

Photo credit: Creative Commons & Wikipedia



Spouse Migration

Roots and Routes



Vol 7, No.11-12, November - December, 2018



GRFDT
Global Research Forum on
Diaspora and Transnationalism

www.grfdt.org

Editor's Note



Contents

Articles

Book Review

Editorial Information

©GRFDT. Roots and Routes is Printed, designed & circulated by GRFDT

Special Issue Editor

Tasha Agarwal

Editors

Arsala Nizami & Monika Bisht

Editorial Board:

M. Mahalingam

Rakesh Ranjan

Smita Tiwari

Rajiv Mishra

Rahul Kumar

Diksha Jha

G. Srinivas

Sadananda Sahoo

Tasha Agrawal

Feroz Khan

Design and Production:

Rakesh Ranjan & Feroz

Khan

Email: editor@grfdt.com

Website: www.grfdt.org

Dear Friends,
Greetings!

This edition of Roots and Routes is a special issue on 'Spouse Migration'. Through this issue we want to bring forth the aspect of gender, marriage and migration in the academic discourse. The intersection of gender and migration has not received its due attention among migration theorists and thinkers, which has paved way for this special issue. When we talk about migration, we tend to club people from one nationality, as one homogeneous group such as Indians, Mexicans, and Sri Lankans etc. However, if we dwell deeper into it, we tend to understand that the issues and challenges faced by both the gender, from the same country, are on a very different plain, which we somehow tend to miss out completely.

Among female migrant, a large proportion of immigrants constitute of spouse migrants who follow their husbands in foreign land. The dual scenario of leaving their family as well as country back and landing into foreign land with not much familiar faces around, brings forth a completely different set of challenges. Many a times, the dependent status of spouse, alienation and isolation within the confined spaces of home have led to psychological imbalances, anxiety, depression etc. among newly arrived spouses. There have been many cases of domestic violence, confiscation of visa, divorce etc. which these women have to deal with, while staying away from their closed ones. All these have important sociological as well as psychological dimension, which needs to be understood.

The Immigration policies of different countries also gives separate attention towards the aspect of family reunification or spouse migration. This implies that dependent families or spouse migrants have important implications on the receiving countries which needs to be investigated and understood. This edition is an attempt to bring forth few such dimensions and arouse the curiosity of the reader to understand the gender specific concerns of spouse migrants.

In this edition we have an article by Dr Anjali Sahay, who shed light on the Indian women migration to the US on H4 visa and their experiences of compromises and uncertainty in the host country. She discusses about changes in immigration policy of US which has been undertaken in Barack Obama as well as Donald Trump administration and how has that impacted the immigrants. Another article by Rahul Kumar discusses the phenomenon of Punjabi spouse migration to UK and the associated socio-cultural challenges. He has discussed the immigration policy of UK, with emphasis on family reunification. He further discusses the challenges as well as opportunity that lies ahead when one migrates to UK.

This issue also contains two book reviews. The first book review is by Vijay Kumar Soni who reviewed the book 'Visa Wives'. The book is a non-fictional work which gives in details the experiences of immigrant spouse to the US, right from first feeling of immigration to a broader issue of assimilation. The reviewer marks this book as a practical handbook of survival for a dependent spouse. The next book titled 'Marriage, Migration and Gender' is reviewed by Tasha Agarwal. The book is on the interplay of marriage and migration among South Asian Women. The book contains essays on different aspect of marriage migration and is fifth volume of the series titled 'Women and Migration in Asia'. The reviewer finds this book interesting and foresee it as a book which can bridge the existing gap in gender and migration and can facilitate further research.

I hope you enjoy this special issue. In an attempt to have a meaningful engagement on gender and migration, we invite researchers to participate and share their experiences with us. We wish you a happy reading and look forward to your suggestions and comments.

Tasha.

Tasha Agarwal

Perils of H4 for Indian Women

Migration of Compromise and Uncertainty

Dr. Anjali Sahay, Associate Professor, Political Science Program, School of Public Service and Global Affairs, Gannon University, Erie, PA – 16541
Email: sahay001@gannon.edu



“After working towards my MBA, I had worked in eBay and PayPal in India for four years. Then I got married and moved to the United States on an H4 visa. I went through painful stages of waiting for my paperwork to fall in order, from H4 to EAD, then finally to a career in the United States legal authorization to work under EAD H4 visa status. Under the current US administration, there is talk of revoking the EAD H4 right to work. I have literally lost 4 years without doing anything productive in my life and no hope of securing a permanent job under these circumstances. I believe my compromised visa status has been a complete waste of my talents, education and experience.”

-Anonymous

This narrative is a typical experience of many coming to the United States on a dependent visa status. The movement necessitated, for decades, the migration of Indian spouses (mostly women) to make career and other sacrifices in their compromised status as a dependent visa holder. Not only did they make sacrifices in their personal lives by giving up a familiar way of life to follow their spouses they also sacrifice their existing careers. The history of this migration largely begins with the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 when migration from India to the United States increased

between 1965 and 1990 as a series of legislative changes in the United States. These changes removed national-origin quotas and introduced temporary skilled worker programs that created employment-based permanent visas. Of the many beneficiaries were those that migrated from India and after the onset of the dotcom boom of the 1990s when Silicon Valley's demand for H1B workers increased. Thus after 1990, India as a source country became a prime beneficiary for those receiving H1B visas in the United States. “In 2017, Indians were the top recipients of high-skilled H-1B temporary visas in the United States with 247,927 H1B visas and China a second at 36,362.” (US Citizenship and Immigration Services, n.d.) Dependents of H1B visa came in through the popularly known H4 visa which was issued to dependent family members (spouse and children) of H1 visa holders who would like to accompany the H1B visa holder to the U.S. during their stay.

