

Poor Income and Unemployment as Determinants of Labour Migration: Empirical Evidence From Bangladeshi Migrant Workers in Klang, Malaysia

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Abstract

The present work is an empirical study of the causes of labour migration, especially, Bangladeshi temporary migrants to Malaysia. The study is based on the survey of 100 Bangladeshi migrant workers who were selected according to two stage sampling procedure. On one stage, an area where Bangladeshi workers reside was selected through random sampling procedure. On the second stage, 100 respondents were selected from the area according to purposive snowball sampling procedure. The main objective of the study is to find out the causes for migration of Bangladeshi workers to Malaysia. The majority, 66 respondents, leave their country because of poor income. These respondents had some income in their origin country but that was not sufficient to survive their needs to look after their family. It was also found that 31 respondents left the country because of unemployment. Thus, most of the Bangladeshi workers left their country due to poor income and unemployment. Finally, the study suggested that adequate measures should be taken to provide pre-departure training on job and host county's culture to the expected migrant workers.

Keywords: Malaysia, Bangladeshi Migrants, Push Pull, Social Network, Poor income, Unemployment

Introduction

Labour migration from Bangladesh is not a new phenomenon. Bangladesh, being a labour surplus country, exports a considerable number of workers to different countries (Graph 1 Labour migration from Bangladesh from 1976 to September 2021). Report from the Bureau of Manpower Employment and Training (BMET) stated that a total of 13333963 Bangladeshi migrant workers migrated to different countries of the world including the Gulf, South East Asian and other Arab countries in between 1976 to September 2021. According to BMET, from 1976 to September 2021, a total of 1,057,213 Bangladeshis have migrated to Malaysia for employment. Evidently it started in 1973 when oil price was hiked in the Middle East (Castles, 2003; Dannecker, 2005). Due to the changeable economic situations in the Middle East, workers were considering a new South Asian country, Malaysia, because of its economic growth. However, groups of male workers from Bangladesh have started to come to Malaysia since the mid-1980s (Dannecker, 2005), and has gradually increased.

There are many factors that inspire people to migrate. The important ones among them are poverty, underdevelopment, good governance, and access to health, education and employment (Zamir, 2006). The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) was adopted in 2018 under the auspices of the United Nations. Objective 2 of the GCM is to ‘minimize the adverse drivers and structural factors that compel people to leave their country of origin’. It mentions well-established development objectives, such as poverty eradication, food security, education, economic growth, infrastructure, decent work, gender equality, rule of law, good governance and human rights (para 18) (Antoine Pécoud, 2021: 22).

In Asian countries, international migration is primarily viewed as a push element from countries of origin and a pull factor to countries of destination (Reza, Subramaniam, & Islam, 2019). It is also observed that migration has increased because “knowledge of opportunities around the world has increased and improved means of transport have given people the ability to move long distance at relatively low cost” (Martin et al., 2007:11). Siddiqui (2005) pointed out the movement of migrants as for better livelihood. According to Siddiqui, “short-term international labour migration is defined as the voluntary movement of people from one country to another for a certain period of time to achieve a better life or to earn a better livelihood. Employment is a major avenue through which migrants aspire to attain a better standard of living (2005:2)”. The present study aims to investigate specific research question; what are the factors that motivate Bangladeshi migrant workers to leave the country and choose Malaysia as a destination country? This is very important as the causes that motivate enormous number of workers to migrate even though the demands of the workers are small (Dannecker, 2005; New Stairs Times, 2009). This requires detailed information about the socio-economic background from which the migrants come and the condition of the area where they used to live in their country of origin. It is also important, in this context, to know the role of family members, relatives, labour brokers, recruiting agencies of the country

of origin and social network in helping and facilitating the migration. According to Lindquist (1993), the mere idea of ‘going abroad’ is very soothing and prestigious. It gives relief and comfort to people and enhances their prestige among their colleagues. Many people migrate for this reason.

