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Abstract- Labour migration is a pervasive feature of economic development. People mobility for temporary or permanent labour purposes is a routine part of agricultural and industrial activity. There are very significant migration flows in some developing areas, with considerable impacts on individuals, households and regions at origin. Despite the growing debate about motivations and impacts of recent migration flows, costs and returns of this global phenomenon are still unclear and remain far outside the public policy realm. This is true especially with respect to migration of people from rural areas of developing countries. The purpose of this paper is to review key issues relating to rural labour migration and its links to economic development at origin. What is the impact of migration, both personal and social, on rural and socio-economic development in source regions. The study indicates that maximum rural labourers migrated with their family member during the period of peak seasons. The study revealed that poverty (90.2%), unemployment (89.2%) and landlessness (44%) were observed as major causes of rural labour migration.

Keywords: labour migration, rural population, unemployment, lifestyle.

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Impacts of Rural Labour Migration of South Bengal: A Case Study of Bankura and Purulia Districts of West Bengal, India

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Abstract- Labour migration is a pervasive feature of economic development. People mobility for temporary or permanent labour purposes is a routine part of agricultural and industrial activity. There are very significant migration flows in some developing areas, with considerable impacts on individuals, households and regions at origin. Despite the growing debate about motivations and impacts of recent migration flows, costs and returns of this global phenomenon are still unclear and remain far outside the public policy realm. This is true especially with respect to migration of people from rural areas of developing countries. The purpose of this paper is to review key issues relating to rural labour migration and its links to economic development at origin. What is the impact of migration, both personal and social, on rural and socio-economic development in source regions. The study indicates that maximum rural labourers migrated with their family member during the period of peak seasons. The study revealed that poverty (90.2%), unemployment (89.2%) and landlessness (44%) were observed as major causes of rural labour migration. The results also indicate that migration is prevalent, and is a source of support for households to supplement their livelihood. The majority of migrants moved away from home to look for a better income and employment opportunities at the destination place. Remittances form a significant proportion of the total rural household income, surpassed only by salary and wage earnings. Even though the amounts of remittances and their uses are extremely varied within and between the studied areas with compare to rural non-migrants, they provide one of the important means through, which migrants maintain close links with the households left behind, and contribute significantly to the livelihood of a large proportion of the rural population. In South Bengal it is found that labour migration is more relevant in terms of economic, social, personal and household enhancement compared to non-migrant dwellers.

Keywords: labour migration, rural population, unemployment, lifestyle.

I. INTRODUCTION

Migration is the movement of a person or a group of people, to settle in another place often across a political or administrative boundary. It is the process of shifting from a place of residence to

another place for some length of time or permanently including different types of voluntary movements. It has great impact on economic, social, cultural and psychological life of people, both at place of emigration as well as of migration (Kaur, 2003). In India the labour migration is mostly influenced by social structures and pattern of development. Uneven development is the main reason of migration along with factors like poverty, landholding system, and fragmentations of land, lack of employment opportunities, large family-size and natural calamities. The high-land man ratio, caste system, lawlessness and exploitation at native place speed up the breakdown of traditional socio-economic relations in the rural areas and people decide to migrate to relatively prosperous areas in search of better employment and income. Diversification of economy and increased land productivity in certain areas, rapid improvement in transport and communication means, improvement in education, increase in population pressure and zeal for improving living added momentum to the mobility of population in India (Roy, 2011).

Migration is the barometer of changing socio-economic and political conditions at the national and international levels. It is also a sign of wide disparities in economic and social conditions between the origin and destination. It is generally believed that the globalization processes all over the world has accelerated the migration tend in search of survival, fulfillment and a better life for themselves and their families (Gupta, 1991). Rural migration is the phenomena that describe the movement of people from their villages to urban areas, usually in search of a better livelihood (Roy, 2011). In India there are a vast numbers of partially employed workers in rural sector, internal mobility is critical to the livelihood of many people, especially for people from rural areas who generate a continuous stream of out migrants destined for cities. Migration is not merely a reallocation of human resources but is a process which has three fold impact: a) on the area experiencing in-migration b) on the area experiencing out-migration, and c) on the migrants themselves (Tiwari, 2009).

