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Economic and Social Impacts of the Male Migration on Families left behind

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Abstract- Some of the major streams of temporary migrant workers come from Asian countries. Almost all these migration flows involve the division of migrants from their families. Consequently, transnational families in which one or more members are abroad for several years are increasingly common in the Asian region. Moreover, there is an increasing number of migrant families with one or both parents who are migrated overseas for work for a substantial part of their children's growth. While the issue of families and children left behind by migrant men has not yet been intensively studied and it remains under-researched and indeed little understood in Sri Lanka, which is one of the major suppliers of overseas domestic workers. Currently, the Sri Lankan government faces a dilemma. On one hand, remittances from overseas migrant workers are the second largest source of foreign export earnings. On the other hand, there is a growing concern with the social effects of that movement on the children and wives left behind by migrant men. So this study has identified the impacts of male migration on left-behind families. While, it is impossible to conclude that the effects of international male out migration are only positive or negative, social impact is greater than economic benefits, or economic benefits are greater than social costs since the study has found mixed results of positive impacts, as well as negative, social impacts.

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Economic and Social Impacts of the Male Migration on Families left behind

Ishanka Dias

Abstract- Some of the major streams of temporary migrant workers come from Asian countries. Almost all these migration flows involve the division of migrants from their families. Consequently, transnational families in which one or more members are abroad for several years are increasingly common in the Asian region. Moreover, there is an increasing number of migrant families with one or both parents who are migrated overseas for work for a substantial part of their children's growth. While the issue of families and children left behind by migrant men has not yet been intensively studied and it remains under-researched and indeed little understood in Sri Lanka, which is one of the major suppliers of overseas domestic workers. Currently, the Sri Lankan government faces a dilemma. On one hand, remittances from overseas migrant workers are the second largest source of foreign export earnings. On the other hand, there is a growing concern with the social effects of that movement on the children and wives left behind by migrant men. So this study has identified the impacts of male migration on left-behind families. While, it is impossible to conclude that the effects of international male-out migration are only positive or negative, social impact is greater than economic benefits, or economic benefits are greater than social costs since the study has found mixed results of positive impacts, as well as negative, social impacts.

Keywords: male migration, left-behind family, benefit, cost, impact.

I. Introduction

Migration is known as human mobility from one place to another. (Channa, Pathan, & Shaikh, 2016). This involves change of residence across a considerable distance from one spatial boundary to another. Migration is one of the most significant and pressing global problems of our time. The current global estimate is that there were around 244 million international migrants in the world in 2015, equivalent to 3.3% of the world's population. Asia, home to 4.4 billion people, was the source of more than 40% of international migrants worldwide.

Sri Lanka, is one of the main suppliers of skilled and unskilled labour to the world (Siriwardhana, Jayaweera, Wickramage, & Adikari, 2013). Sri Lankan labor migration is a widely discussed area where many scholars have come up with various peaks and valleys. As of 2016, remittance from the migrated employees account for almost 10 percent of Sri Lankan GDP. So, Sri Lankan government has become more flexible in promoting foreign jobs and it has also in fluenced to a visible increase of departures from 14, 456 in1986 to 242, 930 in 2016 Sri Lanka Bureau of Foreign Employment, 2008).

During the past decade the male share of total departures was increased steadily and it reached 66 percent in 2015. It was 41 percent in 2005, and in 2016, it has exceeded around 65 percent. Though the economic benefits of migration can be visualized through for exearnings and the GDP percentage, the social impact of migration to the left behind families is often hard to visualize and given less attention in migration literature. A number of Government agencies have initiated number of programmes and schemes on improving the status of women migrant workers (Dias & Jayasundere, 2004). But the status and problems faced by male migrant workers receives little attention although it is an issue that threatens to become. So it is important to understand the socio economic impact on wife and children of male migrants which represents a considerable gap in Sri Lankan migration literature which is the main purpose served through this research.

II. Material and Method

a) Research Design and Sampling

A qualitative technique is used to collect and interpret the data and the study findings are based mainly on the empirical data where constructivism philosophy is appreciated. The researcher uses the interview schedule, direct observation and content analysis methods for the collection and analysis of data. The survey respondents are women and children who reside in Colombo district of Sri Lanka and their husbands / fathers migrate abroad. The Colombo district is selected as the majority of migrants are from Colombo district which represent 12% of total migrants in 2015. In migrant families, the criteria adopted for participation in the survey were the duration of migration (more than 1 year), marital status (married) and age of woman (20-60 years). Thus, women left behind are considered those whose men have been migrants for at least a year. In all, 15 left-behind wives of migrants are interviewed using an unstructured questionnaire. The questions were asked in the local language, Sinhala using local terminology. The interviews that take place in Sinhala are translated into English. Both secondary and primary data are used in the study. When addressing

