
UNIT 2 MIGRATION, INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

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2.1 INTRODUCTION

Migration is the movement of an individual across the administrative boundary, with or without the will of the person concerned. Migration has become a universal phenomenon in modern times. Due to expansion of transport and communication, it has become a part of the worldwide process of urbanisation and industrialisation. In most countries, it has been observed that industrialisation and economic development has been accompanied by large-scale movements of people from villages to towns, from towns to other towns and from one country to another.

From a demographic point of view, migration is one of the three basic components of population growth for any region, the other being fertility and mortality. But whereas both fertility and mortality operate within the biological framework, migration does not. It influences the magnitude, composition and distribution of population. More importantly, migration influences the social, political and economic life of the people changing the cultural mosaic of the place.

According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), about 42 million migrants live outside their home communities who have been forced to flee for getting some respite from conflict, repression and violence. Refugee Migration has many causes and takes several forms. This includes people who cross international borders in search of refuge as well as those who are internally displaced. Also of concern are stateless persons, populations affected by natural disasters, those living in areas that are or

will be affected by climate change, and those involuntarily resettled as a result of development projects.

The social system of the country can have a significant effect on the migration pattern of the people from various back ground. It is also the determinant of the economic condition of the people which in turn leads to inequality. At the international level the global inequality is based on wages, labour market opportunities or lifestyles. Millions of workers and their families move each year across borders and across continents, seeking to reduce what they see as the gap between their own position and that of people in other, wealthier, places. In turn, there is a growing consensus in the development field that migration represents an important livelihood diversification strategy for many in the world's poorest nations. This includes not only international migration, but also permanent, temporary and seasonal migrations within poorer countries, a phenomenon of considerable importance across much of Africa, Asia and Latin America.

Yet, it is also clear that migration - and perhaps especially international migration - is an activity that carries significant risks and costs. As such, although migration is certainly rooted, at least in part, in income and wealth inequalities between sending and receiving areas, it does not necessarily reduce inequality in the way intended by many migrants. Much depends on the distribution of these costs and benefits, both within and between sending and receiving countries and regions. Also important in terms of the aggregate impact of migration on sending societies is the selectivity of migration itself. Clearly, if most migrants were to come from the poorest sections of society, and they were to achieve net gains from migration, this would act to reduce economic inequality at least, all other things being equal. But, migrants are not always the poorest, they do not always gain, and other factors are not equal.

Let us read the objectives of this Unit.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

After reading this Unit, you will be able to:

- Identify the various patterns of human migration;
- Discuss the causes and consequences of migration; and
- Elaborate upon the role of various agencies in migration.

2.3 MIGRATION AND INEQUALITY

The Unit investigates the inequality issues, and extends the analysis to cover the role of caste and social identity for the labour market. The major cause of rural-urban migration is the inequality among the people, based on the interpersonal and inter-household inequality within and between

villages. The inequalities *within* sending areas are also crucial in generating migration - more unequal villages send more migrants. Migrants come from the most productive age groups and as a result, unequal power structures within villages go unchallenged. Migrants from wealthier backgrounds also do better. These facts ensure that migration enhances inequality.

Based on the range of different types of migration, and the varied economic, social, cultural and political contexts within which migration occurs, it is difficult to draw any overarching conclusions about its impact on inequality. Indeed, examples can be found of migration both increasing and decreasing inequality. Inequality needs to be defined in broader terms than simply income or wealth. Inequality, like poverty, is multi-dimensional, and can be measured at individual, household, regional and international levels. There are socio-cultural dimensions to inequality, as well as inequalities in access to power. All aspects of inequality are highly gendered. In other terms inequality is the role played by a variety of political, economic and social-cultural institutions, since these are often crucial to the ways in which wealth, power and opportunity are distributed within societies.