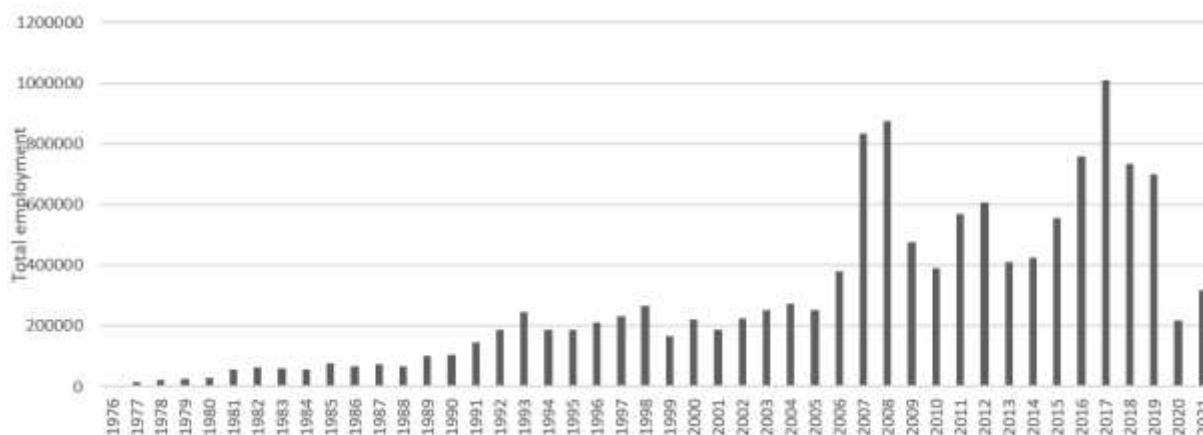


Figure 1. Labour migration from Bangladesh from 1976 to September 2021

Source: Prepared by authors from BMET data

Review of Existing Literature

Tasneem (2004) discusses factors contributing to migration decision making from social and economic aspects in the case of Bangladeshi workers. Tasneem (2004) found five categories of out migration that occurs among Bangladeshi workers overseas. These are (a) distress economic condition, (b) future improvement of economic status, (c) social factors, (d) political factors and (e) access to information and demand in receiving countries. Tasneem gives an account that social factor remains the most influential factor for out migration. Her study indicates that besides governmental organization like (Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies), and private recruitments agencies, at least 60 percent of the recruitment is done through individual initiatives and social networks. Many researchers also emphasize that social network is an influential factor for international migration and it is also supported by Massey et al. (1993) Wickramasekera, (2000); Parrado and Cerrutti (2003), and Haas de (2008).

According to Massey et al. (1993: 448), “networks can be defined as sets of interpersonal ties that connect migrants with former migrants, and non-migrants in origin and destination areas through bonds of kinship, friendship, and shared community origin.” Parrado and Cerrutti (2003:101-132) assert that “through the assistance of friends and relatives, new migrants may more easily be able to obtain information and receive active assistance in finding employment and a place to live.” However, Massey et al. (1993: 448) criticize that the social network process of migration has a negative impact on governments to control the migration systems as they are not often consulted by the migrants in regard to their movement.

According to Ramasamy (2004), there is currently an exodus of non-permanent workers, mostly on contractual basis, from labour surplus countries to those experiencing a shortage.

He asserts that the movement of people from one country to another stems from a search for better economic, social and political opportunities. Apart from this, movement of migrants can also be attributed to the nexus formed among agents, recruiters, middlemen, and corrupt officials that leads migrants from one place to another. He describes economic opportunities, geographical proximity between different territories in the region and cultural and religious links provided for the movement of peoples of different nationalities. Since migrants are saddled in the lowest rung of the socio-economic order, Ramasamy (2004) argues that they fall prey to the differential process of development in different places, particularly in the Southeast Asia region. And once migrated, these workers sometimes get embroiled in sporadic conflicts with the locals, giving rise to the social distance between the two groups. He calls for taking up a regional approach instead of a bilateral one to address the problems concerning the migrant workers.

A number of studies show that the majority of international labour movements within Asia and the Pacific relate basically to the temporary contract labour migration of low-skilled workers (Hugo, 2009; Azizah, 2005). Hugo (2009) describes that the international labour migration process within the Asia Pacific is beset with a host of barriers such as recruitment and selection, pre-departure preparation at the destination and on returns, etc. The study takes note of the fact that the governments exhibit an inability to recognize the significance of migration and mutually beneficial migration policy between the countries. It thus advocates the need on their part to pay attention to issues like capacity building, lack of co-operation between origin and destination points, lack of data, and poor governance of labour migration. Karim, et al. (1999) conducted an empirical research on foreign labour-force working in various sectors in Malaysia. Exploratory in nature, the study portrays the socio-economic profile of foreign workers as well as the perception of the local community toward them. The study surveys around 300 people from Bangladesh, Indonesia and the Philippines in various working sectors in Penang and 50 households (Malay, Chinese, and Indians). According to the authors, the reason for this high migration is due to the wage differential between the rich and poor countries, with the migrants moving in the direction of higher wages and employment rates. However, the researchers contend that the foremost reason for the rise in foreign workers can be traced to the structural conditions of economic inequality between nations (Lie, 1994).