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the primary objective. The sample is selected through convenient and purposive sampling techniques.

b) Data collection and Analysis

In this research data collection is mainly done through interviews and direct observation which are the primary data sources to the research. Collecting data through interviews with participants is a feature of many qualitative studies. Secondary data sources include the reports published by government departments such as reports of foreign employment bureau and central bank reports which are transparent and published with the direct involvement of Sri Lankan government. Data gathered as interview transcripts, notes, video and audio recordings, images and text documents is analyzed using narrative as a case study method. This method involves the summarizing and formulating of stories presented by respondents taking into account context of each case and different experiences of each respondent. In other words, narrative analysis is the revision of primary qualitative data by the researcher. Each respondent is given a code and transcripts are prepared with information gathered by interviews. By understanding trends and patterns such as word and phrase repetitions and primary and secondary data comparisons data is analyzed to achieve the purpose of the research.

c) Trustworthiness and ethical consideration

Credibility of the research is achieved through triangulation which is accomplished by asking the same research questions of different study participants and by collecting data from different sources and by using different methods to answer these research questions. Purposive sampling is used in this research to address the issue of transferability as specific information is maximized in relation to the context in which the data collection takes place. Also pictures are taken of the living places of respondents to confirm data validity is also effective in ensuring the trustworthiness of the research.

The consent from each respondent is taken prior to the interview and the aim of the study was well explained as their information is only used for academic purpose. Also, each respondent was taken care to ensure that the participants fully understood the nature of the study and the fact that participation is voluntary. A statement is made that confidentiality of recovered data will be maintained at all times, and identification of participants will not be available during or after the study. For example, all data collected was anonymized by replacing the participants' names with ascending code numbers (A – J) in the order of the initial interviews. Compliance is shown with protection of human subjects as required by University of Kelaniya and the study is deemed to be one of minimal risk to participants and that the probability and magnitude of interruption or discomfort anticipated in the research will not be greater than any ordinarily encountered in daily life, or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. Participants are well informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without questions being asked.

III. Results and Discussion

In this study the importance is given to understand the impacts to the left-behind family when husband/father migrates to another country. These impacts can be broadly categorized into economic and social impacts (Ndlovu, 2018; Ukwatta, 2010). So, under the impacts to left-behind families, two main themes as economic impacts and social impacts can be derived.

a) Economic impact to the left behind family

There are contradictions among the existing views as some findings revealed that there were little economic and social gains to the families left behind because the quality of their lives never significantly changed (Ndlovu, 2018). On the other hand, there are evidences to prove that foreign employment has positive implication in economically. Remittances can alleviate poverty or reduce the risk of falling into poverty and remittances sent by migrants increase domestic consumption and improves access to basic goods (Nufile, 2014). So, it is important to understand the real impact to the left behind families.

"We have bought a land in Gampaha and the construction of our house is almost done…."

"Now we have a better life here. If he stayed here, we would never be able to build a house of our own. But now we have a house and lands in Gampaha and our children have a better tomorrow..."

According to respondent A, earlier with the little income it was hard for them to even dream about building a house of their own. But now with the increased income they have purchased several land plots and built a house which was their primary objective of going abroad. So, there's a significant change in the lives of left behind family in the case of A. similar evidence was found in the case of B.

"We have settled our debts and bought a new car. Now I take children to school and tuition classes by myself… our lives has become much easier now…"

"We both worked hard, so we could manage all the expenses. But now even without my job we have a better life and income here…."

So, there was a significant positive impact for the household from migration to B's household. According to her, previously both of them were employed and they got a sufficient income to cover up their expenses but now with husband's earnings alone they have settled the debts, bought a car and increased their standard of living. Respondent C also mentioned a similar point. According to her, their earnings were sufficient for them to cover up expenses. But after

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migration their standard of living has increased positively.

"We both were employed in different companies and we earned enough to survive. But now we have a better income and even we have bought a vehicle… our income has increased, and we have given all the facilities to our child"

According to C, her husband's migration had a positive impact toward their household. Though both of them were employed they didn't have a car and enough savings. But with the migration their income level has been increased significantly and they have bought a vehicle as well. So, it's obvious that, their standard of living has increased with the migration decision. Their house was properly maintained with modern luxury furniture and their vehicle costs more than 6 million in today's market. These observations also supports that they are economically stable. Respondent E also mentioned that her live has positively changed economically, after her husband's migration.

