

## Exploring the Causes and Consequences of Migration from Saraiki Belt to Karachi

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### Abstract

A qualitative exploratory research was conducted to study the causes and consequences of migration from Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi. To achieve that purpose, interviews based upon an open – ended questionnaire were conducted. Total of ten (10) respondents were interviewed. After transcribing their responses, thematic analysis was conducted to identify causes and consequences. Following significant conclusions were drawn after performing thematic analysis: 1) The law of migration as given by Raven stein is true in the case of migration of people form south Punjab to Karachi; push factors include limited opportunities in the south Punjab districts and pull factors include better economic opportunities in the city. 2) The analysis shows that support system in Karachi plays a vital role in attracting migrants from the south Punjab as it reduces risks and costs attached with migration and provide information about job and other opportunities in the city. It means that the Network Migration Theory is also valid as far as the migration from the south Punjab to Karachi is concerned. 3) One of the biggest consequences is the economic prosperity. 4) Migration has significant consequences for women. Immediate consequences for women include the extra responsibility that they share when go out for work to support their families and issues which they face at the hands of male family members who get frustrated owing to the weakening patriarchal bonds in the city. 5) The analysis also shows that Louis Wirth’s urban traits as given in his classical work ‘Urbanization as a way of life’ are also possessed by the Saraiki migrants in the city of Karachi like specialization, dependence on secondary contracts et cetera.

**Key words:** Migration, internal migration, Saraiki migration

### Introduction

Pakistan is rapidly becoming an urbanized country. According to the recent population census of 2017 around 36.4% people live in urban areas (Pakistan’s population has ballooned to 207.8m, provisional census results show, 2019). Moreover, the last population census of 2017 shows that around 20% of Pakistanis live in ten cities (Khan, 2019). Karachi being the largest city in the country is the hub of urbanization. People from across the country migration here. People who migrate here include people from different ethnicities like Pashtuns, Saraikis et cetera who belong to various geographic locations like the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan, Saraiki belt or what it is commonly called the South Punjab.

Migrants from Saraiki belt are different from other migrants’ communities like Pakhtuns et cetera as women constitute a large number of migrants from Saraiki belt. Moreover, they belong to lower strata of society and are, therefore, indulged in informal economy of domestic help. Resultantly, this community, being involved in informal economic sector, is most vulnerable to abuse and violence.

Therefore, it is both interesting and important to scientifically study why members of this community, being vulnerable to abuse and violence, migrate to Karachi and what are the consequences of this migration for them owing to their involvement in informal economy of the city.

### Statement of the Problem

Migrants from Saraiki belt or what is commonly called the South Punjab are of the biggest contributors to informal economy of the city of Karachi like domestic help et cetera. Women constitute a large proportion of migrants from this region to Karachi and are, as a group, big contributors to the informal economy of domestic help. As this community is indulged in informal sector, their rights are routinely and rampantly violated. Therefore, it is pertinent to scientifically study why members of this community, being vulnerable to abuse and violence, migrate to Karachi and what are the consequences of this migration for them owing to their involvement in informal economy of the city.

### Research Objectives

- a. To explore the causes of migration from the Saraiki belt to Karachi despite the fact that they are indulged in informal economy of the city and are, resultantly, vulnerable.
- b. To study why women, constitute a large proportion of Saraiki migrants unlike other migrant communities where majority of migrants are males.

### **Research Questions**

- a. What are the causes of migration from the Saraiki belt to Karachi despite the fact that they are indulged in informal economy of the city and are, resultantly, vulnerable?
- b. Why women constitute a large proportion of Saraiki migrants unlike other migrant communities where majority of migrants are males?

### **Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study is limited to the migrants in Karachi from the Saraiki belt. The study focuses on the migrants from Saraiki belt particularly indulged in the informal economy of the city. Moreover, the study mainly attempts to identify the causes and consequences of migration for the Saraiki migrants in the city of Karachi. As far as theoretical scope is concerned, the study uses the theoretical model of Law of Migration or Push – Pull theory. In short, the study aims to identify the causes and consequences of migration from the Saraiki belt in Karachi particularly indulged in especially in informal economy.

### **Limitations of the Study**

Following are the important limitations of the study:

- a. Time is limited. Had there been more time, data collection from other more respondents would have been possible. It would have made the study more representative.
- b. Funds are limited. Had there been more funds, more data would have been collected, for instance, by employing research assistants.

