

Research Paper :

Causes of migration of Indian children to other countries

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ABSTRACT

The research work was undertaken with the objective to study the causes of migration of Indian children to other countries and most preferred country of migration. The sample of 200 parents were drawn from 150 families for which, 28 villages were covered to finalize the sample. The samples were equally divided according to the age range of respondents such as 65-75 years and 75-85 years. It was observed that preferred countries of migration of children were Canada followed by United States Of America and United Arab Emirates. Main reasons for migration were marriage base followed by better work culture and good quality of life there.

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Migration means the movement of people from one place to another. In modern times, with the ever-increasing flow of young Indians to foreign land, the society is experiencing a new influx of global style of life. The Indian families are going through transition period. However, this has turned into an emotional problem for many of parents. While admiring children's achievement abroad, parents also feel the painful separation at the aging stage during the initial period. Because of a keen desire not to deny their children the best of education and career opportunities more and more parents had to stretch their resources beyond comfort. In the interest of a bright future for their children, many parents happily sacrifice their own personal pleasures and aspirations. The Indian children have generally excelled in foreign lands both educationally and professionally. This has often meant that the families have felt deprived of a source of emotional and some times even of financial support. On the national level, the country has suffered from the brain drain.

On this front, however, the current thinking has changed substantially. During the initial period of their separation, both parents and children live on the hope of reuniting in the foreseeable future after education is completed and some professional experience is gained. However, as young boys and girls gain more confidence, develop independent thinking and come to face with new opportunities, many of them decide to stay back to explore new horizons. This often marks the beginning of new

problems for many families as the working children engage in developing their career, leave home problems and busy in raising their own families and therefore can't visit their parents as often as they may like to. The aging parents, sensing lack of emotional support, begin to worry about their sun-set years. Many children advise their parents to immigrate permanently. However, for various reasons, it is difficult for most of the parents to accept this proposal. Thus, the initial gap - a geographical one - now converts into a wide emotional gap as well. While the world's moving fast and furiously, taking people way beyond their home towns and countries, to explore new horizons, there's someone back home whose world has shrunk: the senior citizens.

Hank (2007) revealed that even when micro level factors are controlled for the Mediterranean, people continue to exhibit closer family relations than their northern counter parts. When looking at the contemporary European picture as a whole, author found no indication for a decline of inter- generational relations. Chakrabarti (2008) revealed that ageing for many a rural woman is neither a curse nor a blessing. It hardly frightens them, for some women earnestly desire to undertake role reversal. They are not a liability to the family but certainly a human assets who also help ushering social change.

In today's global village concept, the youth has forgotten their culture and legacy. They are following their western counterparts after attaining a suitable position in

the society. The most beautiful aspect of Indian culture is its joint family system which is now deteriorating. In the joint family system, the parents, children and spouses of the children resided together under a single roof. Majority of the aged living with families were satisfied with various types of needs (Bakhshi *et al.*, 2002). It can be concluded that globalization and westernization have weakened the joint family system and encourage the migration of youth to cities or overseas which had brought about problems to elderly which were unheard in the past. The objectives are as follows: to study the causes of migration of Indian children to other countries and to examine the most preferred country of migration for Indian children.

EXPERIMENTAL PROCEDURE

The present study was conducted on aged parents of Non-Resident Indian Children residing in rural areas of *Jagraon* subdivision of Punjab. There are 88 villages under *Jagraon* subdivision. For selection of sample, parents of Non-Resident Indian Children were contacted through snow ball method. The sample of 200 parents were drawn from 150 families for which, 28 villages were covered to finalize the sample. The samples were equally divided according to the age range of respondents such

as 65-75 years and 75-85 years. Under each age category, 100 respondents were taken, which were then divided into two categories *i.e.* single parent family category (50) and two parent family category (50). Further, the sample for the single parent family constituted 25 fathers and 25 mothers in both age groups; similarly the samples were equally distributed over both sexes in the category of two parent family as 25 fathers and 25 mothers.

Note: An Indian citizen who stays abroad for employment/carrying on business or vocation outside India or stays abroad under circumstances indicating an intention for an uncertain duration of stay abroad is a non-resident (NRI).

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The basic unit of society *i.e.* the family did receive the major impact of commercialization, modernization, urbanization and westernization. It has broken away from joint family structure to the nuclear one. In India, urbanization and industrialization have brought about major changes in the social structure. The centuries-old joint family system disintegrated, and with it collapsed the safety net of parents and grandparents. Many young Indians have moved to foreign countries for work,

Table 1: Per cent distribution of NRI children as per the country of their migration