Bankura and Purulia districts are the agro-ecological zones of West Bengal, India, that regularly

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witness of rural out-migration. Labours of Agriculture, Construction, Manufacturing, Mining and Quarrying are mainly migratory, moving in search of occupation throughout the whole year. This movement has some time helped labourers to get the benefits of growth of development. They mainly migrate to Burdwan, Hooghly, Medinipur, Asansol, Kolkata and also to Jharkhand due to diversification of economy and increased land productivity in certain areas, rapid improvement in transport and communication. As sufficient local labours were not available, economic activities of these regions had to depend on the migratory labour for various operations, especially during peak seasons. Thus labour migration is still largely a survival or a subsistence strategy of rural West Bengal.

II. OBJECTIVES

In above context, the present study has identified the major constraints faced by the migratory labour at their native place which leads to migration and the impact thereof on income and employment pattern of migrants. The proposed study is designed with the following objectives:

- To examine the socio-economic profile of migrants and non-migrant households in the study area.
- To understand the causes and nature of rural labour migration of the study area.
- To assess the impact of migration on the migrant households.

III. METHODOLOGY

Two blocks from Bankura (Ranibandh and Raipur) and another two blocks from Purulia district (Manbajar-1 and Bandwan) have been selected because of maximum rural out-migration is found at these four blocks. Fifteen villages from those selected

blocks are chosen by following stratified random sampling. The survey was done by following questionnaire method along with few Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) with the adivasi intellectuals at the place of origin of migrants. The study was conducted by the selection of respondents from each selected village as a representative sample of 10 migrant and 10 non-migrant respondents which were selected randomly. The total sample size is 300 which were analyzed by the help of SPSS and MS Excel software. In addition, the Chi-square analytical technique was used to test the variations observed in the effects of labour migration in the study areas. Here any household if a person remains out of station for at least one year he/she is considered to be a respondent. All respondent migrants were classified into two groups, viz. short-term migrants and long-term migrants. Migration during peak agricultural or economic season being a common feature in the study area, all persons who migrates only during peak periods and return to their native places within the same year or after one year, were considered as short-term migrants. Persons working permanently with on a yearly contract or year after- year contract (more than two years) and visit their native place occasionally for a few days, were considered as long-term migrants. Thus, the sample was comprised of 75 long-term and 75 short-term migrants.

IV. RESULTS

The results of the study have been discussed under various subheads:

a) Socio-economic Profile of Respondents

The distribution of the respondents according to their socio-economic background is heterogeneous in nature by increasing in labour migration.

Table1: Comparative distribution of migrants and non-migrants according to their socio-economic background

Variables		Migrant	Non-migrant
Age (years)	<20	30.8	22.6
	21-40	60.9	68.0
	>40	8.3	9.4
Caste	General	56.2	53.1
	SC	16.4	40.6
	ST & other	27.4	6.3
Religion	Hindu	85.9	86.9
	Muslim	14.1	13.1
Education	Illiterate	36.0	25.6
	Primary	47.1	58.1
	Secondary	15.5	10.0
	Highersecondary	1.4	6.3
	& above		

Monthly Income	<2000	11.0	6.2
	2000-5000	15.1	38.1
	5000-10000	65.8	52.5
	>10000	8.2	3.1
Socio-economic status	BPL	93.3	84.0
	APL	6.7	16.0
Amount of land	No land	44.0	6.0
	1 to 50 Decimal	20.0	26.0
	51 to 100Decimal	24.7	38.0
	Above 100 Decimal	11.3	30.0
N		150	150

According to the socio-economic profile (Table 1) of the respondents, 60.9 percent of the migrants and 68 percent of the non-migrants were in the age group of 21-40 years, while 30.2 percent and 22.6 percent were in the age group of below 20 years, respectively. Thus, the number of migrants was more in 21-40 years age group because it is the preferred age-segment by employers because laborers in this group can undertake agricultural and other economic operations. Also, this age group has to shoulder majority of the social and domestic responsibilities. The majority of the respondents were of general caste category in both migrants and non-migrants. It was because of the social stigma attached with working as a labourer that they do not work as labourers at their native place but accept it at other place. As far as the religion of the migrants and non-migrants was concerned, nearly 86 percent of the respondents belonged to the Hindu religion, while rests were Muslims. The educational level of migrants was an important factor which gave impetus to migration, as revealed by the study. Among migrant labourer, 36.0 percent were illiterate, 47.1 percent had studied up to the primary level, 15.5 percent up to secondary standard and only 1.4 percent up to higher level. On the other hand, there were 25.6 percent illiterates among non-migrants, while rests were literate. It is the low income in the native place which induces migration to the areas of better livelihood opportunities. In the present study, the

monthly income of 65.8 percent migrants was in the range of Rs. 5000-10000 while among non-migrants, 52.2 percent were earning income in the same range. The result shows that migrant labourers had quite better income than non-migrants. In the study area BPL listed families are of 93.3 percent among migrants and 84.0 percent among non-migrants. The amount of land of the migrant respondents is low in respect to non-migrants. Near about 44.0 percent migrants have no land for cultivation or other uses. But the people who do not migrate, posses at least a little land from which they lead their livelihood. So, they have less interest for migration.

