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WOMEN WHO GO AND WOMEN WHO STAY:
REFLECTIONS OF FAMILY MIGRATION PROCESSES
IN A CHANGING WORLD

by

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Preface

Migration as well as women and development are topics of great interest among policy-makers and researchers. It is, therefore, surprising that their intersection has received so little attention in the research literature. The present working paper goes some way toward rectifying this oversight by drawing together available information.

The simple, frequently accepted view that the migration of women is determined by marriage considerations alone, i.e. that women migrate only on marriage to join their husband or after marriage to accompany their husband is shown in this working paper for what it is, a myth. The authors' find that women generally migrate for similar reasons as men - such as for employment, education and the city lights. This being said, the authors also point out how the patterns and determinants of migration are somewhat different for women and men as family considerations do often take on greater importance for women, including migration for marriage, migration to accompany the husband and fleeing from a difficult marriage situation.

The authors also point out quite correctly that the phenomena of women left behind and migrant women are conceptually interrelated. Decisions on which household member(s) should migrate or to stay behind are part of the same household decision-making nexus that helps determine a family’s survival strategy. This micro-level perspective is important if we are to understand the interrelated issues by women and migration. At the same time, it is also important to analyse these phenomena within the macro context, specific development policies and social/cultural norms that all too frequently disadvantage women’s opportunities in the labour market.

The topic of this working paper, women and migration, deserves much more attention than it has been given to date. This working paper will help those interested in this topic as it provides a useful review, appropriate conceptual viewpoints as well as a pot-pourri of worthwhile topics and unanswered questions worth pursuit.

Amarjit Oberai was responsible for recognising the importance of this topic and for commissioning this study.
Executive Summary

Although they tend to be overlooked in most migration studies, there are many more women migrants in developing countries than is commonly believed. Female migrants made substantial contributions to urban growth in recent decades. Further, there are vast numbers of women who are directly involved in migration, namely as women left behind by migrant husbands. This report summarises the results of an extensive literature review of developing country research pertaining to both aspects of migration, women who go and women who stay.

In more ways than were expected, women migrants are like male migrants: they migrate in their late teens or early twenties, they are usually single, and economic need is the most significant motivating factor. But there are differences. Compared to male migrants, the economic motives are mixed with social motivations, and these latter often affect where the women go. For many women, migration is their first step into the labour force. Like their brothers, many women migrants find work in the informal sector, usually in trade or personal services. Large proportions of women start life in the city as domestic servants or independent traders. Female migrants tend to earn less than male migrants, but they send part of their earnings more regularly to their families. Perhaps because they are able to provide this help, and certainly because their economic lot has improved, most women migrants report satisfaction with their moves.

In contrast, the women left behind often experience economic or psychological stress as a result of their husbands' departure. In principle, the women left behind are expected to retain the same economic activities and presumably living standards - between continuing farm activities and remittances from their husband - life is supposed to improve. In fact, women left behind may not receive remittances or any other benefits from remittances transmitted to other members of the family. Depending on the farming system, some women are unable to continue farming or trading activities because they lack necessary material or human resources. But being left behind is not a uniformly negative experience. Many women gain in independence and economic standing, either by their own activities or through activities made possible with remittances. Family and community factors play a significant role in helping women cope with their husbands' absences.

Based on this review, the authors make several recommendations for programmes or activities that could create more options for women migrants, whether they go or stay. Among these education is perhaps the most important, and portable, resource that can help women migrants. The review concludes with suggestions for future research dealing with women and the migration process.
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I. INTRODUCTION

Much has been written about the consequences of migration: the impact on the sending area (Connell et al., 1976; Lipton, 1982; Oberai and Singh, 1983), effects on the receiving area (Findley, 1977; Yap, 1976; Oberai, 1987), and the adjustments of the migrants themselves (Goldscheider, 1983; Martine, 1979). Given what has been thought to be the nature of many migration streams, however, especially those covering longer distances (Ravenstein, 1885; Shryock, 1964), the attention of a large proportion of migration studies has rested solely, or at least primarily, on male movers. Even where female migration "actually constitutes a majority of all migratory moves," often involving women who change residence upon marriage, such moves have too often been ignored for several reasons (Ware, 1981:142). First, female migration has long been considered insignificant economically; with low rates of participation in the labour force, women have received little attention in economic models of migration. In addition, since most female moves are usually from one rural area to another instead of to an urban centre, they have been de-emphasized in the face of current attention to what are seen as the more pressing problems of urbanisation (Ware, 1981).

Much of the literature that does exist on women and migration "has been written largely from a male perspective; that is, it has described women in terms of their relationships to men" (Hafkin and Bay, 1976:1). In societies characterised by patrilineal and patrilocal social systems, the movement of a woman to a new place of residence has been viewed almost exclusively as a simple reflection of her association with her household or family (Connell et al., 1976). The general rule has thus been "the men followed the money and the women followed the men" (Little, 1973:17). Until recently, therefore, separate investigations of the determinants and consequences of female migration have been considered redundant and of insufficient interest to justify separate analyses (Thadani and Todaro, 1979).

This lack of interest was maintained until very recently, even though female migration has been on the rise for some time. The now growing recognition that migration among women is an important phenomenon in its own right has been very late in coming; some have argued that the existence of basic differences between male and female migration behaviour should have been evident as early as 1966, when Lee's general migration model was introduced (Thadani and Todaro, 1979:1). Lee's (1966) insights at that time demonstrated the importance of the "potential differences between male and female migrants at least as regards intervening obstacles and personal factors".

It is clear, for example, that female and male migration behaviour may be guided by different sets of decision rules and influences. Among the factors that help to determine the extent of these differences are political, economic, and socio-cultural factors that still can, at times, allow or encourage male migration, while discouraging or prohibiting female migration (Connell, 1984; Thadani and Todaro, 1984). Although extreme examples of this scenario are becoming increasingly less common, their continued existence does provide insights into the origins of the "male bias" in the migration literature.
In Iran, for example, particularly among the lower classes, access to information and modern sector opportunities is extremely unequally distributed between males and females. Migrants to Tehran are generally single men seeking employment, or other males accompanied by their often illiterate wives, daughters, and other female family members. Autonomous female migration is not encouraged. Since a man's honour depends to a great extent upon the virtue of the women in his household, the interactions of those women with non-kin males are severely restricted. Travel is closely regulated, and women who accompany or follow males to Tehran are often not allowed to travel beyond the boundaries of their neighbourhoods. Those who do venture outside those boundaries may generally do so only under supervision (Bauer, 1984). The limitations placed on female mobility, along with their generally low levels of education, make it difficult for women to find employment outside the household. Thus while migration in Iran is a viable mechanism through which males seeking economic advancement may attain their goals, it is a much less realistic option for females.

The Iranian case may be contrasted with the Senegalese case. Until recently, some Senegalese women of the Cassamance migrated almost exclusively to help migrant brothers or spouses with the processing of oil palm kernels. With the subsequent collapse of the palm oil market, however, the niche of "accompanying" migration disappeared. As a result, the women of Lower Cassamance were forced to change their strategy, but they did not cease migrating. Instead, they changed patterns, shifting from rural-rural migration to rural-urban migration to work in Dakar as domestic servants. The migration to Dakar was seasonal, generating cash income to support their children during the dry season and helping to replace the income previously gained by processing palm oil for male relatives (Hamer, 1981). As a consequence, what originally appeared to be purely associational migration, with women simply following their spouses, turned out to be economically motivated, complementary migration, that diverged from the male migration patterns when the option of associational migration disappeared.

If the differences between forces governing the migration of women and those affecting the movements of males are not understood, any attempts to influence migration patterns are likely to have limited success. Among the economic factors differentially affecting male and female migration are sex-linked differences in the division of labour. In some settings, the division of labour at the origin can be such that one sex holds much greater responsibility for generation of income or support than does the other. The non-producers are then more likely than others to move out. Similarly, agricultural innovations are at times responsible for altering the demand for labour for different sexes. Stivens (1985) notes, for example, that among rice cultivators in Malaysia, tractors have basically replaced male labour once needed for hoeing. Rice farming, that has long been considered primarily women's work anyway, is now increasingly being left in the hands of a female labour force, as "the feminisation of land" becomes more and more common (Stivens, 1985:3). Male labour, no longer essential for cultivation, has often to seek job opportunities elsewhere.

In Tanzania, males traditionally outnumbered the females in migration to the capital city, but since the early 1970s women have been found to outnumber men (Sabot, 1979). Bryceon (1985) suggests that the increase in the proportion of female migrants to Dar es Salaam is due largely to a dramatic shift in the balance between the pros and cons for women of
remaining in the rural areas. A young woman’s livelihood is far less secure in her village than is that of a young man, and her “traditional access to the land and means of production is basically limited to usufruct rights conditional on [her] marital status” (Bryceson, 1985:141). The movement of females to the cities has, however, been facilitated by their increasing levels of educational attainment (Herold, 1979; Knotts, 1977; Eviota and Smith, 1984).

While evidence of many types of economically-oriented migration among women is accumulating (moves for jobs, education, etc.), numerous other factors may also be involved in a woman’s decision to leave home. She may be enticed by the ‘bright lights’ of the city. She may move to flee a difficult marriage or the heavy work and long hours required of life on the farm. She may try to evade her "apparent social inferiority" (Little, 1973:20), and move in quest of some form of freedom or emancipation. Finally, therefore, she may also undertake a move as a means to improving her status or general situation in life (Little, 1973).

Separate analyses of the determinants, consequences, and patterns of female migration are therefore certainly warranted, even where autonomous, economically motivated migration among women is rare. Associational female migration is also important for a number of reasons. For example, does a woman’s associational move to the city affect the division of labour within the family? If so, in what ways? How do the problems a woman confronts in the city affect her social and economic roles vis-à-vis the family? Are social subsystems influenced by such a move? If so, how? Is independence gained from the family of origin? If so, how much? How does that independence affect the migrants?

Similar information may be ascertained from women who remain behind while their husbands migrate out. Why don’t they accompany their husbands? Do women left behind confront new social and economic problems as a consequence of the departure of their husband? Are social support systems adequate to sustain the woman left behind? Do women left behind become more or less independent from their families?

Some researchers suggest that male outmigration has a positive effect on the well-being of the women who are left behind. Rural-urban moves may contribute to rural development through the diffusion of urban values and attitudes, and through the transfer of money and urban goods from the migrants to their families at the origins (Goldscheider, 1984). Others are less optimistic, however. Stichter (1982:28) argues that as a result of the departure of males for the city, Kenyan women often find their "obligations to husbands ... intensified, as they [are] pressed to take over more labour on family land-holdings".

Although male out-migration may allow married rural women to move into management positions in the agricultural sector, the absence of a male figure on the farm to help them obtain resources, such as information and services that are controlled by other men, makes any substantial improvements of their lot difficult to secure. While the status of these women appears to be rising relative to that of the non-managing women, it still remains well below that of men.

Single women who are left behind by a large out-migration of men face other potential problems. Although early marriage may be the norm, they are likely either to have to postpone it due to constraints in the
marriage market (Goldscheider, 1984), forego marriage altogether, or consider migrating themselves. If they delay marriage, they might find themselves marrying someone closer to their own age than would otherwise be true, a change that could strengthen their position within the family (Caldwell, 1968; Casterline et al., 1986; Safilios-Rothschild, 1982). Conversely, they might find that older men returning to the village would continue to select those women just reaching marriageable ages, thereby increasing the age gap between spouses; and larger spousal age differences are often associated with diminished power for the wife within the family.

In this paper, we review the migration literature, particularly that pertaining to the developing world, to identify the patterns of female migration behaviour and the familial and societal forces underlying their alternative choices. In taking stock of what is known about female migration, it is also important to be aware of the limitations to findings imposed by the historical research designs and migration models. The conclusions we can draw about women migrants will be very much circumscribed by the extent to which prior research has been able to address their migration.

This review is subdivided between the two major categories of women affected by migration: women who go and women who stay. At some points in her lifecourse, a woman may be more likely to go than to stay, such as prior to first marriage, or just after separation or divorce. Over a span of years, going and staying are not exclusive events; she may experience both migration states, in sequence, first going, and then being left behind. While there are similarities in the issues a woman must confront for both decisions, they are sufficiently different, especially in outcome for the woman, that we have chosen to treat them separately.

The next chapter addresses the questions pertaining to women who go. The third chapter discusses the situation of women left behind. The final chapter synthesizes the findings in an attempt to develop a more holistic view of female migration, and concludes with a presentation of issues for additional research.
II. WOMEN WHO GO

The conventional view of the male migrant is the young man who sets off on his own to carve out a niche for himself in a strange and distant city. He is often aided by kin or co-villagers already residing in the city and despite unfavourable odds, he is often successful in finding some kind of a job or source of income to support himself, perhaps even earning enough to remit to his family. But are the typical female migrants like their male counterparts? If there are different forces motivating their migration and different constraints upon their social and economic activities, the typical female migrant might differ markedly from her male counterpart. Will the female migrant be poorer or richer than male migrants? Will she be more likely to be married? Will she too rely on friends to help her get established in the city? What kinds of economic niches will she find for herself?

This chapter addresses these questions and evaluates what we know about women who go, including women who go as autonomous movers, without a spouse tied to or motivating the move. It is clear that women do move with a great deal more autonomy than many early writers have suggested, yet their migration behaviour, like that of their male counterparts, cannot be taken out of context. Women have increasing input into the migration decision, but as we have noted, often continue to go as part of a family strategy aimed at improving the well-being of the group as a whole. This may be achieved either through direct transfers from the woman's earned wages back to her natal family, or by the simple removal of the woman from the number of those in the household requiring food and other necessities. This chapter begins with a brief overview of the recent impact of female and male migration upon cohorts in metropolitan areas throughout the developing world, continues with some portraits of women who have gone, adds some discussion of the structural factors behind their migration decisions, and concludes with an assessment of the consequences of their movement, both for the women themselves and for their families.

GROWING PREVALENCE OF FEMALE MIGRATION TO MAJOR METRO AREAS

As early as the 1960s, migrants accounted for almost half of the growth of the 15-64 year old female cohort in some of the world's major metropolitan areas. Some examples are presented in Table 1. In the 1960s, male and female migrant contributions to growth of the 15-64 year old cohorts in selected countries were on average 44.9% and 42.7%, respectively. In fact, in many of the Latin American metropolitan areas as well as in Bangkok, the migrant contribution to growth of the 15-64 year old female cohort exceeded the proportion contributed by male migrants to the growth of the urban male population. If we focus only on the cohort that includes the migration age peak, the 15-29 year old cohort, the contribution of female migrants constituted 57.9% of the growth of that population, not much below the male migrant contribution of 69.6%.

Survey data from several settings have shown that since the 1970s, female migrants have often outnumbered their male counterparts (Allman and May, 1979; Pasuk, 1982; Eviota and Smith, 1984; Bryant, 1977; Taglioretti, 1983; Hamer, 1981). Many writers are thus at last starting to recognize the importance of migration in the lives of women in developing countries.
Table 1: Migrant Contribution to Metropolitan Growth 1960-70 for Selected Metropolitan Areas by Sex and Age Cohort (per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metropolitan Area</th>
<th>15-29 yr. old cohort</th>
<th>15-64 yr. old cohort</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Africa:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accra</td>
<td>125.1</td>
<td>57.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algiers</td>
<td>91.9</td>
<td>71.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southeast Asia:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>57.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jakarta</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>40.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manila</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>46.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seoul</td>
<td>85.5</td>
<td>76.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Asia:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damascus</td>
<td>63.9</td>
<td>39.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teheran</td>
<td>55.0</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belo Horizonte</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>67.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bogota</td>
<td>61.1</td>
<td>54.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buenos Aires</td>
<td>81.6</td>
<td>89.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Caracas</td>
<td>67.4</td>
<td>50.8</td>
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<td>Guadalajara</td>
<td>43.4</td>
<td>40.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lima</td>
<td>66.3</td>
<td>50.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mexico City</td>
<td>59.0</td>
<td>49.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monterrey</td>
<td>58.6</td>
<td>49.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porto Alegre</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>71.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recife</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>40.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rio de Janeiro</td>
<td>71.8</td>
<td>71.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>59.3</td>
<td>63.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>São Paulo</td>
<td>94.8</td>
<td>89.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>69.6</td>
<td>57.9</td>
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PORTRAITS OF WOMEN WHO GO

Of all the patterns of autonomous migration likely to be adopted by a woman, perhaps the most common is that of migration during her teenage years to work as a domestic servant in a nearby city. As a rule, women who follow this pattern are unmarried, and they view their migration either as a way to save for the future when they will marry, or to help their impoverished families back home. Whether in West Africa, Southeast Asia or Latin America, they are likely to find their first job with the help of relatives already in the city. The following example describes typical circumstances under which migration into domestic service is adopted. It is taken from a study of migrant families in Ilocos Norte, the Philippines (Findley, 1987:171):

"The Castro family ... owns no land, and their only source of income in their village is hired farmwork. Each of the members over age 13 is hired to plant garlic [the cash crop in the region where the family lives] for one month each year earning 20 pesos a day [$1.13 in 1985]. They may also work at transplanting rice or ploughing, but these jobs are not as certain from year to year. There are nine children in the Castro family, with five under the age of thirteen.... The father, Domingo, has circulated between Manila and their village over the last fifteen years, doing hired farm work when at home and working for short periods as a carpenter or janitor in Manila. He leaves the village to find work in Manila when he can't earn enough to support his family, while his wife asks him to return from Manila whenever she says that his remittances are not covering their expenses.... Given the family's continual need for income, as soon as their children reach working age, around age 14, they stop going to school and start working. The eldest son fishes in the nearby river and does hired farmwork in the area. The next two eldest are both daughters who have gone to work as domestics in Manila. The elder of the two, Marites, is 16 and has worked as a domestic for three years. She earns 250 pesos per month [$14] and sends money regularly to her parents. Marites found a job for her younger sister, Jocelyn, aged 15, and she worked in Manila as a maid for nine months. During this time, she sent her parents 300 pesos [$17]."

The family's income situation is precarious, and over the years migration has been a frequent, though not continuous, source of cash income. It was natural that the two daughters would migrate when they became old enough (at the age of 14 or so) to work as domestics, thus relieving the family of the burden of their support as well as generating additional income, albeit meagre. Like so many other young girls, Marites and Jocelyn have little education and no training for off-farm or nondomestic work. Their work in the city is a repetition of their work at home: housecleaning, laundry, child care, and assistance with meal preparation. The only difference between the two situations, nonmigrant and migrant, is that migrants are paid a small sum for their labour, whereas nonmigrants work as unpaid family labour.

Commonly, occupational mobility is practically nonexistent for the young migrant who works as a domestic. She has no training and no avenue for acquiring new skills. For most, the exit from domestic service is marriage, but in Southeast Asia some women have advanced from being domestics at home to domestics abroad. Their work situation is often more demanding than in their home country, and many of these women complain of
the excessive hours and lack of freedom they find overseas. In many cases, however, domestics working in nearby cities in their home countries earn roughly a tenth of national per capita income, while those who work overseas can earn sums up to or exceeding the national average. Thus, even given some disadvantages, this leap in potential earnings fosters continued interest in international migration, particularly from the Southeast Asian nations to the oil-rich states of the Middle East. Like male migrants, then, women do respond to sizeable wage differentials when they exist at different destinations.

Migration to Study:

While more frequent among men than women, another pattern commonly adopted by young single women is migration to a nearby city in order to obtain additional education. While attending high school or college, they generally stay with relatives. The following is the story of a young Peruvian woman who migrated from the Sierra to the Coast to continue her education (Bourque and Warren, 1981: 32-34).

"Concepcion was born into one of the wealthier Mayobamba families. Her father holds substantial private land and cattle. Her mother, an indomitable sierra woman, raised five surviving children, two boys and three girls. Concepcion’s life has been characterised by her strong desire to study. Her first move to the coast was in pursuit of high school education. Concepcion’s family had planned to send her younger brother to the coast to continue his studies. An elder sister, already working on the coast, offered him a place to live. At this point, Concepcion began to lobby for more schooling as well. It took a lot of protesting, but eventually she convinced her father to let her go. Her mother agreed, and the older sister offered to keep both children. Life on the coast required some changes. Concepcion did very well in the Huacho school and was anxious to continue studying after high school. She thought about nursing or teaching and planned to go to Lima and enroll in a specialised course of study. She managed to accompany her brother to Lima and they lived together for a while. The brother, however, was unable to make a success of it on the coast and decided to return to the sierra. Concepcion stayed on, sharing a room with some cousins. She found employment in a department store where she could work during the day and study at the preparatory academy in the evening to get ready for her university entrance exams. She failed the entrance exams for the university twice and finally managed to pass the third time. Once in the university, she studied for two years, met a young man from Huaral whom she married, and then became pregnant. When the first boy was born, Concepcion dropped out of the university and found work."

For several reasons, Concepcion’s experience is typical of that of other females who migrate in order to pursue their studies. Perhaps because parents still are reluctant to invest in the education of girls, the girls who do migrate to the city to continue schooling often do so without much familial support, or even in the face of parental disapproval. This means that they are much less likely than boys to actually complete their schooling, should financial difficulties arise. In addition, the young female student is often at risk of early pregnancy, another disrupter of studies. As a consequence, partly because girls may have more difficulty completing their schooling, the avenues of upward mobility through the white collar professions tend to be
less accessible to them than to males with similar goals. Even interrupted schooling may nonetheless be an advantage to girls who are able to increase their commercial value by gaining basic knowledge of mathematics or reading. Schooling may also make them more competitive in the urban marriage market, as in the case of Concepcion.

Migration into Prostitution:

While not as common as migration into domestic service, a significant number of young single women migrate into prostitution. Some enter prostitution by default when other earnings possibilities are not realized (D'Hont, 1985). Some start out as waitresses and then shift to the more lucrative prostitution business (Smale, 1980), while others move with the express purpose of becoming prostitutes (Findley, 1987; Pasuk, 1982). Usually, these young women come from very poor families, families who have had a stretch of bad harvests, large debts, and few prospects for paying them off. The following description of a young migrant who works as a prostitute in Bangkok was taken from a case study by Pasuk (1982).