Sr. No.	Name of the country	Age						Total
		65-75 years			75-85 years			
		Single parent family	Two parent family		Single parent family	Two parent family		
	Father	Mother	Both Parents	Father	Mother	Both parents		
1.	Australia	3(12.00)	1(4.00)	8(32.00)	2(8.00)	1(4.00)	2(8.00)	17(6.75)
2.	Canada	10(40.00)	13(52.00)	18(72.00)	8(32.00)	12(48.00)	16(64.00)	77(30.56)
3.	China	1(4.00)	0(0.00)	2(8.00)	3(12.00)	2(8.00)	2(8.00)	10(3.97)
4.	Greece	0(0.00)	1(4.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	1(0.40)
5.	Holland	2(8.00)	1(4.00)	0(0.00)	2(8.00)	1(4.00)	1(4.00)	7(2.78)
6.	Japan	1(4.00)	0(0.00)	1(4.00)	1(4.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	3(1.19)
7.	Korea	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	1(4.00)	1(0.40)
8.	Malaysia	2(8.00)	1(4.00)	1(4.00)	3(12.00)	0(0.00)	2(8.00)	9(3.57)
9.	New Zealand	1(4.00)	2(8.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	1(4.00)	0(0.00)	4(1.59)
10.	Philippines	8(32.00)	0(0.00)	1(4.00)	4(16.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	13(5.16)
11.	Singapore	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	1(4.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	0(0.00)	1(0.40)
12.	UAE	8(32.00)	6(24.00)	6(24.00)	6(24.00)	6(24.00)	4(16.00)	36(14.29)
13.	UK	6(24.00)	3(12.00)	7(28.00)	0(0.00)	1(4.00)	4(16.00)	21(8.33)
14.	USA	3(12.00)	7(28.00)	4(16.00)	15(60.00)	11(44.00)	12(48.00)	52(20.63)
	Total	45	35	49	44	35	44	252

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

UAE: United Arab Emirates

UK: United Kingdom

USA: United States of America

Table 2: Per cent distribution of reasons of migration of Indian children

Sr. No.	Reasons	Age								Overall Total
		65-75 years				75-85 years				
		Single parent family		Two parent family		Single parent family		Two parent family		
		Father	Mother	Both Parents	Total	Father	Mother	Both Parents	Total	
1.	Better work culture	7(15.56)	4(11.43)	15(30.61)	26(20.16)	12(27.27)	5(14.29)	9(20.45)	26(21.14)	52(20.63)
2.	Marriage	23(51.11)	12(34.29)	15(30.61)	50(38.76)	19(43.18)	21(60.00)	19(43.18)	59(47.97)	109(43.25)
3.	Better quality of life	15(33.33)	19(54.28)	19(38.77)	53(41.09)	13(29.54)	9(25.71)	16(36.36)	38(30.89)	91(36.11)
	Total	45	35	49	129	44	35	44	123	252

Note: Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

education or business, which results in their aged parents being left alone without assistance in daily living. In India, as in many other parts of the world, the joint family system that used to act as a strong backbone for social and emotional support for family members is rapidly vanishing. The chapter has been divided into following sections for discussion purpose:

Causes of migration of Indian children to other countries:

Table 1 and 2 depict causes and list of different countries where children had migrated. Table 1 shows the list of countries where children had migrated. As per the information gathered, out of the total number of NRI children, 77 had migrated to Canada, 52 to USA, 36 to UAE, 21 to UK, 17 to Australia and 13 to Philippines. The number of children migrated to China were 10, Malaysia 9, Holland 7, New Zealand 4, one each in Greece, Singapore and Korea. This shows that the preferred countries for migration were Canada, USA, UK and Australia. It could be further be interpreted that comparatively more number of children of single fathers irrespective of age range migrated to overseas, followed by children of two parent family and less numbers of children of single mothers migrated to overseas thinking that their mothers might be left alone.

Table 2 elaborates on the reasons of migration of children to overseas. It is quite evident from table that irrespective of age of the parents and category of family, 43.25 per cent of NRI children migrated on marriage basis followed by 36.11 per cent of NRI children migrated for better quality of life overseas. The reasons mentioned were better facilities, disciplined life and pollution free environment and functioning is systematic in comparison to Indian society. 20.63 per cent NRI children migrated due to better work culture in terms of better wages according to hard work put in, good working environment,

no bribery and fair chance of promotion in relation to the capability of the person. Among all reasons mentioned, marriage was the major reason of migration for children of for parents in the age range of 75-85 years. Parents also believed this reason as the most easiest and safest for permanent settlement without putting any effort.

Conclusion:

With the latest trends in India, the youngsters are leaving their country, when they are in their late teens or early twenties. This is the time when parents are just in their late forties or early fifties. They allow their children to leave the motherland so as provide them with better opportunities for education and jobs. Many a times, when educational opportunities are blocked or denied, the best option seems to be to leave the country for options in other lands. As the years go by, they get entrenched in fulfilling careers in the country of their migration and get used to a much better standard of living therefore due to which it becomes more and more difficult to come back and the result is that parents being left at home keep waiting for their return start accepting that children might settle overseas for their future well being. With passage of time they become old and retire. Some of the parents may develop physical problems as well as financial constraints.

Salient findings:

– The preferred countries of migration off children were Canada followed by United States of America and United Arab Emirates.

– The reasons for migration of children to overseas were marriage base followed by better work culture and good quality of life there.

– Majority of parents and children settled overseas were happy because of better quality of life and more job opportunities there.

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