### **Delimitations of the Study**

Following are the delimitations of the study:

- a. The study is concerned with the migration from Saraiki belt to Karachi. The study does not include migrants from other communities in the city.
- b. The study is limited to the geographic limits of the city of Karachi. The analysis and conclusions will be drawn from the sample that is representative of the Saraiki population within the geographic limits of the city. No respondents will be taken from outside the city for data collection and analysis purposes.

### **Literature Review**

Pakistan has witnessed major migrations over the last couple of decades. These migrations are due to variety of reasons. For instance, internal migration from the northern areas were mainly due to poor law and order situations (Yusuf, 2019) where people of the areas were forced to vacate their native homes as military operations were conducted against the militants and insurgents. However, migration in the country do not follow this trend of rise in migrants owing to some compulsion. Internal migration is also voluntary in nature. Migration from Saraiki belt to Karachi is a glaring example in this regard. Therefore, this voluntary type of migration presents itself as a good candidate for systematic study of migration based on some solid theoretical models. As said by well-known political economist Akbar Zaidi, now it is the decade of migration from southern Punjab to the city (Rehman, 2016).

### **Migration**

Migration, generally speaking, refers to the people's change of location over a period of time by result of which they cut their ties with geographic location they move from (Raymer & Smith, 2010). This definition by Raymer and Smith (2010) provides that migration is actual movement of people from their original place of dwelling to another place over a period in such a way that their ties with the original place are severed. They maintain that migration is different from general mobility of people mainly in two ways: distance travelled and time spent in the destination.

Migration can be categorized into two main classes: Internal migration and external migration. That is to say, that people can change their location of dwelling within a country – internal migration – or they can altogether leave the country and move beyond borders (Raymer & Smith, 2010). Moreover, it is important to mention here that it is not necessary to altogether shun the ties with original place of dwelling; the migration may be temporary in nature. Temporary migration – it is also called circular migration – refers to a type of migration that involves mobility of people in such a way that their place of economic activity is changed but not their usual place of residence (Bilsborrow et al., 1984). However, researchers agree that continuous absence of a person from the original place of dwelling is an important pre-requisite of temporary migration (Hugo, 1982; Zelinsky, 1971).

The role of temporary migration in the rural economy of developing countries is very significant. People migrate not to seek survival but to diversify economic activities (Keshri & Bhagat, 2010). Some members of rural households, the authors further argue, leave their original places of residence in order to contribute to the family's income. The members

of such rural households leave the traditional rural economy i.e. agriculture and go to urban areas for better economic opportunities. In short, temporary migrants do not completely sever ties with their original place of residence.

The migration from the south Punjab to the city of Karachi hence falls under the category of temporary migration. It is migration because people who migrate from the south Punjab remain consistently absent from their original place of residence and this continuous absence, an important condition for a movement of people to be a migration as maintained by Hugo (1982) and Zelinsky (1971), from their native towns or villages makes it a migration rather than simple the mobility of people. However, it is temporary in nature because most of migrants do not shun their ties with their original place of residence i.e. the south Punjab and their objective is to contribute to the economic wellbeing of their households located in the original place of residence. Their ties with their native town and intention to contribute to households located in native locations which are two important characteristics of the temporary migration (Keshri & Bhagat, 2010) make the migration of people from the region of the south Punjab a temporary migration. Besides this, the migration from the southern region is within the borders of the country. Therefore, it can be said that the migration from the South Punjab to the city of Karachi is actually temporary internal migration.

Migration the southern region of the Punjab province resembled that of migration from other regions i.e. majority of migrants were males who lived in male only accommodations. However, it gradually changed and now the whole families migrate to the city. Both male and female members of the family participate in the economy though in informal one. Male members are involved in professions like masons' barbers, rickshaw drivers, waiters and security guards (Rehman, 2016). Females, on the other hand are involved mostly in domestic help. Majority of domestic labourers particularly females are from the Saraiki belt. Moreover, Saraiki people are also preferred in factories as both skilled and unskilled labourers as they do not frequently visit their native towns as do Sindhi or create political pressure and situations as do Pashtun workers (Rehman, 2016). In short, Saraiki migrants have found their place in the city. As said by Abdul Jabbar Abbasi, leader of the Pakistan Saraiki Qaumi Ithad (the PSQI), the Saraiki community has become 'socially, culturally and politically visible over the last fifteen years (Rehman, 2016).