"My husband sends me money each month and I have my salary. When he went to Australia after 2, 3 months he started sending me money. So now I can save money as well…"

"Back then we had no savings but after his migration now I can save after settling the expenses of household…"

Before the migration of E's husband, they were struggling to cover up the expenses. But now E has a sufficient income for her expenses. So there's a positive impact for household from the migration of E's husband. It was obvious that they have all the facilities in the apartment. Similar evidence was found in the case of F.
"We stayed with my husband's parents without a job for a long time… Now we have solved our main problem and living in our own house…"

According to F, they didn't have a house of their own so they stayed in husband's ancestral home because her husband didn't have proper job. But after her husband migrated to Kuwait, they were able to build their own house.

"We gave all the facilities for our child. We never let her feel our difficulties. Now we have saved enough to send her abroad for her higher studies…"

With the remittances sent by her husband, E managed to educate her child well and they have also planned to send her abroad for higher studies. Their family is solely dependent on the remittances sent by the migrant as F is a housewife. So the decision of migrating was a life changing one for their family. It's obvious that migration has resulted in significant positive impact in the case of F. In the interview with G, it was clear that the migration of her husband has resulted in a positive economic impact to the household and their lives have significantly changed ever since.

"We were so helpless without a house. Sometimes house owners yelled at us to leave the place saying that they need to repair the house. So we had to give the house immediately and we were homeless and had to move these sewing machines and equipment so many times… But now we have a house of our own… this is not a big palace but at least we have a place to live…"

As respondent G said, they had a tough time living in rented rooms. Sometimes land owners asked them to leave the place without any prior notice. So they were helpless without a house of their own. But few years after migration they were able to afford a land in Kadawatha and build a small house. So, remittance sent by the migrant had significantly changed their economic condition. In the visit to her place I witnessed the half-built small house with 2 rooms. In the case of I, it was obvious that I is living with all the facilities. She has a 2 stories house and a vehicle worth more than 6 million. Even before the migration of his husband their earnings were sufficient for them as both of them were working and they had properties from both sides. But after migration her standard of living has increased positively.

"We had all the facilities we need. But now I'm staying alone in this big house and he is sending me money every month… even I get all the income from his property. So I do have much higher income now…"

With her husband's migration, "I" has become the owner of all the properties. So her level of income and standard of living has increased. So, it's obvious that, her standard of living has increased with the migration decision. A similar evidence was found in the case of J as well.

Before migration F and her husband had faced several financial difficulties and they lacked money for the treatments of their son. So, in the interview with J, it was clear that her husband's decision of migrating to another country was a great relief for her as their lives have significantly changed ever since. They are living in a 2 story house built near Homagama town.

"After he migrated to Oman he found a good job and he sent me money every month. With the help of my brother we went to meet several doctors and finally we were able to cure his illness completely… and now he is in good health and doing his studies… our economic condition also improved…"

As a result of remittance generated through migration "J", was able to cure his son and their economic condition also has improved. So, it is obvious that migration has generated a positive impact to the left-behind family of migrant.

So most of the respondents including A, B, C, E, F G, I and J stated that economic condition of the left-behind family has significantly improved after their husbands migrate to another country. It was obvious that their living condition has improved as many of their houses were with good facilities and some were under construction as seen in appendix 4. So these cases support the argument brought up by Nufile which says,

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remittances sent by migrants act as a source of alleviating poverty and improve the standard of living of families left behind (Nufile, 2014).

Some respondents stated that their economic condition has not significantly changed as a result of migration.

"Income levels are not that different then and now. We earn little more but it did not make a big difference in our income…"

So as D mentioned their economic condition has not significantly changed as a result of migration. They have a two stories house which is properly maintained with a vehicle worth 4 million in current market price. So it was obvious that they have all the facilities they need. Similar evidence was found in the case of H. H and her husband were both qualified doctors and after their marriage they moved to house in Borelesamuwa which was given to them by H's parents as the dowry. So, they had their own house and never faced severe economic hardships.

"My father gave this land and house to us. We both were working as doctors in the general hospital… even before he migrated, we had a good income and it was sufficient to us to live….."

They have never face severe economic hardships because both of them had highly-paid jobs. So their income was sufficient for them to live a satisfactory life. Also E is currently living in their two story house with a big garden and it was obvious that they have all the facilities they need. So as H mentioned their economic condition has not significantly changed as a result of migration. They have a two stories house which is properly maintained with a vehicle worth 8 million in current market price. So the cases of D and H supports the view of Ndlovu, which says migration doesn't significantly increase the standard of living though there can be small economic and social gains (Ndlovu, 2018).

b) Social impact to the left-behind family

Under social impacts, respondents stated about the impact to their child's behavior, children's educational achievements, stress and increased responsibilities and autonomy in decision making. So several sub topics are derived under social impact to left behind families.