In 2015, the Obama Administration signed an executive order announcing that, effective May 26, 2015, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) would be extending eligibility for employment authorization to certain H4 dependent spouses of H1B nonimmigrants who are seeking employment-based lawful permanent resident (LPR) status. DHS amended the regulations to allow these H4 dependent spouses to accept employment

in the United States. For many on the dependent visa, the H4 EAD opened a door to independence in the workplace. In the twenty seven years that the H4 visa had existed, it was only in summer of 2015 that a certain subset of H4 visa holders (whose H1B spouses had applied for green cards) were allowed permission to pursue paid work in the US. For everybody else on an H4 visa before 2015, paid work was out of question. “Prior to the Obama administration’s change, H4 holders (spouse of H1B) weren’t allowed to earn an income or have a Social Security Number, especially the spouses of legal foreign workers, mainly tech workers from India and China, to obtain their own work visas.” (Murphy, 2018) Many spouses, mostly women had also come forward to report instances of domestic violence, the need to have a bank account, an independent income, and a right to work. Indians have to wait the longest for employment-based Green Card (permanent residency) because of a massive pileup of backlogged cases caused by a rule that limits these visas to a 7% country cap. There are currently 306,601 people from India in that queue and the wait time can be up to 100 years. H4 EAD was intended to help these families by allowing their spouses to work until they get Green Cards.

The Donald Trump administration, meanwhile, has announced that they would overturn this executive order. The Department of Homeland Security implied as much when it notified an American federal court that it would issue a proposed regulation in February 2018 to rescind the law that allows H4 spouses to work. And even though the Department of Justice and the Department of Homeland Security plans to defer this order, the plan to rollout of this proposal has sent panic and chaos signals amongst those affected. “In general, there is a sense of disbelief that the government would actually revoke this work authorization for high-skilled professionals who are well on their path to permanent residence.” (Zaveri, 2018) Many immigrant lawyers believe that this would cause major personal and corporate disruption. In particular, tech companies rely heavily on H1B visas to hire foreign talent. In 2017, Amazon, Microsoft, Accenture, IBM and Deloitte were in the top 20 employers hiring H1B visa holders. Companies such as Microsoft have also indicated that if work authorization for H4 visa holders would be revoked the company may also be forced to move jobs out of the United States. Overall, this along with all the restrictions and hurdles with H1B has led to a largely ‘unwelcome sign’ for most Indians in the United States.

Gender is central to any discussion of the causes and

consequences of migration, whether forced, voluntary or somewhere in between. The U.S. immigration system, influenced by the doctrine of coverture, prohibits dependent spouse visa holders from working or independently regularizing their legal status, and inhibits their ability to escape domestic violence or obtain a divorce or custody in U.S. courts. Each year, several thousand women come to the United States in their capacity as spouses, only to find their rights compromised by the constraints of their visa status. “For policy purposes it must be recognized that:

1. Women migrate as much as men. Migration data must be disaggregated by sex and age, and migration policies must take account of how gender shapes different migrants’ needs.
2. Migration can increase women’s access to education and economic resources, and can improve their autonomy and status.
3. Female migrants and refugees are at greater risk of exploitation and abuse, including trafficking.
4. Highly skilled women have high rates of migration but many are employed in low-skilled jobs.” (O’Neil, Fleury, & Foresti, 2016)

For Indian women, the alternative to family patriarchy has become state patriarchy further reinforced by the U.S. immigration system. Especially for those under H4, migrant spouses may be prevented from working. Mostly female, these migrants that do work may experience deskilling or be confined to ‘feminine’ jobs, often paid or valued less than other work. Ensuring full and productive employment and decent work requires access to work that is aligned with migrants’ skills and qualifications. It also means improving social and economic value afforded to work typically performed by women and girls.

The focus on H4 visa holders—spouses of a certain class of professional immigrant workers has been largely overlooked in immigration reform, without any advocates from the corporate lobby that supports their husbands, or advocates from the domestic violence community. Comprehensive immigration reform should provide meaningful relief for spousal visa holders, addressing the longstanding inequities between husbands and wives that the current law perpetuates. So far, the experience of H4 visa holders can be characterized, at best, a migration of compromise and uncertainty.

Bibliography

Murphy, B. (2018, February 1). Spouses of Indian and Chinese tech workers could be stripped of right to work in U.S. Retrieved from Chicago Tribune: <http://www.chicagotribune.com/business/ct-biz-h1b-visa-spouses-20180201-story.html>

O'Neil, T., Fleury, A., & Foresti, M. (2016, July). Women on the move: Migration, gender equality and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Retrieved from Federal Department of Foreign Affairs: <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/resource-documents/10731.pdf>

US Citizenship and Immigration Services. (n.d.). Retrieved from <https://www.uscis.gov/sites/default/files/USCIS/Resources/Reports%20and%20Studies/Immigration%20Forms%20Data/BAHA/h-1b-2007-2017-trend-tables.pdf>

Zaveri, P. (2018, August 28). Spouses of immigrant techies fear the Trump administration will soon revoke their ability to work in the US. Retrieved from CNBC: <https://www.cnn.com/2018/08/28/tech-companies-h4-holders-brace-for-trump-administration-changes->

Zaveri, P. (2018, August 28). Spouses of immigrant techies fear the Trump administration will soon revoke their ability to work in the US. Retrieved from CNBC: <https://www.cnn.com/2018/08/28/tech-companies-h4-holders-brace-for-trump-administration-changes->