Over time, various approaches have evolved in population movement. Massey et al. (1987) use an integrated approach to study migration from Mexico to the United States. In this regard, the studies of Rigg (1989) and Singhanetra-Renard (1992) are important because they incorporate variables of international economy, government policy, community interaction and family strategies in order to explain patterns of contract of labour migration from Thailand. Yueh (2008) states that a social network increases labour supply flexibility of migrant workers. He emphasizes that in the case of China, social networks are given consideration to labour supplies for migrant workers.

Meanwhile, Lindquist (1993) claims that the economic forces and government policy alone are not sufficient to maintain migration movement nor interpersonal relationships. International flow of migration emerges as a complex set of links that connect individuals and

communities to the national capital region and ultimate places abroad. Applying a multilevel approach, he finds that structural imbalances provide conditions for potential movement which is a required link among various people and places. Lindquist (1993) describes that once an individual attaches the idea of “going abroad”, the process is fraught with hazards. His study indicates movement from a small town placing labour flows and the migration network processes within the context of international patterns.

Narayanan and Lai (2005) provide an account of the causes and consequences of immigrant labour, specifically of Indonesian origin, and their impact on the construction sector in Malaysia. The study observes that since the majority of Indonesian workers are unskilled, that has a direct negative impact on the quality of output in that sector. This view is echoed by Abdul-Aziz (2001) who conducts a study on Bangladeshi workers in the construction sector and finds that they are unskilled and mostly illegal. Yet, these workers are willing to work long hours, at low wages and under harsh conditions (Gill, 1988; Azizah, 1988; Navamukundan, 1992). To address these issues, Narayanan and Lai (2005) propose two ways, namely, providing facilities to train workers and defraying part of the costs of further training overseas.

Theoretical Framework

Modern scholars of various disciplines showed their interest in migration and found its linkage with development crucial and vital. As such, they conducted several studies and evolved several theoretical perspectives which are different from one another in their level of analysis as well as paradigmatic and thematic orientations (Haas, 2008). The reason is that migration has been studied by different disciplines and with different orientations and levels of analysis. Many scholars felt the need for a comprehensive theory of migration and made attempts in this direction. But it was difficult due to the complex nature of the phenomenon and its separation from other socio-economic and political processes. This is the reason that Salt (1987) and Van Amersfoort (1998) found it not possible to generate a general theory of migration.

However, there were two main strands of theoretical framework about migration up to 1980. One was neo-classical views and the other was historical-structural views including neo-Marxist, dependency and world system theories. Later on, in the wake of postmodernism, the cooperation between migration theorists of different disciplines and paradigmatic backgrounds were sought and attempt was made to integrate different theoretical perspective on migration (Massey et al., 1993). In the following sections, some theoretical perspectives are discussed that throw light on the causes of migration and the mechanism through which population moves from one place to another. Further, the researcher discusses the theoretical model which is proposed for this present research.

The Neo-Classical Perspective

This theoretical model was developed by a famous geographer Ravenstein, (1885, 1889) who contributed two articles on migration in which he formulated “laws of migration”. He took a holistic view of migration and considered it dependent on development. He contended that

economic conditions are the major causes of migration. This perspective explains that people generally move “from low income to high income areas and from densely to sparsely populated areas” (Skeldon, 1997: 19). Further, it was observed that migration was also influenced by distance and population densities. The thrust of the perspective is a “spatial-economic equilibrium” towards which people move for better prospects of life.

This theme, as Castles and Miller (2003) observe, has been highlighted by various scholars and social scientists. It is also the foundation and rationale behind push-pull theories. There are two strands of the theory. One is macro-level neo-classical theory and the other micro-level neo-classical theory. According to the first, migration takes place due to geographical differences in supply and demand of labour. Workers generally move from ‘low-wage, labour surplus regions, to high-wage, labour scarce regions’ due to differences in wages. The micro-level, neo-classical migration theory focuses on migrants as individuals who rationally decide to move to the place where they can get the highest wages and be most productive. The neo-classical migration theory was applied to study the nature, causes and impact of rural-urban migration by Lewis (1954), Todaro (1969) and Harris and Todaro (1970). Later on the theory, with some modification, was also applied to international migration.

Historical-Structural Theory

The Historical-structural theory emerged in 1960 and provided a new paradigm on development and migration. It is based on Marxist view of political economy and world system theory. It was a reaction of developmentalist-modernizationist approaches of development. It highlights the unequal distribution of economy and power between developed and underdeveloped societies. People have no equal access to resources. As a matter of fact, some capture the resources, use them for their own benefit and deprive the majority of the population of their right of existence. The capitalist system reinforces these inequalities. The developed societies strengthen their productive system and capture global market. As a result, underdeveloped societies suffer a setback due to their inability to compete in the global economic structure. Thus, migration, according to historical-structuralists, is the result of economic disruption created by capitalist accumulation as well as unequal terms of trade between developed and underdeveloped countries (Massey et al.,1998).