"Taew, from the Northeast of Thailand, is third in a family of eight children, and definitely the prettiest. After coming to Bangkok to find some sort of work to enable her to help her family, she tried various restaurant and waitress jobs until she finally was lured into working as a masseuse by the promise of magnified earnings not possible by any other route. At first she gave only massages, but eventually she was convinced to add sexual services. She quickly earned enough to send her family the money for a new well. For a while she stopped working and was supported as a mistress by one of her clients, but when it became clear that he could not send money to her parents, she went back to work. She has kept her work as a masseuse a secret from her parents, who are very proud of her and the money she has sent back. Her parents either do not know or do not want to recognize that their daughter is a prostitute, but the rest of her relatives apparently have deduced this fact from Taew's high level of remittances and low level of education. In any case, there is no doubt that the family is much better off now, due to Taew's remittances. Not only have they improved their house, they have also been able to send three children to school, which they view as the best long-term investment."

This case illustrates the often compelling reasons behind the migrant's decision to enter prostitution. Often adopted by single women before they have any children, there is little evidence that there are lasting negative sanctions that impede their subsequent marriage chances. Single or divorced women with children find prostitution a means to earn high incomes to support their children and to establish themselves independently. As is the case in international domestic service, the financial rewards for prostitution are often 10 or 20 times what a woman can hope to earn as a petty merchant, and it requires no training. Also like domestic service, however, there is little occupational mobility for the prostitutes.

Migration as an Escape from a Marriage:

Another common type of female migrant is the woman who moves away from her village at the time of marital dissolution. It may be the act of migration itself that allows the woman to escape from a bad marriage, or
she may move after being abandoned by her husband, perhaps himself a migrant. Women may also move into the city when they are widowed, but this usually occurs only if they have no family to care for them in the village. The following is an example of a Malian woman who used the occasion of a visit to town to leave her husband (Findley, 1987).

"Oumou has lived most of her life in a small village in rural Mali. It was a hard life and she recalls that during the times of drought they were forced to seek work in nearby cities just to feed themselves. After fifteen years of marriage in which the family's life was frequently interrupted by seasonal migrations, Oumou simply could not tolerate her husband and the hard life anymore. When she was obliged to go to Bamako to help her brother with some legal problems, she seized this occasion to leave her husband. While helping her brother she met a man whom she liked, and they became lovers. Shortly thereafter she moved in with him, as he had housing provided as part of the benefits of his work as a watchman. Although he was unable to support her, he did arrange for a vegetable stand in front of the employer's store. She now supports herself selling vegetables at this stand and has no intention to return to her husband."

This woman moved independently, almost secretly, hiding the real reason for her move. Once in the city, she severed ties with her husband and his family. Like many women who migrate in conjunction with a separation or divorce from their husbands, Oumou was left in a precarious situation; and like many other such women, she quickly realigned herself with another man. Although Oumou did not bring her children with her, she is typical of other recently divorced women in her adoption of petty commerce as a means to support herself. This is one of the few ways that a migrant woman with young children can work. As is true of the women who migrate into domestic service, most of the newly divorced women who migrate have limited skills. If they have dependent children to look after and no family to help take care of them during the day, these women have little choice but to engage themselves in petty commerce. Their incomes from these activities are likely to be very low, and as a result, they continue to face strong economic incentives to remarry.

Seasonal Farm Labour Migration:

Another migration pattern sometimes adopted by widowed or divorced women is seasonal rural-rural migration. If there are young children, this requires a decision either to take the children along or to leave them with family. There is evidence of this pattern in India and the South African and Andean regions. The following is the story of a Mozambican widow (Manghezi, 1982: 166-168).

My husband died and left me with two small children to care for and ... I decided to go to Xinavane [a sugar estate] to look for work. This was in the 1950s and I left my children under the care of my mother. At first I did hoeing. There were many, many women when I was there. There were dormitories for women who came from long distances, and we slept four to eight women in each dormitory, providing our own bedding and the company providing the food. The women who came from neighboring areas went back to their own homes in the evening.
The seasonal rural-rural female migrant probably faces a more difficult migration situation than other female migrants. The rural labour market is highly segmented and when women are hired for seasonal work, they tend to be concentrated in the very lowest paying activities, jobs that men will not take. They live in dormitories or temporary quarters, and have little protection from men who seek their sexual favours. Even their income may not be secure and may be contingent upon "good" behaviour. Finally, as the jobs are only seasonal, they have no long-term security. Not surprisingly, this is not a very desirable migration option for women.

Migration to Join Spouse or Kin:

Of course, women commonly migrate to join previously migrant husbands. Although they may actually migrate alone, such moves are classified as associational. Because of the cost of bringing a large family to the city, wives who follow their husbands may be less likely to have many children, or, if so, they may leave some of the children behind with their families in the villages. The following is an example of a woman who has migrated to join her husband, taken from a study of migrants in Bamako, Mali (Findley, 1987).

For two years after her marriage, Sitan continued to sell vegetables and other foods at the main plaza of Nioro, their native city, while he was a driver operating out of another regional city, Kati, further south. They were seldom able to be together, due to his travels. When his employer decided to move to Bamako, he decided to follow him, but still he did not ask his wife to join him. Finally, after two years, he sent for his wife to join him. For the first two months they continued to live with his sister, with whom he had been living, but then they found a room of their own in a low rent compound where many other migrants like themselves live. He pays the rent and a small sum each day for food, and she must make up the difference for household expenses with her own work. She has continued with her independent trade activities, although she has shifted to the sale of prepared food and traditional soap prepared from peanuts. When she became pregnant, she sent for two nieces to help her out with housework and with the marketing activities. With their help, she is able to make about 250 francs CFA ($0.80) which she uses for the additional food and household expenses not covered by her husband. Particularly while her husband is on the road, she finds she does not have enough for the day's food, so she often borrows from the landlord's wife, who lives in the compound, as well as a friend who lives there.

Although this migrant has accompanied her husband to the city, she is not fully supported by him. She still must struggle to earn money for the family's needs, a situation which we find to be fairly typical of other "passive" migrants who accompany their husbands. Like other migrant women, she engages in petty commerce to supplement his contribution to the household. She also depends on an informal exchange network to get her through the times when she has neither support from her husband, nor enough from her own activities. Finally, she is like many other young African migrants in that she has now "adopted" two of her rural kinfolk. She will raise them and prepare them for marriage in return for their help with her chores, a pattern typical of foster parenting in much of West Africa.
There are, of course, other patterns and types of female migration, but these are the ones that dominate across the developing region: migration seeking domestic or other employment, migration for education, migration to dissolve or after dissolution of a marriage, seasonal migration, and migration to join family. Women are like men in that economic considerations more often than not drive their decisions; such considerations may include support for parents, for siblings, and for their own children. These motives, however, are mixed with family and social factors that additionally constrain or facilitate their migration.

WHY WOMEN MIGRATE

When women are asked why they migrated, they usually give one of two basic reasons: to accompany spouse or family, or to seek work. In some settings, affiliation dominates, while in others, economic incentives dominate. Affiliational or associational moves include marriage migration, moves to follow a spouse, or moves to join other family members. Moves qualifying for inclusion in the economic category are those related to finding or improving jobs, education, income, and occupational mobility. In many cases, categories within or between groups of economic and associational motivations for migration overlap. In others, migrants might have several reasons for moving, but only one reason is recorded.

In Table 2, we present data from studies covering each geographical region in the developing world in which specific reasons for women's migration are cited. Most of the research refers to surveys or research conducted between the early 1970s and the present. The table subdivides the studies by region: Asia, Africa, Latin America, Caribbean, and South Pacific, and it dramatizes the importance of economic motivations for female migration. In the recent literature reviewed, the movers who are motivated by the search for employment are found to outnumber those moving for any other reason. In 27 per cent of the studies, the search for employment is cited as a primary motivator among women migrants, while in an additional 29 per cent of the studies, other economic incentives for migration are enumerated. Studies citing economic influences as determining women's moves outnumber those in which the women claim to have moved for personal or social reasons (56% vs. 35%); this is the case both within and across regions. Such findings run counter to the arguments of those who suggest that women's moves tend to be much more highly social or personal, than economic in nature.

Nonetheless, associational moves are common among female migrants. In 16 per cent of the studies reviewed, the women moved primarily to accompany or follow a spouse or other family member, while 13 per cent mention migrating in order to marry. Overall, moves for employment are shown to be most common among women in Latin America, the Caribbean, and the South Pacific, while moves for marriage or to accompany a husband or other family member are more common in Asia and Africa, as well as among women moving from developing countries to more developed nations.

Studies in which over two-thirds of the migrant women indicated that they had migrated to marry or to accompany family members tend to be those focusing on South Asia. In one study of India, over 80 per cent of the female rural-urban migrants surveyed in Kerala and West Bengal indicated that they had moved as housewives accompanying working husbands, or they
Table 2: Reasons Cited for the Migration of Women in LDCs (Number of studies) (Figures in brackets are column percentages)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stated reasons</th>
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<th>Carib. &amp; Latin America</th>
<th>LDC to South Pacific</th>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>(24)</td>
<td>(34)</td>
<td>(26)</td>
<td>(33)</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(12)</td>
<td>(13)</td>
<td>(6)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase economic</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(6)</td>
<td>(9)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>(6)</td>
<td>(8)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
<td>(11)</td>
</tr>
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<td>(9)</td>
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<td>(66)</td>
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<td>(56)</td>
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<td>5</td>
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<td>(11)</td>
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Note: The studies referenced in the table span the disciplines of economics, sociology, geography, and demography. The studies date from the 1970s and include governmental reports, books and journal articles. Documents were primarily in English, but also French and Spanish. Each cell of the table indexes the number of studies in which this reason for migration was given for the study population.
had moved at the time of marriage due to virilocal residence customs (Singh, 1984). Similar results are found in other research on India and Pakistan, as it appears that most female migrants in that region move to join family or to marry (Oberai and Singh, 1981; Premi, 1980; Shah, 1984).

In fact, in Pakistan, female migration appears to be undertaken almost exclusively for marriage or associational purposes (Shah, 1984). There the movement of single women happens only in extreme circumstances. While a growing number of women are moving for educational reasons, they generally must go in association with other family members. Women in Pakistan are thought to require sheltering, to be continually "attached to some form of family structure that affords ... protection" (Shah, 1984:110).

Some have argued that female migration in India is also almost solely associational or marriage-oriented (Mukhopadhyay, 1980; Premi and Tom, 1985). Others suggest, however, that the situation now appears to be changing to allow for increases in economically motivated migration among women. Although migration to India's large cities, both from rural places and from other urban origins, is dominated by males, women vastly outnumber men in the rural-to-rural flows. Singh (1984) argues that while the latter is due in part to patrilineal traditions, lower castes do not necessarily adhere to such traditions. They often enter the migrant labour force instead, a segment of the labour force that has been growing as the commercialization of agriculture has proceeded. Technological advances are providing new opportunities to women in the rural areas, thereby encouraging increases in economically motivated female mobility. In the country as a whole, however, associational migration still dominates.

Migration for marriage and affiliation is also predominant in other selected settings: Jamaican migrants to London (Foner, 1976), Yoruba migrants in Ghana (Sudarkasa, 1977), women migrants in Ilorin, Nigeria (Watts, 1983), migrant women to Juba City, Sudan (Muludiang, 1983), and migrant women in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia (Altorki, 1977). Where available, percentages of those moving to marry or join a spouse or other family members are found to be high in several African countries: 55 per cent in the Sahel region (Conde and Diagne, 1985); 43 per cent in Liberia (Duza and Conteh, 1984); 48 per cent of migrants in Benin City, Nigeria (Okojie, 1984). Except for Jamaica, these are predominantly Moslem societies with varying degrees of female seclusion, low levels of female participation in the wage labour force, and very high proportions of marriage, all of which contribute to the high proportions of affiliational moves.

When the affiliative motivations are disaggregated by whether the woman is moving either to join her spouse or other family member, or to find a husband, we find the following. Of Kikuyu and Abalayia women interviewed in Nairobi, 38 per cent said they came to marry or join a spouse, 21 per cent said they came with or following parents, and 5 per cent said they came to join other relatives, such as brothers or sisters (Knotts, 1977). In a study of predominantly associational migration in Liberia, roughly one quarter of the women were actually moving in order to marry, with three-quarters moving to join a previously migrant spouse (Duza and Conteh, 1984). Similarly, only a minority of affiliational female migrants actually move in order to marry, according to surveys in Benin City, Nigeria (Okojie, 1984) and parts of Thailand (Bangchang, 1981; Singhanetra-Renard, 1981).
In contrast to the situation in many of the African and South Asian settings discussed above, affiliational moves are not predominant among female migrants in Southeast Asia and Latin America. In only a few Southeast Asian and Latin American surveys do as many as half of the female migrants give affiliational reasons for their migration to the city. According to one study, for example, only 11 per cent of female migrants to Bangkok moved with their families (Piampiti, 1984). In these regions, economic reasons dominate: 68% moved to find a job in Bangkok (Arnold and Piampiti, 1984), 70% to find work in Dagupan City, the Philippines (Trager, 1979), 56% to find a job and raise their standard of living in Malaysia (Araffin, 1984); 46% to support family in Puerto Rico (Monk, 1981). In many studies, the precise proportion moving for economic reasons is not given, but economically motivated moves are stated as being in the majority in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Haiti, and Mexico (Albert, 1980; Bossen, 1981; Berggren et al., 1977; Rengert, 1976).

Why is there such disparity between the proportions moving for associative and economic reasons in Africa and South Asia versus Southeast Asia and Latin America? When viewed longitudinally, it appears that the high proportions of women giving economic reasons in Southeast Asia is a fairly recent occurrence. In Malaysia, for example, 56% of those surveyed in 1977 claimed to have migrated to find a job and to raise their standard of living. Historically, however, the reasons for women's migration in Malaysia were almost exclusively associational. Women moved basically either to be with their families or in order to marry. Otherwise they were expected to remain in the rural areas where they would presumably stay out of trouble and provide both agricultural and household labour. Parents thought that if girls were to migrate to the city without supervision, they would go astray, and would consequently be at a disadvantage when they entered the marriage market. In addition, at that time there were virally no jobs for any but the most highly educated young single women in the urban centres.

Development in both the urban and rural sectors of Malaysia is now producing significant changes, however. New labour-saving technology allows girls to stay in school longer than was previously possible. With a sufficient level of education, they may continue their schooling in the city, thus learning the skills necessary for formal sector employment. Female employment possibilities are also expanding and the government is actively seeking improvements for women in both urban and rural settings (Khoo and Pirie, 1984). At the same time, significant changes in the value structure that strengthens the social supports behind the migration of these young women have also been taking place. In Ariffin's (1984) study of Peninsular Malaysia, for example, it is found that as girls in the rural areas watch traditions challenged by the spread of modernisation, many begin to feel the need to move beyond the more restrictive patterns of the countryside, and to seek individual freedom and economic advancement in the city.

Often in Southeast Asia we find evidence of a mixture of social and economic motivations, with the economic incentives for migration dominating. Push and pull factors combine to influence the migration process. In Bangkok, for example, some female in-migrants do not move exclusively in search of employment, but find jobs anyway, generally in the services sector. In such cases, both associational considerations and potential employment opportunities constitute the pulls, while poverty, droughts, and off-season unemployment constitute the pushes (Arnold and
Piampiti, 1984). As in the case of Malaysia, processes associated with modernisation are precipitating changes that influence Thai women’s migration behaviour. While rural traditions are challenged, levels of education rise, and women’s participation in the non-agricultural labour force increases, interest in a possible move to the city also increases. Lack of employment opportunities, unequal educational opportunities between country and city, and often unsatisfactory rural living conditions provide further impetus for such a move (Piampiti, 1984).

What are some of the other differences in the social structure that permit economic factors to dominate in inducing the migration of the young Southeast Asian and Latin American women? One difference may involve nuptiality patterns. In Southeast Asia and Latin America, women usually choose their own mates. This is in contrast to parts of Africa and South Asia where marriages still are often arranged, and parents receive a brideprice. In Southeast Asia and Latin America, girls feel other obligations to their families. Many migrate not only with the goal of saving for their own marriages, but also to provide some economic support for their kin. In Bangladesh, 11% of one group of working migrant women are principal providers for their parents (Chaudhury, 1977), and in Puerto Rico, 25% of the daughters in the household provide the sole support to parents and siblings (Safa, 1984). In addition, in parts of Asia women marry later, increasing the chances that their first moves as adults will occur while they are still single (Hirschman and Rindfuss, 1982). This alone would reduce the proportion of affiliational moves.

Aside from affiliation and economic necessity, what else precipitates female migration? Related to the objective of seeking employment, some women say that they migrated to further their education or obtain additional training for specialised employment (Graves, 1984). Many claim to go in search of improved skills, to find out more about life in the city, to get away from life in the village, especially the hard agricultural work, and to escape parental controls. Although the latter may be a goal, however, most still go under some parental control; for example, they must live with a relative who can keep an eye on them while they are away.

Of the studies reviewed here, 11% indicated that education was an important motive for female migration. This proportion varied little across the regions, despite major differences in regional levels of female schooling. The relatively low proportion of women who cite education as a motive for migration is consistent, however, with male-female educational attainment differentials. Although many families oppose migration solely for education among their daughters, other parents see increased schooling as an investment in the economic potential of the girls. This is often the case in Korea, where many young girls are sent to Seoul after primary school or junior high school to continue their education. This is also common in parts of Southeast Asia (Salaff and Wong, 1977).

As this information on education suggests, even when young single Korean women migrate alone, their migration decisions are seldom made unilaterally. If the woman is a member of a family, decisions tend to be made by family heads, with varying levels of input from the women themselves. This situation is common throughout the developing world. Decisions are primarily influenced by family welfare issues, often survival itself, but also long-term issues such as upward economic mobility.
Poverty is perhaps the biggest single motivator of migration for young single women. With the monetarisation of the rural economies, families have greater need for cash income. Where they lack resources or access to the means of production, a cash income can only be gained by allocating some family labour to the wage economy. In such situations, poor families do not decide whether or not someone will migrate; they decide who will go when and where. If women who have relatively few opportunities for employment in the rural economy can obtain jobs elsewhere, their families will encourage, or at least not impede, their migration (Arizpe, 1981; Abasiekong, 1979; Hamer, 1981; Jelin, 1977; Morokrasic, 1983).

The women most likely to be pushed out by rural poverty are often the women who find themselves alone with children to support. Unless they have access to land through the maternal lineage, a single woman with children must rely on wage labour to support herself (Bourque and Warren, 1981; Murray, 1981; Smale, 1980). As the paucity of rural employment opportunities severely restricts her earnings, one solution is for the female family head to merge her household with that of a sister or mother, thereby gaining access to land and other support from her family (Murray, 1981; Albert, 1980). Another approach is for the woman to leave her children with her mother or sister, to migrate in search of work, and to send remittances back for the support of her children (Murray, 1981; Berggren et al., 1977; Bryant, 1977). Despite the hardship of being separated from their children, it is often easier for unattached women to find work in cities, where the jobs and resources are less apt to be completely determined by patrilineal ties (Schmink, 1982).

Even without the economic stress of being a single mother, the widening gap between farm incomes and family needs has been a catalyst for the migration of many other young women. In Costa Rica and Haiti, declining farm sizes have meant that women no longer inherit enough land with which to support their families. Since they are often unable to find work in nearby rural areas, high levels of migration among young women in search of employment result (Albert, 1980; Berggren et al., 1977). One survey in Guatemala found that 28% of all rural women had migrated that year to work in the coffee or cotton plantations, and 70% of all rural women had migrated to work on the plantations at least once in their lives (Bossen, 1984). Even in India where norms have long discouraged independent female migration, the commercialisation of agriculture has coincided with a rise in rural-rural seasonal migration among women (Menafee Singh, 1984). There, declining productivity and price levels for their products has forced large numbers of women into seasonal labour markets.

For rural families caught in an income squeeze, both sons and daughters may be encouraged to migrate, but where there is an urban employment differential favouring women, families may prefer that their daughters go. In Latin America, for example, women are able to find employment, usually as domestics, much more quickly than are men, so daughters are more likely to migrate and to do so at an earlier age. The push for female migration is accentuated by a division of labour in many Latin American agrarian systems that gives fairly limited roles to young girls (Deere, 1979; Jelin, 1977). In Asian societies, industrialization has been associated with an increase in unskilled or semi-skilled jobs that are often allocated preferentially to women. In Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand large numbers of young women report that they migrated to take jobs in electronics or apparel factories (Hong, 1984; Khoo and Pirie, 1984; Piampiti, 1984).
Even where urban jobs are not differentially available to men and women, families may prefer that their daughters migrate. This is the case in Mexico, New Zealand, and Thailand, because daughters have been found to remit more reliably than sons (Arizpe, 1981; Graves, 1984; Lightfoot et al., 1983). In New Zealand and Thailand, the migration of daughters is also favoured because they are more likely than sons to obtain higher status jobs in the salaried formal sector.

Patron-client systems of labour recruitment may further facilitate female migration, because a patron can be entrusted with the care and supervision of the young girl (Lightfoot et al., 1983; Graves, 1984; Bourque and Warren, 1981). To a certain extent, the placement of a young girl as a domestic reflects this patronage, with the girl's family trusting the employing family to care for and chaperone their daughter. With a "safe" placement in a family, many young girls who would otherwise not be given the freedom to migrate, are permitted to do so.

Despite often compelling economic motivations for female migration, many women do not migrate. And in some settings, there is almost no independent female migration. What prevents the mobility of women in these areas? This question is addressed in more detail in the following chapter, but warrants some attention at this point as well. First, in many instances, marriage and other ties to the family in the village inhibit female migration (Mincer, 1978; Gugler and Flanagan, 1978). Social attitudes of female seclusion, protection of women's virtue, and purdah can also operate to limit the independent migration of women (Singh, 1984). Under the system of purdah, avoidance by women of contact with most men is proscribed, mobility is limited, and females are expected not to show themselves much outside their households.