Migration and Diasporas An Interdisciplinary Journal

Vol. 1

No. 1

January- June 2018

Contents

<i>Editors' Note</i>	7
Articles	09-121
Ascription, Aspiration and Achievement: Malaysian Indian Trajectory - Ravindra K Jain	9
The Emergence of Long Distance International Displacements and Restrictive Migratory Laws: A Review of Legal Expressions Based on Racist and National Discrimination - Luciana L. Contarino Sparta	21
Digitalization of long distance nationalism, diaspora and their on-line political participation via internet- Zeynep Aydar	38
Managing Migration in the Time of Economic Crisis: Example of Four EU Countries: (Germany, Spain, UK and Italy) - Yasin Kerem GÜMÜŞ	58
Frontier Heritage Migrants: Finding Home in Globalizing India - Melissa Tandiwe Myambo	82
Diasporas Lobbying the Host Government: Mexican Diaspora as a Third Actor of the Bilateral Relationship Between Mexico and the U.S. - José de Jesús López Almejo	100
Book Reviews	122-142

Punjabi Spouse Migration to UK

Socio-Cultural Challenges

Rahul Kumar, PhD Scholar, CSSS/SSS, Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi

Abstract

Punjabi spouse migration to the United Kingdom has been prevalent since centuries. During colonial relationship between Britain and India, only men were granted visa to work in the UK labor market for Britain's post-war economy. Punjab witnessed a major migration of labor to the UK. The United Kingdom like other western countries relaxed immigration rules & regulations and started granting visa to a spouse on marriage basis. Transnational marriage migration of Punjabi spouse from Punjab to the United Kingdom unleashed many opportunities for her to develop but at the same time, she has to face social, cultural challenges in a multicultural society of the UK. This article concludes that due to prevailing patriarchal mindset among the Punjabi families, migrated spouse could not avail the full benefit to reach at par with the western women in terms of social and economic independence.

Introduction

Britain has always been a country of immigration. Immigration to the United Kingdom (UK) in the 21st century is larger, more diverse, and more mobile than even before. The Indian community in the UK has a long history and is marked by heterogeneity (Somerville and Dhudwar, 2010)¹. Labor migrants were taken by the British government to the United Kingdom but many wives and children were later brought to Britain - predominantly during the 1960s and 1970s for Indians and Pakistanis, and the 1980s for Bangladeshis (Gardner and Shukar, 1994; Coleman, 1995; Gardner, 2006). The UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS) reported that 305,000 people born in India are estimated to have moved to the UK between 2016 and 2017, making India the most common migrant nationality in the country. Today, of the world's approximately 16-18 million Sikhs, perhaps one third live outside the Indian state of Punjab and at least one million live outside South Asia (Dusenbery, 1989a).

Spouses are the largest single category of migrant settlement in the UK (Migration advisory Committee, 2009). "Spousal settlement" refers to migrants granted permanent residence rights on the basis of marriage and (for those nationalities

captured by immigration statistics) corresponds to the statistical category of "grants of settlement" to husbands and wives in the UK Border (Katharine Charsley et al 2012:864). Patterns of marriage-related migration to Britain- are diverse, reflecting the region's varied culture, religion, and migration histories (Ballard, 1990).

Women migration is a step towards modernization. Many second-generation male migrant seek a spouse in the country of origin. The 2001 UK census recorded that people from South Asian backgrounds were the least likely of the minority groups to be married to someone from a different ethnic group. At the same time, Punjabi Girls are also interested to marry a Non- Resident Indian (NRI) for the better prospects of their own future and to have access to a better standard of living. Pull factors such as better job opportunities, availability of regular work and relatively higher wages, better opportunities for education, better health facilities and better living conditions, impressive clean infrastructure, effective equitable administration and nice joyful sources of entertainment, etc. attract them. Since the 1980s, these have probably been predominantly British- born Indians marrying in their parental or grandparental homeland perhaps particularly Sikh (Singh and Tatla, 2006). Various empirical studies have shown that the determinants of migration and migration intentions for men and women tend to differ. While men generally have the major income role, women are expected to contribute to family and parental support (De Jong, 2000).

Policy Context: Spouse migration to the UK

The 'family route' is the main route for family migration to the UK. The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act imposed, very severe, restrictions on entry to Britain from the Asian sub-continent and thus transformed temporary migrants into permanent settlers (Ansari, 2004). A common response was for men temporarily working in Britain was to bring over their wives and families and form permanent homes. Thus, after 1962, the dominant flow of migrants was dependents (wives and children) rather than the economically active individuals (Ansari, 2004). The British Nationality Act of 1948 gave British citizenship to all residents of India and Pakistani (as to other members of the then British Empire and Commonwealth) (Peach, 2006.)

1 Indian Immigration to the UK, IMDS, Working Paper No.2

- Any British citizen can sponsor a marriage partner provided he or she shows a proof of an annual salary of \$18,600 held for at least six months prior to application. The rule, however, does not apply to EU Citizens.
- Spouse and civil partner of British Citizens are required to have been in the UK for three years and have ILR on the date of application. Rules of intention to live in the UK, good conduct, language skills, and also Life in the UK test apply to spouses (HM Government, 2015).

Socio-Cultural Challenges

Migration of Punjabi spouse from Punjab to the United Kingdom to join British husband has been prevalent since centuries. In most of the cases, transnational marriage is arranged either through a relative or an agent known to both the parties. Berthoud (2005) found that a majority of South Asian women came to Britain aged 11 over had an arranged marriage. Brides conventionally move to their husband's households, so that it has been suggested that for Punjabi women, "womanhood" implies (Bradby, 2000:236). Some of the following socio-cultural challenges usually faced by the Punjabi migrant spouse in the British society and within the Punjabi households.

