



**DOES THE LIMITED SOCIAL SUPPORT NETWORK INFLUENCE THE
RE-INTEGRATION OF OVERSEAS LABOR DEPORTEES IN KHYBER
PAKHTUNKHWA, PAKISTAN**

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study was to identify the impacts of restricted social support network in the reintegration of overseas labor deportees in their home country. The study was carried out in district Dir upper and Swat, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. 322 participants were taken randomly from 1958 deportees. The data was collected by interview schedule and analyzed by frequency and percentage distribution at univariate level and to check the association between independent and dependent variables, chi-square test was used at bi-variate level. The study found that the deportees facing various readjustment problems in their home country upon return. It was further found that the deportees have lack of preparation prior to deportation, lack of sustainable re-engagement program after deportation that could help them with housing, food or employment training for reintegrating into the home environment and dearth of government policies to monitor their earning. Early and sustainable reengagement program are needed that helps in providing jobs, shelter, food, funding the cost of living and re-training is recommended.

Keywords: Social support network, Deportees, Reintegration, Labor migration

INTRODUCTION

Social support network is one of the key indicators for the successful reintegration of overseas labor deportees. The absence of such preparation or a reintegration program can hinder the readjustment of deportees. According to IOM (2011), one of the major issues in return migration is to measure the extent to which the return program is sustainable or successful. The contributing factors for effective reintegration program include number of returnees, collaboration with the country of origin, community perception towards returnees, the budget allocated for the program, and participation level of returnees in planning and implementation the program.

Migrants are not ready for return because they have not been furnished with any information about deportation during their detention and the success of their return is dependent upon the willingness and preparedness to leave the destination country (David, 2017). The unwillingness and unpreparedness to leave the host country can adversely affect the success of return, and in such a situation, the deportees are likely to be planning for remigration because some deportees' financial situation is

worse than prior to their migration situation. If involuntary returnees do not find any job upon their return, there is greater likelihood of being unemployed for a long time. Such an unemployment situation is a sign of vulnerability and a critical dimension of social exclusion. In their study into the experiences of Ethiopian returnees expelled from Saudi Arabia, De Regt and Tafesse (2016) concluded that the returnees had been given almost no time to prepare for their return and had been forcibly expelled without even getting the opportunity to collect their belongings, thus encountering many challenges upon their return home. Fonseca, Hart & Klink (2015) observe that the success of return migration is dependent upon the sufficient preparation prior to deportation.

Kamal (2013) argues that there were no aid program available to deportees upon their return which could relieve their economic, social and psychological stress. If the assistance program is of limited duration and scope, Ratha, De, Plaza, Schuettler, Shaw, Wyss, and Yi (2017) comment that such form of assistance can have a negative effect on their sustainable return. Therefore, aid conditionality and limitation may not be

an effective tool in managing return migration and their sustainability. The example of an aid program in Armenia is less positive with Johansson (2008) explaining that there were no distinctive privileges for deportees in Armenia.

In other cases, relief efforts do not yield positive effects. For instance, Boodram (2018) reveals that the deportees received limited financial, emotional and psychological assistance in Trinidad and Tobago, mostly receiving aid from family member or relatives living abroad and other state funded organizations but because the intensity of aid is very low, this hindered rather than facilitated the re integration process. The aged deported people received food and temporary housing from faith based organization but that these were irregular and often forced them to change their religion.

Challenges in relief and aid provision for deportees range from difficulties of access and lack of information about available social services in Libya (Dako-Gyeke, & Kodom, 2017), dearth of information system for reintegration program for returnee migrants in Pakistan (Arif, 1998) and lack of assistance for deportees in Ethiopia (De Regt & Tafesse, 2016). Arif (1998) expands that there are no such programs

or schemes to target those migrants who are returning from overseas, and no institutions or organization are available to provide emergency aid for the deported people in Pakistan.

If the deportees are not supported with technical training and for job searching, they become unemployed and a burden on their families and may seek remigration for further re-employment abroad (De Regt & Tafesse, 2016). Schuster & Majidi (2013) elaborated the IOM and INGO designed and implemented program such as computer skills, business trainings, English language, and vocational trainings for Afghan returnees to improve technical abilities of deportees. According to De Regt and Tafesse (2016), financial and social capital for deportees to establish businesses has been identified as another challenge, which they argue cannot be done without the help of other strong organizations. Ratha, De, Plaza, Schuettler, Shaw, Wyss & Yi (2017) report on the efforts of the Mexico Government by way of establishing a program known as Somos Mexicanos (we are Mexicans) in 2014 to support deportees in searching employment opportunities, establishing businesses and addressing the trauma of deportation. However, it was very difficult for the

government to support the huge numbers of deportees with limited resources, and thus the deportees remained unemployed for a long time without developing an earning capacity in Mexico. In terms of challenges faced by deportees, research shows that migrants were obstructed from applying for state old age pension schemes or public assistance (Boodram, 2018) and found it hard to access services in the public offices, to deal with the uncooperative attitudes of the public office managers; they were also frustrated by the poor work ethics prevailing in most public offices, the laid back attitude of the residents and lack of punctuality (Setrana & Tonah, 2014). The absence of appropriate support from the government frustrates the deportees even further and mobilizes them towards re migration (IOM, 2014). Hence, the lack of governmental interventions affect the successful reintegration of the deportees (Mengesha, 2016).