Inequality is clearly a major driver of migration. Indeed, international migration is a powerful symbol of global inequality, whether in terms of wages, labour market opportunities or lifestyles. Millions of workers and their families move each year across borders and continents, seeking to reduce what they see as the gap between their own position and that of people in other, wealthier, places. According to the UN there were 191 million international migrants in 2005, increasingly concentrated in the more developed regions of the world. Similarly, internal migration within poorer countries, whether permanent, temporary or seasonal, reflects both perceived and actual inequality of opportunity between places. It is not just inequality between sending and receiving areas that promotes migration. Inequality within sending areas can also generate migration, since more unequal villages tend to produce more migrants than less unequal villages.

Let us examine the relationship between migration and social change. Migration *is*, of course, change and it can lead, in turn, to further transformations both in sending and receiving societies. Here we restrict the scope of analysis to migration across national borders, although several of the points made below may apply as well to long-distance domestic movements. As a *form* of change, international migration has been analysed as a consequence of a diverse set of causes, both in the source and receiving countries.

Looking first at international migration from across the region, evidence from both Pakistan and Bangladesh suggests that inequalities are increased, as relatively wealthy individuals and villages that have more access to long-distance migration enhance their position in relation to the poor. However, in-depth evidence of the relationship between migration and inequality in

an ethnographic study of movement from Talukpur, a village in Sylhet, Bangladesh, to the UK tells a more complex story. Here, Gardner (2001) argues that 'access to *bidesh* (abroad) has increasingly become the pole around which inequalities are clustered. Not only has it helped to create them, but so too has it become a metaphor for thinking about them'. Her argument relates not only to economic inequalities, but also to broader social and cultural cleavages, with migration becoming one of a number of analytically distinct measures of status and power. Yet although inequality has increased between wealthier households and the very poor, it has decreased between the wealthiest - the elite that used to hold positions of power - and the many poorer households who were often previously dependant on this elite for economic and social support, but have now become much better off.

One reason for this is that the original migrants from Talukpur were by no means the wealthiest - indeed, some were even landless, with land traditionally being the major indicator of wealth in rural Bangladesh. In practice, migration brought with it considerable changes to landownership in Talukpur. Those who already owned land often acquired more fields and moved from being small to large landowners, whilst some of those without land managed to transform their position to become amongst the most prosperous households in the village. In this context, access to international migration, specifically to London, came to result in as much social and economic power as ownership of land. Migration brought more than simply money, in the form of remittances; it also brought with it 'cultural capital' and social prestige. In turn, remittances were also fed into other areas of life, with a wider impact on political, social and economic power. Indeed, inflation in all sectors of the economy (labour, commodities and technology) has made it difficult for small plots of land to be economically viable.

As elsewhere in Bangladesh, many *Sylhetis* have lost their land and this phenomenon has been intensified in '*Londoni* villages'. Yet as polarisation grows between migrants and non-migrants, there increasingly appears to be no clear fit between economic position and status classification. The conspicuous consumption of foreign goods, while being the principle differentiation in the village between migrant and non-migrant households also, according to Gardner, 'reflects the economic dependency of the *desh* on aid and remittances from overseas and the hegemonic power of international capitalism'. While laying claim to some of this power the migrants are unwittingly pointing to the larger inequalities that structure our world.

In addition to intra-village inequality, some observations can also be made about increased inequality between migrant and non-migrant villages in Sylhet. In particular, villages that have experienced high levels of '*Londoni*' migration are now startlingly distinct, filled with stone houses, sometimes

two or three stories high, and showing extensive material wealth in contrast to the impoverishment of much of the rest of rural Bangladesh. Education is another clear sign of the increasing inequality between villages, with 'modern' education a major sign of prestige in Talukpur, and levels of literacy in the village much higher - over twice the national average for men, and one and a half times the national average for women - mainly a result of migrant households' increased wealth. Growing temporary migration to the Gulf may also be having similar impacts on inequality, as the poor remain largely excluded from such flows.

