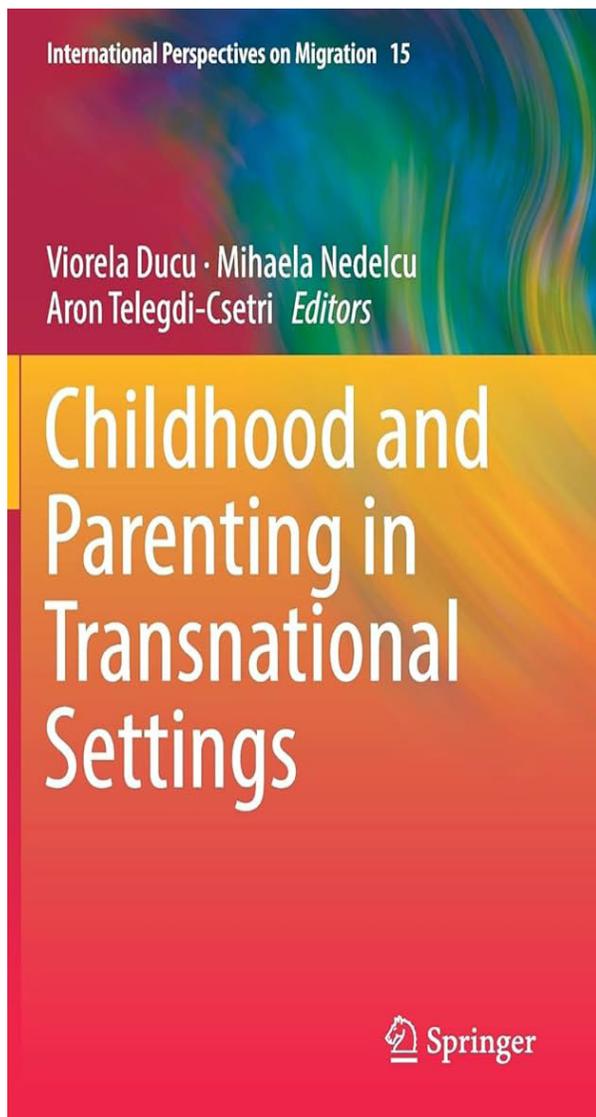


ROOTS & ROUTES

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Dear Readers, Greetings!

Human trafficking is a grave and pervasive issue that transcends borders and affects countless lives. It thrives on vulnerabilities, and anyone can fall prey to it, irrespective of their age, gender, and nationality. The consequences of trafficking are devastating, as victims not only face physical but also psychological abuse. Victims of trafficking lose their freedom and control over their lives. Significant efforts are taking place at both the global and national levels, and there is a need for a more intense and focused approach in this area, not only to help and rescue the victims but also to prevent people from becoming victims. This issue aims to investigate the critical issues associated with trafficking and its laws. Additionally, it will address the critical issue of partiality in treating refugees.

In this edition of Roots and Routes, we have covered two articles and a book review.

The first article offers a thought-provoking analysis on trafficking written by Tawafuddin Azimi, the article is titled “***Dominant Approaches in Counter Trafficking: A Constructive Critique in the Indian Context***”. It investigates into the complexities of human trafficking, offering an insightful critique of anti-trafficking efforts and their impact.

The second article in this edition, authored by **Melody Khuoltaikim Singson**, is titled “***Partiality in the Treatment of Ukrainian Refugees Sparks Outrage: Are Non-European Refugees Discriminated Against?***” It delves into the complex issue of refugee treatment in Europe amidst the ongoing Russia-Ukraine conflict. The article sheds light on the discrimination faced by non-Ukrainian refugees in Europe, emphasizing that refugees from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia have not received the same treatment as Ukrainian refugees. The article calls for greater efforts to ensure equal rights and fair treatment for all asylum seekers and refugees.

Additionally, this edition features a book review titled “***Childhood and Parenting in Transnational Settings***,” reviewed by Sila Mishra.
Top of Form

We invite our readers to participate and share their experiences with us for a more meaningful engagement. You can reach out to us via email at editorinchief@grfdt.com. We hope you enjoy reading and eagerly await your suggestions and comments.

Happy Reading!