But purdah is not equally observed, and differences in levels of adherence may be reflected in migration differentials. For example, in the south of India, where purdah is not strictly enforced, levels of female migration are much higher than in the north of India where purdah is more strictly obeyed. In Nigeria, on the other hand, many women in purdah have migrated. Thus, even when strictly enforced, purdah alone does not explain low levels of female migration (Pittin, 1984). Social attitudes can contribute to the variation, but there may be other forces operating that free some women in purdah more than others.

Part of the variation in the influence of social and cultural restrictions on migration may depend on the degree of countervailing economic forces compelling women to migrate. In northern Nigeria and Mali, severe droughts have often caused a large number of women to disregard cultural norms restricting their mobility and to migrate to the cities in search of work (Pittin, 1984; Brett-Smith, 1984). In both Mexico and Malaysia, despite cultural norms that are antithetical to autonomous female migration, there are also relatively high levels of independent mobility among women (Arizpe, 1981; Khoo and Pirie, 1984).

In the settings in which women do not migrate, the village economic situation may be more compatible with adherence to cultural norms, either because there exists a more positive role for women in the rural sector or because the economic conditions in the rural areas are less severe, or because of some combination of the two. Variation in migration is thus likely to be due not just to variations in nuptiality patterns and other social factors, but also, and perhaps more importantly, to economic
opportunities and patterns of labour force allocation. While women may say that they go or do not go for associational reasons, their mobility may be as much a reflection of economic as of social realities.

WHO ARE THE WOMEN WHO GO?

What are the characteristics of the women who migrate, particularly as autonomous or independent migrants? Are they younger than their male counterparts? Do both single and married women migrate? What are the economic circumstances that cause a woman to leave her family behind? What happens to the women after migrating, particularly if they migrate to the big cities, as many of them do? What are the problems they face as single women in the city? Are they able to achieve their migration objectives? This section of the chapter addresses these issues.

Age at Migration:

The women who move alone from the country to the city tend to be those who, due to their youth, have not yet established familial or economic ties beyond their families of origin, or those who have had such ties severed due to their advancing age. Thus, a skewed but bimodal age distribution is often found, with the largest peak in the late teens and early twenties and the second, smaller peak in the late forties or fifties (Youssef et al., 1979; de Oliveira and Garcia, 1984).

Women generally have the highest probability of migrating during their first years of participation in the labour force, as surveys have shown that the highest proportion of female migrants are between the ages ten and twenty (Pasuk, 1982; Palmer, 1983; Jelin, 1977; Herold, 1979; Hamer, 1981; Hirschman and Vaughan, 1984; Hugo, 1981; Trager, 1984; Sudarkasa, 1977; Bossen, 1984). In addition, in many areas, there is a second age peak among women who move in their late fifties and sixties. This group is comprised largely of widows or divorcees, many of whom move to cities to join children who have previously migrated there. This is common, for example, in both Indonesia and India (Hugo, 1981; Oberai and Singh, 1981). The following table presents some typical age distributions for female migrants, regardless of marital status.
Table 3: Age Distributions of Female Rural - Urban Migrants, Selected Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Burkina Faso</th>
<th>Kenya</th>
<th>Ghana</th>
<th>Sudan</th>
<th>Mexico</th>
<th>Puerto Rico</th>
<th>Thailand</th>
<th>Malaysia</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>05-14</td>
<td>18.8</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>32.3</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>22.4</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>15.0</td>
<td>44.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-24</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>38.4</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>16.9</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-29</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30-34</td>
<td>26.2</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td>8.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35-39</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40-44</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45-49</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 +</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: -- indicates age groups excluded from the survey. " indicates that this age group is included with the previous age group to which that age group's proportion refers.


In many settings, the modal age at migration is younger for female than male migrants. In Indonesia, for example, women move to Jakarta earlier than do men, since their work as domestic servants begins at earlier ages than does the work done by men (Hugo, 1981). In Thailand 57 per cent of the female migrants to Bangkok are under age 20, compared to 47 per cent of the male migrants (Arnold and Piampiti, 1984), and a similar pattern of differential selectivity is displayed among migrants to Nairobi. There, 67 per cent of female migrants are under age 30, compared to 51 per cent of male migrants (Knotts, 1979). Although female and male migrants conform to roughly the same age distribution in Puerto Rico (Monk, 1981), in Chile, the first-time female migrants are more often found in the youngest age groups (Herold, 1979).

The migration of young, single women is particularly common in rural-urban migration streams. An example of this pattern is the migration of young women from two rural Mexican villages (Arizpe, 1981). There, female migrants generally leave for Mexico City while in their early to mid-teens. They go as part of a family strategy to improve the economic well-being of the family, work for several years, and then return to the rural areas in their late teens or early twenties to begin married life. In Bangkok, female migrants from four selected rural villages were also found to move primarily as young adults, mostly between the ages of 15 and 24 (Piampiti, 1984).

When migration at the upper age ranges is examined, we find that older women are more likely to migrate than are older men. In settings as diverse as Indonesia (Hugo, 1981) and the Ivory Coast (Etienne and Etienne, 1968), there are more elderly female than male migrants. This higher rate of movement among older women may be attributed to several
factors. First, upon widowhood or divorce, a woman may move to town to join previously migrant children. Second, childless women who have never gained acceptance in the village may finally leave for the city where their motherless status is not so detrimental socially or economically. Third, although elderly men in groups such as the Baoule of Ivory Coast acquire increased status with age, this is not so for elderly women. Through their power and control of resources, men can support themselves even if they themselves do not work. Elderly women can only be supported if they are under the care or authority of a man, such as a brother, father, or husband. Without a connection to a man, the elderly woman may have no recourse other than migration to town where she can establish herself independently possibly as a merchant (Etienne and Etienne, 1968).

Marital Status:

Marital status is very highly related to the age distribution of female migrants. The young age peak is comprised primarily of never-married women, while the older age peak is made up of women recently widowed or divorced.

With or without controls for age, an almost universal finding of studies of autonomous female migration is its selectivity for women not presently in marital unions. This is consistent with many of the stated motives for migration. Young never-married women very often migrate either to remit to their families of orientation prior to their own marriages, to save money for their future marriages, or to move in search of superior marriage markets. In any of these cases, migration necessarily precedes marriage. Similarly, the dissolution of a marriage often precipitates migration, as a woman deprived of support from her spouse may find it necessary to migrate. In Haiti, for example, virtually all of the solitary female migration is related to ending or beginning a conjugal union (Berggren et al., 1977).

In certain Asian countries, female migrants are more likely to be single than are their male counterparts. This is the case, for example, in both Thailand and Indonesia (Smith, 1981). The following statistics illustrate some of the proportions single among female migrant populations:

- Bangkok, Thailand, 80% single (Piampiti, 1984)
- Dagupan, Philippines, 80% single (Trager, 1984)
- Chiang Mai, Thailand, 83% single (Bangchang, 1981)
- Taipei, Taiwan, 88% single (Huang, 1984).

This pattern is also displayed in some African and Latin American countries. Studies of young migrant women in Dakar, Senegal found 68 per cent to be single (Diop, 1987), and of those working as domestics in Bamako, Mali, 83 per cent were single (ISH, 1984). In Kenya, 60 per cent of the migrant women were single or not currently married (Knottts, 1979), and in Ghana urbanward female migrants are predominantly single as well (Brown, 1983). Surveys in several Latin American settings also show very high rates of migration for young single women (Schmink, 1982; Jelin, 1977; Albert, 1980). In one extreme example, 80 per cent of the families in one Mexican village claimed that all of the adult unmarried daughters had migrated out, leaving the mothers as sole adult females in the households (Arizpe, 1981).
The pattern of higher migration among unmarried women is not without exception, however. In Ghana, for example, female migrants are more likely to be married than single. As shown in Table 4, the selectivity for married women in that country is found regardless of destination. Female migrants are also proportionately more likely to be married prior to their moves than are male. For Ghanaian women, marriage increases, rather than decreases, the chance that women will migrate.

Table 4: Distribution of Recent Migrants by Sex and Marital Status
Ghana, 1971 (Per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status:</th>
<th>Female Rural</th>
<th>Female Urban</th>
<th>Male Rural</th>
<th>Male Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married before migration</td>
<td>75.8</td>
<td>61.3</td>
<td>50.2</td>
<td>35.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married after migration</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>8.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never married</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>25.4</td>
<td>42.1</td>
<td>55.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Adapted from Table 5.1, Brown, 1983: 184. Rural and urban refer to the place of residence of the migrant.

High rates of migration among married women are also apparent in many other parts of Africa (Adepoju, 1979; Sudarkasa et al., 1977). One study found, for example, that 53 per cent of all female migrants to Dar-es-Salaam under the age of 20 were married at the time of migration, while 88 per cent of all those aged 25-29 were married. Both of these proportions of married women were higher for migrants than non-migrants (Sivamurthy and Machindi, 1984). In Liberia, married women often migrate, but without their spouses. In that society, women must remain married for survival, but this does not preclude migration. Married women frequently move independently to town to raise their incomes and to invest in education either for themselves or their children (Bledsoe, 1976). Similar patterns are found among women of the Lower Cassamance Valley, Senegal, where many married women migrate seasonally to earn money for their children's expenses (Hamer, 1981).

As we have noted, a sizeable number of women also migrate in order to escape bad marriages. In Kampala, Uganda, for example, one study estimated that up to one-third of the autonomous female migrants coming to that city had migrated to leave bad marriages (Obbo, 1980). Others leave after they divorce, as in Ethiopia, where divorced women are socially isolated and cannot find work outside the services sector of the cities (Hellen and Said, 1984). High levels of migration among divorced women are also found in Ghana (Brown, 1983) and Sierra Leone (Dorjahn, 1977). In Kenya, some divorced women migrate to towns, where they find a lucrative living as prostitutes (Bujra, 1977). In Latin American and the Caribbean, there are very high mobility rates among both divorced and widowed women as well (Schmink, 1982; Jelin, 1977; Albert, 1980; Berggren et al., 1977).
It should thus be clear that patterns of migration can vary by marital status, both within and between regions. Making generalizations about the marital status of female migrants is therefore not always appropriate. What we can say with some confidence, however, is that in most cases marriage is not a prerequisite for the migration of women.

Family Size:

Autonomous female migrants often come from larger families. In both Asia and Latin America, the larger the family, the greater the chance that a daughter will migrate, particularly if the family has little land (Arizpe, 1978; Ariffin, 1984; Margolies and Suarez, 1978; Monk, 1981; Pasuk, 1982; Rengert, 1981). One study found that in smaller families, daughters and sons were about equally likely to migrate, but larger families provided greater push to females than to males. Whereas sons may be needed for the family agricultural activities, daughters are often viewed as additional mouths to feed, and their migration is encouraged. In a rural area of Ojuelos, Central Mexico, for example, 37 per cent of the daughters in families with more than seven siblings had migrated, compared to only 20 per cent of the sons. The pressure for daughters from large families to migrate also increases with poverty. Among large families with no rights to farmland, 52 per cent of the daughters migrated, compared to only 30 per cent of the daughters from large families with land rights (Rengert, 1981).

Own children:

Having children does not prevent women from migrating. In fact, children may instead encourage a woman's migration, especially if she is not married. In Latin America and Africa, for example, unmarried mothers figure prominently in the migrant population (Schmink, 1982; Fernandez-Kelly, 1983; Adepoju, 1979; Brydon, 1985; Bryant, 1977; Berggren et al., 1977; Ennew, 1982). In Ghana, if married women have children they are less likely to migrate, but single women with children are very likely to migrate (Brown, 1983). In Lesotho, if a woman has children and her union is dissolved by divorce or abandonment, she has little choice but to migrate to seek support for the children. The children are then often left with her mother or a sister, in an extended family household (Murray, 1988: 106). Women in Cameroun adopt similar practices, as a survey of a low-income neighbourhood of Douala, Cameroun has shown; there high proportions of the migrant women had left their children in their home villages (Mainet, 1985).

In Gabarone, Botswana, one survey showed that nearly all female migrants had children to support. In that society, it is customary for a woman to prove her fecundity prior to marriage, but having done so, she is frequently left to support the child herself. Of necessity, she will then often leave her child with her own mother while she looks for work in the city (Bryant, 1977: 24).

Although less commonly noted among the Asian studies, there is evidence that women in India may on occasion leave their children behind with their families in order to work on construction projects (Sinha, 1975). Similarly, many migrant women in Indonesia work as petty traders and live in group quarters in the city while their children stay at home in the villages (Lerman, 1983).
Although small numbers of children do not appear to restrict, and may instead spur single women to migrate, the presence of many children often does restrict mobility. In Kenya, a survey of female migrants to Nairobi found that 50 per cent of the employed, and 20 per cent of all female migrants had left some or all of their children in rural areas. The women who had migrated to the city leaving their children behind tended to have fewer children than did the women who remained at home, however. Migrant women were found to have an average of 1.6 children, compared to 4.6 children among non-migrant women in the rural areas (Knotts, 1979). Similarly, in Ghana, unwed mothers with one or two children were much more likely to migrate than were those with more children (Brydon, 1985). Apparently, when a young woman has only one or two children her parents will care for the young children while she works and remits. This arrangement becomes more difficult for women with several children, and their migration is thus often inhibited.

In situations in which a woman cannot share childrearing responsibilities with her kin, the fact that she has any children at all may impede her migration. As studies in Lesotho (Murray, 1981), Mexico (Weist, 1978), and Peru (Bourque and Warren, 1981) have shown, if there are no relatives who can or will care for children while the woman migrates, migration is much less likely to occur.

Educational attainment:

Although higher educational attainment has often been cited as a determinant of male migration (Findley, 1977; Sabot, 1979), Youssef et al. (1979: 4) argue that their data fail to substantiate that finding insofar as women are concerned. The lack of educational selectivity among women may be due, in part, to the fact that fewer women view education as an important consideration when they assess their chances of employment. In addition, in cases of associational migration, advances in education may be a low priority motivation for the move. In such situations, the wife's educational attainment may be completely irrelevant to the migration decision.

In absolute levels migrant women from Third World Countries tend to have had little schooling at the time of their moves. No doubt this reflects the generally low levels of education attained by women in those regions overall (Jelin, 1977). Many of the female migrants do have at least some primary education, however, as the statistics in Table 5 show.

In addition, relative to rural non-migrants, female migrants are often found to be positively selected with respect to education, as studies in Chile (Herold, 1979), Kenya (Knotts, 1979), Lesotho (Murray, 1981), Nepal (Taludar and Stoekel), Sierra Leone (Byerlee et al., 1977) and Zambia (Chilivumbo, 1985) demonstrate. In Kenya, for example, the migrant Kikuyu women in Nairobi average 6.2 years of schooling compared to 4.7 for rural Kikuyu (Knotts, 1979). In Ghana, the female rural-urban migrants show very high levels of education, compared to other types of migrants and rural non-migrants (Brown, 1983).
Table 5: Percentage of Female Migrants with Some Primary Level Schooling

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schooling</th>
<th>Asia</th>
<th>Africa</th>
<th>Latin America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bangkok</td>
<td>Gabarone, Botswana</td>
<td>Jalisco, Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td>Juba City, Sudan</td>
<td>Ciudad Juarez, Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jakarta, Indonesia</td>
<td>Monrovia, Liberia</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taipei, Taiwan</td>
<td>Nairobi, Kenya</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Malaysia</td>
<td>Abalaya migrants</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Urban Philippines</td>
<td>Kikuyu migrants</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources:</td>
<td>Bangkok, Thailand (Piampiti, 1984)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ciudad Juarez, Mexico (Fernandez-Kelly, 1983)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gabarone, Botswana (Bryant, 1977)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ghana, (Brown, 1983)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indonesia, (Hugo, 1979)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jakarta, Indonesia (Sethuranam, 1976)</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jalisco, Mexico (Rengert, 1976)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Juba, Sudan (Muludiang, 1983)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malaysia (Khoo and Pirie, 1984)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monrovia, Liberia (Duza and Conteh, 1984)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nairobi, Kenya (Knotts, 1979)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Philippines, (Engracia and Herrin, 1984)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Santiago, Chile (Herold, 1979)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Taipei, Taiwan (Huang, 1984)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One such pattern of educational selectivity among female migrants is shown in Table 6, below. In one study of Malaysia, 26 per cent of the female migrants were found to have had at least some secondary education, compared to only 11 per cent of the rural non-migrants (Khoo and Pirie, 1984). Overall, compared to rural stayers, rural-urban migrants were less likely to have very little education and more likely to be in the higher education categories. When compared with urban natives, the migrants were somewhat less likely to be completely uneducated, but were also less likely to have finished secondary school. At the same time, however, they are also more likely to have attained some education beyond secondary school.

Even in societies with a very low level of education among women, female migrants have often been shown to have higher levels of education than non-migrants. While females in both migrant and non-migrant categories are often completely illiterate in Pakistan, migrant women who move frequently clearly have the edge in education over women who do not move at all: 89 per cent of female non-movers were found to be completely illiterate, compared to "only" 62 per cent of female multiple movers. These effects are maintained even when age and marital status are controlled (Shah, 1984).

- 25 -
Table 6: Educational Attainment of Women in Malaysia by Migration Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Rural-Urban Migrants (All ethnic groups) (Per cent)</th>
<th>All Women (Per cent) (Per cent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>29.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Primary</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>42.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Primary</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some Secondary</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finished Secondary</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>9.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post Secondary</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: " indicates that the per cent reported for some primary includes completed primary.


Educational selectivity among migrants often varies according to migration destination. Several studies show that women going to the larger cities are selected for lower levels of education than are women going to other destinations (Hugo, 1979; Herold, 1979; Arnold and Piampiti, 1984; Bulatao, 1984). Similarly, a survey of families in Marisco, Puerto Rico found that the more highly educated were less likely to migrate to the regional cities and the United States than were the women with almost no education (Monk, 1981). Evidence demonstrating the opposite is also substantial, however. In the Philippines, for example, less educated women go to the smaller cities and rural areas (Eviota and Smith, 1984), while the more educated women go to the larger urban areas. And as we have noted, the same is true in Ghana.

It is clear that overall female international migrants tend to have the highest degree of educational selectivity of any migrant group. For example, according to one study, roughly 30 per cent of the Asian women admitted to Canada had attained at least university level education (Basavarajappa and Verma, 1985). Among Polynesian migrants to New Zealand, most female migrants had completed the equivalent of a seventh or eighth grade education (Graves, 1984). Even when primarily associational moves are considered, it is often the case that the more educated, more highly skilled women are the ones who accompany a spouse or family member, while those with little education or few marketable skills are forced to remain behind (Azmas, 1981).

After migrating, however, the rural-urban or international female migrants are often less well educated than comparable female non-migrants at the destination. This is particularly likely for the female migrants to large cities, as data from Dar-es-Salaam (Sivamurthy and Machindi, 1984), Monrovia (Duza and Conteh, 1984), Bangkok (Arnold and Piampiti, 1984), and Manila (Bulatao, 1984) suggest. Because school systems tend to be superior in the larger cities, native women from those areas are better able to take advantage of educational opportunities. And, as we have already mentioned, many of the young women who go to the big cities migrate explicitly in search of further educational advancement (Trager, 1984; Byerlee et al., 1977; Muludiang, 1983).
Female migrants do tend to be less highly educated than male migrants, as studies in Botswana (Bryant, 1977), Cameroun (Clignet, 1977), Guatemala (Bossen, 1981), Indonesia (Sethuraman, 1976), Kenya (Knotts, 1979), Mexico (Rengert, 1981) and Sierra Leone (Byerlee et al., 1977) all have shown. Only 33 per cent of the male migrants to Jakarta have no education, compared to 45 per cent of the female migrants, while 28 per cent of the male migrants have ten or more years of schooling, compared to only 16 per cent among the female migrants (Sethuraman, 1976). In Malaysia, 22 per cent of the female migrants had no education at all, compared to only 6 percent of the male migrants (Khoo and Pirie, 1984). Because these differences no doubt reflect male-female differences in educational achievement as a whole, it is not reasonable to make any conclusions regarding the educational selectivity without controlling for the underlying sex differences in educational attainment.

Economic Circumstances Prior to Migration:

Some writers argue that male migration (or migration that is not sex-specific) is dominated by two opposite groups, the most wealthy and the poorest households (Mazur, 1984; Chaudury, 1978), while others claim that it is those in the middle income categories who are more apt to migrate (Connell et al., 1976). Those in a third school maintain that male migrants are drawn disproportionately from poorer families (Findley, 1977; 1987). The evidence is also mixed for the female migrants. Some information exists to suggest that women from very poor families may be especially likely to migrate. In Latin America, for example, a great many of the single women migrating to the cities are drawn from lower class families, for whom the migration is part of the family strategy for survival (Jelin, 1977). Young women are more likely to migrate as part of this strategy if they play no major role in producing family income in the family's home community (Wilkinson, 1982; LaGuerre, 1978; Kane, 1977; Drakakis-Smith, 1984; Okojie, 1984; Arizpe, 1981; Trager, 1984). For example, in Guatemala the average amount of land a family cultivates satisfies at most one-third of their consumption needs. Families are therefore forced to engage in wage labour, and since men comprise the dominant share of the rural plantation work force, women migrate to cities to seek additional support for their families (Bossen, 1981).

Although there are few studies of the relationship between land ownership and female migration, one detailed study was undertaken by Arlene Rengert in a rural area outside Jalisco, Mexico. As mentioned briefly above, she found that daughters were more likely to migrate from families with no land rights than from families that had land rights; only 34 per cent of the families with land rights had migrant daughters, compared to 47 per cent of the families with no land rights. Daughters who had the highest propensity to migrate had eight or more siblings and came from families with no land rights; 52 per cent of such families had migrant daughters (Rengert, 1984).

Similarly, in Nigeria (Abaseikong, 1979), 52 per cent of the surveyed single female migrants were drawn from families without any rural land holdings, while only 39 per cent of the male migrants came from such backgrounds. Landless or poor families in rural Thailand and Indonesia are also more likely to send their daughters out to work (Pasuk, 1982; Speare and Harris, 1986), since for these families, the daughter's migration is essential if she is to generate income for the family.
This inverse relation between land ownership and female migration is not invariant, however. In the Philippines, daughters regularly migrate whether or not the family owns land (Kikuchi and Hayami, 1983), and the same is true among the Abalayia of Kenya (Knotts, 1979). One study of migration to Mombasa, Kenya found that migrant women were drawn from the moderately poor families, but not from the very poorest, because the poorest lacked the resources to finance migration (Bujra, 1977). This is also commonly found among male migrants.