The dependency theory, an offshoot of historical-structural perspective, considers migration as the cause of underdevelopment because it adversely affects the economies of underdeveloped countries. It, in fact, destroys peasant societies, and shatters their economic and population structure. Similarly, Emmanuel Wallenstein’s world-system theory categorizes countries into core nations, semi-peripheral, peripheral and isolated nations on the basis of their degree of dependency. Haas (2008: 8) states, “In this perspective the incorporation of peripheries into the capitalist economy is associated with putting a (migration) drain on them”.

Push-Pull Theory

The Push-pull theory explains migration purely in terms of economic factor, particularly the income difference between sending countries and receiving countries (Massey, 1990). It is a popular explanation of internal as well as international labour migration given by different social scientists and provided by different models. Straubhaar (1986: 837) observes that “the push-pull or cost–benefit model offers the widest field of application in the context of international labour migration”. It spells out that low income and high unemployment in the labour sending countries are push factors while high income, job stability and job opportunity in the receiving countries are pull factors. Thus, the difference in wage structure initiates the movement of labourers. Lee (1966) presents this model when he revised Ravenstein’s law of migration. He contends that migration depends upon four factors: factors associated with the area of origin; factors associated with the area of destination; intervening obstacles (such as distance, physical barriers, immigration laws, and so on); and personal factors. Migration, according to him, takes place from specific area of origin to specific area of destination due to better opportunities and flow of knowledge from the destination (Lee, 1966). It also depends upon the individual characteristics of migrants who evaluate the situation at areas of origins and thus destinations differently and respond differently.

Social Network Theory

It is generally observed and propounded by different theorists that migration depends upon the economic condition that forces people to move to a place where they get better opportunity of livelihood and better standard of living. Recent researches show that this alone is insufficient to explain the true nature of migration pattern (Salt, 1987; Schoorl, 1998). Social scientists are, thus, in search of alternative paradigms to understand the factors in creating new migration pattern. One of the factors that shape modern migration pattern is social network. The social network model works when a certain number of migrants settle at a destination and play a vital role in initiating a subsequent migration pattern. Lee (1966) finds that the flow of information back from the place of destination to the place of origin initiates new process of migration and facilitates the passage for new migrants. Bocker (1994) observes that settled migrants serve as ‘bridgeheads’ because they reduce the risks and material and psychological costs of subsequent migration. The friends and relatives at the destination provide relevant information to the new migrants, help them find jobs, make arrangement for their stay and assist them complete other formalities. Thus, they promote further migration by providing necessary facilities and creating conducive condition for the new migrants. Appleyard (1992) also observes that the established migrant community at a particular destination increases the likelihood of subsequent migration to that place. In keeping the importance of social network, Massey et al. (1993) consider it a form of social capital that people use to move to other places for better prospects.

Based on previous studies, taking consideration to various theoretical models, and empirical evidence, the present study has proposed (Figure: 1) a conceptual framework that motivates Bangladeshi migrants to Malaysia: Aspiration to better prospects.