Feroz Khan

DOMINANT APPROACHES IN COUNTER TRAFFICKING: A CONSTRUCTIVE CRITIQUE IN THE INDIAN CONTEXT

Abstract

Human trafficking is a highly complex phenomenon that persists, drawing hundreds of thousands of victims worldwide, affecting stable democracies as well as conflict ridden societies indiscriminately. Existing anti-trafficking mechanisms adopted by governments and international organizations are incommensurate with the magnitude of the issue. This article, drawing upon secondary sources, aims at a brief assessment of the incongruities between the intentions of anti-trafficking mechanisms and their real impact. In this regard, it attempts to explain the unabated, if not increasing, presence of the crime worldwide. Anti-trafficking measures, in many cases, instead of protecting victims, further infringe their human rights and thus re-victimize them. This article specifically analyses these concerns, and explores issues such as human trafficking within the framework of voluntary migration, and some of the shortcomings of the UN Trafficking Protocol. Subsequently, it comments on the human rights impacts of anti-trafficking instruments in India. The article challenges some of the erroneous notions regarding victims and prevention measures in mainstream discourse and puts forward suggestions for approaching the issue from a better perspective.

Key words: *Anti-trafficking mechanisms, Human Rights, Human Trafficking, India*

Introduction

Counter trafficking mechanisms worldwide prescribe elaborate laws for prosecuting offenders but fall short when it comes to preventing the crime and protecting victims. This could be because of inadequate awareness regarding the ground realities that drive human trafficking among stakeholders like governments, media, academia and religious institutions (Vijayarasa 2017, p.19). Statistics on human trafficking tend to be

inconsistent, owing to the surreptitious nature of the crime. Secondly, there exist a number of contentious definitions as to what involves human trafficking. Some countries conflate human trafficking, prostitution and human smuggling, failing to make adequate distinction between these while some others routinely disregard internal trafficking and trafficking for non-sexual forms of exploitation. These incoherences hamper the proper investigation of the issue (Kapur 2007, 115).

Furthermore, victims of human trafficking or people who have had first-hand experience of migrant exploitation are rarely stakeholders in designing counter trafficking policies. Consequently, a substantial portion of existing counter trafficking mechanisms, like those in India and Nepal reflects a morally conservative approach centered on sexual exploitation/ prostitution. Thus, they fail to address intimate connection with poverty, migration, unemployment, labour laws, education and gender discrimination.

Domestic Prevention Measures and Curbing Migration

A particularly skewed approach in prevention measures is that most governments, instead of working towards eliminating exploitation at destinations, focus on restricting the actual movement of people. Some destination countries conflate human trafficking and immigration. These governments project it as an issue of national security (Ramona 2017, p 26) demanding restrictive immigration laws, a tactic aimed at stemming immigration and sex work (ILO 2105, PP. 2, 8). Consequently, policy measures may entail illegal detentions or immediate repatriations, even subverting principles of non-refoulement: actions which do tremendous harm to the human rights of migrants.

Whereas prevention measures in source countries often involve 'safe' migration policies placing excessive

restrictions on the mobility of prospective migrants. This particularly affects women and adolescents, limiting their rights to freedom of movement and livelihood (ILO 2019). South Asian governments, like in Nepal, have various labor migration policies which prohibit women of certain age groups from migrating for low skilled work in the Arab states and Southeast Asia. These restrictions on the grounds of age and gender entailed unintended consequences for women like increased dependence on irregular migration channels, which ultimately led to greater vulnerability to being trafficked (ILO 2105, p. 9).

Human trafficking is intertwined with irregular migration. Restrictive immigration policies prompt potential migrants to rely on informal recruitment channels and find themselves in exploitative situations upon arrival in destination countries. Similarly, age, gender and occupational bans criminalizing workers within policies worsen their vulnerability to abuses, rather than protecting them. Such restrictions on migration do not in fact deter victims from these risky expeditions as long as supply and demand in an occupation are strong and consistent, regardless of the nature of the work (ILO 2019, p.1).

Instead, policies aiming at formalizing employment relationships and eliminating exploitation at work should be pursued. This includes strong labor governance measures mandating the accountability of employers for ensuring compliance with international social protection standards and labor rights across supply chains. Safe migration programmes should be replaced with policies that support mobility by informed choice as in laws mandating labor recruiters to provide accurate information to potential workers on working and living conditions. Cross border trafficking could be best mitigated by cooperation between governments of countries involved and improving migrant protection schemes. Assigning special authority to police and border personnel to prevent trafficking is detrimental to the human rights of victims (ILO, 2019, p 3).