IV. Behavior of Children

Many respondents commented on the impact to children from the displacement of their dad. Most of them stated that they didn't notice a significant difference in the behavior of children and children have adopted to the change with time.

"My daughter was 3 years old when he left. So she didn't get much time to be with her dad….. It didn't make a big difference to them because I was always with them and played the role of father as well."

As a described, her husband's departure hasn't made a significant difference to the behavior of their children. She has taken a good care of children ever since her husband left and has fulfilled all the responsibilities that should be completed by her husband. So because of her care taking, children hasn't feel the absence of their father. A similar evidence was found in the case of B.

"They were too small when he left. So it does not make a significant difference to them… He came to Sri Lanka when my elder son was born and spent couple of months here… They became so close and when he left I managed to fill that gap…"

As B mentioned her husband left the country 8 years back and came back to Sri Lanka when her first son was born. Her husband was so attached to the child. But when he went back she was able to void the gap because kid was too small to feel the change much. So when children grow up, absence of their father, didn't make a significant difference to them. C mentioned a similar point.

"My husband was really busy with his work. So he didn't get much time to spend with our child… from his childhood he was so attached to me, still at the age of 15, he prefers to sleep with me… my husband was not much close to the child. So, his departure didn't impact him much"

According to C, her husband was a busy person and he got only a handful of time to spend with them. So, her kid is more attached to mother and because of that, husband's migration didn't make any significant impact to the behavior of child. A similar evidence was found in the case of G.

"I didn't see a big difference because she is closer to me than to her dad… I always took care about her and encouraged her to do her studies well. I regularly met her teachers and talked to them and I always looked forward to motivate her to study well… and I provided all the facilities to the best I can..."

As G mentioned she haven't noticed a significant change in her daughter's behavior after her husband migrated to Qatar. She has taken a good care of her daughter ever since her husband left and has fulfilled all the responsibilities that should be completed by her husband. Since she was so committed for her child, her daughter hasn't feel the absence of their father. Since G has taken a good care of her daughter, migration of her husband hasn't made a considerable impact to children. Respondent H expressed a similar view,

"Both me and my husband had a busy life. Sometimes we both had to do nights… we had a little time to be with our kids… our maid is like a family member for us, she is taking a good care of our children.. They are really close to her… we had a little time to spend with them. That's why I decided to discontinue my higher studies and spend more time with our kids… so they didn't feel the absence of their father much…"

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As H mentioned she and her husband were both busy with their job and they had no time to spend with their children. But their maid was so close to them and looked after them well. After her husband's migration she discontinued her higher education to spend more time with children so that they won't feel the absence of their father much. So, her husband's migration didn't make any significant impact to the behavior of child. These cases supports the argument raised by (Asis, 2007), which emphasizes that, Child's well-being is not seriously weaken by the departure of one or two parents to another country suggests the capacity of that particular family to adjust for the change and the credit should be given to the parent who stays with children or the care-taker for voiding that gap.

Some respondents expressed contradictions to the previous argument as they mentioned they see a significant behavioral change in their children and they miss their fathers a lot. As D mentioned her husband was with her when her children was born and he stayed with children for one or two months and that made him so attached to the children.

"My husband is so attached to kids. Even he handles them better than me. He loves his kids a lot. We call him each day through skype and my elder son is waiting to see his face each day. He can't sleep well without seeing his face…"

"The infant was so close to him when he left and in the first few days it was hard for me to make him sleep without the help of my husband…"

According to D, her husband is so close to their kids and he regularly check on them though he was away from the country. Their elder son waits to call him each day as he can't sleep without seeing his dad's face. Even the 3 months old baby was so attached to him which made it hard for D to void his absence. This clearly shows the attachment between the father and kids. Children are so small in age but still they miss their dad a lot. Similar evidence was found in the case of E.

"Our son was so close to him. He loved to play with him even he looks like his dad…."

"After he was gone, I had many sleepless nights because baby was used to sleep with both of us. He must has felt the absence of dad…"

According to E, her husband was so attached to son. After he migrated to Australia her son felt the absence of his dad, even though he is 8 months old. So this indicates the negative social impact to the left behind-children. A similar point was brought up by F's daughter regarding the migration of her father.

"I was so small when my father went abroad. I hardly remember it. He calls me whenever he can and I know that he loves me a lot. I miss him so much. But I can understand his situation… he does everything because of me, for my future..."