### **Causes of Migration**

The migration from Saraiki belt to Karachi is due to variety of reasons. According Arif Hassan (2019), a renowned architect of the country, there are two main reasons behind the migration from the south Punjab to Karachi: One, feudal control has weakened in the south Punjab; two, high need for cash in rural economy. In words of Multan based journalist, the migration from the Saraiki belt to Karachi is mainly because of economic reasons including the high rate of unemployment in the southern Punjab districts and lack of adequate industrial infrastructure to accommodate increasing Labour force of the region (Rehman, 2016). Furthermore, Shahid Javed Burki, former vice president of the World bank and former finance minister of the country, in his article Migration and economic backwardness in Punjab categorizes the causes of migration from the southern Punjab into more theoretical terms: Push and Pull factors (Burki, 2012). Push factors, the poor situation in native villages or places of residence which force people to leave or migrate, Burki maintains, are independent of magnitude of distance. Short distance migrations are evidence of this proposition, he further maintains. On the other hand, he continues, pull factors, the attraction and opportunities in terms of jobs et cetera, are also behind the migration of the people of the southern Punjab. Migration of people from the southern to Karachi is a good example of Pull factors behind the migration from the southern districts of Punjab; people migrate to Karachi because it offers them better economic opportunities (Burki, 2012). In short, there are variety of reasons behind the migration of people from the southern Punjab to Karachi.

### **Push – Pull Theory**

To understand the underlying causes of migration from the southern region of Punjab province the push – pull model given by Ernst George Ravenstein is very pertinent. It is mainly because of the fact that he studied rural – urban migration which is also the focus of this research study i.e. the migration of people from the south Punjab – rural area – to the city of Karachi – urban area. Moreover, his model makes it easy to understand the factors of migration as he provided the types of factors: Push factors and Pull factors. Pull factors are basically attractions in towns which inspire people to migrate from their original place of residence and Push factors are basically restrictions or limitations which compel people to leave their native towns or villages and settle somewhere else. Though he did suggest that there were other factors behind the rural – urban migration like increase of population in rural areas, he was of the view that reasons behind the migration are basically economic (Grigg, 1977). People from rural areas migrated, he further maintained, either owing to the attractive jobs et cetera in the urban areas – pull factors – or they moved to the city because poverty in the rural areas compelled them to move out of their native towns and villages – push factors of migration. In addition to this, the theoretical model of the E.G. Ravenstein about migration is relevant because he in his world – famous article of 'laws of

migration' maintained that majority of migrants move to the places which are at short distances (Grigg, 1977). This also holds true in the case of migration of people from the south Punjab to the city of Karachi.

Though there might be other reasons behind migration like war, ethnic discrimination et cetera (Ahmed et al., 2010), economic reasons as mentioned above in terms of push and pull factors are actually the reasons behind migration. Moreover, research provides that people migrate from their native towns and villages owing to the expected higher economic earnings (Ahmed et al., 2010). This is again relevant with our study as people from the south Punjab move to the city of Karachi owing mainly to higher economic returns in the urban areas. Therefore, it can be seen that theoretical framework as given by E.G. Ravenstein is very pertinent and helpful in understanding the underlying causes of migration from the Saraiki Belt to the city of Karachi.

### **Consequences of the Migration**

Migration also have huge consequences for the migrants. It improves their economic standing and status. It is true in the case of migrants from the south Punjab to Karachi as well. Karachi, as discussed above, serves as an attraction and opportunity to improve economic standing (Burki, 2012). Therefore, we can say that better economic standing is the most sought after consequence of the migration. However, in the case of the migration from the south Punjab the economic standing of households located in the city are not exclusively important; the economic standing of households back in the native towns and villages is equally important, as mentioned above, a goal of the temporary migration like the migration from the southern Punjab to the city of Karachi is to economically contribute to households located back in the native towns and villages (Keshri & Bhagat, 2010). Therefore, to understand true picture of consequent economic migrants both households, the ones located in the city and the ones located in the native towns or villages, should be incorporated.