Turning to **Kerala**, a rather different research project - the *Kerala Migration Study* - also provides rich evidence on aspects of the relationship between international and internal migration and inequality in sending areas. Based on a sample survey of some 10,000 households conducted in 1998, it is probably the largest study of its kind in the region. It shows that Kerala experienced a massive increase in migration, which became one of the most prosperous 'industries' in the state. The authors (Zachariah, Mathew and Rajan, 2000) assert that 'migration has contributed more to poverty alleviation and reduction in unemployment in Kerala than any other factor', with the proportion of the population below the poverty line declining by 12 per cent, and the unemployment rate fell by 30 per cent. Some support for this comes from the fact that in 1998, remittances made up nearly 10 per cent of the State's GDP, twice over what the state received from the central government by way of budget support, and well over the combined export earnings of the state's two major industries, sea food and spices.

The *Kerala Migration Study* compares opportunities and living standards between non-migrant households, inter-state migrants who stayed in India, and international migrants, most of whom went to the Gulf. As in other cases, it shows that migration is generally selective of young, educated men, although the proportion of women in both emigrant and inter-state migrant flows was found to be rising. Interestingly, it shows migration patterns that differ remarkably between different religious and ethnic communities - thus Muslims were twice as likely to migrate internationally to the Gulf as the average, whereas Syrian Christians were twice as likely to migrate within India as the average. In contrast, members of scheduled castes were less likely to migrate to either destination. Also, although degree holders were much more likely to migrate than non-degree holders, the reverse was true for those whose fathers were educated.

Unfortunately, the study does not allow us to look directly at changing economic inequality, since the economic position of migrants and migrant households prior to migration is not recorded. It does show that those who migrate do better than those who do not. For example, migrant households had higher levels of food consumption, were more likely to have electricity, to own land, and to have invested in land improvement, and were more

likely to use private hospitals. However, per capita remittances also appear to follow the educational level of migrants prior to departure, with the most educated sending home the highest amounts. This is reflected in a better performance of Syrian Christian internal migrants, who tended to be better educated, compared to Muslim migrants to the Gulf, whose educational levels were lower.

2.4 SEASONAL LABOUR MIGRATION AND INEQUALITY IN INDIA

The following case study concerns the complex, and in some respects contradictory story to be learned from recent studies of internal migration in West Bengal and Western India. In **West Bengal**, in relation to seasonal labour migration it is found that 'overall, the workings of this segment of the labour market are likely to increase inequality as employers' surplus-accumulating production is facilitated - especially that of large-scale employers, whilst most migrant workers are working hard to stay in the same place.' Remittances play a crucial role in the context of growing inequality especially for the landless households, noting that there are very few cases in which seasonal migration has led to individual upward economic mobility. In Murshidabad district in particular, men usually travel unsolicited, and without prior agreement with an employer and thus face great uncertainty. Almost all migrant households use their cash remittances for food and loan repayments. Seasonal migrants are excluded from government provision of health services and education when away for work. Combined with the nature and intensity of the work and the living conditions, this means that the health of the migrants suffers more than those who stay behind.

However, this form of seasonal migration in West Bengal has also increased the migrants' aggregate power in the labour market and changed long-standing relations of power more in favour of the labourers themselves. For example, in Puruliya District, there has been a significant shift in relations between the landowning and labouring classes. The increased access to seasonal out-migration for agricultural and other manual workers has contributed to the diversification of livelihoods by these workers and a consequent loosening of their obligations to the landowners. The result has been labour shortages during peak agricultural seasons, leading to changes in the terms of land and labour contracts in the region to the advantage of labourers. These labour market adjustments have allowed workers more choice regarding their employers, giving them more power to gain increased benefits or higher wages.

In contrast, in **Western India**, the scope for such worker choice is much more limited, since employers often act together. This is the case in Bardoli

taluka in South Gujarat, where sugar cultivators maintain a 'highly organised recruitment process', reducing the extent of benefits derived by labourers. Meanwhile for a small minority of Bhil migrant households in tribal Western India, there are benefits in the form of saving, investing and meeting contingencies, for the poor majority, migration is again a defensive coping strategy that simply allows them to combat the extreme economic vulnerability. The uniformly poor appearance of Bhil villages disguises significant differences in wealth, status and power within them, which have a bearing on the organisation and outcome of seasonal labour migration.