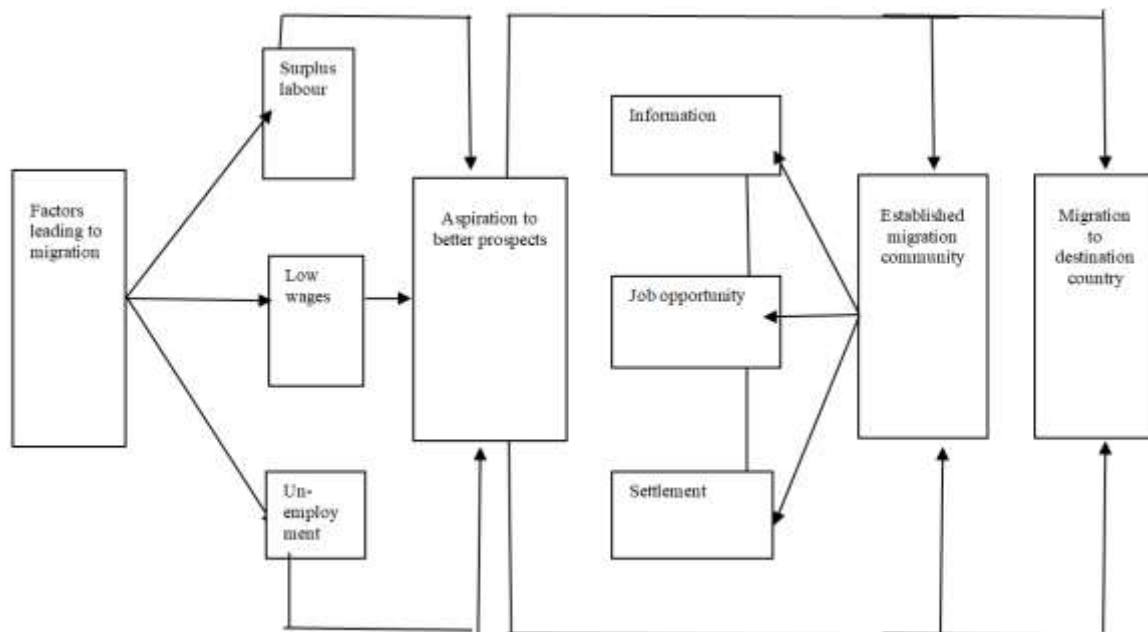


Figure 1. Aspiration to better prospects (A proposed Framework of Bangladeshi migrants to Malaysia)

Research Methods

In view of the objective of the research and the research questions put forth in the earlier discussions, the researcher has used quantitative method for the collection of the relevant data. For this purpose, a survey questionnaire was constructed based on previous studies to elicit relevant information.

Universe of the Study

The universe of the present study is Port Klang, and its industrial area in Selangor, Malaysia. There are many manufacturing factories in this area and it is characterised as an industrial zone in Malaysia where many foreign workers are working. The workers who work in manufacturing factories and in other industries of the area are mostly from Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Cambodia, and Vietnam. The research concentrates only on Bangladeshi foreign workers in Malaysia.

Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised of Bangladeshi migrant workers in Malaysia. The study proposes to adopt two stage sampling procedures. At one stage, an area where there is concentration of Bangladeshi workers is selected according to random sampling procedure. Generally, there are five major areas where we find large concentrations of Bangladeshi workers. They are Port Klang, Meru, Sri Muda, Sungai Buloh and Kajang. To ensure true randomness from these areas, the study areas of Port Klang were selected in random sampling procedure. All places (Port Klang, Meru, Sri Muda, Sungai Buloh and Kajang) were

given numbers and from these the selected area was chosen randomly. The purpose to use random sampling procedure is because with this kind of sampling, each possible sample of n different units has an equal chance of being selected, which also implies that every member of the population has an equal chance of selection into the sample (Bryman, 2008: 171; Moser & Kalton, 1980: 81).

At the second stage, 100 respondents were selected by using purposive and snowball sampling techniques. The purposive sampling is useful “to select members of a difficult-to-reach specialized population” (Neuman, 2006: 213). At the same time it is also helpful “when a researcher wants to identify particular types of cases for in-depth investigation. The purpose is less to generalize to a larger population than it is to gain a deeper understanding of types” (Neuman, 2006: 213). The snowball sampling is the technique where “the researcher makes initial contacts with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses these to establish contacts with others” (Bryman, 2008: 184). As Bangladeshi workers are scattered and not known to everybody, these techniques help the researcher to select the respondents in a systematic way.

There are two reasons for choosing purposive and snowball sampling technique. Firstly, it is difficult to collect a list of migrant workers because there are many classified workers working in various sectors making it impossible to select samples randomly. Secondly, using snowball sampling is easier to get respondents’ address and information.

Data Collection

The study used the survey method. A survey questionnaire was developed and distributed to the migrant workers. The survey questionnaire was constructed and questions relating to the causes of migration and socio-demographic characteristics.

Data Analysis

The data obtained by the research instrument were analyzed using SPSS. The study described the characteristics of the populations, descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages of responses which include computation of percentages.

Results

Socio-Demographic Characteristics

The sample of the study consists of 100 Bangladeshi workers. The age of the respondents ranged from 20 to over 51. In the age category, the majority (30%) were between 26-30 years, followed by 23% who were between 36-40, and 20% were between 21-25 years. Results presented in Table 1 indicate that the majority of Bangladeshi workers’ age is between 26-30 years. It shows that the majority of temporary workers go abroad at a very young age. Education plays an important role in foreign assignment. Working in a foreign country the success and failure are greatly influenced by individuals’ level of communication and interpersonal skills, language proficiency, pre-departure knowledge, and education factors (Fish, 2001). Further, educational achievement helps individuals (expatriates) to cope with and fit into a new cultural environment (Kaur, 2004). Results in Table indicate that the majority of 49% respondents completed their secondary school education, followed by 24%

who gained their higher secondary school certificate, 22% completed their elementary school and very few (5%) graduated with a bachelor's degree. Thus, according to the data the majority of respondents go abroad often completing high school (49%). Only 5% of the respondents came to Malaysia after gaining a bachelor's degree. This concludes that overall, the majority of Bangladeshi manufacturing workers have less educational qualifications. The data relating to the marital status of respondent are presented in table points out that more than half of the respondents were married (51%), while 49% were unmarried. Thus, the distribution of respondents into married and unmarried categories was about the same. They were equally divided in their categories. According to the data presented in table, 53% earn from RM501-1000 and 37% earn from RM1001-1500 per month. Only a small percentage of them, that is 10%, earn from RM1501-2000 per month. Overall more than half of the respondents under study earn up to RM1000 per month. It shows that most of them are engaged in lower income jobs.