### **The Migrant Network Theory**

The Migrant Network Theory is also very relevant as far consequences of migration are concerned. According to this theory, there is a contact between migrants with those who are former migrants and with those who are non – migrants and reside in original place of residence through familial ties and friendship (De Jong, 2002). These ties increase the probability of migration as costs and risks of migration are lesser and the expected economic returns are higher (Massey et al., 1993).

Two aspects of the Migrant Network Theory are significant regarding the consequences of the migration are concerned. Firstly, migrant networks provide the information about the jobs in the urban areas. This support in the job search is the one of reasons of post – migration satisfaction. Secondly, familial ties and friends' circles provide a sort of social support which consequently leads to positive post – migration psychological impact on the migrants (De Jong, 2002). In short, existence of migrants' networks makes the migration easier for the people. This is true in the case of migration from the south Punjab to the city of Karachi.

### **Consequences of Migration for Women**

Migration greatly affects women. However, there is a disagreement amongst scholar whether migrations make women better off or worse-off. One group of researchers argue that migration provides women with increased economic opportunities and resultantly their standing vis-à-vis men is elevated (Guendelman & Itriaga, 1987; Boserup, 1970; Grasmuck & Pessar 1991; Lamphere, 1987). On other hand, there is another group of scholars who argue contrary to this notion. They are of the view that migration further lowers the women's position vis –a-vis men as it increases the dependence upon male counterparts owing to separation from families, relatively more social isolation et cetera women's dependence (Zinn, 1995; Espin, 1999; Fernandez-Kelly and Garcia, 1990; Young and Willmott, 1957; Zhou, 1992). Therefore, it is important to understand how migration affects women migrants from the southern region of the Punjab province in the city as large number of migrants from the region are women.

In other words, migrations bring changes both negative and positive for women. Migration may both mitigate and reinforce the gender role differences (Parrado, Flippen & McQuiston ,2005). Research also shows that women particularly use migration as a tool to gain autonomy and independence (Ortiz, 1996). In short, migrations affect the lives of women greatly and significantly.

### **Urbanization of the Saraiki Migrants**

The study in addition to identifying the economic consequences of migration for the Saraiki migrants in the city, the study also aims to see if migrants have become urbanized. If yes, to what extent. For gauging the consequences - if migrants are urbanized - the theoretical model of Louis Wirth as given his classical work, "Urbanization as way of life" (Wirth, 1938) is very pertinent. Important urban characteristics as given by Louis Wirth which serve as a standard of gauging if the migrants are urbanized are briefly discussed below:

- Urban dwellers depend on more people. However, they do not depend upon any particular person or persons.

- Individuals are professionally specialized.
- Individuals protect their interests through representation.
- Relationship amongst the members is through secondary contracts rather than primary contracts.
- Familial bonds are weaker.
- Traditional solidarity is undermined.
- Marriages tends to be postponed.
- Families are smaller.

Though Louis Wirth gives other characteristics of urban lifestyle, above mentioned attributes are used to see if the migrants from the south Punjab in the city of Karachi have become urbanized.

From above discussion, it can be said that there is no direct study available on the migration from the south Punjab to Karachi. In addition, most of analysis available about causes and consequences is from macro perspective. There is indeed absence of literature particularly from migrants own perspective. Therefore, there is a dire need to scientifically study the migration from the south Punjab to Karachi and delve into the experiences of the migrants.

### Research Design

This study is exploratory in nature. The methodology used for this study is the qualitative approach/methodology. Qualitative approach or methodology is to define or explores a particular social phenomenon by keeping its context in the background and by using different sources of data collection (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2003). Semi - structured interviews from the respondents was conducted. Then, interview transcripts were analyzed to identify major themes, causes and consequences in this case using thematic analysis technique.

Convenience based Purposive sampling was used in the study. The sampling is purposive because only member who are Saraiki migrants in the city of Karachi and who are indulged in informal economy are chosen as respondents. Moreover, sampling technique was convenience based because only those members of Saraiki community in the city was contacted to whom access can be easily achieved.

Data was conducted through semi-structured interview through open ended questions guide from participants. Thematic analysis technique was use to reach the conclusions regarding the causes and consequences of migration for Saraiki migrants in the city of Karachi.

### Data Analysis

Firstly, demographic characteristics of each respondent are briefly mentions. After that, each objective of the study as mentioned in first chapter is addressed. Thematic analysis is done to achieve the objectives of the study.