➤ Multicultural Environment

Ethnic composition of UK is diverse. This diversity entails social & cultural challenges for the newly migrated Punjabi spouse to integrate in a multicultural society of UK. Language diversity also poses hurdles in the path of integration since a large number of the Punjabi women, in general, speak Punjabi language. It becomes difficult for them to interact with other women who speak English and other languages at the work place. South Asian women face negative stereotypes and discrimination in the British society.

➤ Domestic Violence

Punjabi spouses are subject to domestic violence in the UK. This domestic violence sometimes leads to divorce. Several studies suggest various forms of domestic violence occur among the Punjabi families in the UK. Dowry has been a bone of contention among the Punjabi families. Caste and community characteristics also play a destructive role in case of inter caste marriage. The majority of the Sikh diaspora in the UK (and also worldwide) is from the Jat caste, who were traditionally landed peasant farmers. In 2010 & 2011, the number of recorded cases of domestic violence against women in England were 697,870, including 41,494 incidents

reported in the West Midlands²

➤ Prevalence of Patriarchy

According to Vivek Kumar (2004), when men migrate, they do not migrate only as biological souls, they migrate with social-cultural baggage. Prevalence of patriarchal mindset in the Sikh families is quite predominant. Male authority is still enforced in almost all spheres of family life, and is usually supported by such kinship organization as "*Biradari*". Women are considered to be weak and needing protection by the male members of their families. Feminists argue that, patriarchy is the foundation of oppression against women, and it is from patriarchy that other categories of oppression against women are produced (Segal, 1993). Chakravarti (2013) argues that the subordination of women is a common feature of almost all stages of history, and is prevalent in large parts of the world, the extent and form of that subordination has been conditioned by the social and cultural environment in which women have been placed.

In Punjabi society, the status of women is subjective to various religious laws and the customs. Social structures constraints have apparently acted to reinforce the impact of prevailing customs to further deteriorate women's status. Stereotypically, Punjabi women are held responsible for maintaining family *izzat*. Female activities are either largely confined to the home or they are segregated and secluded from "male activities". Due to their seclusion, women have yet to realize their full economic and social significance in the society; they remain both economically and socially dependent on the male members of the family (Abdur Rauf, 1987:403). In a multicultural society of Britain, Punjabi women are hardly allowed by the male dominant households to participate in the highly westernized liberal world in a fear that it might bring bad reputation to the family. Several past studies indicate that older people of the households make objection on women's western attire. According to Sikh traditions, everyone in the household should visit Sikh Gurdwara (Sikh temple) and follow Sikh scriptures religiously. Such social and religious restrictions sometimes create intergenerational conflict between second and third generation's adolescent and older parents.

Opportunities in the UK

In the developed country like the United Kingdom, women enjoy more freedom and liberty than the under-developed countries. Women enjoy equal employment rights in egalitarian, open and tolerant & liberal British society. Over the past 40 years, the UK has seen an almost continual rise in

2 <https://www.desiblitiz.com/content/domestic-abuse-of-british-asian-women>.

the proportion of participation of women in labour market. The employment rate among women of 'prime working age' (aged 25-54) is up from 57% in 1975 to a record high of 78% in 2017³. Some of the opportunities are discussed to emphasize the viewpoint.

➤ **Employment Opportunities**

In line with traditional Punjabi culture and the reluctance of allowing women into a foreign workplace, earlier women generally stayed at home while the men went out to work. This changed in the 1970s with the collapse of manufacturing industries, the traditional bastions of employment for male immigrants, particularly in the Midlands and the North of England. The resulting higher rates of male unemployment opened up opportunities for unskilled immigrant women to join the labour force, primarily out of economic necessity (BSR, 2017)⁴. Table I presents data on Sikh women with full time and part time employment.

Ethnic minority Asian women enjoy equal employment opportunities in all industries of the UK. Discrimination in employment in any form based on religion or caste or color is considered unfair. Affirmative legislation is in place to protect women from any kind of social, economic or political harassment. Trade unions in the UK are now much better at responding to the legitimate demands of non-white and women workers and are now a central part of campaigns to extend rights that were previously denied to non-white workers. The first law banning discrimination on the basis of race was passed in 1968⁵.

Table I: Full time and part-time employment of Sikh Women in UK

Employment Status	Male (%)	Female (%)	Total (%)
Full-Time Employment	58	60	59
Part-time Employment	14	02	08
Self-employment	08	20	14
Others	20	18	19

Source: British Sikh Report (2017).

3 <https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/BN234.pdf>

4 British Sikh Report (2017), <http://www.britishsikhreport.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/British-Sikh-Report-2017-Online.pdf>.

5 <http://www.striking-women.org/module/workplace-issues-past-and-present/equal-opportunities#Race%20discrimination%20at%20work>.

➤ **Entitlement, Benefits and Rights**

Women's economic empowerment is the process of achieving women's equal access to and control over economic resources, and ensuring they can use them to exert increased control over other areas of their lives (Taylor and Pereznieta, 2014). The government of UK provides unemployment allowances to the unemployed women. Older women after the completion of 65 years are entitled to old age pension. Employees have the right to 52 weeks maternity leave from day one of their employment. Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) is paid by the employer for 39 weeks to women who meet the qualifying conditions. Casual or agency workers have the right to health and safety protection and the right not to be treated unfairly because of pregnancy or childbirth. Medical Services such as Diagnosis and treatment of certain contagious diseases e.g. TB or HIV, Diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, are exempt from charges⁶

Social security facilitates women's economic empowerment by alleviating poverty, reducing vulnerability to economic risks and supporting women to overcome barriers that prevent their economic participation, such as caring responsibilities. Social protection has positive, long-term implications for inclusive economic growth in developing countries given its overwhelmingly positive impacts on household productivity and labor market participation (Mathers and Slaters, 2014).