Table 1. Socio-demographic profile

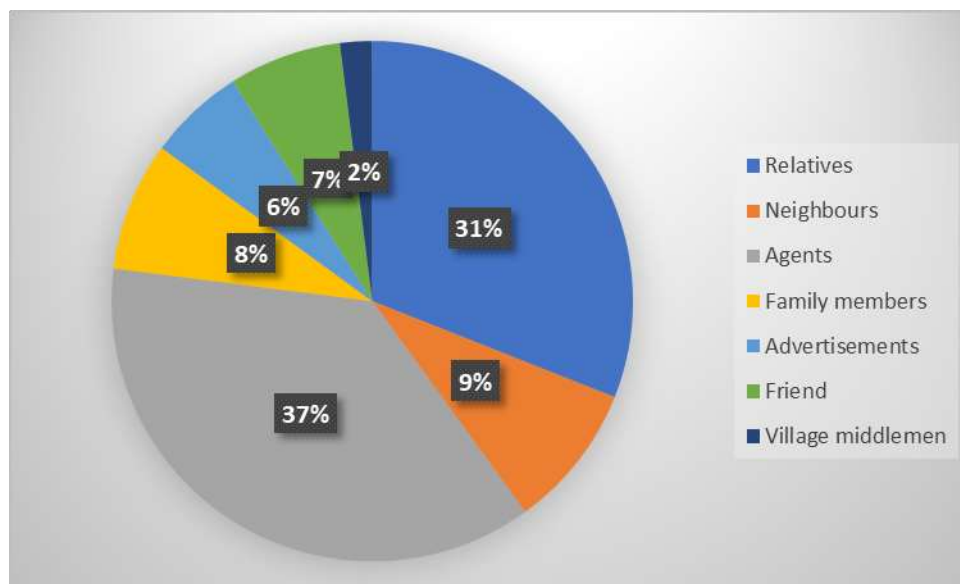
Respondents demographic information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Age</i>		
20 and under years	3	3.0
21-25 years	20	20.0
26-30 years	30	30.0
31-35 years	12	12.0
36-40 years	23	23.0
41-45 years	8	8.0
46-50 years	3	3.0
51 and over	1	1.0
Total	100	100.0
<i>Highest education level attainment</i>		
Elementary school	22	22.0
Secondary school	49	49.0
Higher secondary	24	24.0
Bachelor's degree	5	5.0
Total	100	100.0
<i>Marital Status</i>		
Married	51	51.0
Single	49	49.0
Total	100	100.0
<i>Monthly Income</i>		
RM501 – 1000	53	53.0
RM1001 – 1500	37	37.0

Respondents demographic information	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<i>Age</i>		
20 and under years	3	3.0
21-25 years	20	20.0
26-30 years	30	30.0
31-35 years	12	12.0
36-40 years	23	23.0
41-45 years	8	8.0
46-50 years	3	3.0
51 and over	1	1.0
RM1501 – 2000	10	10.0
RM2001 and more	0	0.0

Causes of Migration

Sources of information about job availability in Malaysia

The majority of respondents came to know about the job opportunities in Malaysia from the agents and their relatives, friends, neighbours and family members who were already working in Malaysia. 37% of the respondents came to know about the job prospects through agents. A very small percentage of them, i.e. 6% came to know about the job opportunities in Malaysia through advertisement. Besides agents role, the findings also indicate that almost half of these Bangladeshi workers have relatives who are also working in Malaysia. The tendency is majority workers who work in Malaysia bring their family members (father, brother, son, brother in law, sister in law) from host country help to settle Malaysia such as finding a job.