The UN Trafficking Protocol – Drawbacks of a Prosecution Oriented Approach

The UN Trafficking Protocol advocates for a '[human rights based](#)' approach. Such an approach practically

bases policies on assessing their impact on individual victims and ensuring that their human rights will be effectively protected. This demands accountability from governments and recruiters for contraventions of the same. Unfortunately, anti-trafficking mechanisms in almost every country radically contradict this victim-oriented approach (Pattanaik 2007, p 7).

In fact, some clauses in the Trafficking Protocol itself contradict this human rights-based approach, because the protocol is essentially premised on viewing human trafficking as a criminal enterprise, with prosecution of the trafficker given preponderance. This relegates the agency of the victim and his/her distinct experiences to secondary importance, thus narrowing the complex issue of human trafficking to a helpless victim malevolent trafficker dichotomy. This dents the ascertainment of the real factors which drive human trafficking. For example, the treatment of victims' consent by the protocol corroborates this incongruity. The consent of the victim should be proven as obtained through [malicious](#) means, the burden of which rests upon the prosecutor. If the employment of such prohibited means is proved, then the consent of the victim is immaterial before law. In case of absence of the prohibited means, the victim might not be thereafter deemed as trafficked. This procedure offers victims the proclivity to falsify their accounts and deny having given consent in cases where they were originally aware of the risks involved. Hence, it provides loopholes for the trafficker to escape indictment and punishment (Azimi, 2022).

Victim Stereotypes

This undue emphasis on the acts of the trafficker could be attributed to the notion of the quintessential victim of trafficking as propagated by the media- young, female, poor, uneducated, sexually abused, and totally incapable of discernment. But in reality, trafficking rarely corresponds with the narrative of the kidnapped and helpless young woman; instead, it involves more frequently economic migrants (Vijayarasa 2017, 44). In their research based in Ukraine and Vietnam, Vijayarasa and others concluded that the more educated and financially sound sections of the society had a higher vulnerability to being trafficked (Vijayarasa 2017, pp 101, 123, 132). In such circumstances, human trafficking was driven by voluntary migration, owing to seem-

ingly better prospects of life in destination countries, but the victims finding themselves in situations of exploitation after arrival (Vijayarasa 2017, p 123).

The definition of human trafficking as encapsulated in the Trafficking Protocol fails to accommodate these forms of trafficking and therefore, Vijayarasa calls for an alternative definition, which discards victim stereotypes and acknowledges trafficking's intimate connection with economic migration (Vijayarasa 2017, p191). Hence, legal instruments premised on the protocol should adequately address non-sexual forms of trafficking like forced labour.

Shortcomings of Domestic Anti Trafficking Laws and Their Enforcement in The Indian Context

India lacks a comprehensive definition of trafficking either as a common minimum platform for states to coordinate or for prescribing remedies for all kinds of trafficking (Thomas 2011, pp 36,37). The Immoral Trafficking Prevention Act, India's cardinal anti-trafficking law, almost exclusively focuses on sexual exploitation and hence, non-sexual forms of trafficking go severely under-recognized. A patriarchal bias permeates anti-trafficking laws in India, as the discourse on anti-trafficking largely revolves around the legality of prostitution and the moral turpitude associated with it. Additionally, the ITPA couldn't be called a sensitive law as it does not draw adequate distinction between the trafficker and the victim, and hence contains provisions which punish victims, for instance (Thomas 2011, pp 36,37).

As per statistics, cases of human trafficking are increasing in India. Yet disproportionately few victims are identified. India has an extremely low conviction rate of 27 percent¹. This could be because of a lack of robust investigation system and a justice system that is largely inaccessible to victims². Even when traffickers have been identified, there are few arrests and much lesser prosecutions (Jones & others 1985, P 8).

Indian anti-trafficking laws have been developed without adequate participation of victims or vulnerable groups like migrants, sex workers and people engaged in low skilled jobs in the unorganized sector. India doesn't have a comprehensive migration policy and the

existing migration laws adopt different standards for dealing with emigration, immigration and repatriation, the impact of which is influenced by the religion, class and gender of the subject (Pattanaik 2007, p 128).