Community contexts and development levels often play an important part in influencing migration possibilities. The poorest families may be concentrated in the most underdeveloped regions where information about and resources for migration is lacking (Findley, 1987). In such cases, higher rates of migration may occur among more well-off women residing in regions with greater access to the resources that facilitate migration. This is borne out in studies of northeastern Thailand, where the poorest women are not the most likely to move (Lightfoot et al., 1983). Similar factors may account for the fact that the lowest migration rates in Pakistan are observed among the poorest women. There the highest rates occur among women in socio-economic groups slightly above the bottom tier (Shah, 1984).

**Occupation Prior to Migration:**

Although the prior occupations of female migrants have only rarely been studied explicitly, women's descriptions of their migration experiences indicate that many do not work for wages prior to migration unless they work as seasonal or casual laborers (Deere and de Leal, 1982; Bossen, 1981; Jelin, 1977). In fact, for a great many women, whether they are single or married, migration is likely to involve a transition from non-wage labour or unemployment to wage labour. For example, while prior to migration 50 per cent of women in one Nigerian study were unemployed, only 20 per cent remained unemployed after moving. The proportion serving as unpaid family labour also dropped from 15 per cent to 10 per cent (Fadayami, 1979). According to one Kenyan study, only 29 per cent of the female migrants to Nairobi had been employed prior to migrating, and of those who had worked prior to migration, many had been in the informal sector as petty traders (Knotts, 1979).

Unemployment prior to migration also appears to be more common among females than males. While only 12 per cent of the male migrants to Semerang, Indonesia had been unemployed prior to migration, 25 per cent of the female migrants had been unemployed (Lerman, 1983). Although similar employment patterns have been observed in Thailand and Costa Rica (Piampiti, 1984; Albert, 1980), differences in pre-migration unemployment rates should be evaluated with caution. Because informal sector activity is often excluded from employment statistics, women working in the informal sector are often reported as unemployed and may even describe themselves as such. This artificially inflates the proportion of women listed as unemployed prior to migration.

**THE EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN WHO GO**

Particularly for the autonomous female migrant who leaves behind family, children, or spouse, work is a major reason for migration. Not surprisingly, employment rates are high among such female migrants.
When examined by duration of residence, we find that recent female migrants are often more likely to be in the labour force than either non-migrants at the destination or long-term migrants (Shah and Smith, 1977; Seetharam and Olenja, 1984). In Kenya, much higher proportions of female migrants than non-migrants under age 25 are employed, but among older and more settled migrants, labour force participation generally falls below that of the native cohorts (Sethuraman, 1976). In Ghana, on the other hand, female labour force participation rates after migration are high for both the youngest and oldest cohorts, i.e., for the teenagers and for women aged 45 and over. Among other cohorts, migrants do not differ significantly from non-migrants in terms of their labour force participation (Brown, 1983). While married migrants often have lower labour force participation rates than do natives in many parts of Asia (Shah and Smith, 1984), divorcees have higher labour force participation rates than non-migrants; this reflects the especially urgent need for divorced women to find sources of support.

Occupations of the Migrant Women:

Seldom is there any real change in the type of work women do after migration, even among rural-urban migrants. In rural areas, women are often restricted to unpaid household labour; in the cities they continue in the same vein as paid domestic servants (Jelin, 1977; Munscher, 1984; Rengert, 1976; Schmink, 1982; Drakakis-Smith, 1984). Or, they might raise vegetables in the rural areas and then turn to selling produce once they move to the city (N’Sangou, 1985).

The predominance of low status jobs among female migrants in cities throughout the developing world (Bay, 1982; Jelin, 1977) is shown in Table 7, below. In regions of recent urbanisation in Argentina, the greatest growth in female employment between 1947 and 1970 occurred in the domestic service and public administration sectors (Recchini de Lattes, 1983). In Africa, where men traditionally have been recruited for the low-level public administration slots, employment opportunities for women have been more circumscribed. There, female employment is more strictly limited to the "informal" and non-salaried sectors that have the lowest wages and the least security (Stichter, 1985). Even though women are becoming more fully proletarianised, as access to land becomes more restricted in the peasant economy, many are not being fully incorporated into the formal wage labour market.

What is the range of activities in the informal sector that women commonly perform? A recent study in Abidjan examined typical occupations for the women migrants, both from other parts of the Ivory Coast, and from neighbouring countries. The native women, often little older than 10 or 12 years of age, work as itinerant food and vegetable sellers, sellers of assorted goods in the market, proprieters of open air food stalls, hairdressers, seamstresses and domestic servants. Surveyed women coming from other nations also concentrate in the services sector, again in a variety of positions. Women from Burkina Faso cultivate and sell European vegetables, while the Malian women sell kola nuts, brochettes, pineapples, and traditional Malian goods such as peanut soap and indigo tie-dye fabric. Guinean women sell indigo fabric brought from their own country, work at small food stands, or serve as hairdressers or singers. Ghanaian women specialise in restaurant work and prostitution, while Nigerian women are itinerant merchants of various products (Toure, 1985: 22-24). This list displays an enormous variety of activities, and reflects the ingenuity of the migrants at finding niches for themselves.
Women may also find, however, that their range of potential occupations is restricted by implicit rules involving the sexual division of labour. In Yaoundé, Cameroon, men specialise in European fruits and vegetables and the resale of modern goods such as plastic buckets, while women specialise in local food products where the profit margin is lower and risk of loss due to spoilage much greater (N'Sangou, 1985). Researchers in Lusaka, Zaire (Jules-Rosette, 1985) and Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire (Toure, 1985) have reached similar findings.

Perhaps out of desperation, often with the only alternative being that of having no income at all, female migrants may tolerate conditions considered unacceptable to native populations. Migrant women tend to have lower aspiration wages than do natives and as a result they often accept extremely low salaries. In Indonesia, South Korea, Malaysia, and Thailand, the proportion of migrants in low paying domestic service is two to four times that of non-migrants (Shah and Smith, 1984). In Dakar, Senegal and Bamako, Mali, young women who come to work in the dry season as domestics earn salaries at the very bottom of the wage scale, far below minimum wage (Diop, 1987; ISH, 1984). In the commercial sector, migrants are often found in the least remunerative areas, such as the fruit and vegetable vending. In Douala, Cameroon women known as "Buy-em Sell-ems," go to the villages to buy their produce, and 40 – 80% of their mark-up reflects their transport costs. These women gain relatively little on a day to day basis, but they lack alternatives that would otherwise allow them to keep up with expenses (N’Sangou, 1985).

Although there is some evidence that single women are finding jobs in the wage sector in Southeast Asia (Huang, 1984; Hong, 1984; Khoo and Pirie, 1984) as well as in Mexico (Sassen-Koob, 1984), they still tend to work in low status occupations. A recent study of female employees of off-shore electronics and apparel workers or maquiladoras in Ciudad Juarez revealed that although migrant women do not have immediate access to such
jobs, as they lack the education and job search skills necessary to obtain them, the jobs may not be permanently out of reach. The jobs themselves, however, are tedious, poorly paid and subject to very high turnover rates. These supposedly desirable jobs turn out to be insecure and just as exploitative as the domestic sector jobs. Not surprisingly then, once women have worked as maquiladoras for some time, many leave their jobs to return to the less lucrative, but less stressful domestic service sector (Fernandez-Kelly, 1983).

There are exceptions to the pattern of low status attainment, but they are rare. In Chile, if first-time female migrants to Santiago are excluded (among whom only 6.3 per cent work as professionals), one in five of the other female urban migrants is found to be a professional (Herold, 1979). Further, there is evidence of high educational and status attainment among repeat female migrants to a secondary city in the Philippines (Trager, 1984). Unfortunately, there are few other studies that provide the same detail on occupation by type of destination and migration rank, so we cannot conclude that this is a general pattern.

Even the educated migrants may not find the financial benefits to migration to be as large as expected. In part, this is because women earn less additional income than men for each additional year of schooling they complete (Schmink, 1982), but it is also because even educated women often end up in traditionally low salaried female occupations such as domestic and personal service. In Thailand, over half of the young single recent female migrants are cooks or maids, while in Indonesia, the proportion is close to 70 per cent (Smith, 1984). Although the rural-urban migrants may have more education than their rural counterparts, they tend to be less well educated than native women in the urban areas. As a consequence, they lose out when competing for jobs with more educated women. Most have no choice but to turn to domestic service or petty trade (Okojie, 1984). In Kenya, 45 per cent of the working female migrants in one study were found to be maids, 24 per cent were self-employed in petty trade, and the remainder were in sales and clerical work (Knotts, 1979).

Thus, when migrants' occupational status is compared to natives' occupational status, the migrants tend to occupy the lower status positions. In several Asian cities, recent migrants are over two times more likely to be found in domestic service than are non-migrants (Shah and Smith, 1981). In Harare, Zimbabwe, long-settled migrants or migrant women of middle-class neighbourhoods are five times more likely to be employed in the formal sector than are the poorest women, many of whom are recent migrants (Drakakis-Smith, 1984). Although many native women are also employed in low status occupations, the migrants generally fill the bulk of the very low status occupations.

As was true of the other socio-economic characteristics examined thus far, female migrants fare poorly in terms of occupational status when compared to their male counterparts. Not surprisingly, males are more likely than females to be found in the wage or formal sectors of the economy (Murray, 1981; Kane, 1977). A typical pattern of sex-related occupation distributions for migrants is given in Table 8. The results were obtained from a 1979 survey of migrants in three medium-size cities of Togo (Dupont, 1987). While 14 per cent of the male migrants were employed as civil servants, only 3 per cent of the female migrants had such jobs (see Columns 1 and 2, Table 8). The males were also disproportionately more likely to work in the semi-skilled artisanal
occurrences, as 36 per cent of the migrant males were apprentices or artisans, compared with 9 per cent of the female migrants. In contrast, the women were concentrated in the domestic and commercial sectors, with 35 per cent of all migrant women saying they were housewives, and 32 per cent merchants or traders. Only 5 per cent of the male migrants reported themselves as traders.

Table 8: Occupational Distribution of Male and Female Migrants to Three Medium-Size Cities of Togo, 1979 (Per cent)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>All Migrants</th>
<th>Recent Migrants</th>
<th>Long-Settled Migrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male Female</td>
<td>Male Female</td>
<td>Male Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>25.3 12.6</td>
<td>20.2 8.4</td>
<td>29.9 15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed/retired</td>
<td>2.5 4.6</td>
<td>1.6 4.0</td>
<td>3.1 6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housework</td>
<td>0.0 34.9</td>
<td>0.0 47.6</td>
<td>0.0 26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmwork</td>
<td>10.2 2.3</td>
<td>4.5 2.3</td>
<td>13.7 3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisan</td>
<td>24.8 6.1</td>
<td>17.1 6.1</td>
<td>27.3 5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apprentice</td>
<td>11.0 3.1</td>
<td>24.9 6.8</td>
<td>5.5 1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trader</td>
<td>4.9 32.0</td>
<td>5.5 17.8</td>
<td>5.0 38.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal services</td>
<td>4.8 0.6</td>
<td>3.7 1.4</td>
<td>4.0 0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civil service</td>
<td>13.7 3.4</td>
<td>18.1 4.9</td>
<td>9.4 1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2.8 0.4</td>
<td>4.4 0.7</td>
<td>2.2 0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample size</strong></td>
<td><strong>2586 2784</strong></td>
<td><strong>381 427</strong></td>
<td><strong>1205 1393</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Dupont, 1987, Tables 1 and 3.

Similar patterns have been observed in Botswana, where 80 per cent of male migrants are in the salaried sector, compared to only 43 per cent of the female migrants (Bryant, 1977), as well as in Sierra Leone and Guatemala (Byerlee et al., 1977; Bossen, 1981). These differences are probably again related to underlying differences in educational attainment; i.e., occupational differentials would probably not be as marked if educational level were controlled.

**Prostitution and Illegal Occupations:**

One of the reasons why women have not always been given as much encouragement to migrate as men has been the fear that they would turn to prostitution after arriving in the city. This has been the case particularly in Africa and Southeast Asia (Smale, 1980; Little, 1976; Pasuk, 1982; Lerman, 1983; Bujra, 1977; Pittin, 1984). One survey of a high-migration neighbourhood of Douala, Cameroon showed that half of the female migrants acquired money from "friends" (Mainet, 1985). Sample surveys may not reveal the full extent of prostitution among the migrant population, however, since respondents are often reluctant to admit to illegal professions.

What is known about women who migrate into prostitution comes from a handful of studies (Lerman, 1983; Pasuk, 1982; Pittin, 1984; Bujra, 1977). One investigation of low-income migrants to Semarang, Indonesia,
places the proportion who turn to prostitution at 29 per cent of all female migrants (Lerman, 1983). The women who turn to prostitution tend to be either very poor young women trying to support their families, or older divorced women seeking independent sources of earnings for themselves. Both groups of women see prostitution as their only means to earn a lot of money quickly and reliably.

Although the wage differential varies, prostitutes can earn five to ten times what the typical migrant woman might earn each day. For these women, becoming a prostitute is the quintessential form of target migration; they work until they have amassed enough savings to buy land, a house, or a business for themselves or their families, and then they retire to their villages, returning to a "normal" married life. Seldom do women go into prostitution because they have no other choice of occupation; they do so because no other options provide such handsome returns.

The most detailed portrait of prostitution among migrants is a study of Bangkok masseuses (Pasuk, 1982). The number of prostitutes in Bangkok is estimated as close to 200,000 and could be as high as 10 per cent of all young women 14-24 years of age. There are so many women from the Dok Kam Tai District, one of the impoverished areas of the Northeast Region, that in 1979, total postal remittances from Bangkok were estimated at 76 million baht, or 1250 baht per resident. (Average earnings in Bangkok are 200 to 500 baht per month for waitressing and other legitimate female occupations).

Pasuk's survey showed that 70 per cent of the women working as prostitutes in the massage parlors had come from farming families, and 85 per cent had come in order to help feed their families. The average size of the families was 6.4 children, significantly higher than the national average. Over half (58 per cent) were between 18 and 23 years of age when they migrated, and most had been there from one to four years at the time of the interview. Only a few had originally migrated with plans to enter prostitution; most entered that line of work after becoming discouraged with the lack of other jobs and low levels of earnings in legitimate occupations. The prostitutes maintained good relations with their families, sending back one-third to one-half of their earnings each year. Surveys in the village indicated that prostitution is neither approved of, nor stigmatised. Many men said they would not mind marrying a former prostitute, because they knew that girls generally chose that line of work only as a means to help their families.

Unlike Asia where the female migrants who enter prostitution are predominantly young and single, in Africa they are likely to have been married at least once (Bujra, 1977; Pittin, 1984; Obbo, 1980; Sudarkasa et al., 1977; Mandeville, 1979). Some enter prostitution to escape an unwanted marriage, and some after a barren marriage. Others turn to prostitution out of sheer desperation (Obbo, 1980). Because so many African prostitutes are either divorced or escaping from bad marriages, most do not remit to their families.Prostitutes in Kampala, Uganda and Bamako, Mali are exceptions, however; many of those women report taking up prostitution as their last option to earn money to feed their children (Obbo, 1980; Vaa, Findley and Diallo, 1990). As is true in Asia, women who succeed in gaining a steady or more affluent set of clients can then use their earnings to buy land or a business for themselves.
Economic Mobility of the Migrant:

Because many of the autonomous female migrants enter the labour force or leave unemployment at the time of their migration, most of their incomes go up after migration. Even if their jobs are poorly paid, and even if they were working prior to migration, they may be able to work more hours than prior to migration, and hence have a higher total income (Okojie, 1984; Pasuk, 1982; Jelin, 1977; Pittin, 1984; Selby and Murphy, 1982). In a wide variety of settings, migrant women, like migrant men, have reported improvements in their own earnings. The increases are not necessarily immediate, or as large as the women had hoped, but they are increases (Bryant, 1977; Hong, 1984; Trager, 1984; Munscher, 1984; Rengert, 1976; Muludiang, 1983). In the North region of Thailand, for example, the average monthly income of 1115 baht for female migrants to Kampeng Petch (a small Northern city), reflects a substantial increase over the 887 baht per month prevailing in the region as a whole (Bangchang, 1981). Among one group of migrant women to Nairobi, post-migration income increased an average of 189% (Knotts, 1979). Higher incomes tend to translate into improvements in overall standards of living more often than not. In one study of Bangkok, 60 per cent of those surveyed reported post-migration advances in their levels of living (Piampiti, 1984). In Jakarta, over half of the women included in another study reported such improvements (Sethuraman, 1976).

This type of success is certainly not guaranteed, however. After they move a great many women still find that they are just barely able to break even. And, although less common than a simple lack of mobility, there are instances in which female migrants suffer sharp downward economic mobility after migrating. Among surveyed Kikuyu and Abalayia migrants to Nairobi, for example, a minority reported having lost as much ground financially as the majority had gained as a result of their moves (i.e., 187 per cent) (Knotts, 1979: 168).

The prospects for women migrants were aptly summarised by one researcher (Muludiang, 1983):

Migration in itself cannot result in any major improvements in the position of women unless it is accompanied by some structural and economic changes. The process is undoubtedly an important avenue for upward social mobility for certain individuals (e.g. the educated), but it is too soon to predict its socio-economic implications for women as a group. Women who move may or may not find the world opening up before them. It depends on the circumstances in which they move and the culture in which they live.

Although few studies systematically compare male and female migrant occupational mobility, there is some evidence that mobility may be more limited for female than male migrants. As shown above, in columns 3 to 8 in Table 8, 25 per cent of the male migrants in Togo start out as apprentices, but after 10 years of residence, most become semi-skilled craftsmen. In contrast, 7 per cent of the female migrants start out as apprentices, and only half of them move to independent craftswoman status. The most heavily travelled female mobility path involves a shift from housework to commerce. While on arrival at various destinations in Togo, 48 per cent reported themselves to be housewives, after 10 years 27 per cent still fell into that group. The remainder generally shifted into commercial occupations, as the proportion in commerce demonstrates.
At the time of the study, 18 per cent of the new migrants and 38 per cent of the residents who had been there for ten or more years were in commerce. Beyond these findings, however, there is little evidence that changes take place in the occupational distribution of female migrants as their duration of residence increases (Dupont, 1987).

The average income gained as a result of migration also appears to be lower among women than among men. In Indonesia, male earnings by educational level increase with time since migration, but similarly adjusted female earnings show almost no real increase after the initial post-migration rise (Speare and Harris, 1986). Although not adjusted for differences in educational attainment, a survey of migrants in Gabarone, Botswana, demonstrated further that most migrant women (64 per cent) earn less than the median monthly income, while 72 per cent of the migrant men earn more than the median income (Bryant, 1977).

Economic Changes for the Woman’s Family:

As we have noted repeatedly, many of the autonomous female migrants leave their homes solely in order to help improve the economic situations of their families. It is therefore not surprising that female migrants, especially the young single migrants, often are more reliable remitters than are their brothers (Graves, 1984; Arizpe, 1981; Curson, 1981). The following figures demonstrate what high proportions of migrant women remit to their families:

Bangkok masseuses, 91% (Pasuk, 1982)
Single women in Korean cities, 55% (Hong, 1984)
Gabarone migrants, 30% to family of orientation, 100% to family of procreation (Bryant, 1977)
Nairobi, Kikuyu migrants, 51%; Abalayia migrants, 40% (Knotts, 1979)
Domestic servants in Mexico, 100% (Arizpe, 1981)
Turkish women in Germany, 100% (Munschier, 1984)

In other studies, precise proportions remitting are not discussed, but it is indicated that "most" women do so (Albert, 1980; Trager, 1984; Berggren et al., 1977; Connell, 1984; LaGuerre, 1978).

Further, although the actual amounts women remit are often lower than the amounts remitted by males (largely because female salaries are lower), limited evidence suggests that the proportions women remit are at least as great as those sent by males (Graves, 1984). In Bangkok, for example, women from northeastern Thailand remit the same proportions of their salaries as do male migrants (38 per cent), despite the fact that they earn about half of what males earn (Lightfoot et al., 1983).

Even when no comparisons between female and male data can be made, it is clear that women provide large proportions of their earnings to their families, and that these injections constitute considerable improvements for the recipients. A survey of seasonal migrants employed in Bamako, Mali, for example, showed that when they returned to their families they often carried $70-100, or the equivalent of about eighty percent of their season’s cash income with them (ISH, 1984). Further, one group of surveyed working women in Bangladesh, 45 per cent of whom were migrants, provided over 50 per cent of their families’ incomes (Chaudhury, 1977).
Not all women make enough to remit to their families, however. In Nigeria, Senegal, Indonesia, and Mexico, low income levels prevent many women from sending money to their families of orientation (Pittin, 1984; Kane, 1977; Hugo, 1981; Rengert, 1976). Instead, some women must receive help from their rural kin in order to survive periods of unemployment or low salaries. In Gabarone, 17 per cent had received help from kin, usually in the form of food (Bryant, 1977). In Douala, Cameroun, 54 per cent of the women in one low-income neighbourhood reported receiving money or food from their families in the villages (Mainet, 1985).

As we have mentioned, however, even when the women are not able to contribute directly to their families by way of remittances, economic benefits may accrue to the household as a result of their out-migration. For example, families in drought-stricken areas of Nigeria and in rural Mexico have reported that the departure of their daughters relieved them of having to feed additional household members (Pittin, 1984; Rengert, 1976).

On the other hand, in areas in which women supply substantial amounts of agricultural labour the migration of women often has detrimental effects upon the family's farm activities. In the Lower Cassamance region of Senegal, for example, growing numbers of women now migrate prior to marriage. Although the women earn cash needed for their marriage in their seasonal migrations to Dakar, the region's rice production has suffered because planting is often delayed and there is less labour available for weeding (Hamer, 1981).