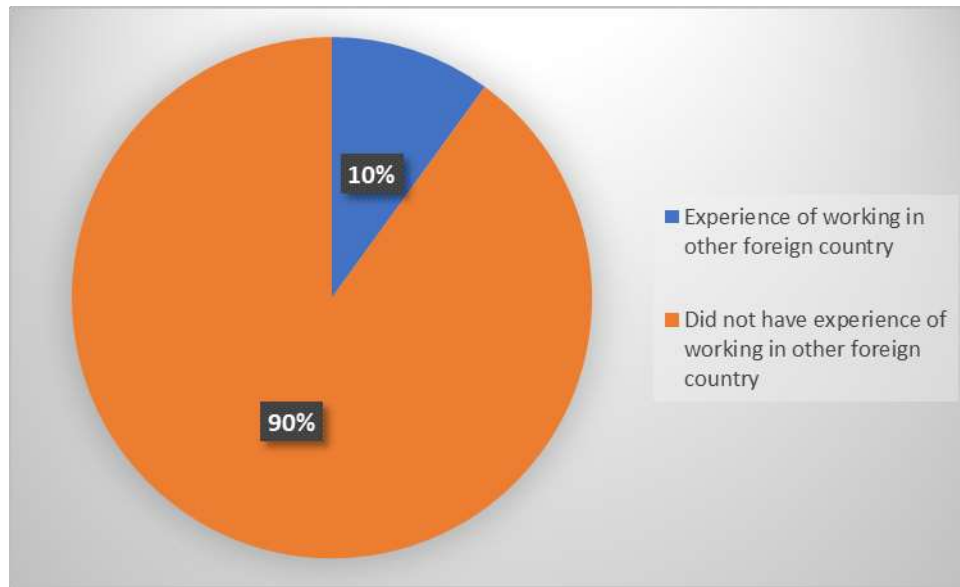


Pie Chart 1. Sources of information about job availability in Malaysia

Source: Survey result

Previous working experience in other foreign countries

Most of the Bangladeshi workers have not had any previous work experience in other foreign countries. The majority of Bangladeshi workers, i.e. 90% came to Malaysia as their first destination. Only 10% of Bangladeshi workers had experience working in other foreign countries. They were working in Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirate, Kuwait, and Oman. Due to their instable source of income and economy, they decided to move to other countries.

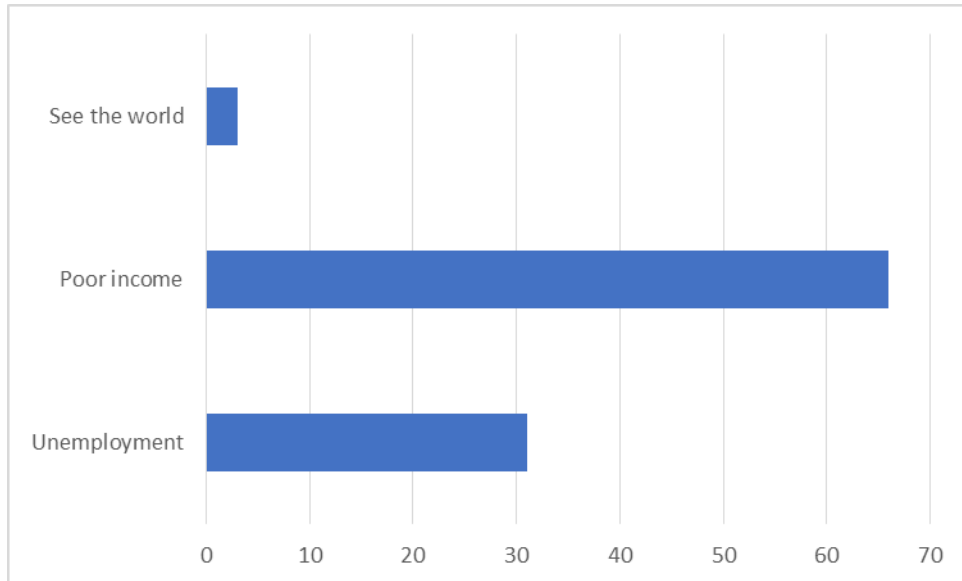


Pie Chart 2. Working experience in other foreign countries

Source: Survey result

Reasons to leave the country

Most of the Bangladeshi workers leave because of poor income and low wages in the origin country. Graph 2 demonstrates that the majority, 66% of the respondents, leave their country because of poor income. It shows that these respondents had some income in their origin country but that was not sufficient to survive their needs to look after their family. Furthermore, the present study also shows 31% of the respondents left the country because of unemployment. It is followed by 3% who wanted to see the world. It indicates that most of the Bangladeshi workers left their country due to poor income and unemployment.