b) Characteristics of Migrants

Table 2 shows the migration related characteristics of rural labour. About half of the sample respondents (50%) considered that they got the beneficial information about migration from their friends and relatives. It was also observed that family member are the major informer (62.5%) for long-term migrants where as friends and relatives are for the short-term migrants (51.2%). It is also noticed that 64.7 percent household are experienced up to two migrant members belonging their family. In case of short-term migration, 29.4 percent households had more than three migrant family members, whereas the figure was much lower for the households of long-term migration (6.7%).

Table 2: Percentage distribution of labour migrants according to their characteristics

Variables		Long-term migration	Short-term migration	Total migration
Informer*	Friends or Relatives	34.8	51.2	50.0
	Family member	62.5	29.5	47.3
	Neighbourers	38.6	27.8	32.7
No. of migrants from the household	Up to 2	84.0	45.3	64.7
	3 members	9.3	25.3	17.3
	> 3 members	6.7	29.4	18.0
Type of work*	Agricultural Labour	78.7	86.5	84.7
	Garden Labour	14.8	28.3	22.7
	Factory and other	38.1	43.4	42.6

	Burdwan District	54.2	45.6	41.3
Destination Place*	Hooghly District	48.1	43.7	48.0
	Other	11.5	17.8	10.7
N		75	75	150

*Multiple Response

The work performance of migrant labourers at destination places is quite interesting. About 84.7 percent are engaged as agricultural labour besides gardening (22.7%) and factory work (42.6%). Therefore, at the study area maximum migrant labourers mainly go for work in agricultural field. The places of destination of the migrant labourers inducing migration at Hooghly (48%) and Burdwan (41.3%) where a little trend towards other places (10.7%). Short-term migration is more concentrated at other places (17.8%) than long-term migration.

The distribution of first migration of labour migrants has been shown in Figure 1 which is displaying

the year when migrants have migrated. The results focused that major migrants started their first migration for work in 1996-1999 (56%). Prior to 1995, only 24 percent rural people started to migrate as labourer. After 1999, the trend of labour migration has started to reduce. It is clear from the figure that after 2003, very few rural people (1.3%) does started to set out from their place of origin for work purpose. Therefore, it is revealed that major labour migrants are working as labour since before 1999.