The migration of women thus may serve to bring about or reinforce structural changes in the rural economy. In Thailand, the migration of grown female children has increased male work loads. Remittances from daughters are invested in cash crops that are cultivated by men, a type of feedback that has further increased the demand for male labour. The resultant transformation of the structure of agricultural production has reduced incentives for daughters to return to inherit the land that traditionally would have been theirs, and as a consequence, some villagers now complain of "daughter scarcity"; i.e., they have few if any daughters to whom to pass on their land (Palmer et al., 1985).

Migration and Women's Status within the Household:

Recent research has suggested that in addition to changes in the financial position of the woman and her family, migration may precipitate changes in the woman's social position within the household as well. Migration often allows control of status and resources to be separated from the family at the origin (Goldscheider, 1984), and may also cause traditional family structures to weaken and encourage the development of new ones (Youssef et al., 1979). This is particularly important in patrilineal and patrilocal societies where a move away from the woman's in-laws may encourage the development of more intimate and egalitarian relationships among newly married couples (Ware, 1981).

Empirical support is now available for these positions. Conklin (1981), for example, has argued that migration is a significant predictor of higher levels of decision-making power among women in India, and similar findings have been reported in Indonesia. In rural Java, unless the move involves relocation to another village early in the marriage,
residential mobility at or soon after marriage has been found to improve a woman's decision-making power within the household (Williams, 1987). Longer distance migration while the woman is very young may instead "deprive some women of a reliable source of support in societies where kinship obligations are normally strong" (Mueller, 1983: 280). In fact, in Indonesia inter-village moves were found to be detrimental in terms of the woman's within-household status only if they took place within the first four years of marriage. After four years, inter-village moves also increased women's control over major in-house decisions (Williams, 1987). That study focused entirely on associational migration that occurred around the time when the couple married. Much further research should be done to determine the impact of migration upon the within-household status of women who move independently.

Subjective Evaluations of the Migrant Experience:

Within-household status improvements aside, except for the highly educated elites who migrate between professional jobs, most female migrants face very difficult conditions both before and after they move. Life at the destination can be particularly difficult for autonomous female migrants. Although conditions are often made easier by help from relatives and friends, as well as by the prospect of income improvements, the transitions made by migrant women are still considerable. To provide an overview of migration outcomes, we present the following brief synopsis of the range of problems noted by many female migrants, and the evaluations they have made of their migration experiences.

Results from a survey of Korean migrants in Seoul indicate that most women experienced improvements in their absolute standards of living. They were not prepared, however, for the expenses they would incur, the types of work they would have to do, or for the lives they would live in general. Housing was of low quality, particularly compared to the housing situation of natives. Single migrant women felt alienated, and even married women found life difficult, as few relatives were available to help with child care. Many migrants claimed that their health had suffered; among the single women, 35 per cent said they were in poor health as a result of working conditions and the stresses of urban life. Single women complained of pressures to be more accessible sexually, and 17 per cent of the currently married migrants said they had become pregnant prior to marriage (Hong, 1984).

A somewhat mixed review is also given by many migrants to Bangkok. Although 60 per cent said that their lives were much improved since they migrated, one-quarter complained that they had problems with transportation and that they did not like the urban environment. These were significant problems among the 20 per cent of migrant women who wanted to return home (Piampiti, 1984).

Most women moving to Taipei, China reported successive improvements in the jobs and level of living, and as a result appeared to be generally satisfied. Nonetheless, many retained a fear and distrust of the city and of the native men. They indicated that they still preferred village life, despite post-migration improvements in their economic situations (Huang, 1984).

Like many of the women in Taipei, two-thirds of the women interviewed in Nairobi, Kenya said they preferred life on the farm to life in the
city. When asked what they did not like about Nairobi, 34 per cent of the Abalayia said "everything", and 40 per cent of both the Kikuyu and Abalayia complained of the high cost of urban living. Many disliked the "bad influences" in the city. Only 14 per cent of the Kikuyu and 9 per cent of the Abalayia women surveyed had no complaints about Nairobi (Knotts, 1979).

One survey of migrants to Dakar, Senegal specifically addressed the situation of women living in dormitories. Once in Dakar, women often live in bidonvilles consisting of many small barracks that are subject to both epidemics and fires. The site of this study housed between 7500 and 9000 persons, the majority of whom were women working as domestics or petty vendors. The neighbourhood had no stores except a bakery. It had one mosque, one tap, and one latrine. Despite the lack of personal space, women found they had more autonomy in the city. Women living with spouses were very rare, although many women had had children by men who had promised to marry them. Many women want to marry, but prefer that elusive figure, an employed man. In fact, they avoided permanent relationships with unemployed men who would be a burden on them. Finding a spouse who would support the woman and her children was viewed as a long-run strategy, however. In the short-run, the women turned to their own kin, mainly younger sisters, for help with cooking and child care. Many of their children suffered from malnutrition, and despite living in the city, were not in school, a luxury their mothers could not afford to provide for them (Kane, 1977).

A study of a low-income neighbourhood of San Lorenzo, Guatemala found that many of the poorest migrant women lived in homes with mud walls, dirt floors, no latrines, and little else. Many had been abandoned by their spouses either before or after arriving in the city, and depended for each day's food on their petty commercial activities. Even so, they felt that urban life constituted an improvement over life in the country, because in the city they did manage to earn something each day. And, when they could not sell their vegetables, they could always sell sexual favors (Bossen, 1981: 215-217).

In Belo Horizonte, Brazil, housing and the high cost of transport are major problems for migrant women. The high cost of living in more accessible locations has forced many women to seek housing in the periphery, and as a result they often spend 20-25 per cent of their income on transport, as well as three to four hours a day commuting. The costs of transport are so great that they cannot afford to use many of the urban services, such as health care facilities (Schmink, 1982).

In Mexico City, one study of migrant women explored the importance of exchange networks between poor families. It is common for women in these networks both to borrow and to loan food or services on a daily basis. The networks also provide information about new job possibilities and other income-generating opportunities that are vital to survival in the city (Lomnitz, 1977). Without them many women would probably be unable to support their families.

A study of migrants to Tehran, Iran found that women who migrate to Teheran with their husbands are often overwhelmed by additional responsibilities of urban life. They find themselves suddenly responsible for shopping, dealing with schools, and so on. They usually do not speak Persian, so they cannot work outside the home even if permitted to do so.
by their husbands. Thus, their lives are circumscribed by the
neighbourhoods in which they live. Once in the urban environment, their
husbands become increasingly anxious about the possibilities for social
change. They allow their wives little exposure to modern influences, and
if anything, protect the women more from films and other modernising
influences in the city than they did in the rural areas (Bauer, 1984).

In general, as is true among their male counterparts, female migrants
throughout the developing world depend a great deal upon kin for
assistance in finding jobs and getting established. Kin assistance is
particularly important for women in the domestic or informal sector, where
word of mouth is an all-important mechanism through which to find work
(Graves, 1984; Lomnitz, 1977). In other cases, women may obtain similar
types of assistance from male lovers (Mandeville, 1979). In Kampala,
Uganda, for example, single female migrants sometimes grant sexual favours
or even motherhood in exchange for help in obtaining work or housing in
the city (Obbo, 1980).

Post-Migration Fertility:

Although many of the single female migrants are in the prime
childbearing years, surprisingly few studies of migrant women examine
their childbearing patterns before and after migration. What evidence
there is suggests that migrant women have smaller families at the time of
migration (if they have any children prior to migration), and that
compared to rural non-migrants, they continue to have lower fertility.
Rural migrants in one Kenyan ethnic group average 2.7 children ever born,
compared with 5.8 for rural non-migrants of the same group (Knotts,
1979). In Togo, rural-urban migrants also have fewer children ever born
than do rural natives (Assogba, 1987).

Compared to urban non-migrants, however, the rural-urban migrants may
or may not have lower fertility. This is particularly true if one
controls for education and age (Findley, 1981; Farber and Lee, 1984;
Muludiang, 1983; Oberai and Singh, 1980). Migrant women in Bangkok have
an average of 3.7 children ever born, compared to 4.2 among urban
natives. As duration of residence increases, however, the differences
diminish, suggesting that the fertility varies only temporarily and that
migrant fertility ultimately "catches up" (Goldstein and Tirasawat,
1977). Migrants to Chiang Mai, for example, often mention postponing
childbearing until their incomes are high enough to allow them to hire a
maid (Bangchang, 1981). In the Punjab, by the time urban migrant women
reach the age of 40-44 years, their fertility is the same as or higher
than that of native women (Oberai and Singh, 1980).

In Lomé, Togo, the fertility of settled migrants sometimes exceeds
that of natives by one or more births. As shown in Table 9, when age, and
level of education are controlled, recent monogamous arrivals have lower
fertility than do ten-year residents, but the fertility of ten-year
monogamous migrants approximates or exceeds that of native monogamous
women. The differentials are much smaller for polygamous women, except
for the highly educated settled migrants between the ages of 25 and 39 who
average two more children than do natives.
Table 9: Children Ever Born by Educational Attainment, Type of Marital Union, Years Resident in Lomé, and Age

<table>
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<th>Illiterate Recent Settled Migrant</th>
<th>Primary Education Recent Settled Migrant</th>
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<td>Monogamous Women:</td>
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<td>25-39 years:</td>
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<td>40 years and over:</td>
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<td>Polygynous Women:</td>
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<td>40 years and over:</td>
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<td>Sample size:</td>
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<td>32 382 254 8 158 217 12 52 115</td>
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<td>Note:</td>
<td>-- indicates insufficient cases in cell. Settled migrants are resident 10 years or more.</td>
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Plans for the Future:

Of course, those who migrate to marry or join a spouse may be more likely than others to plan to stay at their destination. However, among single autonomous migrants, quite a large number do not view their migration as permanent. Rather, it is a form of target migration, undertaken to earn money for the family, for their own education, or for their own marriage. Ultimately, the women plan to return to their home towns to marry and settle (Trager, 1984; Pasuk, 1982; Arizpe, 1981; Rengert, 1976). In one study of female migrants to Bangkok, for example, only 30 per cent envisioned their migration as permanent (Arnold and Piampiti, 1984). Similarly, in Kampala, Uganda, another survey found that roughly a third of the migrant women returned to the rural areas within two years of their arrival in the city (Obbo, 1980: 118).

In some cases, however, the economic structure of the society has changed so much that even married women cannot count on land or access to productive resources when they return. In such situations, the women tend not to return until they are old and ready to retire. This is
happening with increasing regularity in Africa (Stichter, 1985; Murray, 1981; Kane, 1977; Pittin, 1984). For these women, shuttling between rural peasant and urban proletariat lives is a thing of the past; their lives have become completely dependent on wage work. If able to find jobs in the city, they generally cannot afford to leave them (Rempel, 1981).

CONCLUSIONS

Until recently, when female migration was considered, it was almost always considered to be marital migration. Because women were viewed as being outside or only weakly attached to the labour force, economic factors were not expected to motivate female independent migration. It was thought that women moved to marry or to join spouses; they did not move to work.

In reality, much female migration is economically motivated and independent of a change in marital status. Increasingly, women migrate to the city, work for several years, and then marry. When asked they will often indicate that they married after migration, but we should not conclude that the migration was initially undertaken for marriage reasons. This temporal relation between migration and marriage has clouded for too long our understanding of why women migrate.

Whether because researchers in the past did not ask the questions that would have enabled them to examine autonomous female migration properly, or because there have been underlying shifts in female migration patterns, it is only now becoming clear that women are more than simple appendages to male migrants. Increasingly large numbers of women are migrating autonomously. At least as many women now move for economic as for marital reasons, and these autonomous movers can no longer be overlooked.

Although a not insignificant number of the autonomous female migrants are women exiting from a marital union, these moves are not only motivated by changes in marital status. The structure of rural society often denies these women access to economic and social support, and economic realities propel them to the cities. Such women are particularly disadvantaged as migrants. Many have child dependants, yet they are not competitive in the labour market because they have inadequate education or training. Widowed and divorced women may have an extra handicap of advancing age. Compared to young girls migrating for the first time as teenagers, these women have much greater difficulty in finding jobs and supporting themselves and their children.

In addition, the female migrant often finds herself at a disadvantage when her situation is compared with that of the male migrant. With her lower educational attainment and more limited labour force experience, she is more likely to work in the informal sector and to earn lower wages than her male counterpart. Migrant women are typically employed in domestic service or petty commerce, both of which are characterized by low earnings and little or no job security.

Nonetheless, a majority of the women surveyed in various cities throughout the developing world have reported satisfaction with their decisions to migrate. Their satisfaction, however, may attest more to
the conditions in traditional rural agrarian settings, than it does to the absolute level of living afforded migrants in the cities. Urban life brings with it a variety of unfavourable conditions: problems with housing, urban congestion, and the high cost of living.

Despite these disadvantages, autonomous female migration is expected to become increasingly common. In some cases, families prefer the migration of daughters to that of their sons, as daughters who manage to find employment appear to be more regular remitters. If rural economies deteriorate further, we can thus expect more pressure on daughters to migrate in order to remit to their parents. Once viewed as the role for upwardly mobile, educated sons, this is increasingly a role filled by daughters.

Whether among the young or the old, female migration can no longer be passed off as non-economic or inconsequential. Such migration is important for the women themselves, for their families, and for their children.
III. WOMEN LEFT BEHIND

Although women who go may or may not experience major disruptions to their family lives, there is no doubt that will be significant for the women left behind. Togetherness is "a luxury beyond reach for the very poor" (Ware, 1981:147), and conjugal bonds frequently weaken in the face of widely separated employment opportunities. What forces compel couples to separate and disrupt family unity? What are the experiences of the women? Do they consider their lives better for having stayed behind? These are the issues addressed in this chapter. As in the previous chapter, we first present portraits of commonly observed types of women who stay behind: in this case, women with strong economic functions tying them to their homes, and women without strong economic functions at either origin or destination. This is followed by an examination of the reasons for disruption of the family household. Finally, we summarise the consequences of this pattern of migration for the women and their families.

PORTRAITS OF WOMEN LEFT BEHIND

Separate Roles, separate lives:

The first common type of woman left behind is the woman who remains behind because she exercises control of key rural resources while her husband does not. Although her presence is vital to the rural economy, her husband's may be optional. He is therefore free to migrate to zones where he can employ his time more productively. The classic example of this case is a matrilineal society, where women have a dominant role in controlling resources, which pass along the women's side of the family. Women make key agricultural decisions and are responsible for the major agricultural tasks. Men may perform certain agricultural functions, such as clearing the land for new farm plots, but throughout much of the agricultural season, their labour is not required for specific tasks. In such situations, the men often migrate in search of wage employment, leaving their wives behind for seasons or even years. Examples of this pattern are found in Southeast Asia and various regions within Africa.

In the Western zone of Zaire, for example, women generally live in matricentral units. Men contribute little to the household economy, and women farm the land with their kin groups. If the spouse of a particular woman is absent working in a nearby city or on a railroad, the work her husband would have done will be done by one of her male relatives. Absence of specific individuals engenders little change in the overall patterns of male assistance (MacGaffey, 1983).

Segregation of economic roles may be accompanied by separation of residences, and where togetherness is not a high priority, the departure of the husband for a separate residence in town causes few changes for the wife. She continues the autonomous management of her activities, while her husband continues to be independent, making whatever contributions he generally makes towards the support of his wife and children. If the man has migrated only a short distance, he may return weekly to see his family, and as a consequence his wife's situation may differ little from that of other wives who only see their non-migrant husbands a couple times a week. This pattern is common where husband and wife live in separate structures due to polygamy (Abu, 1986; Bartle, 1979; Peil, 1981: 141).
The following example, abstracted from Carol Colfer's report on her research in Kalimantan, Indonesia, demonstrates how, because of their cultural and economic roles, women left behind have been able to adapt readily to the migration of their husbands (Colfer, 1985).

In Long Segar, Kalimantan, women left behind generally are able to provide for the needs of their families. Despite their husbands' absence, they continue to have equal access to farming land. They are socialised from early childhood to be involved in rice and vegetable production. They are knowledgeable about traditional agricultural practices and can perform almost all the necessary stages in the agricultural cycle. They are used to making many kinds of decisions and expect to have to manage on their own from time to time. Indeed, the hardships women endure are a source of pride and self-respect. If anything, women are reluctant to acknowledge missing their absent husbands. They generally take on the additional work with good humour and aplomb.

One factor that surely helps mitigate many problems including loneliness is the integrated system of support from other members of the community. Due to the kinship classification system, males one generation older than a child are often viewed as "fathers," and the childrens' uncles make excellent father substitutes, sometimes living in the same household. Still, life for women is not easy in the absence of their husbands. Most difficult are the strenuous agricultural tasks such as tree-felling and fence construction, but many women also admit having some trouble caring for sick children on their own (Colfer, 1985:232-235).

Varying access to resources is one factor that can determine how well the women left behind cope in the absence of their husbands. Even when wives do not have much in the way of agricultural resources, they can often provide for themselves if they have access to other resources. The following summary, based on the work of Bourque and Warren (1981:125-133) in Peru, shows how women left behind have used outside commercial activities to support themselves while their husbands are away.

In Chuchin, a small commercial center in a valley at the edge of the Peruvian Sierra, the women are competent businesswomen. Many have established hotels, restaurants, and small shops, sometimes as sole proprietors, regardless of marital status. Most women engage in several income-generating activities. With their earnings outside of agriculture, women hire labourers for their potato fields to substitute for their absent husbands.

Although the women left behind may not always fare as well as in the previous example, they appear to cope fairly well when men have relatively weak roles in the rural economy. One woman in Kenya has summarised her position as follows (Huston, 1979:42-43):

"Most women don't rely on their husbands now. If they get some money, well and good; and if they don't, they just try to get money for themselves - selling vegetables or making and selling handicrafts. Life is very difficult these days, and men are paying less attention to their wives. You see, men have wrongly just taken advantage of having more money. Instead of using money properly, to improve the lives of their families, they spend it on all the 'facilities' available at hotels.... So women are fed up. They think now that
relying on a man can be a problem. They say, 'We should try to do something ourselves. Then, whether we get something from our men or not, we still will be able to raise our children properly.'"

No Economic Role in the City:

The second common type of woman left behind is one who stays, not because she has an important positive economic role in the rural zone, but because she does not have one in the destination where her husband does. In essence, he is pulled and she is not. This difference leads to a situation in which the financial status of the woman left behind becomes critically dependent on the remittances her husband is able to send. Because she does not have the same kind of independence and control of rural resources found in the examples described above, she may find herself in very difficult economic circumstances if her absent husband does not send regular contributions. Thus, the ability to generate a high remittance income becomes a criterion for evaluating the success of the migration strategy from the point of view of the woman and the larger family. If his income becomes high enough, he might be able to bring his wife and family to live with him at the destination; when it does not, the migrant is locked into a system of sending remittances back, never quite making enough to escape from the migration circuit.

A classic model for this type of migration is found in Lesotho and other nations that have traditionally sent men to work in the diamond mines of the South African region. Generally, women have been strictly excluded from this migration. The following example of this type of woman left behind is drawn from Lesotho, but could easily take place in any of a number of other settings (Murray, 1981: 158-159):

In 1973-74 Motlalepula was a truck operator in a coal mine at Vryheid (Natal), recruited through Vezamafa [another man in the same village].... Even with variable monthly bonuses his wages were appallingly low. His wife MaPuleng had three out of their four children resident with her in Ha Molapo [his natal village], the fourth being resident in her natal home at Witsieshoek (Basotho Qwaqwa). Motlalepula came home for one month in June 1973, bringing some roofing materials to complete a new hut which they were building in response to the needs of a growing family. He took a new mine contract in July 1973 but the first remittance he sent following his departure was one of R45 in November, with instructions to MaPuleng to buy a table and chair set. The immediate priority at that time was to buy food for immediate consumption and to arrange for their single field to be ploughed. But she could not flout his direct instructions and she bought the cheapest table and chair set available in the wholesale store in Butha Butha, for R29. Having paid R5 to hire oxen, plough and labour, bought seed for R1.50, repaid debts of R2 and bought half a bag of maize flour for R3, there was virtually nothing left of the R45 to buy paraffin, soap and other small but necessary household items. Less than two weeks after receiving the single large remittance of R45 MaPuleng was deeply depressed about her budgeting problems. In December her husband sent her a parcel of clothes for herself and the children; and in January 1974 a sum of R15, one third of which went to repay local debts. Her husband arrived home at the beginning of May 1974 with very little money, for he had spent his earnings on buying three horses in the Republic and on expenses involved in smuggling them into Lesotho. The horses succumbed one
after the other to an enzootic intestinal affliction (bots). The
previous year Motlalepula had given R10 to an affine of his elder
brother to invest in buying a beast on his behalf, but he was only
able to recover a small calf worth a good deal less than that sum.
His ventures into livestock were thus a notable failure and his wife
was exasperated at the conflicts of priority in expenditure, when, as
so often, she and the children did not know where the next meal was
coming from. "A man hasn't got sense... he doesn't know, yet if you
don't do what he wants, he beats you...."

Like many other families, this family is trapped in a seemingly
endless cycle of poverty and circulation. Each time the husband leaves,
his remittances are just enough to keep the family going, but never enough
to take away the persistent threat of hunger. Because he is not at home
during cultivation season when food supplies are shortest, he does not
seem to appreciate their problems. Instead, he persists in pursuing the
elusive dream shared by many Lesotho men, namely, to own a large herd of
cattle that would give him prestige and sufficient income to stay home in
semi-retirement.

If the husband is able to remit regularly and adequately, the woman
may be able to buy necessary services or labour to compensate for his
absence. One woman from the same Lesotho village described earlier
provides a case in point (Murray, 1981: 158):

Though her husband has now retired from work on the railway, in the
twenty-five years he worked for the railway he regularly sent his
family R30 per month. They own no land, but with this regular income
this woman has been able to have regular share-cropping arrangements.
In 1974 they reaped ten bags of grain. She also supplemented his wage
income with regular brewing of local beers.

Although this woman has had to cope with the absence of her husband,
his absence has been used to generate a fairly stable income for herself
and children.