➤ **Community Based Organizations Support**

When a new migrant arrives in the host society it tries to seek information about services such as education, health, employment, housing, visa and citizen procedures, legal assistance to social and emotional support that is culture specific. In order to avail these services, a new migrant has to visit Community-based Organizations (CBOs) which offer settlement services which are socially inclusive and evolve community participation under immigration department policy guidelines. English classes for beginners, intermediate English classes and scrap-booking are given to the newly migrant spouse free of cost. Community based organizations funded by the UK government offer employment and financial assistance to the migrant spouse to acquire educational skills and qualifications to meet the industry requirement and advise them about other sources of support/information. Culturally appropriate and gender sensitive activities assist immeasurably migrant women to integrate into the British society and help in developing all round personality.

6 <https://www.maternityaction.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Undocumented-MRB-2018.pdf>

Conclusion

From the above discussion, we can conclude that Migrant Punjabi spouse can enhance their social and economic independence if they are given full freedom and liberty to live their life in their own way. There is need to change traditional outlook to facilitate migrant spouse to build up their professional career in the western liberal society. Male members of the household need to support migrant spouse to integrate and remove 'concrete ceiling' holding them back from achieving their potential and reaching their goals (Bennett et al 2006).

References

Abdur, Rauf (1987). Rural Women and the Family: A Study of a Punjabi Village In Pakistan, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, Vol.18.No.pp.403-415.

Ansari, H. (2004) *the Infidel Within: Muslims in Britain since 1800*, London: Hurst

Ballard, Roger. (1990) "Migration and Kinship: The Differential Effect of Marriage Rules on the Processes of Punjabi Migration to Britain." In South Asians Overseas. Ed. C. Clarke, C. Peach, and S. Vertovec. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. pp. 219-249.

Bennett, C. Tang, N. and Yeandle, S. (2006) *Women's Career Development in the Local Authority Sector in England Sheffield*: Centre for Social Inclusion, Sheffield Hallam University.

Berthoud, R. (2005) Family formulation in multicultural Britain: diversity and change in Loury, C., Modood, T. and Teles, S. (p.222-254) *Ethnicity, Social Mobility and Public Policy*, Cambridge: CUP

Bradby, H. 2000 "Locality, Loyalty and Identity: Experiences of Travel and Marriage Among Young Punjabi Women in Glasgow". In *Tourism and Sex: Culture; Commerce and Coercion*. Ed. S. Clift, and S. Carter. London: Pinter.

Chakravati, Uma (2013). Conceptualizing Brahminical Patriarchy in Early India: Gender, Caste and State, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.28, No.14, pp.579-585.

Coleman, D. (1995) "Spouse Migration from the Indian Sub-Continent to the UK: A Permanent Migration Stream?" *People and Place* 3(1):1-8.

De Jong, G. (2000) 'Expectations, gender and norms in migration decision-making', *Population Studies*, 54(3): 307-19.

Dusenbery, Verne A (1989a). Introduction: A Century of Sikh beyond Punjab. In the Sikh Diaspora. N Gerald Barrier and Verne A. Dusenbery, eds. Pp.1-28. Delhi: Chanakya Publications and Columbia, MO. South Asia Publications.

Gardner, K. (1995). *Global Migrants, Local Lives: Travel and Transformation in Rural Bangladesh*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gardner, K. (2006) "The Transnational Work of Kinship and Caring: Bengali-British Marriages in Historical Perspective." *Global Networks* 6(4):373-387.

Hugo, G.J. (1981) 'Village-community ties, village norms and ethnic and social networks: a review of evidence from the Third World', In De Jong, G.F. and Gardner, R.W. (eds) *Migration Decision Making; Multidisciplinary Approaches to Micro level Studies in Developed and Developing Countries*. New York: Pergamon Press, 187-218

Katharine Charsley, et al. (2012). Marriage-Related Migration to the UK, *The International Migration Review*, Vol.46, No.4, pp.861-890, Sage Publications Inc.

Kumar, Vivek (2004). Understanding Dalit Diaspora, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol.39.No.1.pp.114-116.

Mathers, N. and Slater, R. (2014) *Social protection and growth: Research synthesis*. London: ODI.

Peach, (2006) 'South Asian migration and settlement in Great Britain, 1951-2001', *Contemporary South Asia*, 15:2, 133 - 146.

Segal, M. (1993). The Academic confrontation with patriarchy: Two decades of feminist theory and practice in sociology and related disciplines. *Race, Sex & Class*, 1(1), 95-107.

Singh, G., and D. S. Tatla (2006). *Sikhs in Britain: The Making of a Community*. London: Zed Books.

Taylor, G. and Pereznieta, P. (2014) *Review of evaluation approaches and methods used by interventions on women and girls' economic empowerment*. London: ODI.