Human Rights Impact of Anti-Trafficking Laws in India

The preponderance on sex work, in practice, vilifies sex workers, disregarding the fact that they have human rights to dignity, freedom and livelihood. This is manifest in "brothel raids", which are coercive exercises forming the initial step towards 'rescuing' women and children in the commercial sex industry, ignoring whether the adult sex workers were trafficked or voluntarily inducted. The ITPA gives disproportionate authority to police officers and magistrates in matters related with the rescue and rehabilitation of victims. This is detrimental to the interests of the victim as instances of police officers manhandling sex workers and communally motivated raids are common. (Pattanaik 2007, p 123).

Some laws regarding human trafficking unjustly punish women involved in prostitution while the perpetrators, who can be the trafficker who recruited these women for sex trade or brothel keepers who lodge them in exploitative conditions, are let off with minimal sentence – something that induces traffickers commit the crime with impunity. Because of this, in Indian brothels, women who were or had been sex workers often hesitate to co-operate with law enforcement agencies fearing reprisals from corrupt police and brothel owners (Jones & others 1985). This lack of a conducive atmosphere for victims to testify and an absence of witness protection schemes coupled with protracted legal proceedings undermine the detection and punishment of violators.

The immediate redress offered to victims are administrative detention centers, which often involve the loss of liberty, deplorable living conditions and invasive medical tests. This may prompt victims to hark back to prostitution. Therefore, such inordinate detentions should be immediately abandoned (USD 2022). Circumstances like these indicate that existing counter trafficking mechanisms need to be revisited as they imperil the human rights of victims while having insufficient punitive impact on the trafficker.

Conclusion

The effective addressing of human trafficking requires a radical shift from conventional and stereotypical notions surrounding human trafficking and its victims, which dominate mainstream policy discourses. Anti-trafficking policies and interventions should be developed on an evidence-based approach drawing upon consultations with people who have been trafficked and other vulnerable groups like irregular migrants and sex workers. Legal instruments must acknowledge trafficking's inextricable link with economic migration especially, when it is pursued via informal channels of recruitment. Formalization of recruitment channels and mandating compliance with international labor standards from employers and recruiters along with better intergovernmental coordination help at preventing labour and sexual exploitation of migrants. Such a holistic approach centered on upholding and effectively protecting the human rights of victims and vulnerable communities is an indispensable step towards eradicating human trafficking.

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PARTIALITY IN TREATMENT OF UKRAINIAN REFUGEES SPARKS AN OUTRAGE: ARE NON-EUROPEAN REFUGEES DISCRIMINATED AGAINST?

As of August 2022, an estimate of over 6.4 million Ukrainians has fled the country to the neighbouring countries, seeking safety for their families and loved ones amidst Russia's special military operation that began on February 2022. This has triggered one of the largest and hastiest refugee exodus in Europe since the end of World War II. The global response to refugees, but especially from the neighbouring countries, has been described as "tremendous solidarity and hospitality." For instance, the European Commission promised to welcome refugees with open arms. Slovakia and Poland let refugees into their countries without passports or valid travel documents, Ireland lifted visa requirements, the United Kingdom relaxed its visa requirements for refugees, the European Union proposed and offered Temporary Protection Directive (TPD) for at least three years, and the United States attempted to fast-track the application process and pledged to accept 100,000 refugees. In addition, the EU also proposed simplifying border controls and entry conditions for Ukrainian refugees. Ukrainian refugees can travel visa-free for 90 days throughout EU countries. The public and politicians have also been mobilizing as a display of solidarity and support. Amidst this commendable solidarity and hospitality shown to Ukrainian refugees, there has been an outrage regarding the perceived discrimination of non-Ukrainian refugees in Europe. In this article, I reflect on and discuss the purported discrimination of non-Ukrainian refugees. I argue that the racialized treatment of non-European asylum seekers and refugees witnessed during the Russo-Ukraine conflict is not an isolated, once-off event. Rather, it is a reflection of protracted discrimination against non-European asylum seekers and refugees in Europe. It reflects the failure of relevant authorities to implement the dictates of the international refugee protection regime, and therefore, more efforts are required to ensure that the rights of all asylum seekers and refugees are protected in practice.

