| Not continued after marriage | 16 | 31 | 37 | 74 | 53 | 53 |
| Continued after marriage | 34 | 69 | 13 | 26 | 47 | 47 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Of the entire sample, roughly 47 Percent maintained their studies after getting married, while the remaining 53 Percent stopped. Only 31 Percent of respondents in the non-migrant category continued their education, compared to roughly 74 Percent of respondents in the non-migrant category. Interestingly, 69 Percent of respondents from migrant households reported continuing their education after getting married. Yet, just 26 Percent of respondents who were not migrants reported it. Regarding the distribution of respondents' post-marriage studies, there is a discernible difference between migrants and non-migrants.

Table: 4 Motivations for pursuing higher education after marriage

| Reason | Women in migrant HH (n=34) | | Women in non-migrant HH(n=13) | | Total (n=47) | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|---------|-------------------------------|---------|--------------|---------|
| | No | Percent | No | Percent | No | Percent |
| Own Interest | 17 | 49 | 5 | 38 | 20 | 42 |
| Husband's support & interest | 13 | 38 | 3 | 23 | 18 | 38 |
| Other family members support | 1 | 4 | 3 | 23 | 4 | 9 |
| To get a job | 3 | 9 | 2 | 16 | 5 | 11 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The majority of sample respondents—those in the migrant and non-migrant categories—state that they pursued further education beyond marriage out of personal interest. 38 percent in migrant household and twenty three in non-migrant household finished their education because of their husbands' interest and assistance. Four percent of migrant students and twenty-three percent of non-migrant students received support from other family members to pursue higher education.

Management of money in household activities

In order to ascertain the respondent's precise viewpoint on financial matters, questions about their participation in managing home finances were posed. Women typically have less influence over financial decisions made in their homes. The role that women play in controlling finances in migrant homes vs non-migrant households is being examined in this study.

Table: 5 Controller of money at home

| Controller of money at home | Migrant HH | | Non-migrant HH | | Overall | |
|---|------------|---------|----------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | No | Percent | No | Percent | No | Percent |
| Myself | 35 | 70 | 1 | 2 | 36 | 36 |
| Others(In-laws in case of migrants and husband in case of non-migrants) | 15 | 30 | 49 | 98 | 64 | 64 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Although just 36 Percent of women in the sample as a whole have authority over financial matters at home, 70 Percent of women in migrant households have complete control over financial things. However, it only accounts for 2 Percent of women in homes with no migrants. Therefore, the majority of women in migrant homes are free to manage their finances, while 30 Percent do so in accordance with directives from their spouses or in-laws. Women who cohabits with their husbands in non-migrant homes have limited autonomy over their finances. In 98 Percent of these households, the spouse is in charge of financial concerns.

Information on the respondent's financial transactions

This section takes into account the respondents' financial associations. Women in migrant homes and women in non-migrant households are the subjects of investigations about issues such as money availability, money storage without others knowing, information about bank accounts and loans, subscriptions to Brahmins, Chhetries and Kurries, etc.

Table: 6 Respondent's financial transactions

| Financial transactions | Migrant | | Non-migrant | |
|--|---------|---------|-------------|---------|
| | No | Percent | No | Percent |
| Acquisition or possession of personal funds | 42 | 83 | 22 | 44 |
| Bank account that you use personally | 42 | 83 | 13 | 26 |
| Have borrowed loan to launch a business | 5 | 9 | 5 | 9 |
| Keeping money secret from other people | 29 | 57 | 34 | 68 |
| Subscribe to Brahmin, Chhetries, Kuries etc. | 39 | 78 | 14 | 28 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Only 44 Percent and 26 Percent, respectively, of non-migrant households have bank accounts and money readily available to them, compared to 83 Percent of women who are left behind and have bank accounts they use exclusively. It is evident that there are distinct differences between these two groups of women. In a similar vein, just 9 Percent of individuals in both categories have taken out loans to launch their businesses.

Approximately 57 Percent of women who are left behind and 68 percent of women in non-migrant homes conceal some money from others. When comparing women in non-migrant households to women who are left behind, it is shown that the former are more likely to hoard money without others knowing about it. This suggests that there is a behavioral difference between migrant and non-migrant individuals when it comes to concealing money from other family members.

In comparison to women in non-migrant homes (28 percent), women who are left behind (78 percent) are more involved in small-scale recurring savings programs such as post office Brahmin, Chhetries, and Kuries.