### Demographic Profiles

Total often respondents were interviewed. Out of these ten respondents, six are males while four are females. The number of respondents was restricted to ten as saturation point seemed to be reached. That is to say, they started giving similar answers or additional responses were not adding anything significant and new to the already provided information by previous respondents. Brief demographic profile of respondents is given below.

**Table 1.**

*Demographic Profiles of the Respondents*

Sr. No	Name	Age(years)	Gender	Occupation	Home District	Years since Migration
1	Aslam	20	Male	Mechanic	Vehari	6
2	Waqas	18	Male	A/C Technician	Bahawalpur	4
3	Shahzad	19	Male	Waiter	Lodhran	12
4	Nadeem	28	Male	Mechanic	Vehari	15
5	Siddique	40	Male	Rickshaw Driver	Bahawalpur	9
6	Asif	16	Male	Dishwasher	Vehari	1
7	Fatima	60	Female	Maid	Lodhran	20
8	Humaira	26	Female	Maid	Vehari	6
9	Zarina	45	Female	Housewife	Bahawalpur	20
10	Zubaida	55	Female	Maid	Lodhran	15

The above table presents interesting insights into the Saraiki migrants demographics. It shows that almost all of the migrants from the southern Punjab are below the age of 50 years at the time of migration. It helps us to infer that those people who are capable of doing some work migrate to Karachi. Besides this, the Saraiki migrants are indulged mainly in the blue-collar jobs like mechanic or A/C technician. In addition to this, migrants seem to belong to some particular districts like Vehari and Lodhran. Lastly, the table shows that most of migrations have occurred over the last twenty years or so.

### **Causes of Migration**

After performing the thematic analysis of the responses of the respondents, the Saraiki migrants in the city of Karachi, two main causes have been identified. First one is the economic restrictions or limited earning opportunities in the home town; second is the expected and actual high income possibilities in the city of Karachi. Besides this there are also other reasons behind the migration of people from the Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi. Each cause is briefly discussed as follows:

#### **Limited Opportunities in Native Areas**

One of the biggest and foremost cause of migration is the economic limitations back in the original place of dwelling i.e. the southern Punjab. Almost all respondents cite this as the primary cause of their decision to migrate from their ancestral lands. As said by 19-year-old Shehzad who works as a waiter in the Defence area: *Reason for coming here is work.* In words of another migrant from the Saraiki belt Nadeem who works as a mechanic: *Major reason of migration is financial conditions [in his native district of Vehari] and wage rate is less there [home town].* Similar reasons were cited by other respondents as well. As added by Asif, a sixteen-year-old dishwasher who migrated around one years ago: *I came to Karachi due to [hard] financial conditions [back home]. I am eldest in my family with eight sisters. My father is old. Therefore, I had to leave my native town, he further added.* The situation as far as women are concerned was worse. As stated by Fatima, a maid in the area of Clifton: *It was difficult time there. We even had to miss our day meals. We used to do Labour [ seasonal harvest] in agricultural fields but amount paid was very less.* Similar thoughts were expressed by another female respondent. She said: *My husband who died few years ago decided to move here as situations back home were very poor. There were no opportunities. We only used to do harvesting seasonally and that too for a nominal amount.* These responses show that the economic restrictions in the home town and villages of the southern Punjab are the primary cause of the migration from the region to bigger cities particularly to the city of Karachi.

#### **Better Economic Opportunities in Karachi**

In addition to the poor economic situation back home, better economic opportunities in the city of Karachi is the second most important cause behind the migration from the Saraiki belt. Karachi offers them job opportunities particularly the blue-collar job opportunities. Saraiki migrants have created the employment space for them in the city. Saraiki people are preferred in factories as both skilled and unskilled labourers as they do not frequently visit their native towns as do Sindhis or create political pressure and situations as do Pashtun workers (Rehman, 2016). Therefore, better economic opportunities in the city have emerged as an important cause of migration from the southern districts of Punjab province after performing thematic analysis. Responses of respondents lead directly to this conclusion. *Financial situation has become much better in Karachi,* said Nadeem, a 28-year-old mechanic who migrated around fifteen years ago. Similar views were expressed by Siddique, a forty-year-old rickshaw driver, *I migrated to the city along with family so that they are well-fed.* In the words of another female respondent Fatima who works as a maid in the Clifton area of Karachi: *It is a difficult time here too but it is definitely better than the time back in home.* Humaira, another respondent though facing domestic violence frequently said *'it is better here'*. In some case cases the economic amelioration was more significant. As told by Zarina: *Here our economic life improved greatly. I and my husband both started working. Now my sons work at mechanic shop and I do not need to work anymore. Neither my daughter in law work.* From above discussion it can well be concluded that better economic opportunities in the city of Karachi as compare to the home districts in the southern districts of Punjab are a big cause of migration from the Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi.