Not every refugee fleeing from Ukraine was shown a warm welcome, specifically those hailing from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia. Reporters have documented dehumanizing treatment, such as racism, obstruction, and violence, against international students from these regions. Non-white students and migrant workers who had been

living lawfully in Ukraine faced blatant discrimination. The stories surrounding this have been numerous. A Nigerian medical student was told by the guards at the border that "if you are black, you should walk." A Nigerian doctor narrated seeing non-white refugees being beaten with sticks while being stranded at the border for more than two days. On reaching Poland, a Somalian medical student studying in Kyiv was told that "accommodation at the hotel was only for Ukrainians." A Guinean student studying in Kharkiv described how he was turned back at the border while white refugees were allowed to cross over into Poland. One student from Ghana described her experience, saying: "Mostly, they would consider White people first. White people first, Indian people, Arabic people before Black people." Priority on vehicles leaving the country was given to white women and children, while African women were barred from trains departing Kyiv even though there were many empty seats. Clearly, there is a prioritization of some people over others; whether it is based on race or nationality is uncertain.

The essence of how an international refugee protection regime should work exists in solidarity and mobility of support, especially in times of crisis; keeping borders open, not penalizing refugees for arriving without valid identity, and restricting the use of detention measures, refugees being able to join their family members free in other countries. However, history reveals that this is not how the international protection regime operates in Europe, particularly in those countries that are now accepting Ukrainian refugees. European countries that first refused non-European refugees have now felt moved to provide refuge for their fellow white Europeans. Public discourse in Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania is frequently tainted by racist and xenophobic rhetoric about refugees and migrants, particularly those from Middle Eastern and African countries. They have also adopted hostile policies like border pushbacks and draconian detention measures. Some reporters have expressed their disbelief that a refugee crisis could occur in Europe among people "so like us." The treatment of white Ukrainian refugees is different from the racialized refugees from places like South Sudan, Somalia, Syria, Afghanistan, and Haiti. For instance, Canada has

accepted the same number of Ukrainian refugees in three months as from Afghanistan over the past year, despite longstanding promises to accept Afghan refugees.

In late 2021, the atrocious treatment of mostly Iraqi and Afghan migrants and asylum seekers trapped on Belarus's borders with Poland and Lithuania sparked outrage across Europe. Belarus was accused of weaponizing the predicament of the refugees by enticing them to Belarus to travel further into EU countries as retaliation against EU sanctions. The refugees and migrants were brutalized by Polish border guards. Many sustained serious injuries, and thousands were left stranded in the freezing winter temperatures between the two countries in deplorable conditions with no food, shelter, medicines, or blankets. At least 19 migrants succumbed to the frigid cold. In response, Poland erected razor-wire fencing, constructed a 186-kilometre wall to prevent asylum seekers entering from Belarus, and adopted legislation that expels anyone crossing the borders at irregular intervals and bans their re-entry. Regardless of the stand-off between Poland and Belarus, the former nation did not extend a warm welcome to its refugees. Asylum seekers were hardly granted refugee status (out of 2,803 applications in 2020, only 161 were granted refugee status), and a total of 1,675 migrants and asylum seekers were in detention in January 2022, as compared to 122 in 2020.

The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) said in a report released on September 6, 2022, that 7.1 million Ukrainians have applied for refuge in EU members, especially in Germany, Poland, Hungary, and Romania. The country that accepted the most Ukrainians was neighbouring Poland, with 2.5 million, followed by Hungary, with 1.3 million, and Germany, with roughly one million. According to the report, over 4 million Ukrainians were taken into temporary protection programs. In disparity, however, during the decade-long Syrian civil war, the EU has only welcomed 1.1 million Syrians. According to UN data, 560,000 Syrian refugees have been taken in by Germany, 560,000 by Sweden, Austria, the Netherlands, and France, and 120,000 by Greece.

The double standards and racism inherent in Europe's refugee responses are glaring in the fact that no calls were made from Brussels to detain the Ukrainian refugees for up to 18 months. The Bulgarian Prime Minister Kiril Petkov spoke on the matter: "These are not the refugees

we are used to... These people are Europeans... These people are intelligent; they are educated people... This is not the refugee wave we have been used to, people we were not sure about their identity, people with unclear pasts, who could have even been terrorists."