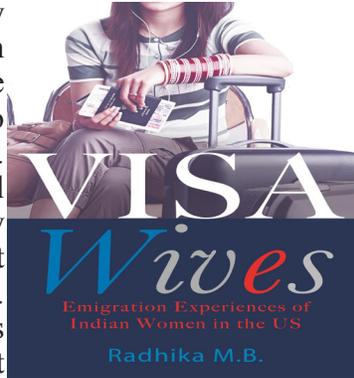
Rahul Kumar has submitted his PhD thesis on the topic: Migration and Well-beings of the Elderly Punjabis: A Comparative Study of Doaba (Punjab) and England (UK) to the Jawaharlal Nehru University. He is a member of the editorial board of "Global Research Forum for Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT)". He is also a freelance media journalist and has been contributing articles, news. He can be contacted at rkbsooru@gmail.com

Visa Wives: Immigration Experiences of Indian Women in the US

Reviewed by Vijay Kumar Soni

Visa Wives: Immigration Experiences of Indian Women in the US | Radhika M.B. | Penguin Random House | Pages: 332 | Price: Rs 399

When the debate over US Immigration Policy on H-1B visas rages, there is one aspect of human Diasporic predicament that has attracted the least attention - that of wives and children who form an integral part of H-1B visa holders' lives. When a person emigrates, it's not an individual alone, but also the close-knit nuclear family that form the saga of human displacement and cultural trans-national transportation. They are not only the cultural ambassadors of their mother country but also of the host country after they come back or move to a third country. The experiences and values they are exposed to form the backdrop of future generations' impression about the country to which people migrate for work or otherwise. Under the current dispensation, what makes Radhika's book "Visa Wives: Immigration Experiences of Indian Women in the US" so distinctive is its highly focused and contemporary look at the problem, which has become the talk of Indo-US bilateral workforce relationship.



A non-fiction work, the Visa Wives is divided into 22 chapters, each dealing with specific need of migratory experience. Starting with the American dream to the first feeling of immigrating to the US to cultural shock and a new life in an alien country, the book provides a descriptive seamless flow of life-changing events in an emigrant's life. Reasonably priced at Rs 399, the book could be picked up at an airport lounge, and by the time a person finishes reading it, he/she is well equipped with gambit of survival tactics before landing in the US.

Predictably, while highlighting some of the challenges faced by the Indian women in the US, the book dishes out practical solutions on issues such as assimilation, networking and making friends in an alien country, thus lightening the burden of Diasporic existence which is otherwise filled with fear, anxiety, uncertainty and volatile geo-political unpredictability. The new move of the Trump administration of re-considering the privileges given to the spouses of "high-skilled" foreign workers to work in the US, may affect some 200,000 people, a large number of whom are wives of H-1B visa holders. The right to work for dependent spouses in the US need to be seen in larger picture of inalienable human rights, rather

than parochial economic and social interests. The host countries, unarguably, have the rights to regulate their immigration policies as per their economic needs, but depriving those who have the required qualification and eligibility to work is a blatant violation of human rights. A more pragmatic and egalitarian approach to this problem should be that the right to work of the dependent visa holders should be factored in, while granting work permits such as H-1B visa.

The above conclusion may not be part of Radhika's book, but it very well points to the lacunae that exists in the US Immigration Policy. It also underlines the need of a charter of rights for immigrant workers and their spouses to end the discrimination that exists in the present legislations. Let's look at the basic premise of such a dilemma. What if an immigrant's spouse lives in the country of her/his origin? Will she/he not enjoy the rights of being employed? Then, why should she/he be penalized/discriminated for migrating to a third country and losing the inalienable rights of livelihood? True, that she is on a dependent visa, but does it not violate the rights of an individual.

Visa Wives is a case study into these disproportionate realignment challenges faced by women whose survival is at stake in a strange, new and sometimes in an indifferent country. By bringing up the personal historiography of individual women like Sarika, Bindu, Kaushalya, Vijaya, Puja, Sathya, Latha, Vidya, Nalini, Shivani, Rupashree, Rani, Pooja and others, Radhika has intertwined every facets of their struggle to the limelight. From fear of immigration, to child rearing, to food habits and searching for accommodation and friends, Visa Wives, provides a glimpse into the daily lives of these characters. They are the real individuals living in the milieu of American dream. One of the facts that the book highlights in a searing contrast is the employment insecurities of those on H-1B visa and the in-house corporate politics of exploitation steered by the market volatility. What happens when a H-1B visa holder loses his job and the subsequent uncertainty? They constantly live with this sword of Democles hanging over their heads.

Migration, Diaspora and Development: An Indian Perspective

7-8th March, 2019

Centre for Diaspora Studies (Independent Centre) Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar

Call for Paper

The twenty first century immigrants' experiences are quite different from the previous immigrant generation. The International Migration Report (2017) states that 3.4 percent of the world's inhabitant population today are international migrants. It is constituted 258 million population is living in a country other than their country of birth (UN- DESA). In the southern hemisphere of globe, along with other continents, Asia has also emerged as one of the important regions that has been contributing large number of international migrants in the world. This geographical region alone, contributes approximately 61 million population in the world migration. According to latest report of the UN-DESA, India has largest Diaspora (17 Million) population in the world who are residing outside their country of origin. And, according to the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India, there are approximately 31.2 million Indian diaspora spread across the world.

Important Dates

1	Last date for receiving short abstract	31st December 2018
2	Intimation about selection of abstracts	11th January 2019
3	Last date for receiving full paper	15th February 2019
4	Dates of International Conference	7-8th March 2019
5	Venue of International Conference	Central University of Gujarat, Gandhinagar, Sector-29.