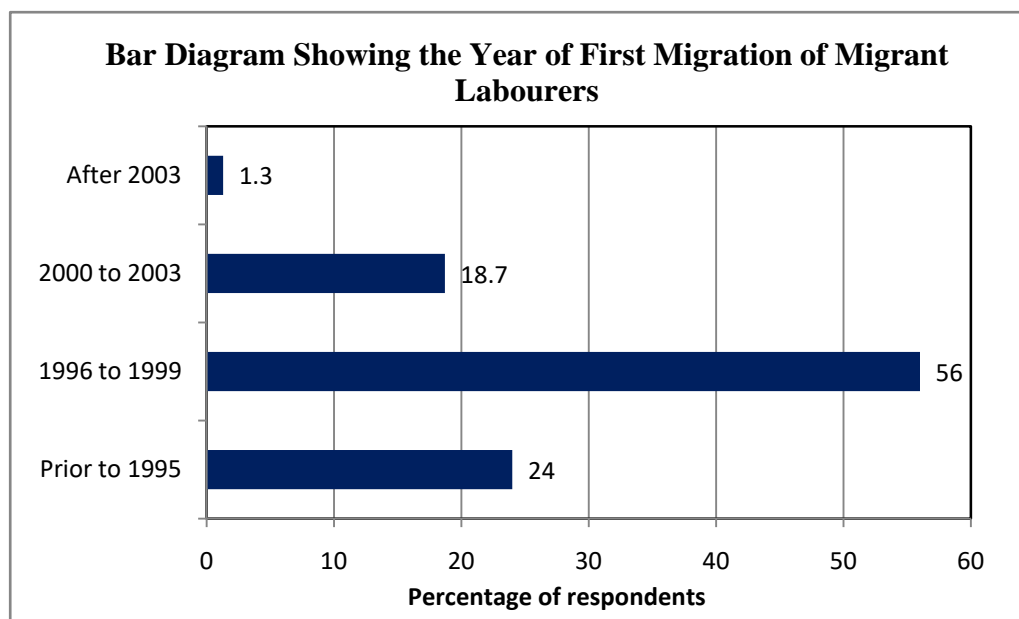


Figure 1: Year of first migration of migrant labourers

c) Factors Leading to Migration

Different economic, social and psychological factors which lead to migration have been depicted in Table 3. The rural people migrate in order to attain a better economic status in life. It was observed that unemployment at the native place was the major economic factor which contributed to the migration of 89.2 percent migrants. Besides, small land holding (52.9%), landlessness (44.0%), low wages (42.5%), crop failure (29.4%) and indebtedness (20.7%), were other economic reasons which led to migration. Therefore, unemployment accompanied by poverty was the major reasons of migration as revealed by the sample respondents. Social factors are more pronounced than economic and thereby induce migration tendency

among people. Poverty (90.2%) and less civic amenities (83.8%) were reported as the major social reasons behind migration. Political intimidation (3.7%) was the social factors leading to long-term migration by some of the respondents (3.0%). The psychological factors inducing migration were leading a poor life (98.3%), high aspirations (79.8%) and demonstration effect (52.5%). Similar trends were seen for both long-term and short-term migrations.

Table 3: Factors associated with labour migration (Multiple response in percentage)

Factors	Long-term migration	Short-term migration	Total migration
Economic			
Landlessness	47.8	37.1	44.0
Small land holding	39.5	63.8	52.9
Crop failure	19.6	29.2	29.4
Low wages	24.3	48.0	42.5
Unemployed	83.5	96.8	89.2
Indebtedness	16.3	24.7	20.7
Social			
Less civic amenities	80.7	83.3	83.8
Poverty	92.2	88.6	90.2
Political intimidation	3.0	5.4	3.7
Psychological			
High aspirations	66.8	73.6	79.8
Poor life	98.7	89.4	98.3
Demonstration effects	49.0	53.8	52.5
N	75	75	150

d) Change in lifestyle of Migrants after Migration

There was a considerable change in the employment status and consequently lifestyle of the respondents after migration (Table 4). The study has revealed that short-term migrants brought their earnings

to their native places personally, whereas long-term migrants used postal money orders either monthly or quarterly for sending remittances to their families at native places.

Table 4: Change in lifestyle since last ten years of migrants and non-migrants (Multiple response in percentage)

Variables	Migrants	Non-migrants	χ^2 value	p value
Economic change				
Life Insurance Policy	17.6	12.0	8.918	0.063
Health Insurance	38.5	11.4	2.935	0.829
ATM card	49.2	11.5	9.421	0.046*
Loan	1.8	38.0	3.803	0.033*
Bank Account	73.0	46.2	0.046	0.018*
Increase of income	76.8	28.5	0.104	0.008*
Increase expenditure	80.3	67.6	7.812	0.031*
Social change				
Increase civic amenities	60.7	53.1	3.814	0.022*
Social satisfaction	72.2	28.0	2.293	0.031*
Health checkup	18.0	16.7	3.703	0.071
Personal change				
Decrease tension	46.5	32.9	9.812	0.052
Alcohol consumption	58.9	49.7	1.343	0.025*
Tobacco consumption	39.0	43.5	2.518	0.082
Household change				
Increase house maintenances	73.8	67.4	0.431	0.019*
Increase standard of living	60.2	58.6	3.802	0.081
Increase responsibility	49.5	45.7	0.912	0.293
Increase of food choice	62.4	41.5	1.353	0.027*
N	150	150		