Several African leaders, including Nigerian President Muhammadu Buhari, strongly criticized the discrimination on the borders of Ukraine by stating that everyone has the same right to cross international borders to flee conflict and seek safety. The African Union stated that "reports that Africans are singled out for unacceptable dissimilar treatment would be shockingly racist and a breach of international law" and called for all countries to "show the same empathy and support to all people fleeing war notwithstanding their racial identity." Similar messages were shared by the UN Secretary-General, Antonio Guterres, who tweeted: "I am grateful for the compassion, generosity and solidarity of Ukraine's neighbours who are taking in those seeking safety. It is important that this solidarity is extended without any discrimination based on race, religion or ethnicity." The UN High Commissioner for Refugees stressed that "it is crucial that receiving countries continue to welcome all those fleeing conflict and insecurity—irrespective of nationality and race and that they receive adequate international support to carry out this task." Clearly, there is profound racial discrimination against non-European migrants in European countries, as revealed through the Russo-Ukraine conflict and the consequent racialized treatment of refugee seekers from Ukraine. This calls for more efforts toward the protection of the rights of all asylum seekers and refugees, regardless of nationality or race. There is a need to move beyond the refugee protection rhetoric espoused by agencies such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees towards their practical implementation, which shall realize the non-racialized treatment of refugees.

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CHILDHOOD AND PARENTING IN TRANSNATIONAL SETTINGS

Viorela Ducu , Mihaela Nedelcu , Aron Telegdi-Csetri (2019) *Childhood and Parenting in Transnational Settings*, International Perspectives on Migration (Volume 15), Springer 978-3030081379, 204 p.

“As fluid and idiosyncratic as transnational life might be, it only acquires meaning, therewith significance, once it acquires sociality per se.”

The book is an endeavour towards value-cultivation in transnational migration by giving voice to the gender revolution and touching upon the issues of emotion-deaf care politics, fatherhood dynamics, the role of the family in increasing the vulnerability of the children, ICT in the moral economy and grandparents’ agency in intergenerational solidarity. Each essay is a creatively narrated emotional account that touches key strings in a transnational familial setup and has contributed to the present-dependent self-understanding approach. There are ten chapters in this book based on “Children in transnational families” and “challenges around parenting in migration”.

Recognising transnational migration from the lens of Filipino children, Asuncion Fresnoza-Flot, in chapter 1 explored a plethora of dimensions like contextual and temporal mobility with the change in arrangements of child care, stay-behind children’s spatial mobility from one family to another, educational mobility, mobility across administrative contexts, socio-cultural mobility and attempted to capture the journey of self-identification and generation of social capital in his limited sample. With fluid precision, the chapter provides an account of the emotional experiences of children emanating from family separation and reunification as well as the mobility and immobility experienced by the children. The author points toward the necessity for an analytical framework that is empathetic towards the perspective

of children, their spatiality, agency, and subjectivity and emphasised unlocking the nexus between micro and macro level processes. However, the chapter has not provided basic information on the socio-cultural and economic status of the respondents (e.g., land holdings, monthly consumption expenditure, sibship size, gender of the child, and the differently abled status of the child, literacy, class, household infrastructure, marital status of the migrant member among others). This is essential in understanding the context and drawing meaningful insights into the scientific aspect of the study. Additionally, though the author claims about the diversity of childhood in various socio-cultural and political settings, the majority of migrant mothers are into domestic services and lack information on sibship size and gendered data it becomes difficult to comment upon the sample being representative of the population. A small sample size of children was studied without a detailed account of their personal

and socio-economic characteristics like sibship size and gender blurs the nexus created by the author in the objective and empirical evidence. From the methodology, it is still unclear why the author chose Belgium and France as destination countries, whether it was because of the trends in outmigration from secondary data, or whether these countries are special cases demanding an investigation. The three distinct cases of migration are compelling environments to understand the dynamics of migration and childhood. Had there been a discussion on the coping mechanism of the children in the three cases of migration as to how children spend their time it would have buttressed the objective in a stronger sense by explaining the mental well-being of the children.

Nóra Kovács’ chapter is a powerful and moving exploration of the childcare system, children’s experiences in live-in caring arrangements, and the

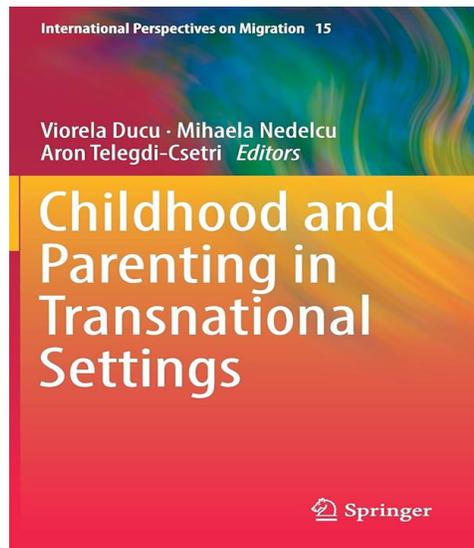


Photo credit: <https://www.amazon.in/Childhood-Parenting-Transnational-International-Perspectives/dp/331990941X>