Control over household decision making by the husband

The spouses living with their husbands are also investigated in this study. To find out control over household decision making by the husband, the respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed or disagreed with the phrase "afraid to disagree with their husband."

Table: 7 Unwillingness to disagree household decision by the respondents

| Unwilling to disagree | Migrant | | Non-migrant | | Overall | |
|-----------------------|---------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|---------|
| | No | Percent | No | Percent | No | Percent |
| Strongly agree | 8 | 16 | 21 | 42 | 29 | 29 |
| Agree | 8 | 16 | 19 | 38 | 27 | 27 |
| Neutral | 9 | 17 | 5 | 10 | 14 | 14 |
| Disagree | 18 | 37 | 4 | 8 | 22 | 22 |
| Strongly disagree | 7 | 14 | 1 | 2 | 8 | 8 |
| Total | 50 | 100 | 50 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Eighty percent of women in non-migrant households concur with this assertion, compared to thirty-two percent of women who were left behind. The statement "afraid to disagree with husband" is disagreed with by about 50 Percent of women who are left behind and 10 Percent of women who are not migrants. We can understand that, in comparison to women in migrant households, women in non-migrant households are more subservient to their husbands. It follows the women who cohabit with their husbands are hesitant to express disagreement with them about issues pertaining to the home. While left behind women are less subject to their husbands' authority when it comes to making decisions for the home.

Place of residence of left behind women.

In the non-migrant homes, every respondent resides with their spouse. But things are not the same for women who are left behind. Thus it is important to study the living alone status of the migrant household. Following table presents the living status of left behind women.

Table: 8 Place of residence of the left behind women

| Place of residence | Migrant | |
|--|---------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage |
| Living alone with children independently | 30 | 60 |
| Living with parents in their house | 3 | 6 |
| Living within laws in husband's house | 14 | 29 |
| Parents stay in your house | 2 | 3 |
| In laws stay within your house | 1 | 2 |
| Total | 50 | 100 |

Source: Field Survey, 2024.

Sixty percent of the women who are left behind live freely in a separate home with their children. 29 percent of respondents live with their in-laws in their husband's home; the remaining 10 percent of respondents reside with their parents (6 percent); occasionally, the respondents' own parents (3 percent) or in-laws (2 percent) visit, but these instances are extremely uncommon in the sample.

Conclusions

It was discovered that women who were left behind benefited from their participation in extracurricular social, political, and economic activities. A detailed analysis of women who are left behind revealed that they participate in social activities at a higher rate than women who are not migrants. Women who are left behind are far better than women in non-migrant households when it comes to managing outdoor activities in the home. This indicates that women must make an effort to manage their situations. Most women from families that were left behind have pursued further schooling after getting married. The study comes to the conclusion that the woman's desire to learn more about managing outdoor household activities was sparked by her husband's financial support in the form of remittances and his absence. Key outdoor household activities include banking, shopping, paying bills, attending to hospital cases, and purchasing goods.

References

- Gulati, L. (1993). *In the absence of their men: the impact of male migration on women*. Sage Publications India Pvt Ltd.
- Hugo, G. (2000). The crisis and international population movement in Indonesia. *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 9(1), 93-129.
- S. Iqbal, I. Balal and M. Anwaar (2014), "Male Migration: Decision Making Autonomy and Changing Roles among Females Left Behind: A Feminist Approach (A Case study Of Village Pindi –ud-Din)", *World Applied Sciences Journal* 29(4):480-485,2014, ISSN 1818-4952, IDOSI Publications,2014DOL: 10.5829/IDOSI.WASJ.2014.29.04.13950.
- Molly, K. A. (2010). Women, who Defend themselves, Defend the Nation: A Pioneering Mission of Education for Women's Empowerment in North India. *Journal of Research: THE BEDE ATHENÆUM*, 1(1), 5-9.
- Rajan, S. I., & Zachariah, K. C. (2018). Women left behind: Results from Kerala Migration Surveys. In *Migration, Gender and Care Economy* (pp. 86-102).Routledge India.
- Sen, A. (2001). Many faces of gender inequality, *Frontline*, Vol: 18, Issue:22, Issue date: 0 9. 11.2001.
- Spindelman, M. (2021). *The Shower's Return: An Essay on the LGBT Title VII Sex Discrimination Cases*.

Websites

- <http://www.worldmigrationreport.iom.int ^ wmr-2020-interact...>
- <http://www.census.gov ^ publications ^ demo>
- <http://www.business dictionary.com, 2022>
- <http://www.dictionary.reference.com, 2022>
- <en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/empowerment, 2022>