Besides these two main caused there were also other factors like personal interests. Some respondents told that they migrated because of their own interest. As their friends and relatives were moving to the city of Karachi, they also decided to move to the city. As said by Aslam, a twenty-year-old mechanic: *I came to Karachi because of my own interest; not because of any necessity. I came to Karachi because most of relatives were living here,* he further added. Similarly said another respondent Waqas: *I came here because of my interest and I think it was right decision.* Hence, thematic analysis also shows that factors like personal interest and social or peer pressure also play an important role in the migration of people from the Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi.

The causes of migration from the Saraiki belt to the city Karachi identified through the thematic analysis of the respondents' interview transcripts corroborates the theoretical propositions as stated by Ravenstein in his world famous the Push – Pull theory of migration. Economic restrictions in the southern part of Punjab are in fact push factors, factors which compel people to leave their ancestral lands. The economic opportunities in the city of Karachi are basically pull factors i.e. the attractions in the city of Karachi which attract people towards it. The law of migration also mentioned that there are also other factors which contribute towards the migration of people from rural to urban centers. Similarly, the thematic analysis also confirms that that except the push and pull factors identified as above, there also other factors like an individual's personal interest that causes a person's migration from the southern Punjab – a rural area – to the city of Karachi – an urban area. Therefore, Ravenstein's proposition that it is the economic reasons that lie at the core of the migration from rural areas to urban holds also true for the migration from the rural areas of southern districts of Punjab to the urban areas of Karachi city. That is to say, it is the economic restrictions or poor financial conditions in the home country that forces the people to migrate from their ancestral lands and it is the better economic opportunities in the city of Karachi that attracts people from different regions of the country particularly from the Saraiki belt. In short, the causes of migration from the Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi as identified through the thematic analysis of responses are not only logical but also follow the universal law of migration from the rural areas to urban centers. The analysis corroborates the major theoretical work on the rural - urban migration as given by Ernst George Ravenstein.

### **Support System in Karachi**

The thematic analysis of the respondents' responses shows that the existence of support system in the city of Karachi is one of the biggest reasons why people from the south Punjab migrate to Karachi rather than other cities or areas which might be at less distance. Almost all respondents cited the presence of some close or distant relative in the city who helped them to migrate to the city and helped them find the jobs in the city. As said by a respondent named Aslam: *I came Karachi because most of relatives were living here [Karachi]*. Another respondent, Nadeem, expressed similar views. *Reason for coming to Karachi was that most of relatives were leaving in Karachi*, he told. Almost in similar words said another respondent Siddique who is a rickshaw driver in the city. *Reason for coming to Karachi is that most of relatives are leaving in Karachi*, he added. Not only relatives help them to come here but also facilitate them in finding jobs. As said by Shahzad, another male respondent: *Relatives help us in getting jobs*. The analysis shows that the support in the migration alone is not sufficient to help the Saraiki migrants permanently stay in the city. Further support for instance in finding jobs et cetera is needed to force the migrants to permanently settle in the city. It is evident from the example of one of the respondents Asif who works as a dishwasher in the Defence area of Karachi. He told that he was planning to go back to village as his relatives did not help them in finding reasonable jobs in the city. In short, support system plays a vital role in first convincing the people from the southern districts of Punjab to migrate to Karachi rather than any other city or area and second it facilitates them to stay in the city permanently.

This role of support system in migration of people from the Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi is both logical and theoretically plausible. It confirms the propositions of the Network Migration Theory. The theory's proposition that existence of migrant network in the place of destination facilitates and reduces the costs and risks of the migration is valid in the case of migration from the south Punjab to the city of Karachi. As it can be seen from the above analysis, relatives dwelling in the city of Karachi serve as a strong support system. They not only help them in the process of migration from the south Punjab to Karachi but also help them in finding jobs. Hence, it can well be concluded that migration from the Saraiki belt to Karachi can be explained with the help of significant theoretical models like the Network Migration Theory.