Chinese entrepreneur migrants in Hungary from the lens of a caregiver. It builds on the resilience and vulnerability of mobile children receiving live-in-care in Hungary's costly and unorganised caregiving market. The author reports that the parenting is 'authoritarian', disregards children's emotional needs, and encourages carers to use corporal punishment if necessary. Though the study has attempted to enlighten the readers by exploring a less understood area of caregiving from the lens of a caregiver that lies at the intersection of policies in the origin country, a 'black market' of caregiving for the mobile children whose parents cannot afford other caring arrangements for their children and amidst all of this the children is at the receiving end of the vulnerabilities. Merely attempting to conclude the caregiver's lens and that too with little to no diversity has the potential to create bias. This seems insufficient given the issue's peculiarity, sensitivity, and complexity. An attempt should have been made to have a birds' eye view of the issue rather than conveniently picking up a side to narrate and generalise some conclusion. The study makes several generalizations that need validation and in-depth research by complementing the ethnographic research with other empirical methodologies and bringing in case studies from different countries. From the policy perspective, it seems from the study that the onus should also be placed on the state for ensuring an organised egalitarian caregiving arrangement for children.

Chapter 4 by Rafaela H. Pascoal and Adina N. E. Schwartz is a bold enterprise in four ways; firstly they aim at explaining the plight of left-behind children stuck between "Push" and "Pull" in Romania which has undergone a continuous source of human trafficking; secondly, while examining the nexus between human trafficking and stay-behind children, the authors realised the role of family environment that exposes children to human trafficking; thirdly, it also explores the reason why despite numerous legislations at place parents do not report to their intentions to migration and don't fulfill other legal requirements because they fear that their child would be institutionalised; fourth, through their social experiment reveals the instances of emotional instability, high risk of being trafficked and taking up drug use, the vulnerability of being trafficked by extended families and their parents and rampant sexual harassment of stay behind female children. The authors give a balanced account of the role of the environment that exposes stay-behind children of the

migrant to vulnerabilities.

At the heart of Chapter 5 by Iulia-Elena Hossu lies the journey of young Moldavians acquiring (or reacquiring) Double citizenship of Romania, which is many a time considered a time and resource-consuming process exposing them to reiterate family histories, and how the process influenced their family structures, relations, and practices. Notably, the study used qualitative analysis by using the snowball sampling method as the sampling structure. It explored how the process of citizenship acquisition (reacquisition) maintains family cohesion, rediscovers family histories, and provides the opportunity to parents' generation to act as a link between children and grandparents. Intriguingly, the author reports a usual gendered migration pattern as a passing note, however, this generalisation asks for further clarification. The lack of a gendered perspective demands gender segregation in the analysis as it intersects with migration, ages, and ethnicity and has the potential to highlight how the intersection of gender in the family gives differential results.

Chapter 6 starts by offering a window to the challenges of children in transnational families (considered to be one form of "post-modern families") along with the shift in gender and intergenerational relations propelled by the reorganisation of the family. Isabelle when asked about her situation post the migration of her mother responded that she had both won and lost, gained material well-being, but felt more abandoned despite being with siblings, survived challenges but saw her performance in school declining, and missed guidance from her father. Drawing on the knowledge of women despite being of any age, relation or be it, migrant transnational families or immigrant transnational families, saddled with round-the-clock care work of closed ones, offer more emotional support to stay behind elderly parents as compared to their male counterparts, the author asks "who cares for the children and elderly" and introduce a unique framework of comparing experiences of the children (when the migrant is a father or mothers) as well as the experiences of the elderly parents (when the immigrant is sons or daughter). Though the study has made a bold attempt to understand the objective at hand, however, given the burgeoning stream of literature (Freeman, 2019) elucidating how the growing cohort of millennials men is diverse ethnically, digitally, late-marrying, and less bounded by gender norms and endeavour to run their families democratically,

it becomes inevitable to include various dimensions like age, literacy, region (urban/rural), marital status of (divorce, married, widow) while examining this question on “who cares for children”. A similar result is established by the author while addressing the question of “who cares for the elderly”. Women offer support to stay-behind parents more so than men.