"When we have projects in the school and late classes, fathers come to pick my friends… So I feel really helpless…"

As F's daughter started to explain, she was so emotional. She likes to be with her dad and she misses him but she understands the reason of his migration. It was obvious that she wasn't happy about her father being away from her but she had to accept it as it was the only solution for them to earn a sufficient income. She felt the absence of her dad and she was worried about that so many times. This reveals the negative social effects of migration as children of migrants feel lonely and stressed in the absence of their fathers. J expressed a similar view.

"My son was my husband's life… They were so close to each other. Even when he was small he preferred to be with his dad. He loves his dad more than me… even after my husband migrated my son is waiting to talk to him… my husband can't sleep without listening to his voice… He asks him every day to come home…"

As "J" said, her husband and her son is so attached. Her son is waiting to talk to his dad and he loves his dad more. So it is clear that their son misses his dad a lot and badly wants to be with him. This clearly shows the attachment between the father and kids. These findings shows the significant impact to children from the migration of their dad. As Khan mentioned in his research, father's role is really important in children's life. From childhood to early adolescence father will be the guide for children and his presence make children mentally strong (Khan, 2017). So it is obvious that there's a significant impact for children from the absence of father which supports the argument which says, children with migrant parents likely to be unhappy than the children living with both parents (Gao et al., 2010).

V. Educational Achievements of Children

Most of the respondents had small children but some children were aged more than 18. Respondent F's daughter explained that sometimes she was really depressed without her dad but when she understood the situation of her family, she made this situation a motivation to study hard. She wanted to find a good job and look after their parents. Now she has come a half way in her journey being a undergraduate in University of Kelaniya.

"In my childhood I have cried sometimes asking for dad. But now I know his intentions and it motivated me to do my education well. My mother and father lived a hard life because they wanted to create a better life for me... So I'm doing my best to find a good job and look after them well..."

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Some studies revealed that the children of migrants have reported poor performance as they are lonely and not given enough care (Yeoh & Lam, 2006). But in the case of F, the situation is completely different as her daughter has taken the displacement from her dad, positively as a motivation to complete his studies well. So, it can be identified as a positive social impact over left-behind children in Sri Lankan context. A similar evident was found in the case of G.

"My daughter never complained me about anything. She never asked me for expensive things and when my husband came home for vacation she promised him to study well and get good grades in the exam… she knows that her dad is working hard to create a better life for her. So she had converted his absence to a motivation to study hard… I'm so proud of my daughter…"

According to respondent E, her daughter has never asked for expensive gifts or unnecessary things, rather she has understood the situation of her family, and made this situation a motivation to study hard. She's working hard to get through the advance level examination with flying colours.

VI. Social Pressure for Left-behind Wife

In many cases negative social impacts to the left-behind wife can be identified as people in the society try to take the advantage of women when their husbands are away from home.

"When constructions of our house were going on, workers asked me for extra money forging the actual price in the market. But I knew the prices well. It is not that easy for anyone to trick me..."

"That's how I lived without husband all these years. If we acted like we don't know and we are weak, people try to overrule us. I've never let that happen. Otherwise people won't allow a woman to live alone with dignity…"

According to A, when husband is away people try to take the advantage out of the situation and try to mislead women. But in her case, she was well aware about market rates so the workers couldn't trick her to steal money. She further emphasized that women should be strong enough to stand alone against these injustices. Otherwise the society will keep on being unfair to women. So she clearly mention the requirement of being strong for women to live in a corrupted society with dignity. Similar evidence was found in the case of B.

"When women like us stays alone with kids, people tend to take the advantage of the situation...Some people came to my house claiming that my husband has taken loans from them. Sometimes they came and threaten me. I was really terrified and called the police… Those things happen when a woman stays alone... Society is so corrupted these days..."

She opened up about the difficulties she faced in the absence of her husband. Some people have tried to threaten her asking for money. As B described, these incidents are common when a woman stays alone in a house without her husband. So it is visible that she is so stressed about the corrupted society and women's role in the absence of men. So it is visible that there's a significant social impact to her which has made her worried about being alone in the house. Respondent E also expressed her stress and pressure she gets from her in- laws.

"My in-laws wanted me dead. Sometimes they came to visit me and ask me to divorce their son. We weren't married according to Muslim law, so they wanted to take my son and divorce me as soon as possible. Without my husband I felt so helpless…"

Since E and her husband were from different religious backgrounds, there was a big pressure for E from the parents of her husband. She seemed like so depressed about her condition. She had no help from her parents and she was living in a separate house alone.

"Sometimes I feel like suicide, but I have to live for my child…."