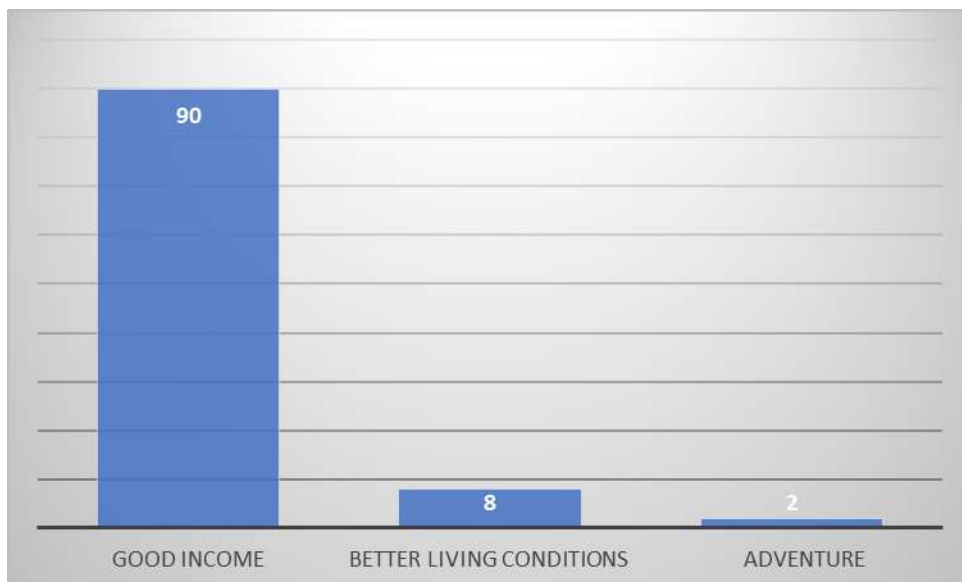


Graph 2. Reason for leaving the origin country

Source: Survey result

Motivation to work abroad

Good income is the most significant motivation for Bangladeshi workers to work overseas. The study finds the factors that motivate workers to leave their home country. Data presented in Table 2 show also the majority (90%) of the respondents left their home country for good income, while only 8% and 2% respondents left the country for better living conditions and for adventure, respectively.



Graph 3. Motivation to work abroad

Source: Survey result

Discussions

From the findings it can be inferred that factors such as lack of employment, low wages and surplus population prompt Bangladeshi workers to choose a country like Malaysia with attractive wages and labour shortage. This view on the causes of migration is also supported by the previous studies (Petra, 2005; Aziz, 2001; Karim, et al., 1999; Carikci, 1987; Zamir, 2006). In temporary migration system, workers' duration of stay is limited and uncertain. Migrant workers encourage their relatives (father, brother, sons and relatives such as brother in laws, sister in laws, cousins) to come to Malaysia to help them during their future trips. One of the purported reasons of establishing such kinship ties in a foreign country is to make the process of future migration easier. This finding is in agreement with those of previous studies arguing that social network promotes labour migration from Bangladesh to overseas (Tasneem, 2004; Siddiqui & Abrar, 2000; Massey et al., 1993; Hass de, 2008; Lee, 1966; Emilito & Arrcela, 2003; Zamir, 2006).

It is observed that from the existing literature review and theories on migration that one theoretical model is not sufficient to explain the factors that initiate and the factors that facilitate migration of Bangladeshi workers to Malaysia. Both push-pull and social network models are applicable to the present case. The socio-economic condition of the country of origin characterized by surplus labour, low wage job and unemployment motivates workers to think of and aspire for better prospects of life. It constitutes the push factor. Many workers have this aspiration but only those (succeed to translate it into reality) more who have good social network in the country of destination. The established migrant community in the destination facilitates the migration of new migrants by providing necessary information, exploring job opportunity and helping them in other matters. The data show that most Bangladeshi workers still have very little access to newspapers. Zamir (2006: 34) also finds that the majority of Bangladeshi workers (66%) found out about job availability in Malaysia through their friends and relatives. He concludes that Bangladeshi workers have very little access to mass media and have less opportunity to migrate.

Conclusion

In explicating the underlying causes of migration of Bangladeshi workers to Malaysia, it is observed that aspiration to better prospects play a key role in their migration to Malaysia. From the economic standpoint, two factors stand out; poor income and unemployment, being cited by 66% and 31% of the respondents, respectively. Furthermore, the level of motivation that induces the workers to seek high-wage overseas jobs stands at 90%. Aside from economic reasons, the social relationship that migrants in the host country nurture with the non-migrants back home turns out to be instrumental in their migration. In terms of getting access to job-related information, workers contacting their family members and relatives in seeking migration constitute 39% of the total respondents. Besides this group, workers aspiring to go overseas also seek the help of their neighbours and friends. Only a few make direct contact with the recruiting agents in this regard.

Recommendations

The study demonstrates that Bangladeshi workers shared their job expectation within their social networks, an informal way of getting information on job demands in abroad. In order to address this situation, the government authority of Bangladesh should take measures that would give direction to the authorized agencies to make sure that the workers get the proper job information *vis-à-vis* their wages, skills, and responsibilities as well as companies' norms, rules and regulations. The government should seriously monitor the activities of the recruited agencies in this regard.

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