*Significant at 0.05 level of significance

The views of migrants and non-migrants were recorded to study the migration scenario in depth. Table 4 was designed to find out the perception and changes about life style of migrant and non-migrant since last ten years. The result reveals that there is a distinct positive relationship between socio-economic changes and migration scenario ($p < 0.05$). Regarding economic changes of the respondents, 76.8 percent labour migrants revealed that due to their migration, there was increase in income, while only 28.5 percent non-migrants opined the same due to other causes. Regarding expenditure scenario of the respondents, 80.3 percent migrants reported an increasing trend, while 67.6 percent non-migrants considered the same without any migration effects. As holding of ATM card and Bank Account, the percentage of migrants is comparatively high than non-migrants with a value of 49.2 percent and 73 percent respectively. Other economic benefits like life insurance policy and health insurance are also in a greater percentage for migrants but have no statistically significant relationship ($p > 0.05$). But, it has been noted that the migrants who through their occupations and association with people outside the community have acquired consciousness about life insurance and health insurance. In this instance, 17.6 percent of the migrants have life insurance policies where 38.5 percent possess health insurance. In case of drawing Loan, migrants, as they are poverty-stricken, are not attached to taking any kind of loan except a little proportion (1.8%) whereas, the non-migrants (38.0%) draw loans for the purpose of permanent agriculture. As far as social change was concerned, 72.2 percent of the migrant labourers have social satisfaction; whereas the figure was only 28.0 percent for the non-migrants in the studied areas. On the other hand, among the migrants, 60.7 percent possessed an increasing trend of pursuing civic amenities more than non-migrants (53.1%); but the figure was only 18 percent for their health checkup. The difference, however, was not so much in case of personal changes; but there also non-migrants were in a higher position related to tobacco consumption (43.5%). However the share of alcohol consumption among the respective sample was more in migrants (58.9%) than non-migrant (49.7%). Regarding the pattern of household change differential migrant labourer in South Bengal were found to be slightly better beneficiary; increase of house maintenance (73.8%) is considered to have a lot of bearing on the life of every migrant household. Through the financial improvement of the labour migrant, maintenances of house and food choice have positively changed. So, it may be analysed that due to migration the migrants (62.4%) become richer in comparison to non-migrant (41.5%) in better food consumption. Increase of standard of living (60.2%) and household responsibility (49.5%) were reported as the other changes due to migration benefits.

The overall socio-economic changes since last ten years signify that migration is one of the leading determinants of rural lifestyle choice, which may be because it is closely associated with the completion of their labour migration. So, it is considered to have a beneficial impact on lifestyle of migrant respondents.

V. DISCUSSION

a) *Impacts on left-behind women*

In most cases the female members also accompany the male members. In such incident looking after the male members and doing cooking arrangement become easier. The women members are also equally competent in job. So they also work equally with the male labourers. But the women of the families, who do not go with the male members to work for some reason, mainly attend the household works. They tend the cattle, collect fire-wood, look after the children. But the women, who accompany the male members, also work in harvesting and threshing paddy, sowing potato-shoot, carrying paddy bundle etc. Yet those who stay at home feel lack of security in the absence of the male members.

b) *Impacts on elderly/aged persons*

In most household one or two aged members are found. These old members of the family face problem when their sons, daughter-in-laws and other members shift elsewhere for job engagement. Due to their old-age they neither can work nor do they have any adult with them to take care. The grandsons and grand-daughters, in that situation stay with the grand-fathers and grand-mothers in the residence. If the aged ones are physically active, in that case, rather they look after the children at home. Most of the aged members desire that other young members get jobs within adjacent areas to their habitat. They do not wish that the young members get job in distant places because they feel their absence. It has mainly two reasons- a) If they live together the young ones may look after them and b) During ailment the young ones may get opportunity to take care. There are many such villages in the study area where all the young members set out in search of job in the eastern part of the state leaving the aged ones at home. In this position the aged members face trouble. They feel it safe to attend job close to their dwelling places so that the other members may arrange for treatment in their sickness and may look after them. They feel lonely and deserted in the absence of the young members of the family. But the non-migrant community has no such problem.

c) *Impacts on Health of Children*

Children below poverty line or of insolvent family are helpless to go to private nursing home or clinic due to shortage of funds and they visit either local quack or doctor or Health Centre or Govt. hospital. Those who are

non-migrant or financially a bit well may visit a registered medical practitioner or district hospital. Child health care is not neglected by parents although there are no major threats of chronic disease to the child affecting them with cough and cold, fever, dysentery etc. No major diseases are found of the children at the study area, so the guardians spend little money Rs. 150-200/- per month to their children.

d) *Impacts on children's education*

Those paid wagger of Junglemahal go to the east side i.e. Hooghly, Burdwan from Bankura, Purulia and West Medinipur etc. every year in November and return within February. Therefore, their wards cannot go to school as they have to go with their parents. Naturally criminal offence takes place in the name of child labour. The most vital factor is that these children remain illiterate and uneducated because examination is conducted in schools of Junglemahal by that time. Even if some children of upper age remain at home cannot sit for the exams as they remain busy in pasteurization, cooking and other works. So the ratio of illiteracy rises up in these areas.