### **Why women constitute a large proportion of the Saraiki migrants?**

Women constitute a large number of Saraiki migrants. The analysis shows various reasons for this. The socio – cultural characteristics of the Saraiki people facilitate the migration of women along with male family members. It has emerged that Saraiki people, historically speaking, possess nomadic attitude and attributes. That is to say that historically, owing to the absence of physical barriers and semi – arid agricultural fields, the Saraiki people have been moving along with their female family members from one place to another place. Resultantly, social values have emerged which do not hinder the movement of female family members along with male family members to the extent they impede the movement of women in other ethnicities like Sindhis who historically owing to their fertile lands and other factors have been less mobile. In short, nomadic background of the Saraiki people facilitate their migration as family units rather than as individual male members. As said by one respondent: *The Saraiki people migrate with families because for them it is not issue of honour like other communities*.

Besides this, the migrants are mostly from the lowest strata of the society and they are used to work along with women in the fields. Therefore, when they come to Karachi, they do not hesitate to send their female family members to work. In addition to this, the male members who migrate to the city of Karachi from the south Punjab are not specialized in any

particular field. In fact, are with agricultural background. Whatever skills they have become irrelevant in the city and resultantly they have to rely on the women to make both ends meet. Therefore, these financial restrictions force the male migrants who are key decision makers in a household to take the female members along with them and make them to work in the city. As said by a respondent Waqas: *Siraiki People came along with family because of poverty and work.* Another significant trend that emerged from the analysis is that they, the Saraiki migrants, allow their female members to work only if financial situations are poor. Once financial position becomes better, they stop sending their female family members to work. In other words, it is the financial restrictions which force the male migrants to take their female family members with them and make them to work to share financial burden of the household. Once they start earning reasonable amount, they restrict their female members within homes and do not allow them to work. A female respondent puts it aptly: *Women migrate to cities with Saraiki migrants because they make them to work. Male members who move to city are not educated or know any other work. So they rely on female members for income.*

### **Consequences of Migration**

One of the biggest consequence for the Saraiki migrants is economic prosperity. Almost all respondents agree that their economic situation has improved after coming to the city of Karachi. They agree that situation is better here as compare to their native towns and villages. As said by a respondent named Aslam: *Financial condition becomes better after coming to Karachi.* Similar views were expressed by another respondent named Shahzad who works as a waiter in the Defence area of Karachi. He said: *Our household earnings are better here[Karachi].* Another respondent also indicated the economic amelioration as a consequence of their migration from the south Punjab to the city of Karachi. He said: *Our household earnings are better here[Karachi].* Therefore, it is evident that one of biggest consequences of migration for the Saraiki migrants is the economic amelioration.

### **Consequences for Women**

The migration from the Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi has significant consequences for the women migrants. In order to properly understand the consequences of women, it is helpful to categorize the consequences into immediate and long term effects. Immediate consequences are that women are asked to work to share financial burden of the household. However, when women work they try to be relatively more independent. Resultantly, males who have just come from rural areas where patriarchal bonds are very strong and who after coming to the city face uncertainty and anxiety are initially unable to cope with it. Therefore, they try to exert their influence on women. However, they are unable to stop women owing to the financial restrictions. Consequently, owing to all these factors women face issues like domestic violence. As said by a female respondent named Fatima: *Women do become independent. However, they face problems initially as male members are not used to it. Afterwards, it becomes normal and males learn to live with it.* Even in that stage women do enjoy some economic freedom. As said by a female respondent who recently migrated after getting married and faces issues at home: *Working has improved my life as I do keep some amount with me, though secretly.* So in short run, women, generally speaking, are forced to do work and have to withstand the worst of weakening patriarchal bonds.

In long run, however, the migration has consequences that are more positive for women. Their employment gives them economic freedom and allow them to take the decisions about their lives. As a female respondent expressed her views: *It has given me freedom here. I know how to lead my life. You can see from the fact that I am getting married again on own will unlike village where you are given in Watta-Satta. I am marrying a person who is not Saraiki but is Sindhi.* It shows that migration to Karachi has positive long term effects for women. It gives them adequate economic independence and sufficient socio – cultural freedom to live their lives as they desire.