"Ramani akka in the next door takes care of my son when I'm working… she is like my own sister. Even my own sister never came to visit me after my marriage. Nobody in my family helped me except my neighbors and friends…"

According to E, she is so fed up with her life and her son is the only reason for her to live. She has no one to help except neighbors and friends. Her husband's migration has resulted in many negative social impacts to her. These findings supports the argument that, left behind wives of migrants have a greater chance of having stress and reporting symptoms of reproductive morbidity (Nangia & Roy, 2013). Also, this clearly indicates the negative social impact over left-behind wives because they are feeling insecure as they believe society is not safe and it makes them further stressed and terrified which impact negatively to their mental well-being.

VII. Women Empowerment

Not only the negative social impacts, some positive social impacts can be identified as left-behind wives have grown confident over themselves and they have developed new skills to face the problems in day today life.

"I don't usually ask people for help. I feel it like a debt and a huge burden for them. I'm used to handle everything alone. I'm really happy about myself because I don't need anyone to help me and I'm strong enough to stand on my own feet."

Here, she has emphasized that she understood her ability to stand alone no matter what. So husband's

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migration has changed her into a different, strong person. She is so confident that she can face any problem without the help of anyone. She feels that asking for help is a burden for others. That makes her even stronger to face problem without any fear. Migration of men is an opportunity for women to take on new tasks and learn new skills that can transform gender relations and improve women's status and empowerment (Petrzelka, Schmook, & Radel, 2012). So the research can be obviously related to the argument that men-out migration allows women to grow and empower that makes them stronger to take decisions for themselves and stand alone to face challenges without any fear.Similar evidence was found in the case of G,

"Now I have used to do thing on my own. I never beg for anyone's help. If a lonely woman asks for help people try to take the advantage of it. Even they try to sleep with that woman…"

According to G, now she is used to do things without help on anyone and she is capable of living on her own. Further she stated that it is not safe to take help from anyone today because they might take the advantage of a lonely woman. These findings, supports the argument that women develop new skills and they will be empowered to take on new challenges in the absence of their husbands (Petrzelka, Schmook, & Radel, 2012).

VIII. Increased Responsibilities and Stress

Many respondents complained about the huge responsibilities that they have to take in the absence of their husbands.

"I can't say I'm happy. I'm a working woman and my office environment is very stressful. My husband is also far away from home. We are running in a rat race..."

"We earn but we are growing old without enjoying our lives. I sometimes think about the meaning of our lives… it's like we are missing ourselves in the middle of our daily chaos..."

According to C, she is not happy about her life. Though they earn a lot, she is worried about her life and being away from her husband. From her expression it was obvious that she is stressed about her life and the responsibilities she has. She is exhausted to balance both her work life and family life. She sounds depressed and with the absence of her husband she is even worried about her life. This clearly shows the negative social impact of migration. Though their economic condition is positive there's a significant negative impact on the social well-being of wife after husband's migration in the case of C. Respondent D mentioned a similar point.

"Without my husband, I have to face so many responsibilities, especially in the problems of our children. I normally get scared over little things. So small changes in kids make me so nervous and I start to panic…"

According to D, she gets stressed over little things and start to panic. When her husband is not around it is hard for her to bear up so many responsibilities which make her nervous. Even when she was talking it was obvious that she is stressed with all the responsibilities.

"My mom and dad stay here with me. I can't drive so when I need to go somewhere, dad takes me. I can handle all the housework with the help of my mom… I miss him always. I wish he was here with us…."

D's parents are staying with her in her house and whenever she needs help they are ready to help her. But she always miss her husband and the absence of her husband makes a great impact on her. So it is obvious that in the case of D, she is frustrated as her husband is away from the country even without any financial difficulty. She wants him to be around with her and their kids and his absence makes her even stressed over little things even though she is living with her parents. A similar evidence was found from F.

"I had a very hard time when my husband left. My daughter was really small and I had to manage everything alone. My parents lived in Matara and I had to live alone with the kid in Colombo. I was really stressed with all the responsibilities at that time…"

When her husband migrated, E had a hard time in a rented house with her daughter. Her parents lived in Matara. So she had to live alone in the rented house in Colombo. She was so stressed with a small child and increased responsibilities. Similar view was expressed by respondent H.

"After my husband left, I had to manage my job, housework and daughter's work… Sometimes I have cried alone remembering the days we struggled. Though we faced so many difficulties at least we were together…"

Respondent G was emotional when she explained how he managed without her husband even she started to shed tears. .According to her she had to take a lot of responsibilities to manage everything alone. Though they struggled in the past they were able to stay together but now they are in two different places and she's worried about it. Similar evidence was found in the case of H.