Those in the most tenuous positions are women who are responsible for
maintaining the family in the village, but who lack sufficient remittance
income from their husbands to do so. Under that scenario, the husband
fails to earn a high enough income through his migrations to support his
family, yet the wife is unable, because of insufficient village resources
or cultivation opportunities, to fully take over in his absence. The
following summary from the work of Bourque and Warren in Peru illustrates
the difficult position in which many such women find themselves (Bourque

In the highland Peruvian village of Mayobamba, women's
responsibilities for subsistence agriculture and maintaining the
family are expected to be offset by the benefit of remittances or
other benefits from male-controlled cash crops and migration income.
Without these remittances, women have no access to cash, and therefore
no means to replace their absent husband's labour with hired labour.
Further, a woman is not allowed to organise labour exchanges in order
to have her potato fields ploughed. She must pay cash if her husband
is not there, even though he himself could organise a labour
exchange. To complete her dependence on men for cash, in this
society, women are rarely hired as agricultural labourers, and if so,
receive only a fraction of male wages. There are few opportunities for a woman to earn money outside of agriculture, yet she must incur expenses for the cultivation of basic food crops. If a man does not remit or bring back money to his wife, her financial circumstances are very bad.

Similarly, if a woman initially accompanies her husband, but then returns without him from their joint migration, she then becomes a woman left behind. Back in the village, she becomes subject to the same insecurities and problems as the wives who stayed in the first place. An example is a Ashanti woman in Ghana with four children (Peil, 1981: 79).

Upon marriage to an urban migrant from her village, the couple left to establish a business in Abidjan. After only five years, he went bankrupt, and his father invited him back to Ghana to the small city of Ashaiman.... He sent his wife and four children back home to their Ashanti village, while he settled in the small city, Ashaiman. He has an apartment there, has established himself as a mallam [Islamic spiritual leader], and does not plan to return to the village to his family.

With the drop in their income, together with the rising costs associated with their growing family, it became uneconomical for the wife and children to remain in the city. As in other parts of West Africa, there is often an obligation for the husband's kin to care for his spouse and children. In this case his family did take the wife and children in, and thus helped to defray their expenses.

These portraits present evidence of the variability in the situation of women left behind. Some retain close marital bonds and receive regular financial support from their husbands, while others fit the image of women deserted and struggling to varying degrees as a result of their abandonment. Migration entails risks and uncertainties; unfortunately for the women left behind, the risks include not only whether the migrant will find work, but also whether he will remit sufficiently to offset the difficulties associated with his departure. Do women assent to this disruption of their family life? What are the economic forces compelling this decision? Who are the women left behind? Are the ensuing difficulties in becoming temporary single heads of household offset by the remittances and other benefits they receive from the migration of a spouse? These are the issues we will explore in the following section.

WHY DO WOMEN STAY BEHIND?

Although some of the reasons women give for permitting their families to be divided have been alluded to above, these reasons have not been explored systematically. First, what proportion opt for splitting up their families only as a last resort, literally to prevent starvation? Under what circumstances is this migration pattern pursued to foster upward mobility objectives? When are the fissions associated with migration also related to changes in marital status?

Much of the impetus for separate migration strategies originates in the agrarian sector. The improved seeds and production technologies have led to higher agricultural productivity, the rise in productivity is often accompanied by a stagnation or even a decrease in labour demand (DeJanvry,
Such changes in agricultural practices are common in zones of extensive agriculture in Latin America, as well as in much of Southeast Asia. In Java, Indonesia, for example, adoption of new techniques, particularly by the more well-off farmers, has been associated with changes in the patterns of labour used in production. In order to minimise their risks many landowners, sell their crops prior to harvest to middlemen who then control the harvest. These middlemen attempt to minimise labour costs, and as a result, hire fewer labourers. In addition, the recent introduction of labour-saving tools and hand-tractors has further reduced local labour demand. Not surprisingly, these changes have substantially increased the need for people to migrate to obtain employment (Hugo, 1985:52-55).

Because wages in the urban sector are not high enough to cover the costs of reproduction of labour (namely, the support of wife and children), men migrating to the cities very often cannot afford to bring their families with them. Thus their wives and children stay in the country, doing what they can to support themselves. In many settings, however, farm income is so low that even this is not sufficient for the women and children (Standing, 1985).

Such families exemplify the process of semi-proletarianisation. Generally, that term has been applied to the individual member who must circulate between the wage and subsistence economy, sometimes a proletarian, sometimes a peasant. But it has increasingly been used to describe the situation of a family, where part of the family ‘engages in the peasant mode of production while others work for a wage income. Where wage and subsistence economic opportunities are spatially separated, the result is a split family, with some of the family left behind in the rural area while one or more circulate between the wage and peasant economies (Deere, 1979; Murray, 1981; Stichter, 1985; Mukherji, 1985; Findley, 1987).

Whether women or men go seems to depend on the role of women in the agricultural economy. In many African societies men traditionally have participated in warfare, trading, hunting, and herding, all of which entail some travelling. For the society to maintain itself, women were assigned the complementary roles of cultivator and nurturer. The advent of colonial head taxes and "labour recruiting" perpetuated the traditional male migration with the establishment of a not always voluntarily mobile labour force. With the reinforcement of the male pattern of spatial mobility, women retained their roles as support figures at home (Stichter, 1985).

There are also striking similarities to this scenario in some Asian and Latin American settings. In parts of East Asia, young men have traditionally migrated to towns to free themselves of the gerontocracy and to prove that they are eligible for adult responsibilities (Young, 1977; Gewertz, 1977). In Latin America, men have traditionally controlled productive resources, so when the family lacked resources, it was the responsibility of the male members of the household to correct the situation. This frequently necessitated male outmigration (Bourque and Warren, 1981; Deere and de Leal, 1982; Wood, 1982), and because the women were not responsible for supplying capital, they did not migrate.

In the African context, the brideprice system may also be a factor in selectively generating male migration. Under the brideprice system, the
potential husband must pay a sum to the bride's parents to compensate them for the loss of her labour. As Cliffe (1978) explains, traditionally men paid the brideprice either in cattle or labour. With the monetisation of the economy, payments are now made in cash, and many young men now migrate to earn their brideprice. Having paid this sum, the husband is reluctant to lose that for which he has paid, namely the value of his wife's labour in farming. From then on, if he continues to migrate his wife will stay behind to cultivate the fields and maintain both his rights to the land and his participation in the agricultural economy.

Even where women are free from lineage or farm responsibilities to participate in the wage sector along with men, their participation may be constrained by their reproductive responsibilities. If wages for "female" urban occupations are too low to permit them to pay for child care or support, they may find themselves confined to the rural agricultural sector, as in case of the Cajamarca region of Colombia (Deere and de Leal, 1982). In Indonesia, women earn less than men in similar jobs, giving more incentive to male migration (Speare and Harris, 1986). Thus, the segmented urban labour markets also contribute to decisions by women to stay behind.

It is clear then that the situation in which a woman is left behind by a migrating husband is motivated by powerful economic and cultural forces that are well-understood. Recent economic crises experienced in many countries have only heightened the forces that often drive men and women apart.

Nowhere are the effects of economic crisis more apparent than in Lesotho. There, the absence of political support for agricultural development engendered a decline in productivity of maize from 11,900 kg per hectare in 1950 to 5,100 kg per hectare in 1970. In addition, population growth caused farms to shrink, with the modal size of family holdings falling substantially. Between 1972 and 1978 the cost of living index skyrocketed, rising by 211 per cent. As a result, many families could no longer generate the money they needed for their basic needs with their low farm production, and they sought employment to supplement their farm income. Families who were completely dependent on farm income were among the poorest, while those who commanded the most migrant labourers became the richest. Because opportunities in Lesotho were extremely limited, a great many men seeking wage labour emigrated, generally to work in mines in South Africa. As we have mentioned, only male labour is recruited for this work, while women are actively denied labour contracts. Hence, the men go to the mines and the women stay, working the land or engaging in petty trade to earn their share of the family's sustenance (Murray, 1981: 831,90-96). Women depend on the men for cash for necessary agricultural inputs (ploughing, traction, fertiliser ...), while men are dependent on women for household production, both of human and food resources.

The presence of such strong structural forces almost demands that male outmigration take place, but in most instances, there is some room for family decisions. Families can decide when the time has come for the husband or son to leave, they can decide where to send that person, and they can decide what steps must be taken to ease adjustment to the migrant's absence (LaGuerre, 1978; Colfer, 1985; Corner, 1981; Curson, 1981; Monk, 1981; Arizpe, 1981). Where the actual decision-making process has been studied, a decision for the husband to go without the
wife is taken jointly. In Indonesia, for example, less than 5 per cent of the women in one village and 15 per cent in another failed to take part in the most recent decision concerning the migration of their husbands (Colfer, 1985: 241). And in Turkey, wives have been found to play a large role in deciding whether or not their husband should emigrate to West Germany (Azmas, 1981). In some cases, as in parts of West Africa, the wife may actually suggest and encourage the migration of her spouse (Brydon, 1985; Peil, 1981).

In most instances the motivation driving men to leave wives behind is urgent economic need, but occasionally the main incentive is upward economic mobility. The husband may migrate to go to school, or to earn money to send his children to school. Remittance income, especially from international migration, may be used to buy land, shift to cash crops, or establish a business (Curson, 1978; Colfer, 1985; Van Amersfoort, 1978; Mines, 1981; Findley, 1987). Families of Turkish migrants to Germany, for example, view migration as a reasonable strategy to improve their lot in life. Wives will sell their own possessions to help finance the migration, and in the migrant’s absence the extended family will help the wife with farmwork, child care, and any home repairs (Azmas, 1981). Similar commitment of family resources with a view to subsequent economic mobility is seen in the support of international migrants from Mexico (Mines, 1981; Roberts, 1985), the Philippines (Findley, 1987), and the Senegal River of the Sahel (Conde and Diagne, 1986; Samuel, 1978).

As an undercurrent to these driving economic forces, marital discord may contribute to the process. In several settings, women claim that their husbands went off in order to abandon them. In some cases, the initial justification may have been economic, but when the woman receives neither remittances nor communications, it becomes apparent that the husband’s departure may not have been entirely economically motivated (Murray, 1981; Berggren et al., 1977; Gordon, 1981; Hirschman and Vaughan, 1984; Bossen, 1981).

WHO ARE THE WOMEN LEFT BEHIND?

Age at Separation:

Compared to the women who go, women left behind are usually older. Even if the man first leaves when his wife is in the lifecycle stage of childbearing and childrearing they may not return to stay for many years, due to the income squeeze on the family caused by child births which also restrict the wife’s labour force participation (Arizpe, 1981; LaGuerre, 1978). One study has found that in Malawi, the average age of women currently left behind was 37 years (Hirschman and Vaughan, 1984); in Lesotho it is 29 (Gordon, 1981:65), and in Zambia, the mean age of women with absent husbands is 48 (Chilivumbo, 1985). In Kalimantan, Indonesia, most wives over the age of 30 spend more of their adult lives without than with their husbands (Colfer, 1985: 240).

There are, of course, some exceptions to the pattern whereby older women are left behind by their husbands. This is often the situation if the men have already been migrants prior to marriage. They return briefly for their wedding and re-migrate soon thereafter. This pattern is common in the Senegal River Valley, where many young wives are left soon after marriage by husbands going to France (Samuel, 1978). Such situations are also common in Lesotho (Murray, 1981; Gordon, 1981).
Marital Status:

By definition, women left behind by a spouse or partner are in a union, even if not formally married, at the time of his departure. Some researchers have suggested that a majority of the women left behind are actually being deserted by their husbands (Buvinic et al., 1978), and there is no doubt that some men do migrate in order to dissolve a union. In Lesotho, for example, women claim that men may use migration as an excuse to abandon their wives and children (Gordon, 1981; Murray, 1981). Case studies of women in Guatemala and Haiti also portray women whose husbands left, never sent anything back, and never returned (Bossen, 1981; LaGuerre, 1978).

Even so, we find little evidence to suggest that abandonment is the lot of most women left behind. In Zambia, only 3 per cent of the women reported that their husbands had gone due to "family problems" (Chilivumbo, 1985). It appears that most women left behind remain married, enduring the difficulties of single-parenting and hoping for a speedy return of a slightly more affluent spouse (Chilivumbo, 1985; Hirschman and Vaughan, 1984; LaGuerre, 1978; Colfer, 1985; Margolies and Suarez, 1978; Monk, 1981; Mukherji, 1985; Oberai and Singh, 1981; Baxter, 1977). Where access to land is controlled by male kin, women rarely initiate divorce proceedings during their husbands' absences, because such action would deprive them of essential access to that land (Bourque and Warren, 1981; Mueller, 1977; Margolies and Suarez, 1978).

When divorce does occur after the husband has left, it tends to reflect the failure of the family's migration strategy. In Niger, for example, divorces have been reported when families could not agree on the allocation of remittances or migrant savings, (Arnould, 1984). Negligible remittances may also lead women to renounce and divorce their absent husbands. In the Senegal River Valley, for example, women who receive nothing from absent husbands do occasionally abandon those spouses in favour of men who will support them (Samuel, 1978).

The sheer duration of absence can strain marital relations. In Western Sumatra, Indonesia, women who have been without their husbands for longer periods are more likely to initiate a divorce (Hugo, 1985). If a wife must live with her in-laws while her husband is gone, additional stress associated with this living arrangement can raise the probability of divorce, as is often the case among young brides left behind in Kerala, India (Shah and Arnold, 1985). If the bonds between the spouses were not well-established prior to the husband's departure, as often happens when his return visits are infrequent, and if the wedding takes place on one such return visit, the chances that later problems will ensue are heightened.

Compared with settings in which males control all access to land, women are less apt to fear marital dissolution in matrcentral societies in which women are fairly autonomous, such as in the West Indies (Moses, 1977); Haiti (Locher, 1977); and Lesotho (Gordon, 1981). In the West Indies, for example, migration tends to weaken already weak conjugal bonds, while strengthening the latent female headship tendencies of the society (Moses, 1977).

When couples do remain married, how long on average do they remain separated from one another? The duration of absence generally depends on
how far away the migrant has gone; the farther he is from home, the less frequently he will be able to visit. Men migrating internationally may be restricted to visits only once a year or less. Further, because overseas employment is often difficult to obtain, men are reluctant to leave their jobs simply to visit home. And, the cost of visits cuts deeply into the savings a migrant hopes to contribute to his family. The result is that even though the migrant may not plan to be away a long time, the duration of his absence may eventually be counted in years rather than months. A survey of Sahelians living in France showed that the average length of stay in France was 7.7 years. Those aged 35 or more had stayed between ten and thirty years. First-time migrants to France generally stay five years before returning home for the first visit, because a full five years are needed to repay the costs of migration, earn the target amount (e.g. for marriage settlement, children's schooling), and maintain remittances for his family's needs (Conde and Diagne, 1986). Similar long durations of absence of international migrants are reported in Lesotho (15 years), Haiti (10 years), and West Indies (several years) (Gordon, 1981; LaGuerre, 1978; Moses, 1977).

While the total number of years spent apart may be equivalent for wives of international and internal migrants, the wives of internal migrants benefit from more frequent visits. Circulators may be absent one to five or six months, but rarely longer than that without a visit. In Kalimantan, Indonesia, women report being separated from their husbands for several years, at least one-quarter and often virtually all of their married lives, although the duration of each trip may be only less than a year (Colfer, 1985). In Varanasi, India, 47 per cent of a sample of rickshaw drivers had been circulating for one to five years and the remainder circulating for ten or more years, but with home visits every two to four weeks (Mukherji, 1985).

Children:

While support for children is a main motivating factor for male migration (Bossen, 1981; Birks, 1979; Baxter, 1977; Corner, 1982), the presence of children can be a key determinant of the woman's decision to stay. Although wives give many reasons for not accompanying spouses (such as no jobs for women in the city or no one to look after the family land), children often figure prominently in the decision not to go. The high cost of urban living combined with the low wages men themselves often find in the city prevents men from bringing their families with them, especially if their families are large and growing (Hugo, 1985; Laite, 1985; Mukherji, 1985). Indeed, the accommodations used by men at their place of work may make it almost impossible to have children there, even if wives are permitted. In Manila, for example, most of the construction workers are male and live at the construction sites in housing that is far from ideal for family living (Stretton, 1985).

In addition, when men migrate seasonally to work on plantations, life can be particularly strenuous. Under such circumstances many women prefer not to take their children (Bossen, 1981; Deere and de Leal, 1982). Further, in many cases women are not recruited for seasonal work at all (Spindel, 1985; Connell, 1984; Etienne and Etienne, 1968), and accompanying moves are thus often out of the question.
Fertility:

Though one expects women left behind to have higher fertility than those who go but lower than those whose husbands are not absent, there are relatively few quantitative studies of the fertility of the women left behind, particularly at the time of first separation. For example, while one study of Indonesia found that the average number of children ever born to women with absent husbands was 5.1 in one village and 4.4 in another (Colfer, 1985:238), there was no contrast to the fertility of couples without migrant husbands. This is a common drawback to many studies that examine the fertility of women left behind.

There are some exceptions, however. Studies in Zambia, Ghana, and Haiti have shown that the fertility of women left behind is often lower than that of women with non-migrating husbands (Chilivumbo, 1985; Connell, 1984; Addo, cited in Hugo, 1985; LaGuerre, 1978). In Zambia, for example, the non-migrant families in the rural survey area averaged 6.7 children while those who had experienced absences averaged 4.2 children (Chilivumbo, 1985). Similarly, in the Upper Senegal River Valley (Senegal, Mauritania, and Mali), wives of emigrants to France have been found to have fewer children than wives of non-migrant men (Conde and Diagne, 1986).

The most thorough study of the effects of circular migration on fertility is a study of Punjabi women. In the survey village, younger women (ages 30-34) with currently out-migrant husbands averaged 2.9 children ever born, compared to 3.6 for wives whose husbands had returned, and 4.0 for wives of husbands who had never migrated. By the completion of the childbearing years, however, the fertility of non-migrant wives dropped below the fertility of women whose husbands had returned from labour migration. The non-migrant families at completion of childbearing averaged 5.6 children ever born, while the wives of returned migrants averaged 6.4 children ever born (Oberai and Singh, 1980). There was thus a temporary suppression of fertility while the husband was still in the migratory process, but by the time the family had completed the childbearing phase of its lifecycle, the fertility of wives with migrating husbands was no longer lower, and was in fact often higher than that of women whose husbands did not migrate.

Without additional research on this topic, we cannot draw any conclusions about the fertility effect of being left behind. Cross-sectional analyses of fertility differentials among families of varying migration statuses do not enable us to conclude whether high fertility among families with absent husbands is a cause or effect of their migration. Some studies indicate that when visits occur relatively frequently or even on an annual basis, the absence of husbands has no effect on the women's fertility (Arnould, 1984; Azmas, 1981; Bourque and Warren, 1981); however, far more exploration of the socio-economic factors associated with these different patterns is needed.

Social Relationships:

The most salient dimension of social change experienced by women left behind is a change in household structure. In some cases, the woman becomes a household head in her husband's absence, as in Indonesia, Zambia, and parts of Latin America, while in others she becomes part of an extended household, as in Thailand, parts of West Africa, and the
Caribbean. The manner in which the extended household is formed also varies: sometimes relatives move in with the woman, as in Haiti, and other times she moves to join relatives, as in Lesotho. And of course, there are women for whom the basic household structure remains extended, before and after the departure of a husband, as in Zaire and Senegal. Table 10 presents statistics regarding household composition for women left behind in a variety of settings.

What might explain these variations in household restructuring subsequent to migration? Access to productive resources is of central concern to the woman left behind, and if the departure of her husband deprives her of access to land, labour or productive inputs, she is likely to seek another household configuration which will give her that access (Cliffe, 1978). If access to productive resources is not contingent upon residence (e.g. communal or lineage controls are exercised, regardless of household structure), then changes in household structure may not be necessary.

Table 10: Prevalence of Different Household Structures Among Women Left Behind, Selected Countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Percent with Absent Spouse</th>
<th>Of the Total with Spouse Absent:</th>
<th>Percent with Female Head</th>
<th>Percent with Extended Family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>North India</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>49</td>
<td></td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala, India</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
<td>most</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesia</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Segar</td>
<td>37.1</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Ampung</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelantan Malaysia</td>
<td>12-24</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Thailand</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avatime, Ghana</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>few</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>40-60</td>
<td>8 de jure</td>
<td>82 de facto</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>46 *</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Zaire</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zambia</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamaica</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>most</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indies</td>
<td>most</td>
<td>most</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bajio, Mexico</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>most</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Venezuela</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>most</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Includes divorced and abandoned.

The need for assistance with child care also may motivate a restructuring of household composition. Particularly if children are very young, a mother may prefer to sacrifice the independence of her household in the interest of assistance with the responsibilities of childrearing. In Jamaica, for example, many women live with their own mothers in three-generation female-headed households (Ennew, 1982), and in Avatime, Ghana, single women with children also will live with their parents in order to be able to share child care and cultivation responsibilities (Brydon, 1985). If a woman can call on the assistance of kin or co-villagers without actually living in the same household, however, she may be less likely to restructure her household, as has been documented in Lesotho (Murray, 1981: 80-81).

Where women have access to land through their own lineages, traditional intralineage assistance patterns may help the wife of the migrant cope with childcare and farming responsibilities. In Zaire, for example, it has been customary for lineage members to assist elderly widows, and women left behind by husbands are viewed and treated in the same way. They do not need to change their household structure, as the lineage assists them (MacGaffey, 1983).

Such assistance is not a guarantee, however. As we have indicated, migration is disruptive in many ways, and a major disruption involves the flow of large sums of money into economies that were previously monetised only slightly if at all. The resulting changes in financial status and perhaps class structure can lead to the demise of traditional mutual assistance patterns (Gudeman, 1978). In Niger, for example, the influx of migrant remittances has ruptured traditional patterns of cooperation between households, and the women left behind are often more on their own than they were before (Arnould, 1984).