For any further information or query please contact:

Dr. Naresh Kumar (Assistant Professor & Conference Convenor) **Email:** migrationdiasporaintconf2019@gmail.com **Mob.:** (+91) 09726773239

The Indian Information Technology revolution of 1990s while opening the door of opportunity for IT professionals, also brought in new concept of trans-national work relations. There was a continuous flux of manpower movement from India to the US and other European countries post-1990s, thus giving birth to new matrix of global migration. The US and 'Made in America' products fascinated Indian ambition as one of the characters Sairam in the book narrates that "When, as a teenager, an aerogram from America had arrived at a neighbour's home with some chewing gum stuck to it. He had got half of it. They treated it like a Tirupatiprasadam"

The Visa Wives is a first-hand narrative of those at the frontier of trans-national migration. Although, as the writer herself points out, there have been enough studies on the non-immigrant visa workers, few have taken a closer look at the families and the better-halves of those who emigrate. The uniqueness of the book lies in its journalistic narration and the repercussion of dilemmas on the filial affiliation. The women, as in all conflict zones of human survival, are always the worst sufferers. Radhika says in the book, "There is mention of Indian women who came as wives as early as 1910. Anti-Asian sentiment was so strong that when the fourth Indian woman arrived in the US, newspaper headlines read 'Hindu Women Next Swarm to California.'" The perceived threat from the migrants and the reaction of the US media has not changed even after the process of globalization set in. The sentiment finds apt expression in 'hire Americans' slogans adopted by the new regime.

There are however two aspects that Visa Wives should have incorporated to make it a complete, and fluid narration of

stories. One, the individual cases should have been woven into a single stream to make it a continuum narration instead of each case study standing alone on its own individual merit. This could have been made possible by taking a thematic approach to the issues at hand. Second, and also as in most Diasporic studies, escaping ghettoization is nearly inescapable which leaves us only with one-sided viewpoints. Most diasporic populations, for obvious reason of identity, remain confined to regional or national acquaintances, thus leaving less space for acculturation and assimilation. Including some case studies of how Indian visa wives are perceived by the Native American women could have added some assimilative flavor to the wonderful and timely case studies.

Giving a parting piece of advice, Radhika, herself a visa wife says, "As a new arrival on a dependent visa, the perceived banality of American landscapes can put you off. But if you train your mind to look beyond the monotony of spaces, you will find the new blessings that the place has to offer." So, the Visa Wives is not only about the trial and tribulations and challenges faced by women emigrants but also about the opportunities and promises that lie in disguise for the more adventurous souls. In all fairness, it should be admitted that the book is a practical handbook of survival for dependent spouses and should be judged within the ambit of its perimeter rather than an academic descriptive study.

Vijay Kumar Soni, Ph.D. Scholar, SOITS, IGNOU, veejay.soni@gmail.com

Migration and Diasporas: An Interdisciplinary Journal

ISSN:

E-ISSN:

Subscription Details	Annual	Single Copy
Print Copy		
India (INR) :	Rs. 1000	Rs. 500
Other Countries (USD):	\$ 50	\$ 25
*Including postal charges		
E-copy		
India (INR) :	Rs. 500	Rs. 250
Other Countries (USD):	\$ 25	\$ 13

Inquiries: Global Research Forum on Diaspora Transnationalism (GRFDT), L2/37 A, DDA, Ekta Square, Kalkaji, Alaknanda, New Delhi 110019

Copy Right: Global Research Forum on Diaspora Transnationalism (GRFDT)

Email: editor@grfdt.com

The data, views, opinions etc being published in this journal, are the sole responsibility of the authors. Neither the publishers nor the Editor(s) are in any way responsible for them.

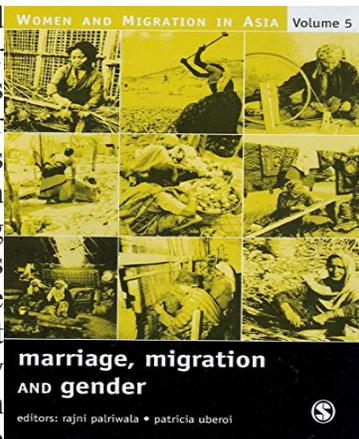
Marriage, migration and gender

Review by Tasha Agarwal

Palriwala, R., & Uberoi, P. (Eds.). (2008). Marriage, migration and gender (Vol. 5). SAGE Publications Ltd.

The book is a fifth subset in the series titled 'Women and Migration in Asia' and so far it has come up covering various dimensions related to Women Migration. This particular issue on Marriage, Migration and Gender has been subdivided into five sections, each section dealing with different aspects concerning marriage and Migration. The first section is an introductory session by the editors of the book themselves where they discussed about diverse marriage rules laid down by the society and discusses about the agency of women in commercially negotiated marriage. They also briefly touched upon the inter-linkages of migration laws and marriage of few countries.

The second section titled 'Marriage as Migration' contains three chapters. The first chapter by Delia Davin discusses about Hukou system and how has that led to spatial hierarchy. Despite the existing bottleneck of Hukou system, women use marriage migration as a means to move up the spatial hierarchy. The author has discussed the impact of marriage migration on sending and receiving area. The author has also discussed on the aspect of trafficking which takes place behind the veil of marriage migration. The second chapter by Teresita C. del Rosario has provided an account of marriage migration among Filipino women. The author begins by laying down the detailed account of history of migration from Philippines and discusses on US-Philippines relationship. By using narratives on the personal account of the respondents, the author has elaborated on the cultural aspect of marriage and women's agency in it. The third chapter by U. Kalpagam discusses the marriage practices among Tamil Brahmans where either the groom or the bride is the American immigrant. The author mentions about the interplay between marriage and American Varna where American Varna also follows hierarchical pattern in terms of their immigration status in US. The author talks a bit about the profile of these Indian immigrant settled in US and the various channels and networks used by them in order to find the 'cultured' Indian bride. The author, interestingly, discusses about the role of temple priest as a commercial agent who has a major role to play for match making.