"In our busy schedules we somehow managed to go to dinner outs, take our children on picnics and visit our ancestral homes. But when he left I had to take care of his patients and our coconut estate in Kurunegala… It was a huge burden for me because I was so stressed with all the work and sometimes I gave up on everything and stayed at home for couple of days…"

She had a busy lifestyle managing both housework and work life. But with his husband's

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migration her responsibilities further increased and she was so stressed. From her expression it was obvious that she is stressed about her life and the responsibilities she has. She is exhausted to balance both her work life and family life. She sounds depressed and with the absence of her husband. This clearly shows the negative social impact of migration. Though their economic condition is positive there's a significant negative impact on the social well-being of wife after husband's migration in the case of I.

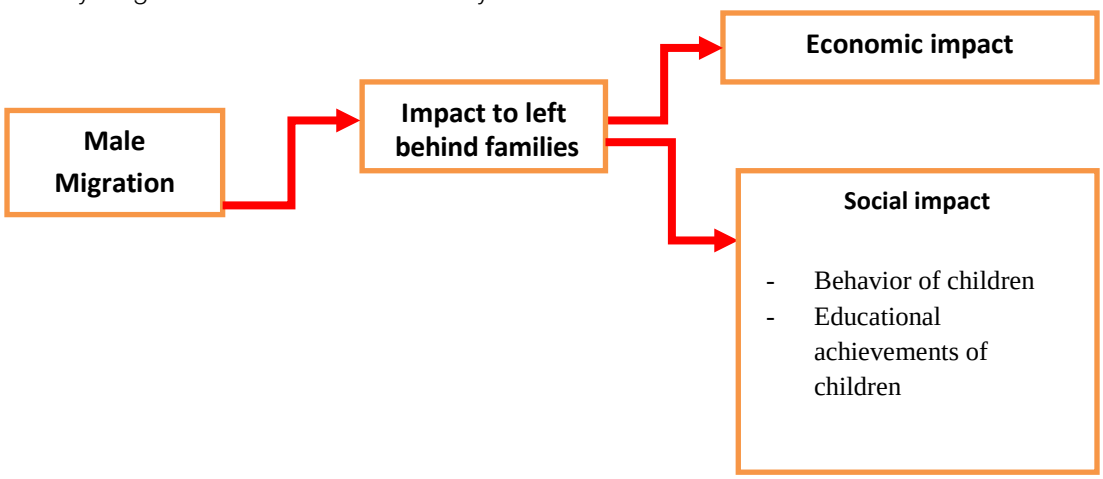
"I have all the facilities I need but I don't have any children and I don't have any meaning to my life. Even my husband left me… I don't blame him even I'm not ashamed to tell this because everyone must know that it isn't my fault… so what is the point of having all these luxuries… Now I understand that all attachments end in sufferings…"

She sounded depressed and she took our conversation to release her pressure and stress. According to her, her life has no meaning and she is not impressed about the luxuries she has. She is frustrated about her life. She emphasized the fact that material things or financial stability is not what people need to be happy but the presence of their loved ones.

"I don't need to do a job. I have good income to live… but if I stayed too long for this house I will get mad….. even my neighbors and other teachers say that my husband went abroad because I was having another affairs… that is the nature of people… they always try to let other people down.."

She further explained that her job is a method for her to release her stress otherwise she had to live inside the house whole day. Many people have tried to let her down, talking behind her back. It was obvious that she was in a heavy mental pain. When she started talking, she never stopped for a second. It was a great relief for her to have someone to talk. This finding supports the argument of (Nangia & Roy, 2013) which states that for economic gains, left-behind wives of migrants pay a heavy price as their physical and mental well-being is seriously undermined by the migration of their husbands. So in this case it is clear that there's a significant negative social impact over male migration on families left-behind.

As findings reveal, that male migration results in both positive and negative outcomes. It is impossible to conclude that the effects of international male-out migration are only positive or negative, social impact is greater than economic benefits, or economic benefits are greater than social costs since the study has found mixed results of positive impacts, as well as negative, social impacts Based on the above findings following model can be developed.



Source: Author's work on the available literature

Figure 1: Proposed model

Most of the respondents stated that the reason for their husband's migration is economic in nature. So economic factors can be derived as a main theme in analyzing the factors affecting for migration. Under that, buying a house, provide better education for children, treating child's illness, unavailability of proper job and higher demand and better opportunities can be seen as sub categories. Not only the economic reasons, some respondents reported non-economic reasons that triggered the migration of their husbands but desire to migrate, parents' coercion to migrate, higher studies and unhappy married life can be identified non-economic sub themes that triggered the male migration. Also under the main objectives of research it is important to understand the impacts to the left-behind family when husband/father migrates to another country. These impacts can be broadly categorized into economic and social impacts. Under social impacts, respondents stated about the impact to their child's behavior, children's educational achievements, stress and increased responsibilities and autonomy in decision making. So several sub topics are derived under social impact to left behind families.