Alissa V. Tolstokorova’s study on the dynamics of masculinity in transnational families endeavours to fill the gap in the literature by augmenting our understanding of migration in modernized paternity from the lens of fatherhood in Ukraine. Departing from the stance on the “modernization of fatherhood”, the theory of “responsible fathering” and using the concept of “patriarchal dividend” deriving from “social dividends of migration” argues that the escapades of staying behind men can be gendered, regendered and degendered. The author has complemented the field research with the analysis of secondary theoretical sources and content analysis on media resources to comprehend two major trends in paternity practices among stay-behind fathers; first, the reconceptualization of masculinity status associated with the urbanization of men (responsible paternity and their parents); second, the devaluation of the masculinity status and *mercantilization* of fathering (irresponsible fathering). Not discounting the potential power of the research from the reader’s perspective I found that although, the study is quite rich and at times enlightening, however, the reader would find themselves coming up with a grey area that lies at the intersection of these two extreme cases of fatherhood.

Chapter 8 broadens our understanding of one of the most noteworthy intersections of transnational migration and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in recent times. The study reports ICT consumption as a ‘meaning-making’ process allowing the family to actively engage in a reciprocal relation, bargain identities, and supervise children from afar which thus becomes an integral part of ‘the moral economy. Being the *ordinary co-presence routines*, usage of ICT-mediated communication has led to an existential crisis, readjustment of the definition of appropriate parenting in some cases, and an essential source of comfort for migrant mothers and a cognitive reminder of the plurality of roles in the other. Thus, the study establishes how transnational migrants in the process of counterbalancing the sense of loss have been able to adapt to changes, navigate and combine their double

living with the help of ICT.

Chapter 9 gives an exhaustive account of the caregiving arrangements with children and the decision to migrate and reunite by examining transnational parenting among migrants in Sweden from Poland and Sweden. The study has adopted three distinct cases to delineate crucial life experiences by considering three cases of migration; first, jointly migrating couples who delegate care arrangements for their children among relatives in the origin country; second, a mother migrating as a lead mover; third, father migrating while other members stay-behind. Authors apply some principles like historical time and space, timing in lives linked lives and human agency are manifested in structural regimes of opportunities and constraints in both the home and host countries. They further noted that transnational parenting is a difficult business as reunification in Sweden unveiled an emotional gap due to separation.

Bringing transnational elements into intergenerational solidarity (downward solidarity) with a focus on the older generation, Chapter 10 incorporates a quantitative approach, an approach less relied upon in the study of transnational families in the context of Romania. The author chooses to examine functional solidarity (financial assistance, timely assistance, and co-residence) flowing from parents to their migrant adult children. The study sheds light on how elderly members get involved in transnational mobility to care for their migrant children and how older parents can perform grandparental roles from a distance. Further sustaining, the gendered provision of intergenerational support the study reports evidence of mothers caring for their migrant kins than their husbands. To sum up, the study establishes that migration doesn’t disrupt intergenerational relations which remain mutual and multidirectional. However, the study only limits the occupational status of children’s needs which has not been understood in nexus with the duration of migration and the nature of welfare regimes for migrants in the destination countries.

In an endeavour to bridge the gap in the literature on the availability and involvement of grandparents in downwardsolidarity, Malika Wyss and Mihaela Nedelcu’s Chapter is suitably imposing given its emotionally engaging stories portraying intricately interwoven intergenerational relations in transnational migration. The title sets the narrative and the findings buttress the

objective of the study. It shows how G0 grandparents act as the social backup in *childbirth circumstances, troubleshooting occasional contingencies, full and permanent childcare, intergenerational sharing, and transmission*. The study could be extended to understand the context of developing countries, how sibship size impacts the caregiving arrangements of grandparents, and how gendered is the caregiving dynamics (whether the gender of the caregiver has any impact on the caregiving patterns or how the gender of the care receiving affects the caregiving) and from the lens of grandparents how do they find this new care dynamics. Moreover, to make the study rich in actionable items some policy interventions facilitating the movement of grandparents could be considered.

The book has attempted to contribute to the developing field of transnational families in migration however, covering the diversity of experiences, countries, and perspectives the book falls short of addressing the two main challenges unveiled from the literature-quantitative and theoretical approaches. Moreover, not discounting the potential power of the book, from the policy perspective, the book offers fewer windows and

intends to be more inclined toward the positive aspect. For a reader, this book is an enlightening experience that boldly eclipses the ignorance around the issues of transnational migration and adds fluidity and dynamism to an egalitarian approach to understanding transnational elements.

References

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