

Gender Discrimination and Wellbeing in Family Sphere Due to Male Migration and Remittances: A Study of Doaba Region of Punjab

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Abstract : A central characteristic of people is their apparent movement from one station to other for their sustenance. Human migration has become one of the most challenging issues faced by the world today. Migration represents an important dimension in world-wide setting; and remittances received by families constitute a major agent in integrating societies in the all over the world, both economically and socially. This paper is an attempt to explore the impact of male migration and remittances upon the family system. This paper brings out how the women play the role of head of the household and take all the economic decisions, but still faces discrimination in the family, that bring loneliness and emotional breakdown on their personal front. For the purpose of this study, data was collected using 30 interviews and 10 case studies in the Doaba region of Punjab. The respondents were classified into two age groups 20-35 years and above 40 years aged women whose husbands migrated abroad. The findings of this study revealed that even though the women were taking some of the economic decisions, but in majority of the cases the patriarchal structure still existed and power remained in the hands of their husbands or in-laws. It was found that women of different age groups reported differently in terms of authority that they have regarding remittances and its consequences in their emotional well-being. The distinction related to their participation in public and private spheres still exists and public spheres are mostly dominated by male members of the family. It can be concluded that freedom of women to take decision on their own is still restricted and they are subjugated to follow their husband or in-law's opinion in matters related to both public and private spheres. However, old age group women enjoyed more independence and freedom to take decision in comparison to young age women. Loneliness and depression were more common in the young age respondent's group than in old age women.

Keywords : gender discrimination, migration, patriarchal structure, remittances

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