In continuation with the discussion on commercial agents, the second section devotes exclusively on 'Brokering Marriage'. The first article by Melody Chia-wen Lu presents the scenario of commercially arranged cross border marriages in Taiwan. She redefines the concept of 'borders' and begins with discussing on demographic character and ethnic composition of both bride and groom. While discussing on the factors motivating cross border migration, the author has emphasized on an important linkage between women's marriage migration and their multiple role as domestic labour and sex worker. The author puts emphasis on the importance of networks and social capital in promoting matchmaking where, apart from commercial matchmakers, most of the migration takes place by informal contact of women from same village. These informal matchmakers make fortune by carrying out of their task of arranging brides. She has put the entire marriage market into three broader categories, namely, human trafficking, Mail Order Bride, and trade marriage; all having their own set of consequences. The next chapter by Therese Blanchet elaborates on the phenomenon of sold wives which takes place in Northern part of India where the Bangladeshi Girls are sold in Indian states of Haryana, Punjab, and Rajasthan etc. The author has traced down the route through which these women are sold and made to reach their destination. By documenting the narratives of the sold wives, the author has provided an account of hardship faced by these women where these women are kept in solitary confinement where she is not allowed to interact but, at the same time, is also responsible for household, farm and sex work. Here the important role of dalalshave been discussed who earns good amount to provide wives. The third chapter by Ester Gallo provides another perspective on marriage migration where the Malayali women migrant in Italy, instead of carrying a 'victimized' image, plays an active role in transnational marriage and makes an informed choice rather than passive acceptance. The author has detailed out the historical account of Malayali women migration in different time period to Italy. Interestingly, the author puts that conspicuous consumption

in marriage is a norm where it is not only desired by the family but also by the migrant women.

The fourth section on 'Marriage transaction and transnational context' brings in the importance of monetary transactions or dowry as an integral part of the process of transnational marriage. The chapter by RanjanaSheeexplores this dimension among Indian migrants in Canada. Canadian policy of multiculturalism has led to reinforcement of confidence among people to showcase their ethnic identity. This, according to author, is witnessed in four scenarios, namely, the display of ethnic affluence, showcasing affluence in daughter's marriage, marriage migration strategy and acculturation in the foreign land. The second chapter by Xiang Biao explores the system of dowry and transnational marriage among Indian IT professionals. He mentioned the nuance of H4 visa and the subsequent dependency which it creates among educated women married to IT professionals. He explored the transnational marriage market and studied the phenomenon on how match making takes place and the preference of having Indian spouse,are set. The author presents the chapter by keeping dowry at the center of the entire discussion on transnational marriage. Here dowry plays a very important role as it sometimes, apart from being a transfer of resources, are also considered important to finance the travel to work abroad, which would earn them laurels in the society.

In the last section titled 'The Strains of Marriage Migration', Katherine Charsley details out the adjustment process of Pakistani Ghar Damads in Britain and the inter-sectionality of gender in the entire process. She discusses the phenomenon of close kin marriage and generates a discussion surrounding the idea of masculinity. The next paper by Kanwal Mand looks into experience of widowhood, separation and divorce among the transnational Sikh women. She mentions the importance of policies of the host country by explaining that the migrant women accessing the kin support is mediated not just by cultural norms, but to a large extent, is guided by immigration policy. Margret Abraham's chapter talks about one of the most important concerns relating to transnational marriage of women i.e. domestic violence. In her chapter she discussed about the issues of domestic violence among Indian diaspora in United States. She also touched upon the aspect where preference of bride from own community is witnessed as they will be maintaining 'Indian Values'. The handling of cases of domestic violence using the racial, cultural and gender stereotyping by the police and courts of US has been put through and the efforts of civil societies, in general, and Sakhi, in particular, towards addressing the issue of domestic violence among south Asian women have been discussed. The last chapter by Kirti Singh discusses the legal aspect

concerning child custody in case of separation or breakdown of transnational marriages. She discussed about the existing laws and judgment of the court which are sometimes colored with biasedness against people with particular ethnicity and gender. She discussed the scenario of child abduction and the effect of such act on the child.

The book contains nice composition of essays covering different issues concerning marriage migration. Ranging from ethnocentric bride preference to forced marriage to legal aspect concerning child custody in case of separation. In academic literature, where the lack of studies on intersection of gender and migration has often been discussed upon, this books comes up as a step towards bridging that gap. Not only does the book cover diverse range of issues, it also builds a platform for further research which can be undertaken in the area of gender and migration.

The cover page of the book seems to be inapt as it merely displays female labours, rather than depicting marriage and trans-nationality, however, the content of the book is rich. The editor has also provided a short biography of all the authors who have contributed the chapters for the book. Overall, the book is an interesting read and is more relevant for social science researchers working in the area of gender and migration.

Tasha Agarwal, PhD Scholar, Ambedkar University
Delhi agarwal.tasha@gmail.com

Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT) is a consortium of researchers and policy makers drawn from national and international universities, institutes and organizations. GRFDT is presently based in India and is shaping as the largest such group focusing specifically on the issues related to diaspora and transnationalism.

The GRFDT works as an academic and policy think tank by engaging national and international experts from academics, practitioners and policy makers in a broad range of areas such as migration policies, transnational linkages of development, human rights, culture, gender to mention a few. In the changing global environment of academic research and policy making, the role of GRFDT will be of immense help to the various stakeholders. Many developing countries cannot afford to miss the opportunity to harness the knowledge revolution of the present era. The engagement of diaspora with various platform need to be reassessed in the present context to engage them in the best possible manner for the development human societies by providing policy in-put at the national and global context.