Along with changes in household structure, out-migration of men may change the age at marriage for the women left behind. If male access to land or status depends on their marriage, they will have an incentive to marry prior to migrating, even though this will mean leaving their brides behind. In rural Niger, for example, men often marry prior to migrating, and in recent years the age at marriage has fallen, so that women become "migrant widows" at an earlier age than before (Arnould, 1984). In Venezuela, on the other hand, selective male migration has raised the age at marriage (Margolies and Suarez, 1978). While there is no noticeable change to the age at marriage in the South Pacific, the selective out-migration of males has changed marital patterns, and there is now more intermarriage between previously separate groups (Connell, 1984).

Occasionally, it has been noted that the lack of a male role or husband's presence has strained the mother's ability to control and otherwise raise her children (Azmas, 1981; Hugo, 1981; Connell, 1984; Gordon, 1981). A review of the Asian situation suggests that women often find themselves unequipped for maintaining the discipline of their children, and that these children may exhibit higher school drop-out rates as a consequence. Many wives are confronted for the first time with major responsibilities for decisions about their children upon the departure of their husbands and are ill-prepared to handle those responsibilities on their own (Shah and Arnold, 1985).

Many women left behind experience heightened psychological stress due to their husbands' absence. Some women fear that their husbands may never
return. Such fears, in combination with the additional responsibilities
shouldered by women in the absence of their husbands can contribute to
psychological disorders among the women left behind. In fact, many find
that their overall levels of health deteriorate (Azmas, 1981). One study
suggests that the loneliness that results from separations may be so
severe for both spouses that it may account at least in part for increases
in suicide rates among migrant families in Sri Lanka (Kearney and Miller,
1984).

An additional social consequence is a possible rise in consumerism.
While working in the city or overseas, the men acquire a taste for modern
goods, and their wives and families themselves come to expect new clothes
and consumer items as symbols of the migrants' success (Samuel, 1978;
Birks, 1985). Even when the family needs food or money for ploughing,
husbands may send consumer goods rather than the food or cash that is
needed (Murray, 1981). Of long-term importance is the shift away from
traditional values of self-support and group inter-dependence to a
consumer ethic that perpetuates the search for wage income, hence the
migration cycle. In Oman, migration not only has destroyed the nomadic
way of life, it has also destroyed the sense of communal solidarity and
interdependence on which that nomadism was based (Birks, 1985).

On occasion male migrants have been found to be more susceptible to
this consumerism than are their wives. Many women chastise their men for
being frivolous with their hard-earned money, spending it on liquor and
women when it could be much better used for food and education (Bossen,
1981; Moses, 1977; Murray, 1981). The costs to the women and to society
of this consumerism may be great, for the consumer goods bought with
migrant savings obliterates any chance that the migrant remittances can be
invested in ways that will increase rural productivity or sustenance
(Arnould, 1984; Weist, 1978).

On the other hand, increases to a woman's self-esteem and independence
often result from her greater responsibility in making family decisions.
Although noted occasionally for wives of internal migrants (Colfer, 1985;
Margolies and Suarez, 1978), this rise in self-esteem seems to occur more
frequently among the wives left behind for long durations by their
internationally migrant spouses (Shah and Arnold, 1985).

In addition, the migration of husbands can contribute to increased
literacy among the women left behind. This reflects the women's desire to
be able to read and write their own letters without assistance, and to be
able to handle bank transactions on their own. In addition, the absence
of the husband enhances the personal growth of the wives, "allowing them
to become more independent, to become stronger as persons, to develop new
interests, and to discover hidden potentials." (Go et al., cited in Shah
and Arnold, 1985: 45). In the matrilineal or weak patriarchal societies,
as described earlier in examples drawn from Indonesia, Kenya, and Zaire,
women often experience increases in autonomy and decision-making
responsibilities.

Whether or not the departure of the husband can be construed as an
emancipating experience for the wife, however, depends largely upon the
societal context in which the action occurs. In partilineal societies
where the woman must continue to rely on males for decisions about banking
or property concerns, she is probably not going to have much autonomy. In
Pakistan, for example, the wife is given little leeway in making household
decisions during her husband's absence. One study found that only 17 per cent of the bank drafts sent home from the migrants to the Middle East were issued in the wives' names (Shah and Arnold, 1985: 45). Male dominance of decision-making also limits the potential for autonomy among women left behind in the Sahel (Smale, 1980; Lewis, 1979) and in parts of Latin America (Bourque and Warren, 1981; Margolies and Suarez, 1978).

Economic Consequences:

The chief means by which women benefit economically from their husbands' migrations is through remittances or savings brought back upon their return. Even though remittance income is a major motive for migration, the level and frequency of remittances varies widely. The following table depicts the range in the proportion of women who actually receive remittances from their absent husbands.

If the raison d'être for leaving wives behind is to generate income for the family, why don't all women receive remittances? First, not all men find well-paying jobs, and others find no jobs at all. Wage levels are so low in major African labour destinations, for example, that men may simply have very little to send, once they have paid migration and living costs (Stichter, 1985). Migrants in Mexico City and Dakar share the view that working in these cities hardly suffices to cover their own expenses, let alone sending large sums to their families (Weist, 1978; Arizpe, 1981; Samuel, 1978). Second, when the migrant earns a substantial salary, he may divide this among a large family and community group. All who contributed to his trip will need to be repaid. A not insignificant part of the remittances also may be designated for special expenses: brideprice for additional wives, funerals, education for siblings, village celebrations, weddings of kin (Samuel, 1978: 191-193; Corner, 1981; Conde and Diagne, 1986; Etienne and Etienne, 1968; Arnould, 1984). In short, a wife is not always the top priority, and she seldom has the power to enforce her demands upon her absent husband. One survey of families in Senegal showed that only 14 per cent of the wives received any money directly from their husbands (Weigel, 1982).

If a woman receives remittance income from her husband, how much is she likely to receive? The following examples demonstrate the variation in the proportion of a woman's income derived from remittances:

- **Malaysia**, small proportion of family income (Corner, 1981)
- **Niger**, 25% and 35% of family income in two villages (Arnould, 1984)
- **Morocco**, Riff region, 31% of women receive all of their income from migrants (Van Amersfoot, 1979)
- **Thailand**, Northeast Region, 48% of income for wives of older migrant husbands (Lightfoot et al., cited in Chapman, 1985)
- **Indonesia**, 50-60% of income, depending on whether husband commutes or circulates (Hugo, 1985)
- **India**, 50-55% of migrant's income (Mukherji, 1985)
- **Lesotho**, varies widely (Murray, 1981).

Perhaps the safest conclusion one can make is that women left behind are in no way certain of receiving remittance from their absent husbands. Regardless of the level of remittance, a major problem is the insecurity and variability of remittances. A West Indies woman feels this way:
Table 11: Percentage of Women Left Behind Receiving Remittance Income by Place of Residence, 1970s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Few Receiving (1-20%)</th>
<th>Around Half Receiving (21-66%)</th>
<th>Most Receiving (67% or more)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Michoacan, Mexico</td>
<td>Riff region, Morocco</td>
<td>Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Indies</td>
<td>North Kelantan, Malaysia</td>
<td>Kalamantan, Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesotho</td>
<td>Malawi</td>
<td>North India</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Senegal</td>
<td>Ife, Nigeria</td>
<td>Java, Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Pacific</td>
<td></td>
<td>Venezuela</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swaziland</td>
<td></td>
<td>Haiti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niger</td>
<td></td>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Mexico (Weist, 1978); West Indies (Moses, 1977); Lesotho (Gordon, 1981); Senegal (Weigel, 1982); Riff region, Morocco (Van Amersfoort, 1978); North Kelantan, Malaysia (Corner, 1981); South Pacific (Connell, 1984); Malawi (Hirschman and Vaughan, 1984); Zambia (Chilivumbo, 1985); Kalamantan, Indonesia (Colfer, 1985: 243); Java, Indonesia (Hugo, 1985); North India (Mukherji, 1985); Saudi Arabia (Birks, 1985); Venezuela (Margolies and Suarez, 1978); Haiti (LaGuerre, 1978); Turkey (Anas, 1981); Yemen Arab Republic (Myntti, 1979); Pakistan (Shah, 1983); Other Near East nations and Swaziland (Palmer, 1985); Niger (Arnould, 1984); Nigeria (Adepoju, 1974).

West Indian men don't like to do any work at all either. A lot of West Indian men like to drink. Those that do work to support their families usually do not make enough to support their drinking habits and their families. So women have to work, too.... They have to do it to keep the family going. Women are supporting themselves, so they do it when the men are here, and when the men are gone as well. They tell their daughters not to depend on men but on themselves (Moses, 1977).

The timing of the remittance may be more critical than the actual amount of remittances. Many women report being dependent on remittances from their husbands for cash to hire assistance with ploughing and planting their lands. If the requisite amount arrives too late, the yield will suffer. In Lesotho, several women recount the poor yields they had that year because they were not able to hire proper and timely assistance in cultivating their fields (Murray, 1981:82-85). Similar difficulties with delays in planting due to lack of remittances have been reported elsewhere, and are often a major problem (Cliffe, 1978; Connell, 1978; Hirschmann and Vaughan, 1984; Palmer, 1985). Where remittances are used for school fees, women again worry and complain that such remittances frequently arrive too late or in allotments too small to meet stated needs (Palmer, 1985; LaGuerre, 1978).
 Assuming they do receive remittances from their husbands, most of the remittance goes for food and survival expenses, as shown in Table 12, below. Less detailed studies also reflect this same pattern of about half of remittances going for food and basic needs in Senegal (Weigel, 1982), Lesotho (Gordon, 1982), Guatemala (Bossen, 1984), Malaysia (Corner, 1981), and India (Banerjee, 1981). There is little doubt that women are dependent on their husband’s remittances for their basic needs.

Table 12: Uses of Remittances by Women Left Behind

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Country:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Zambia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Senegal R.Valley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indonesia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malaysia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food/Survival</td>
<td>76 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Inputs</td>
<td>8 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Expenses</td>
<td>1 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business</td>
<td>2 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land/Buildings</td>
<td>1 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repay Debts/Taxes</td>
<td>10 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceremonies/Obligations</td>
<td>36 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer Goods/Clothes</td>
<td>3 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Goals</td>
<td>12 (Per cent)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


What is the typical situation for a woman who receives very little from her husband? What choices do they have? Do they hire labour to help with farm work? Do they receive help with farm work from others? Do they borrow from friends or family? Do they attempt to develop other economic activities that will support the family in the husband’s absence? These are the questions we address below. To give the reader an introduction to the complexity of the strategy that may be adopted we first present the case of Mrs. Matemba, based on the research of Hirschmann and Vaughan (1984:98-101) in Malawi.

Mrs. Matemba lives in her natal village with her four children. She received two gardens from her mother, and considers this land adequate for her family. None the less, in part due to soil erosion problems, she usually is not able to produce enough food to feed her household throughout the entire year. Her mother gives her maize, but this is still not sufficient for their needs. If her husband or others could help her, she could build earthworks which would stop the erosion problem. Her husband is always away on labour contracts, however, so she cannot do this. He does send her some money each year to hire labour for land preparation and weeding, but these remittances are too small to hire the additional labour needed to correct the erosion problem. Nor are his remittances sufficient to enable her to purchase enough food to close the gap between her own production and the family consumption needs. Therefore, she has used some of the remittances
from her husband to go into maize trading. In fact, she seems to have decided to give up farming in favour of trading, making the family entirely dependent on cash earnings, either from her own or her husband's activities.

If a woman receives little or no remittance income from her husband, to avoid suffering losses in income or food production she will have to be flexible in seeking alternatives. The strategy she adopts to cope with her husband's absence will depend on whether she seeks to maintain or augment the level of agricultural productivity on her holdings. If so, she may try any of the following: taking over his work load completely, hiring labour to perform all or part of the work normally performed by her husband, entering into mutual exchange agreements with kin or neighbours, adoption of labour saving technology. If these are not feasible or if there are other constraints on raising farm productivity, she may seek to develop other economic activities. Failing all these possibilities, she may find herself dependent on the goodwill of family and friends to get through the times when she has no food to feed her family.

If the wives are already the major agricultural producers, the departure of their husbands is not likely to engender major changes in women's activities. A wife's workload may increase somewhat, while the basic pattern remains unchanged. As a result, production is likely to stay constant. In Zaire, for example, women do most of the farmwork and male outmigration precipitates few changes in the productive activities of wives left behind. If the work normally done by a husband needs doing, the woman asks a brother or other male relative to do it. Women continue to be responsible for most economic decisions and management of farm resources (MacGaffey, 1983). Similarly, among the Beti of Cameroun, women perform 84 per cent of all food farming, and the departure of men alters their subsistence activities very little (Stichter, 1985: 76).

Where the departure of the husband leaves certain tasks unfulfilled, one of the most common strategies to replace that labour is to ask male kin in the village to help. In Turkey, Indonesia, Lesotho, Malawi, and Senegal major tasks formerly done by husbands are done by relatives of the woman, so on balance, farm productivity does not suffer. (Azmar, 1981; Colfer, 1985; Hugo, 1985; Murray, 1981; Hirschmann and Vaughan, 1984; Nolan, 1975). Another possibility to replace the husband's labour is to develop a mutual exchange system. Among the Luo of Kenya, for example, women have joined together to perform virtually all the agricultural tasks themselves. Mambwe women (in Zimbabwe) left behind while their spouses work in the mines organise co-operative work parties for land clearing and preparation.

Women may also adopt labour saving innovations that offset the loss of the husband's contribution. With the departure of a large proportion of male labour, the Luo women of Kenya have for years used remittances to hire ploughing teams to clear their land. However, most women do not receive sufficient remittances, so they have adopted other innovations. Some women have developed co-operative labour exchanges as a means to accomplish seeding, harvesting, and transportation of the crops to market, and others have switched to a less labour intensive crop, cassava. Despite its lower nutritional value, cassava is not only less labour intensive, but also more drought resistant, providing insurance in dry years. The women now also plant white maize, a crop that matures rapidly and allows two crops a year. They have bought improved hoe blades, mills,
and ploughs, with either their husbands' remittances or their own trading incomes, and they have allocated more time to cash crops and market activities, in order to develop their own income sources (Stichter, 1985).

The departure of large numbers from the male labour force frequently stimulates a shift by women into new economic activities. A dramatic example of such successful adaptive responses may be found among the Duru women of Oman. The Duru have traditionally been nomadic pastoralists, but with changes in national and world economies, men have been migrating to Abu Dhabi and Saudi Arabia to engage in wage labour. As a result, the men have gradually ceased their pastoral activities, while women have taken them over. Although camel-raising has been discontinued, the women have assumed responsibility for raising the goats and sheep. Indeed, women have successfully expanded their herds beyond previous levels. In addition, with remittances from their husbands, they have dug wells, bought pumps, and established irrigated alfalfa fields to supply fodder for their enlarged flocks. The average number of goats or sheep owned by each household has risen from 6 or 7 to 26 (Birks, 1985). Examples of women developing new enterprises in their husbands' absence are also found in Niger, where women have expanded a co-operative pottery organisation (Arnould, 1984), in Lesotho where women now run the agricultural co-operative and are in charge of the co-operative's garden (Mueller, 1977).

Sometimes women have the remittance income to replace the labour of their absent husbands, but there are labour shortages that limit their ability to do so. In the Roi-et district of Northeast Thailand, for example, over half of the men from one village were found to be absent during the agricultural season. Families were not able to honour exchange labour agreements for threshing rice, and the lack of local labour constrained the introduction of cash crops and new production techniques (Lightfoot et al., cited in Chapman, 1985: 391). In Papua New Guinea, coffee output has been lower in districts affected by shortages of male labour (Connell, 1984: 971). Problems of this sort have also been reported in Nicaragua (Nietschmann, 1979) and in some highly productive rice-growing areas near Bandung, Indonesia (Hugo, 1985: 81).

Even where labour is not in short supply, when women have no remittance or alternative income source, they are unlikely to be able to hire labour to replace their absent husbands. In both Lesotho and Botswana remittances are insufficient to cover the costs of hiring replacement labour, and even when labour is hired, some women have problems supervising the labour. Despite their efforts to hire workers, women have in many instances experienced production declines (Palmer, 1985). A similar situation has been found in Malawi. Traditionally, men were responsible for land tilling, crop protection, and seed selection, but now 45 per cent of the women do all these tasks themselves. One study found that less than half (44 per cent) of these women were able to hire labour to help them with tilling and cultivation in order to maintain their production levels; the remaining 56 per cent did not hire help and experienced production losses (Hirschman and Vaughan, 1984). Similarly, in parts of the South Pacific and Zambia, women left behind now clear less land because they have no men to help them (Connell, 1985; Cliffe, 1978).

Labour shortages are not the only problems limiting women's abilities to adjust to the departure of their husbands; they may also lack capital. As in the Kenyan example above, women are often dependent on
remittances for the purchase of all agricultural inputs. In Zambia, for example, 27 per cent of female-headed households with absent males have been found to be dependent on remittances for fertiliser (Chilivumbo, 1985). In both Zambia and Malawi, women have little access to loans for fertiliser, in part because the women themselves fear they will be unable to repay the loans (Chilivumbo, 1985; Hirschman and Vaughan, 1984). In addition, because rural wages for women are very low, they are often unable to earn enough money for fertiliser on their own (Chilivumbo, 1985).

In such cases, the only remaining option for the woman left behind is that she work harder. Indeed, in most of the adaptive strategies mentioned thus far, it is likely that such women work harder anyway, as heavier workloads are a widespread problem noted throughout the literature on women left behind. Instances of increased workloads for women in the absence of their husbands have been documented for parts of Colombia, Venezuela, Lesotho, Zambia, Indonesia, Orokaiva, and Papua New Guinea (Deere and DeLeal, 1982; Margolies and Suarez, 1978; Gordon, 1981; Cliffe, 1978; Hugo, 1985; Baxter, 1977; Connell, 1984).

Rather than suffer all the adverse consequences of both harder work and lower agricultural output, some women may opt to enter the rural wage labour market (Tagliolletti, 1983; Hirschman and Vaughan, 1984:99-101; Deere and DeLeal, 1982). Instead of raising most of their own food, these proletarianised rural women now buy their own food.
IV. WOMEN AND MIGRATION: A SYNTHESIS

Although they are fulfilling different roles in the family at the time of their migration decisions, the economic influences governing the decisions of the women who go and the women who stay behind are similar. Both decisions are frequently related to the semi-proletarianisation of the family, and are often driven by rural economic downturns. Peasant families, unable to survive without wage income, may find that remittances from daughters are just as vital as remittances from sons. However, when a couple has either no children or none old enough to migrate, either the mother or the father may have to migrate in order to seek wage labour. Generally, women are disadvantaged in the wage labour markets, so it often falls to the men to go and the women to stay behind.

Going and staying are not exclusive events. At one point in her life circumstances may compel a woman to move, while at another the determining factors will dictate that she stay behind. Over her lifecourse a woman may switch back and forth between these statuses. Even if policy-makers address the problems of only one of these groups of women, their actions are likely to alter subsequent patterning of both forms of migration. Indeed, the effects are likely to cut across generations, because the decisions made by a women at one point in time will very often affect the choices made by her daughters and granddaughters. Thus, it is important to adopt an integrated perspective that puts the problems and prospects of each group of women into a broader lifecourse perspective.

What we know so far:

There is much already known about female migration, but it is buried in studies about male migration, agricultural development or anthropological studies of neighbourhoods or villages. Because these studies do not focus on female migration, observations about female migrants tend to be little integrated into the discussion of results. If migration studies did a better job of comparing results by gender, we would know much more than we do now about female migration. We would know even more if household surveys or specialised migration surveys specifically asked women about their migrations.

As early as the 1960s, female migration contributed as much as half to the growth of the working age, female population in the world's major metropolitan areas. Comparable estimates for the 1970s are not yet available, but survey data from several settings have shown female migrants outnumbering males. We can no longer assume that female migration rates are either trivial or significantly lower than male migration.

Female migrants typically move at a very young age, with surveys showing that 25-45 per cent of female migrants make their first moves while still in their teens. Often, girls move at younger ages than their brothers. Typically, this move is made before the girl is married. A second age peak occurs around age 45 to 50 at the time of marital dissolution or widowhood.

Among the women who go, there are several common patterns. These include migration into domestic service, which may or may not be a permanent migration; migration to study, which often becomes the first step in resettlement to a metropolitan area; migration into prostitution,
seldom permanent, very lucrative and not as common as many believe; migration out of a marriage, common among the older cohort of migrant women; seasonal farm labour migration, common in parts of Latin America, Asia, and South Africa where there are estates which employ women; and migration to join a spouse or other kin, which also tends to be permanent and greatly increases the diversity in female migration patterns, taking women to smaller towns and cities as well as to major metropolitan areas.

Even though one pattern may be more common than any other in a given area the women who go are a diverse group, and no simple generalisations can be made about their motives, strategies, or their general characteristics. Within each category of female migration, however, we have found some common patterns which have been illustrated in the portraits presented in this review.

Contrary to the belief that women are "passive movers" who move only to join or follow family members, the studies reviewed here show a dominance of economic over personal or social reasons. Economic motives were strongest in Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, where 50-70 per cent of the female migrants commonly reported having moved to find a job, but even in South Asia and Africa the proportions often exceeded 50 per cent.

In only 35 per cent of the studies did family or personal reasons provide the primary impetus for migration. The lowest proportions of women who reported moving primarily for family reasons were found in Southeast Asia and Latin America. Women were most likely to cite family reasons for migration in South Asia, where several studies showed that over two-thirds of the women moved for such reasons. In all regions, those moving primarily for family reasons voiced a mixture of motives. The limited evidence suggests that fewer than one-fourth of all female migrants actually move in order to marry, with the remainder moving to join a spouse, to divorce, or to join children.

Economic factors seem to be much more important for the cohort of young women, aged 12-29, either never married or engaged. Particularly in Latin America and Southeast Asia, these girls migrate to cities to find work in order to send back money to their families. In Africa, they go to cities to earn money for their marriage. Among the older cohort of women, aged 40 and above, economic factors often propel the migrations to the cities of widows, divorced, or separated women who have children to support and limited opportunities in rural areas.