However, it is important to note that male migrants do not like women to be working and become independent. They think that it has adversely affected the familial bonds. As one respondent said: *Women become more liberal in Karachi as they also earn. In Karachi male dominance is zero,* he further added. Almost all male respondents agreed that women should not work or that they should only work when financial situations are very poor. It shows that women do face barriers in going to work and becoming independent after migrating to the city of Karachi.

### **Discussion**

The migration of the Saraiki people to the city of Karachi do result in their urbanization. The analysis shows that they do possess some of urban traits given by the Louis Wirth in his classical work ‘Urbanization as way of life’ (Wirth,1938). The analysis shows that people become specialized as given by Louis Wirth. It shows that respondents become specialized when they come to the city of Karachi. They prefer to master a certain professional and become professionally specialized in that. Saraiki people prefer to be specialized in professions like being mechanic and technicians and so on. This professional specialization is a manifestation of them being urbanized. Besides this, the analysis shows that their familial bonds have weakened as compare to their native towns. As said by one female respondent: *Bad thing here is that we don't*



go to our relatives unlike in village where we used to live in a single compound – Verha – and used to share everything. Similar views were expressed by another respondent: *People here don't get the chance to meddle into your personal life and you can keep at arm's length, into their limits.* It shows that relations and familial supervision have weakened in the city. In addition to this, the Saraiki migrants rely more on secondary contracts rather than primary contracts. Respondents expressed their views that they trust people less here and want everything to be documented so that interests are protected. Traditional solidarity has weakened too. In rural areas the *biradari* system is very strong source of mechanical solidarity. However, it weakens in the city of Karachi. It is evident from the fact women are getting married even to non – Saraikis let alone outside their immediate clan or *biradari*. Moreover, the Saraiki migrants now prefer smaller families which is another attribute of being urbanized. Besides this, they do not rely on any central figure for help as is the case in the rural areas of the southern Punjab particularly. Lastly, the analyses show that the Saraiki migrants in Karachi prefer smaller families as compare to family sizes in their native towns and villages. In short, the migrants from the Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi do possess urban traits as given by Louis Wirth in his classical work 'Urbanization as a way of life'.

### **Conclusion**

The analysis leads to significant and meaningful conclusions. It shows that most of migrants from the Saraiki belt in the city of Karachi have migrated mainly over last two decades. Moreover, the Saraiki migrants in the city of Karachi seem to belong to certain districts mainly like Vehari, Ladhraan et cetera. Furthermore, the Ravenstein's law of migration is valid in the case of migration from the Saraiki belt to the city of Karachi. There are both push factors – the limited opportunities in the southern districts of Punjab – and pull factors – better economic opportunities in the city of Karachi. Besides this, the Network Migration Theory is also tenable in this case. The analysis shows that people from the south Punjab migrate to Karachi rather than to other cities or areas is basically because the existence of support system in the city. This familial support system helps them first in migration by reducing costs and risks attached with it and then provides them with the information about jobs and other opportunities. Additionally, the study shows that women migrate in great numbers because male members who lack skills required in the city take them, women, with them so that they could also work alongside their men to share the financial burden of their households. As far as consequences of migrations are concerned, the study shows that migration results in the elevation of economic status. The consequences for women are very significant. Immediate consequences for women include the extra responsibility that they share when go out for work to support their families and issues which they face at the hands of male family members who get frustrated owing to the weakening patriarchal bonds in the city. The analysis also shows that Louis Wirth's urban traits as given in his classical work 'Urbanization as a way of life' are also possessed by the Saraiki migrants in the city of Karachi like specialization, dependence on secondary contracts et cetera. In other words, the study shows that the Saraiki migrants have been urbanized.

### **Recommendations**

1. It is recommended to Govt. of Punjab to create job opportunities for peoples of Saraiki Belt than they cannot migrates from homeland to Karachi.
2. It is recommended to Govt. of Punjab to provide all basic facilities of lives for peoples of Saraiki Belt than they cannot migrates from homeland to Karachi.

### **Areas of Further Research**

The study identifies certain areas which need further research for proper understanding. Firstly, the study shows that people from Saraiki belt migrate to Karachi rather than any other city owing to the existence of support system in the city. However, there is a need to further research to find out why in first place they decided to come to Karachi. Secondly, the study indicates that mostly migrants belong to certain districts of the south Punjab. Therefore, there is a need to study why people such districts constitute a large proportion of the Saraiki migrants in the city of Karachi.

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