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IX. Conclusion

Male-out migration's social impact is significant as it is given a less importance in the existing literature. It is impossible to conclude that the effects of international male-out migration are only positive or negative, social impact is greater than economic benefits, or economic benefits are greater than social costs since the study has found mixed results of positive impacts, as well as negative, social and economic impacts. Male-out migration has resulted an increase in the decision-making power of women in both financial and household affairs as a result of their husbands' migration. Increasing the decision-making power in financial activities is more important than in household activities. Before migration they were not active in dealing with people and problems faced. But migration of their husbands has made them strong to face problems on their own. This has been also mentioned in the existing literature that migration of men is an opportunity for women to take on new tasks and learn new skills that can transform gender relations and improve women's status and empowerment which helps to further understand how and why women's mobility is associated with empowerment (Petrzelka, Schmook, & Radel, 2012). With the migration of their husbands, many left behind wives have to take increased responsibilities and when a woman is staying alone with kids people try to take advantage of it. So, people in the society try to mislead women when their husbands are away. These findings supports the argument that, left behind wives of migrants have a greater chance of having stress and reporting symptoms of reproductive morbidity (Nangia & Roy, 2013). Also, this clearly indicates the negative social impact over left-behind wives because they are feeling insecure as they believe society is not safe and it makes them further stressed and terrified which impact negatively to their mental well-being. Also, many respondents stated that they are stressed about the responsibilities that they have to take and they get confused and terrified with the problems affecting to their children.

Many respondents commented on the impact to children from the displacement of their dad. But most of them stated that they didn't notice a significant difference in the behavior of children. Children have adopted to the change with time, mainly because their mother or their care takers have taken a good care of children. This finding supports the argument raised by (Asis, 2007), which emphasizes that, Child's well-being is not seriously weaken by the departure of one or two parents to another country suggests the capacity of that particular family to adjust for the change and the credit should be given to the parent who stays with children or the care-taker for voiding that gap. There's a significant improvement in the well-being of left-behind children in their education and health but in some cases, respondents expressed contradictions to the previous argument as they mentioned there's a significant behavioral change in their children and they miss their fathers a lot. This was found in the cases where dads are more attached to children. As Khan mentioned in his research, father's role is really important in children's life. From childhood to early adolescence father will be the guide for children and his presence make children mentally strong (Khan, 2017). So it is obvious that there's a significant impact for children from the absence of father which supports the argument which says, children with migrant parents likely to be unhappy than the children living with both parents (Gao et al., 2010).

Also, some studies revealed that the children of migrants have reported poor performance as they are lonely and not given enough care (Yeoh & Lam, 2006). But surprisingly findings provide evidence that in some cases children have taken the displacement of their dad, positively as a motivation to complete their studies well. All in all, it was obvious that left- behind families have gained positively in economic terms but they are not happy about their lives as they have to stay away from their husbands.

This research analyses the economic and social impacts to left behind families and a model is presented for further research purposes. As the practical contribution, the model can be used as a foundation to understand the male-out migration impacts to left-behind families and it facilitate further research in quantitative approach. Policy makers can use the findings of this research to take effective policy decisions on labour force and to implement several other social programs to assist and help lives of left behind families. Also, several programmes as stated in recommendations can be taken into action to support let-behind families to enhance the quality of life.

This thesis has produced a wealth of information for a deeper understanding of the impacts of migration of men into the families and children left behind. However, there are limitations that limit a comprehensive analysis of some aspects of the study. The impacts of migration of fathers to children may vary according to the age of children. When considering changes in child behavior, it was found important to analyze changes in behavior by age. Moreover, the size of the small sample and the process of selecting respondents via personal networks instead of using a sample framework are not allowed to generalize results in the general population of migrants. Also social impacts mainly deal with emotional content and personal feelings of respondents so they were reluctant to expose their true problems which limited further analysis of the problem. This study has collected data from male migrant families. When analyzing data on migration impacts it was found necessary to compare results with non-migrant families with similar socio-

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economic levels. Cost and time factors prevented the collection of data from these control groups. This has seriously limited a comparative analysis of male migrant families with the control groups, as well as making strong conclusions about the impacts of migration and child wellbeing.

The model presented in the research can be further verified using quantitative approaches and there's a need to conduct more studies in the area with increased sample sizes. Also the findings obtained from migrant families need to be compared with non-migrant families to take a better picture about the impacts on the left-behind families. Different demographic profiles need to be tested in order to verify the findings of this research.

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