In this region, the success of migration is highly dependent on access to recruiter networks or kin and without these networks the migrant is often left with the worst paid, less reliable forms of labour and are in the most vulnerable positions. Indeed, more generally, the system of recruitment here amplifies debt and dependence and prevents most migrants from working their way out of debt. In this context, Bhil migrants working for the same amount of time end up with very different outcomes. For most, many years of seasonal migration have not led to any long-term increase in assets or reduction in poverty.

Migration can also lead to a loss of social position and status if the migrant is absent for a long time and fails to take part in important village events. This will increase marginality from credit and social networks. However, in a few cases migration can increase a household's earning capacity and its creditworthiness and allow new investments in machinery or land or in social networks to increase social position. For a very few, migration provides the means for upward mobility. For a number of households with greater livelihood security. The report states that labour migration strengthens their position, especially where labourers can become (through kin networks) gang leaders and 'recruiters'.

There are several reasons why different outcomes in terms of inequality can be observed between the two studies of rural-rural migration in West Bengal and rural-urban migration in Western India. In West Bengal, migrants travel in groups to labour recruiting areas where employers and employees collect and here bargaining for wages and benefits takes place. If the migrants are lucky enough to arrive on a day with a high employer to employee ratio then their bargaining power can be quite high. Indeed, there are even cases that are reported of migrant labourers foot-dragging or walking out of a job, in the knowledge that alternative opportunities might exist.

In contrast, for the tribals in western India seasonal migration is from rural to urban areas. Within the urban informal labour market work is highly differentiated along 'ethnic' lines and the Bhils occupy a distinct employment sector that is low paid and unskilled. They are unwilling or unable to risk

competing in other labour markets, and instead are recruited directly from their villages. In this situation, much more than in the case of West Bengal, it is neighborhood and kin networks that are involved in the structures of employment and this reduces competition between employers and keeps wages low. It also removes the opportunity for mobility that is seen in the West Bengal case and ensures the employer a carefully selected, accountable and amenable dependent workforce.

The degree to which workers can make choices in the West Bengal labour market would not be possible in such a structured casual labour market with a socially and economically dependant workforce as in Western India. Thus, unlike West Bengal, the high demand for casual labour does not translate into stronger bargaining power for Bhil migrants. This means that it is also less likely that migration can have an emancipatory effect. On the contrary, Mosse *et al.* argue that 'through migration these workers move into a world in which hierarchical distinctions (Bhil/non-Bhil; tribal/non-tribal) are more keenly felt, generalised and amplified; a world in which the culture of poverty is newly experienced as *jati* (caste/'ethnic') discrimination'.

Box No. 1

Migration in the Western India case appears to have done little to emancipate Bhil women. Gender structures tend to remain intact and women have to continue domestic roles alongside waged labour. Women and older people have a limited participation in labour migration and the enhanced dependence on migrant earnings increases male authority in the household, increasing dependence on men for cash and health care. In this case, migration may amplify gender inequalities.

In this situation, links to recruiters and their kin are crucial and the labour recruitment process can ensure unequal access to earning. Those who have no stable relationships or networks necessary to get regular work are pushed into the most casual and poorly paid work. Also without such networks, the migrant will have problems finding living arrangements, they are more vulnerable to intimidation, under or non-payment of wages and isolation and loneliness.

Check Your Progress:

- 1) *What do you understand by inequality amongst the migrants?*

2) Write distinctive features of seasonal labour migration and inequality.

3) Give example from India where the people have migrated because of inequality.

Let us now discuss relationship between migration and social change.

2.5 MIGRATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

As a *cause* of social change, migration has been analysed from a cultural perspective that emphasises its potential for value/normative transformation and from a structural perspective that highlights its demographic and economic significance. Studies of change vary in scope, focusing at the **micro-level** of individuals and families; the **meso-level** of communities and regions; and the **macro-level** of nation-states and the global economy. Just as the scope of analysis varies, so does the *depth* of the processes of change attributed to migration. Effects may simply scratch the surface of society, affecting some economic organizations, role expectations, or norms. On the other hand, they may go deep into the culture, transforming the value system, or into the social structure, transforming the distribution of power. Such profound transformations are precisely what opponents of

migration in receiving societies fear and what they have traditionally railed against.