Whichever factor dominates, however, female migration decisions are influenced by a much greater mixture of social and economic motivations than are male migration decisions. Standard survey questions asking for the single most important reason for migration will not work well for women, who often have to weigh offsetting economic and social factors in making a decision about migration. In most settings, it is socially more acceptable to cite a marriage or family reason than an independent economic motivation. In-depth surveys, however, show that these family reasons only may be important in influencing where and when a woman moves, not whether she moves. In parts of Latin America and Africa, for example, divorced or abandoned women report having moved because their husbands left them, when the more immediate reason may be that women are unable to find work or gain access to land without a connection to a male head of household. If the economic opportunities were different, some of these women would not have moved.
There is evidence from Asia and Latin America that female migrants tend to come from larger than average families. In these settings, one or at most two daughters stay behind to help the mother while the others go to the cities to find work and send back money to their families. This suggests that female migration, not just male migration, plays a strong role in permitting large families to adapt to high fertility and the resulting squeeze on resources.

Although single and childless women are the ones most likely to migrate, mothers with children migrate as well. In Africa, several surveys have shown that virtually all female migrants have children to support. Sometimes the woman takes her children with her, but more often she leaves them with her parents in her native village. Perhaps due to the difficulties of managing child care, women with three or more children are less likely to move, except in cases of marital dissolution.

Compared to male migrants, female migrants have very low levels of schooling. But compared to other women at the place of origin, female migrants are positively selected. Most surveys show that half or more of the female migrants have some primary schooling. Given the concentration of educational opportunities in the large cities, however, rural-urban female migrants tend to have much less education than the native women and so are handicapped in competing for urban jobs.

For many if not the majority of female migrants, migration occasions an entry into the paid labour force. The jobs women find after migrating, however, tend to be the lowest wage, least secure, and lowest status jobs. Although the terms of reimbursement may differ, many women report doing practically the same kind of work before and after migration: housework, child care, trade. Surveys show that between one-third and one-half of all female urban migrants find jobs in domestic or personal service. The next most common occupation is salesperson, either employed by others or as an independent trader. Fewer than one-fourth of the female migrants find jobs in the blue or white collar professions, with their generally higher and more stable incomes.

Because many of the female migrants enter the labour force at the time of migration, most report economic mobility after migration. Despite the poorly paid jobs, they may be able to work more hours and earn more money per hour than prior to migration. Their income levels may not be as high as had been expected; nonetheless, many women report an improvement in their level of living.

Despite the fact that their incomes tend to be lower than those of male migrants, female migrants appear to remit more regularly to their families of origin. Studies from Asia suggest that women remit a larger share of their income than do men. We know little about how these contributions influence families' attitudes toward female migration or autonomy, and if so whether any attitudinal changes are generalised to other daughters or to expectations regarding women's contributions to the household economy.

Even though women report economic benefits of migration, migration is not without its problems. Studies from Southeast Asia report that women moving to the big cities were not prepared for the congestion, pollution, crime and other problems of urban living. Even so, most reported satisfaction with their moves. Like their male counterparts, women have
relied heavily on kin networks and assistance in getting established and
dealing with daily problems. Much more could be learned about women’s
contributions to urban development if studies of the informal sector or
housing encompassed the strategies of migrant women.

Much less is known about the fertility of female migrants than about
their economic or social adjustments. Limited studies show that female
migrants may have fewer children than similar nonmigrants at or soon after
their migration, but that with increased residence in the city they tend
to "catch up". By the end of their child bearing years, their completed
fertility is the same as or greater than that of urban natives. However,
compared to the rural nonmigrants, the settled rural-urban migrants tend
to have lower fertility, even after controlling for age and education. It
seems that female migration may play a role in the fertility transition,
but more careful studies are needed before conclusions can be drawn about
that role.

If women who go are concentrated in the youngest and oldest age
cohorts, the women left behind tend to be found in the middle, with ages
ranging from the mid-twenties through the forties. Many of the women left
behind are married and have children, usually more children than the women
who go. Some women left behind had migrated prior to marriage, but they
have returned and settled down leaving their husbands to continue
migrating.

Studies show that most of the women left behind have assented to their
husband’s migration, which is seen as an economic necessity. Typically,
the husband who leaves his wife behind is a circular migrant. The
duration and distance of the migration, however, vary tremendously. Some
women have coped with their husband’s absence for a period of months.
Many more, however, have lived with his absence for years, seeing their
husband only once a year, if that. According to some studies, women in
the 40-50 year old cohort have spent more time apart from their husbands
than with them. We know little about the long-term consequences of these
prolonged absences for the family’s health, the socialisation of children,
or evolution of family and household norms.

Some women never questioned being left behind, being strongly
influenced by social custom to feel that their place is at home with their
kin. For most, however, the decision not to go was influenced by a
mixture of economic and social considerations. Some felt that it would be
too difficult to take children to the city, either because the woman would
not be able to work or because there would not by a proper home for the
children. Others felt that they had sufficient work without moving, so
would be better off economically by staying and continuing to farm the
land. Still others would have liked to migrate, but could not expect to
find a job, so opted to stay behind where at least they could maintain
their current lifestyle.

There appear to be two economic constellations that tip the scales in
favour of a woman staying. First, in societies where women play a leading
role in cultivation, as in much of sub-Saharan Africa, women contribute
much to the family’s income by staying behind and continuing to farm.
Second, women may not play key roles in the rural economy, but they also
do not play a major role in the urban economy or in the mines or
plantations to which their husbands have gone. Given the high cost of
urban living and the distance from family, in this situation women also
stay behind.
Although women left behind necessarily make both economic and social adaptations to the departure of their husbands, the adaptations seem to be the most severe among women who do not play a leading role in agricultural or household decisions. These are the settings where women struggle to find ways to replace the absent but essential inputs from their husbands, where remittances are vital for the family’s welfare and even for the continuation of her economic activities. If these lapse, her welfare is imperiled, as case studies from parts of southern and western Africa and Latin America have shown.

In the settings where women already control parts of the economic production system, it appears easier for women to adapt to the men’s absence, for example by shifting to different crops, establishing new trade patterns, and so on. Studies from parts of Latin America, East Africa, and Southeast Asia attest to the creativity of women left behind in continuing or even improving their economic activities while men are gone.

Whether or not the women left behind play a dominant role in the local economic production system, family and co-villagers provide considerable assistance. In Asia, West Africa, and parts of Central America, women often have moved in with kin while their husbands were away. Not only has this alleviated loneliness, but the family usually has helped the woman with farming, household chores, and child care. Elsewhere, particularly in southern Africa and Indonesia, women were more likely to assume the headship of the household. Although we know why women join other households, we know little about why they do not.

Many women left behind have experienced heightened psychological stress due to their husbands’ absence. Some have feared that their husband would never return, or that he would never send money. Others have doubted their ability to raise children on their own. Some have wondered whether and when they might conceive children with their husbands gone so long. Still others have feared that their husbands would become so consumer oriented that they would no longer fit into their original lifestyle. All these fears are grounded in fact. Studies have reported each of these consequences of male migration. Unfortunately, studies of women left behind have not been undertaken with sufficient precision to determine which specific characteristics of the couple, the situation of the woman left behind, or the husband’s migration experience provoke the greatest stress.

On the other hand, some women have found new self-esteem and independence when their husbands left. In parts of South Asia and Africa, women reported gains in autonomy and decision-making responsibilities. Whether or not they have experienced stress or self-confidence seems to depend on the societal context of the migration. In societies where women are dependent on men, either resident male kin or absent husbands, for resources or for decisions about resource allocation, staying behind is likely to be more stressful than when the women have some control over their resources and activities.

Despite strong economic motivations for the husband’s migration, the level and frequency with which husbands remit has varied widely. A surprising number of studies have documented that fewer than one in five wives has received any remittances. When remittances have been received, they seldom have accounted for as much as half of the family income.
Most women who have received remittances report using them for food and basic needs. Although some have planned to use remittances for agricultural expenses, the amounts sent often could not be stretched beyond basic needs. While remittances may keep a family from starving, there is little evidence that they help a family actually get ahead. At best, they can prevent a loss in production, but then only if the woman is able to purchase or receive as family aid necessary labour, seeds, and other inputs.

In fairly rare circumstances, women faced with this precarious situation have shifted into entirely new economic activities. More commonly, women have adapted the production process so that less labour is needed and so that it could be obtained through family or mutual aid groups. In any case, virtually all of the studies report increased workloads for women left behind. We know very little about the long-term physical and social impact of the increased work load for the woman or for her children.

Policy implications of these findings:

All evidence suggests that increasing numbers of women will be involved in migration processes, either as women who go or women who stay. Although we still lack some of the detail needed to precisely target and design programmatic interventions to improve the lives of the women who go and women who stay, a few general guidelines for policies are possible from our current knowledge.

High fertility with resulting high child dependency levels influences both going and staying. Provision of family planning services and counselling in order to reduce fertility and child dependency could give women more options when considering migration. Such services are likely to have the most impact on migration decisions by young never-married women, for whom a delay in the first birth would permit more mobility. For those left behind as well as for those who go, a lower child dependency load could ease the difficulties of coping with migration.

Another issue is lack of education. Without higher education and skills levels, both those who go and those who stay are hampered in their attempts to adopt strategies for upward economic mobility. Lack of education limits the competitiveness of female migrants in the urban labour market, and may also reduce the migration of the otherwise highly migratory younger cohort. At the same time, the lack of education may make it difficult for the women left behind to learn new skills or take charge of their economic affairs.

Literacy and numeracy programmes serving women in both urban and rural areas could provide both women who go and women who stay the skills with which to seek work or to improve their economic position. If more women were literate, they could avail themselves of urban employment exchanges as well as job information bulletins in rural areas. They could compete for jobs or commercial activities in which basic numeracy or literacy pays off in higher or more stable incomes. Along with literacy programmes, programmes that build women's trade or business skills would assist the women who go or who stay in finding new economic niches.

Perhaps most important for rural women are the issues of agricultural productivity and the rural economy. Where food production is higher and
rural income levels less depressed, fewer daughters should have to go to
the cities to send back remittances to their families, and fewer husbands
would have to leave their wives and children behind. Yet, technological
improvements are often labour displacing and ultimately may increase the
out-migration of both men and women. Rural development programmes that
raise agricultural productivity and generate better-paying rural
employment opportunities therefore are likely to affect migration
decisions in either direction, depending on the circumstances. Ideally,
technological transfers that are "culturally appropriate" and geared
toward improving productivity without displacing vast numbers of rural
workers should be sought. Particularly relevant for women left behind are
innovations for women working their own plots. Also important would be
labour-saving innovations such as water storage reservoirs, improved
stoves, or grain mills which reduce the time women need to spend on
routine household chores.

Programmes that include training, credit, marketing, and so on need to
explicitly seek out and involve the women who stay. Policies should
encourage the establishment of labour, production or marketing
cooperatives among women. They should help develop sources of cash income
that are accessible to and controlled by women, whether or not their
husbands or fathers are present. To assist women who move to the urban
areas but maintain strong ties with the rural areas, options that cross
urban-rural boundaries should be explored. This might include, for
example, start-up capital to enable women to make the initial purchases of
farm output, village-based handicrafts, or other goods in the rural areas
for resale in the city.

The evidence suggests that women left behind, and in some cases women
who go, exist under very difficult economic circumstances. It is hardly
likely that their children are spared the suffering, although research on
that subject has been very limited to date. In developing programmes for
child health and welfare, special efforts should be made to reach the
children of migrant women. Precisely because these women and children may
comprise a secondary or dependent unit within a larger household, the
children of migrants may not receive the services available to "native"
children. Depending upon their status within the household and the income
of the household, their nutrition also may be endangered, and additional
nutrition programmes may be needed beyond the standard level.

The ways in which certain combinations of policies will affect women’s
migration choices are uncertain and need to be explored. How changes in
both rural and urban economies affect women’s choices to go or to stay
will certainly affect their own and their families’ well-being. In
essence, an attempt should be made to foster the kinds of adaptive
responses that enable women to take advantage of any community resources
already available, and enable them to make the best of their situations in
general, whether or not that entails migration. Whenever necessary
additional resources should be made accessible.

Agenda for research:

This review has uncovered several gaps in our knowledge about female
migrants in the developing world. The following topics should be high
priorities for further research if the processes by which migration
"works" for women are to be successfully augmented.
1) Family Economics: We do not know enough about the variations in family economic situations that lead to the alternative migration patterns undertaken by daughters. Regional variations are not sufficiently understood to conclude how regional economics influences patterns of female migration. What are the social and economic contributions that daughters, as compared to sons, are expected to make in different societies? In what socio-economic or cultural settings are daughters more reliable remitters than sons? What are the long-term repercussions for the division of labour within families when daughters become significant earners? What economic situations cause a socially sanctioned event, autonomous female migration, to be approved or even welcomed?

How do community and family economic production systems adapt to split households, where the men are absent and women stay behind? We find little evidence that remittances do anything more than help keep the family afloat, but a few case studies do illustrate a greater potential for remittances. In what socio-cultural situations is remittance income invested in productive innovations? What is the specific role of women left behind in facilitating these innovations?

We also find little evidence that there are overt shifts in the division of labour within the family when women are left behind. But work intensifies and we do not fully understand how the greater work load caused changes in other activities, e.g. the work foregone, changes in child care, and so on. Does the migration alter the patterns of caregiving, traditionally the responsibility of women in the household? When women left behind join their parents' household, how does this change the social and economic obligations and rights that women and their families hold with respect to one another? Are there differences in the community or regional structure that facilitate or hamper migration-related changes in household structure and division of labour?

Does the migration of daughters increase the likelihood that elderly parents will migrate to join the daughter, rather than vice versa? How does female migration alter the expectation and patterns of intergenerational support? Are there community or regional institutions that facilitate a shift in the patterns of female caregiving that might otherwise inhibit female migration?

2) Fertility and the decision to migrate: With a family welfare perspective on migration decisions, it becomes imperative to examine more closely the linkages between levels of family dependency and female migration decisions. Although family dependency is a major motivation for their migration female migrants are too infrequently asked about the size of their families or whether they had children prior to migration. A few studies have documented that families with a large number of child dependents are more likely to send daughters than sons. Does this pattern hold when other socio-economic and community-level factors are controlled in a wider range of settings? We have noted various relationships between parenthood status and migration, but without systematic studies, we still cannot explain why, for example, single mothers are more likely to migrate in some settings than others.

In the long-term, does the migration of a young women from the country to the city lead her to have fewer children compared to women who do not migrate? The studies we have reviewed provide evidence that migrant fertility is often lower than nonmigrant fertility at the origin, but not
at the destination. Additional studies are needed if we want to better understand variations in migrant-nonmigrant fertility differentials. What are the family, social, and economic situations of the migrants who continue to have smaller families than their sisters both at the origin and the destination? If they adopt new family size standards, do the women who go convey these to women left behind, serving as innovative role models or sources of information about small families? To what extent should we view the female migrant as playing a pivotal role in the fertility transition?

And what of women left behind? What levels of family dependency lead women to agree to their husbands' departure? The studies reviewed here indicate that having a large family often raises the probability that a woman will be left behind, but the analysis needs to be broadened to control for other socio-economic and community-level factors in a wider range of settings. What changes in fertility would reduce the probability that a woman would be left behind?

Having been left behind, what changes take place in child spacing and completed family size? The studies reviewed here indicate that an increase in spacing between births does occur, but there are not enough studies that control from family migration history at the end of the child bearing period to determine whether the change in spacing leads to a change in completed family size. If there is an increase in the spacing of births for women left behind, in what settings does their fertility fail to catch up? When do the women left behind continue to have lower fertility than their neighbours whose husbands do not migrate, even after their spouses return? How are attitudes concerning the advantages of large vs. small families shaped by the realities of being left behind? Do women left behind place an even stronger value on children who can help then out, or are more children seen as further exacerbating their burdens? The stress and fear that a husband might leave may also influence fertility. For example, do fears that an absent husband might take another woman increase the wife's desire to conceive when her husband visits?

Given what is known about the relation between birth spacing and infant and child mortality, it would seem likely that any migration that results in increased spacing could have a beneficial impact on the health of the mother and child. Do those who go or stay see any changes in their children's survival chances? If so, does this affect their perception regarding the disadvantages of small families?

3) Migration and economic mobility: The outlook for upward economic mobility is very often bleak for both the women who go and those who stay, yet we have seen examples of upward economic mobility among both groups of women. What paths lead to success among movers and stayers? What factors bar others from finding innovative solutions to their economic problems? How might both groups attain more regular and more substantial improvements in their economic situations? What types of services or governmental programmes would help them to raise their standards of living? In what ways do community resources and socio-economic structures facilitate the strategies of women left behind? And what factors restrict their options?

4) Female migration and changes in family and household structure: When women migrate autonomously or are left behind, the distribution of
households by type of family structure is likely to change. While the rise in the numbers of women living alone has been documented, we know surprisingly little about the factors governing the residential choices of female migrants. To what extent are housing choices dictated by availability of various residential arrangements, as opposed to migrant preferences? What are the patterns of household and family transitions for each category of female migrant?

And what about the linkages between the migrant and her family in her place of origin? What role does the female migrant play in facilitating the moves of future migrants from their rural origins to urban destinations, not only in terms of housing, but also in providing entry into crucial social networks? Is this different for males and females? What factors make daughters more reliable remitters than sons? Is this part of a larger exchange, where women who go remit to retain rights to family assistance at a later stage in their life? How often and at what point does the migrant’s orientation and economic support eventually shift away from her family at the origin?

Some researchers have examined the household structures for women left behind, but systematic analyses of the residential choices made by these women are still lacking. What individual, family, or community factors are associated with living alone as a single parent versus joining relatives in extension? Can certain residential arrangements be viewed as more unstable, and thus more likely to be changed than others? Does household structure influence the pattern of remittances from the absent husband or vice versa? If so, how? In what ways do different household structures influence the ways in which women left behind cope with their situations?

5) Sequences of migration over the lifecourse: Over her lifecourse, a woman may both go and stay. Women left behind need to be asked about their own migration histories, not just those of their husbands, while family heads and other household members should be queried about how decisions about migration are made at different points in the family lifecycle. How does the association between migration and a woman’s or family’s economic strategy vary over the course of her life? Under what conditions do women return and become at risk for additional migration decisions? Are women who go in their teens or early adult years more or less likely to be women who are left behind in their thirties and forties? Within families, are daughters who migrated with their mothers or other family members more likely to migrate autonomously when they enter the labour force? Does the migration of other family members increase or decrease the probability that elderly, divorced or widowed women will migrate to join their families elsewhere?

6) Migration versus circulation: There is little evidence of women circulating. What are the constraints on the circulation of women? Where men are increasingly adopting long-distance or weekly commuting, will this be a pattern adopted by women? If so, which women will adopt this pattern: those who would normally go or those who would stay? Will commuting increase the options of the women who would otherwise be left behind? Will commuting alter the selectivity with respect to education or socio-economic status, such that only the very poorest women are left behind?

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7) Migration and development: In the studies reviewed here, very little attention was paid to the contextual or developmental factors influencing the decisions of women to go or to stay. In order to develop programmes that expand the options for women, we need to know more about the role of extrafamilial factors. Are there systematic differences in the potential for upward economic mobility between the labour markets of the cities commonly chosen by female migrants, as compared to those seldom selected? What roles do neighbourhood structures play in facilitating the settlement and integration of the female migrant into the economic life of the city? How do other aspects of urban development, such as schools, transport services, clinics, and child care facilities improve migrant adjustment to urban economic conditions?

Although there is a rich variety of studies considering the male migrant's contribution to urban political and institutional development, very few studies have examined the contributions of female migrants. How active are female migrants in establishing neighbourhood associations, mother's clubs, or other organisations giving structure to the urban social environment? To what extent do women migrants participate in neighbourhood improvement activities? Does their participation vary with their age, marital, or occupational status?

We also know too little about how female migration, as distinct from male migration, has contributed to urban economic growth in the 1980s. Most of what we know about the larger impact of female migrants focuses on their role as domestic servants in helping urban families get by under low wage situations, effectively reducing the urban cost of living. Beyond these structural effects, little is known about the specific influence that women's economic survival strategies have on urban economic growth. In what ways, if any, have female migrants altered the occupational structures of metropolitan receiving areas? Are there any demonstrable changes in the patterns of available goods and services that can be linked to increased migration among women? In what ways have the various commercial or trading activities of the female migrants shaped or stimulated the growth of other firms?

The studies reviewed here amply document a strong correlation between low levels of rural economic development and high levels of women affected by migration, either as migrants themselves or as women left behind. But little is known about the effect of specific development activities on female migration decisions. Do certain rural institutions, such as transport systems, the presence of formal or informal credit services, or the existence of production cooperatives, affect female and male migration differentially?

More studies like those of Hirschmann and Vaughan (1984) and Chilivumbo (1985) are needed to analyse family agricultural production levels across a range of migration strategies. Where have women left behind succeeded in raising their agricultural productivity, and what individual, family, and community-level factors have contributed to their successes? Where and how have women left behind played a role in stimulating development, especially by introducing production or marketing innovations?

8) Female migration and world economy: If daughters migrating or wives left behind are by-products of world economic forces that enhance semi-proletarianisation, how will women's decisions change if labour is
further proletarianised in either rural or urban settings? A few studies have touched on this aspect of female migration, but we still know surprisingly little about the ways in which female migrants are absorbed at different levels of economic development. Will female migration in other industrialising regions follow the pattern evidenced in the newly industrialising countries of Southeast Asia? What is the role of the female migrant in the context of dependent development? Does female migration serve to maintain the stratified economic structure of more developed and under-developed regions? Are women who go or women who stay the catalysts of change or conservative brakes on structural reformation? How are the fortunes of women who go or women who stay selectively improved or worsened by national or global economic changes? Does the restructuring of debt schedules increase the likelihood that women will go or stay behind? Does such restructuring alter the chances that women who go or those left behind will successfully cope with their situations? If so, by what mechanisms?

This review has begun to bring together what is known about women as active participants in migration decisions. However, we need to know much more about the ways in which migration serves not only the immediate needs of the women involved, but also the long-term developmental needs of the societies in which the migration is occurring.
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