Labour Migration: Psychological and Socio-cultural Impacts

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Introduction
Migration can increase the risk for family breakdown and fragmentation of social networks which has direct impact on psychosocial well-being of both migrant workers and their families. Total of 27,23,587 people are recorded for labor migration in Nepal during the period of 2008/9 to 2014/15 with 85 percent in Gulf Cooperation Councils (GCCs) and Malaysia (ADB, 2016).

Anxiety, depression, psychosis, suicidality and other health risks are suffered by Nepali migrants in abroad (Adhikary et al., 2012; MoLE, 2016).

Objectives
To explore psychological and socio-cultural impact of issues faced by migrant workers and their families

Method
Study Areas
The study was conducted in 4 districts: Dhanusa, Makawanpur, Sindhupalchok, Kathmandu

Study Design
The study used a mixed method study design incorporating qualitative, quantitative and participatory research strategies to examine the experiences of female workers post migration.

Sample Size
In total, 57 respondents were recruited for the study: 31 female and 26 male respondents.

Data analysis
All data and field notes transcribed and translated into English. NVivo was used and a thematic analysis was done.

Results
Issues faced by migrant workers during departure
Lack of proper guidelines and orientation on proper/safe methods of departure
Illiteracy and language Barrier

Support systems available
Medical Insurances, Nepal Government Compensation/ Scholarships, Embassies

No Mental Health Psychosocial Support Services was reported while in foreign land

Impacts due to issues faced at different stages:

Issues faced in different phases
Pre-Departure
- Dependent to others
- Negligence in documentation

During Departure
- Lack of proper guidance
- Illiteracy and language barrier

Post Departure
- Expectation vs reality
- Cultural and environmental adjustment
- Abuse and Exploitation

Back to Homeland
- Suspicioussness
- Gender disparity

Psychological Impact
- Gender disparity
- Female humiliations
- Worry Anxiety

Socio-cultural Impact
- Gender disparity
- Female humiliations
- Religious Festivals, Culture Customs

Recommendations
Pre-Departure
Safer Migration Program, awareness and sensitization

Post-Departure
Psychosocial interventions to survivors of irregular migration, sexual and gender based violence and others

Homeland
Community based MHPSS should be ensured at various levels. Such as health promotion and specific protection, diagnosis and treatment, rehabilitation

Conclusion
Despite being a good source of remittances, it is difficult to conclude whether the benefits of labor migration outweigh the socio-cultural and psychological impacts faced by migrant workers and family members

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