The power of migration to effect change either in sending or receiving regions and countries depends on three main factors:

- a) *the numbers involved*;
- b) *the duration of the movement*;
- c) *its class composition*. Concerning the first, it is obvious that small displacements have little causative power, seldom going beyond the lives of those involved and their immediate kin.

In the United States and Europe today, the fears expressed by opponents of immigration commonly portrays a rising out of the poorer nations and overwhelming the social systems and the culture of the developed world. Such fears are readily contradicted by the numbers -scarcely 200 million migrants in a planet of 6 billion, with only a minority going to the advanced countries and by the capacity of the host societies to fend off drastic change. Concerning the second factor, circular flows of short duration tend to produce less durable change than permanent displacements. Under certain conditions, cyclical movements may *reinforce* the existing social structures rather than change them. This may occur, for instance, when migrant workers' earnings help support the development of rural productive structures at home, thereby strengthening their long-term viability. Similarly, temporary labour migration to Western Europe in the 1960s and 1970s helped significantly its economic expansion without making much of a dent into European social structures or cultures until the compulsory end of the program turned temporary workers into permanent migrants.

Permanent out-migration can significantly alter the demographic structure of sending societies, as when entire regions are depopulated. Permanent migrants can also have a stronger influence on sending regions by weakening local productive systems, and changing the culture in the direction of out-migration as the sole normative path to upward mobility. A settled permanent immigrant population of any size will also have a greater impact in the culture and social structure of host societies, as is evident with the transformation of circular to permanent immigration among Turks, Moroccans, and Algerians to Western Europe and with the end of cyclical labour migration across the U.S.-Mexican border, paving the way for a permanent unauthorised migrant population in the United States.

Also, the composition of migrant flows affects the change potential of migration in unexpected ways. One may argue that movements composed of persons with higher human capital would have a greater impact on receiving societies because of the greater capacity of such migrants to express themselves and protect their cultural traits. In fact, the opposite

tends to happen because educated migrants have greater flexibility and capacity to adapt to the receiving culture, being often fluent in its language. Greater human capital translates into better opportunities in the labour market and easier entry into the host society's economic mainstream. On the contrary, flows composed of poorly-educated workers can have a more durable impact because of their initial ignorance of the host language and culture and the tendency, especially among migrants from rural origin, to adhere tightly to their customs. Sizable flows of migrant workers tend to give rise to visible cultural-linguistic concentrations, generally in marginal areas of host societies. Such 'ghettos' go on to become natural targets for nativists who paint them as tangible evidence of migrants' inferior cultural or even biological endowments.

Lastly, flows that are class-diverse comprising both high and low-human capital migrants are most likely to give rise to institutionally complete ethnic enclaves in receiving countries. This is so because skilled immigrants are able to set up enterprises using the mass of their co-ethnics as both a market and a source of labour; in turn, less educated immigrants find in these ethnic enterprises an alternative source of employment opportunities and even a "training mechanism" to learn themselves the ropes of small business management.

Institutionally-complete enclaves represent the most visible manifestation of change wrought on host societies by migration. The duration of such formations varies significantly, however. In the United States, they tend to last no more than two to three generations because the very success of immigrant entrepreneurs pushes their descendants into positions of advantage in the host country's economic mainstream. In Germany and other European countries, according to some accounts, immigrant enclaves appear to last longer.

Box No. 2

The archetypical enclave was that created by the Jewish exodus out of Czarist Russia in New York City. At the start of the twentieth century, almost two million Russian Jews migrated to America from the Pale of Settlement where they had been confined by the Czarist regime and where they were subjected to repeated pogroms. Unlike Italians and other migrant workers of the time, Russian Jews were class-diverse. Skilled artisans and merchants abounded among them and they used their resources to set themselves up in business, starting as humble peddlers and gradually rising in the capitalist hierarchy. By the mid-1930s, an institutionally-complete Jewish enclave had developed in the Lower East Side of Manhattan, where religious and cultural institutions proliferated, an ethnic press in English and Yiddish flourished, and where the needle trades became the 'great Jewish métier'.