e) *Drop-out due to Seasonal Migration*

Seasonal migration causes a strange kind of drop-out, which is not captured by conventional ways of looking at the problem. It is possible for these children to be enrolled in schools and to attend for the first few months of the school session (i.e. July to October), but to them drop out for the remaining months to accompany their parents to migration sites. By the time they return the following April to May, the school session is already over. Thus these children have the strange, Predicament of having their names on school registers, but dropping out for part of the year. Over time, the learning deficit this causes gradually leads them to drop out of school completely.

f) *Impacts on expenditure pattern*

The money that earned by the migrants through the year is mostly spent for victuals. Their monthly expense for victuals is Rs.1000-2000, for medical purpose is Rs 200-300, for transportation Rs.200-300. One time up or down fair is provided by the employer. Expenditure for building-maintenance is as it were nil, almost Rs.200. As in the study area, almost all the villages have electricity facility, they have to pay electric bill monthly Rs.200 in average. No water bill is charged upon them. Those who use Mobile phone spend monthly Rs.100 to 150. No expenditure for fuel purpose as all of them collect fire-wood from adjacent forest and very few families use LPG. On the other hand their expense for smoking, consuming alcohol or pan Gutkha is Rs. 100-150. Most of the tribes are addicted to alcohol yet, in the survey, it has been noticed that a great number of people are addicted to intoxication. For clothing purpose also they spend Rs.200-300. Besides, expenditure of Rs. 200 for education purpose of children

is also there. That is to say, their average expenditure per month is Rs.2000 that they pay with the money they earn from attending jobs migrating to the eastern region of Bengal. Certain labourers earn Rs 10000 to 12000 approximately per head in 2-3 months periodic job.

The effects of out-migration of rural labourers on economic welfare in sending areas depend critically on how emigration affects the local capital-labour ratio among non migrants – that is, on the distributional effects of migration. Moreover, an important concern of the literature on migration is that the poorest are often found the major beneficiaries of remittances, at least directly. This is due to the inability to finance expensive moves, such as those overseas or those requiring some degree of education, but also to the largely recognised 'exchange motive' of remittances (to protect an inheritance, to insure property, or to repay educations costs) which make larger remittances flowing to better-off families. Thus, the impact of labour migration and remittances on income distribution in source regions remains a matter of interest in the literature but also of some dispute.

VI. CONCLUSION

Migration impact on labour-market at origin has been identified as a major knowledge gap in the migration literature (Lucas 2005). Indeed, people out-flows entail reduced labour supply of rural areas and, given migration selectivity, a loss of working age adults (both male and female). This may be a cost in origin place for most families who depend largely upon labour income for their livelihood, and more in general for the whole economy in terms of employment and wage responses. If migration tightens or loosens domestic labour markets is an open question along with the concern about the distribution of potential wage swells between skilled and unskilled, urban or rural labourers. Moreover, the impact of rural out-migration on source economies depends on the how integrated are internal and international labour market, local production markets and international trade (Lucas, 2005). Mass departure of agricultural labourers from one region may induce movement to or from neighbouring areas. Moreover, adjustments in agricultural production patterns induced by migration depend on the degree of openness of the economy to international trade. The information derived from further studies on these cross-market effects can be used to identify appropriate complementary interventions. Yet, this same process could reduce the supply response of local economies to policy changes (as market liberalization unfolds) and lead to an impoverishment process in rural regions. Moreover, if this confidence is not balanced by domestic governments' efforts to facilitate remittance investments and to create complementary policy interventions, especially in the agricultural rural sector, migration may entail a net loss for source regions.

Migration is a complex phenomenon and given the new challenges posed by a 'globalised' and rapidly changing world, drawing lessons from the mass migration of the past century is not an easy task either. One lesson we can draw from the existing migration literature is that a major feature of the current 'mass migration' process - besides the creation of high barriers to it - is its strong linkage to regions of origin. Migrants seem to belong to spatially extended families and communities and they play a crucial role in helping or hindering the social and economic development in their home regions. This motivates further research aiming at a better understanding of the migration-development nexus, both when migrants intend to go back home and when they deepen their integration in the host country.

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Conflict of Interest

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