A few years later, children of these now prosperous migrants were literally taking the East Coast universities by assault, with the City University of New York serving as the main focus for their educational and professional aspirations. By the 1960s, the Jewish Lower East Side was a memory, but members of the Jewish third generation had by then become ensconced in the city's upper professional and business ranks, their education and incomes significantly surpassing those of other ethnic groups, including Anglo-Americans.

A more contemporary example is provided by the Cuban exodus to Miami. Like the Jewish one, this emigration out of the island was class-diverse, led by the old upper and middle strata escaping political revolution. Successively lower layers of the island's population followed the elites, all clustering in South Florida. In a few years, an ethnic enclave began to take hold and by the 1990s, it had consolidated into a cultural, religious, and political complex buttressed by over 72,000 Cuban-owned firms. By 2000, the incomes of Cuban exiles arriving in the 1960s and 1970s were at par with those of native whites and those of Cuban business-owners were the highest in the region. The exiles also had the highest rates of self-employment of any ethnic group in the area. Second-generation Cubans, while also displaying high average incomes, had much lower rates of business ownership, an indication that, like the Jewish second generation, they were leaving the original enclave to seek mobility in mainstream professions.

The pace of cultural and political ascent of Cubans was, if anything, swifter than the early Jewish rise out of Lower Manhattan. Today, Spanish has joined English as the language of business and everyday discourse in Miami. The mayors of all large cities, including Miami proper and Miami-Dade County are Cuban, as are the area's three federal congresspersons; Miami's delegation to the Florida State legislature is almost uniformly Cuban, being comprised of both former exiles and their children.

Attempt the following exercise to recaptulate your learning.

Check Your Progress:

Write how migration based on social change in turn changes the society of the receiving population.

In the following section we will read about gender linkages with social change and migration.

2.6 GENDER, SOCIAL CHANGE AND INEQUALITY: AN INTERFACE

Since, we have already looked at the relationship between migration and inequality, it is important to understand the impact of migration on the women and their social environment. Migration can lead to inequality or change in the social mobility ladder for women. According to Michael B. Whiteford (1978) migration is a liberating process as the moving from one form of social constraints opens up possibilities of social change for both women and men. Although migration plays an important role in the lives of women by creating opportunities for them to improve their material and social conditions, it involves complexity when it comes to altering gender roles. As you have read in other units of this block, migration literature has mainly focused on male experiences and relegated the role of women in migration literature has mainly focused on male experiences and relegated the role of women in migration process.

According to Wasudha Bhatt (2009), “relegating women to the role of dependants (United Nations 2005), even though women are the principal wage earners in many poor migrant house holds. There is a compelling need to understand female migration, not only as a poverty-reducing strategy but also as a vehicle for economic diversification, upward mobility and essential gateway to personal growth and well-being” (p.90).

Wasudha Bhatt in the discussion on the “economic vs. social consideration” analyses the gender aspect of migration process which reflected that the culture of migration has become an inevitable part of India’s social fabric. Further, she has brought the aspects of disintegration of family structure and deepening of social inequality. For instance, due to out-migration from rural to urban, village was no longer seen as the reference point for cultural identity and acquired a cosmopolitan character that deepens the existing social inequality at the village level. Rural-metropolitan migration is acute in states like Odisha and Rajasthan; as a result, more and more migrant workers are landing up in odd jobs. In such a situation, the conditions of women are vulnerable as they face sexual exploitation along with other related problems.

There is a body of literature which looks at the male migration and its impact on the women’s lives. One of the features of migration in the developing countries is increasing male migration and leaving behind their family and wives at home. **Sonable Desai** and **Manjistha Barter** (2014) write that literature on male migration has analysed its impact on women

in two years. Many women experience autonomy in the absence of their male partner in domains of decision-making, mobility and exploring livelihood options. The situation of male migration has fostered women's autonomy, self-esteem and role expansion in absence of their husband. The men also take up domestic responsibilities. This trend of exchanging gender roles is seen to be temporary and works only in absence of male operate as *de facto* household heads and take up additional responsibilities including supervision of agricultural tasks (Desai and Barter, 2014, p. 338). On the contrary, other studies focused on women's financial burden and increasing work burden. One of the studies showed that in the rice production belt of eastern U.P., women's work load is likely to increase to compensate their husband's labour in case of male migration (Paris *et al.*, 2005 in Desai and Barter).

When remittances are not enough to meet the needs of the family left behind in the village, women assume the role of sole breadwinner in the household. The migration studies discuss the various dimensions of social change including women's empowerment, expanding livelihood options, rejecting female seclusion, and a partial change in the gender-segregated roles. In the context of social change and migration, it is important to focus not only on female migration but to incorporate discussions on male out-migration and its impact on women's lives. The increasing female-headed households in the contemporary times can be cited as an obvious consequence of male out-migration. How women perform different gender roles in the absence of males is a matter of social enquiry.

Now let us look at some cases to understand the dynamics between gender, migration and social change. Most of the studies in relation to gender, migration and social change have looked into the aspect of changing gender roles and the conception of mothering. Dreby's (2006) study on migration mothers and fathers from Mexico found that the gender roles with respect to parenting and motherhood have not been altered even in the context of transnational migration. Similar observations have also been made with regards to the Philipino migrants. Even if women migrate and send home remittances, men have not been able to redefine the concept of fatherhood. In case of Mexican migrants, father's relationships with their children is directed by their economic status as breadwinners and mothers continue to be judged by the emotional ties which they have built up from distance (see Trask, 2014). Female migration in this case has not helped in reconceptualisation of motherhood, however, the concept of motherhood has incorporated the aspect of breadwinning as a form of gender role for migrant women. Women's role as primary caretaker is still seen as the core concept of motherhood. To quote **Hondagneu-Sotelo and Avila (1997)**, rather than replacing caregiving with breadwinning definitions of motherhood, they appear to be expanding their definitions of motherhood to encompass

breadwinning that may require long-term physical separations. For these women, a core belief is that they can best fulfill traditional caregiving responsibilities through income earning in the United States while their children remain 'back home'. (cf.Trask, 2014, p.133). The traditional conception of motherhood may not have changed due to women's engagement in paid work but certainly adding of new identities to the concept of motherhood can be described as change. In a similar sense, **Nicholson** (2006) states that migrating mothers do not only provide financial support to their family but they also create new vision through their experiences. Migrant mothers create elements of hope, opportunity and change for their children. When we talk about social change in relation to migrant women, it can be inferred that changes have come within various social institutions such as family and marriage with regard to decision-making, informed choice and gender roles.

2.7 LET US SUM UP

Immigration helps to achieve a more efficient allocation of resources, and hence improves the welfare of nations. However, the rise in allocative efficiency is often considered to be fairly small. The controversy starts with concerns about the distributional effects of immigration: (i) Is immigration detrimental, that is, do immigrants depress the wages and increase the unemployment of the natives, often enter into poverty within the receiving countries, and deprive the sending regions of their most motivated and talented workers? (ii) Is it possible that immigration is just not large and significant enough to cause such damage to be noticeable? Or: (iii) Is immigration *de facto* beneficial, because most empirical studies fail to identify any negative effects on the natives, immigrants are typically faring better in the receiving countries than at home, and the sending countries' population benefits from remittances and labor force from the induced scarcity in the home labor markets? And: (iv) What is actually the objective, equality among natives or among natives and immigrants together?

There are a number of organisations which try to answer the above questions through various reports and publications to understand the plight of the migrants in the best way possible.

2.8 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) Define social change and discuss the interrelationship between gender, migration and social change.
- 2) How do inequality, gender and women's migration relate to each other. Discuss with suitable examples or case studies.

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