In this context, De Regt & Tafesse (2016) and Mengesha (2016) found that the most serious issue faced by Ethiopian deportees was the deficient monitoring of the implementation of the assistance program designed for them. The concerned administrative officers had no interest in addressing the issue,

and most of the deportees participating in this study expressed dissatisfaction with the program offered by the Ethiopian government.

The structuralist approach suggests that the returning migrants can be reintegrated in their countries, and further contributing to development at home. In this regard, a strong capacity and specialized institutions are needed to bring about the utilization of the financial resources of the returning migrants and skills they have acquired abroad (Hazan, 2014). Nevertheless, as most of the returned migrants lack opportunities to contribute visibly and actively in their home countries, the process of their reintegration is greatly hindered (Cerase, 1974 & Hazan, 2014). The deportees are sent back to their home countries under the operation of law in the host country (Gibney, 2013), but involuntary deportees have no time to prepare themselves before their departure. Thus the deportees lack information about the major economic, social and political changes which have occurred in their home countries during their stay abroad (Gmelch, 1980), and they are confronted with the challenge of political instability, unemployment and suppression at home (De Haas, 2006).

The structural approach lays more emphasis on the importance of political, social and economic conditions in their country of origin, not only as comprising major factors in the returning decision but also as representing components that can affect the ability of returnees to utilize their resources and skills acquired in the foreign country (Diatta and Mbow, 1999; Thomas-Hope, 1999). The proponents of the structural approach claim that if deportees fail to reintegrate, the returnees are likely to decide to re-migrate when the “gap” between their own values and norms and those of their home towns is too large to be bridged (Cassarino, 2004).

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Districts Dir upper and Swat Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Moreover, three Tehsils from each districts were

taken randomly i.e. *Sheringal, Barawal and Kalkot* from Dir upper and *Khwaza Khaila, Charbagh and Kabal* from Swat district (see Table 1.1) for inclusion in the research. According to the Overseas Pakistani Foundation (2017) and Pakistan Airport Survey (2016), 1958 persons of the study area experienced deportation from different gulf countries between the period of 2011-2015, therefore, the sample size was 322 as per the analogy Sekaran (2003). The sample size was further allocated to each Tehsils of the sampled districts (see Table No: 1.2) based on proportional allocation strategies (Chaudry& Kamal, 1996) such as:

$$n_i = \frac{n \times N_i}{N}$$

n_i = Required sample size.

n = Overall sample size.

N_i = Number of population in each union council.

N = Overall Population.

Table 1.1: Allocation of sample size in two Distracts and their Tehsils in study area

S. No.	District	Tahsil	Population	Sample Size
1	Dir Upper	Sheringal	606	100
	Barawal Babdai		494	81
	Kalkot		182	30
2	Swat	Khwaza Khaila	262	43
	Charbagh		118	20
	Kabal		298	48
Total		1958	322	

Source: Overseas Pakistani Foundation (2017), Airport survey (2016)

The population of the study comprised male laborers “between the age of 22 to 60” who had been deported from various gulf countries (KSA, UAE,

Oman and Kuwait) between 2011-2015, and they had more than six months post deportation experience in Pakistan. As most of the respondents were non-

literate, an interview schedule was used as the data collection tool for the study. The data were collected by a group of properly trained investigators supervised by the researcher himself throughout the data collection process. Firstly uni-variate analysis was used to calculate the responses in the form of frequencies and percentage distribution. Secondly the dependent variable was

indexed and represented Alpha coefficient 0.8, and then cross tabulated with independent variables with the help of chi-square test to check the association. The following procedures were followed to analyze Chi-square as outlined by Tai (1978).

$$\chi^2 = \sum_{i=1}^r \sum_{j=1}^c \frac{(O_{ij} - e_{ij})^2}{e_{ij}}$$

Table: 1.2: Conceptual Framework for the Study

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable
Approach to Organizational Support Network	Re-Integration challenges to Labor Deportees

To overcome the violation of Chi-square assumption, the Fisher Exact test, which is also known as Exact Chi-square test

was used instead of simple chi-square test as devised by (Baily, 1982);

$$Fisher\ Exact\ Test\ Probability = \frac{(a + b)!(c + d)!(a + c)!(b + d)!}{N!a!b!c!d!}$$

Fisher Exact Test Probability=

RESULTS AT UNI-VARIATE LEVEL

Table 1.3: Restricted Organizational Support influencing re-integration of labor deportees

Restricted Organizational Support Network	Yes	No	Total
You received inadequate return preparation by any organization prior to deportation.	185 (57.5)	137 (42.5)	322 (100)
No sustainable re-engagement program for deportees are available in your home country.	173 (53.7)	149 (46.3)	322 (100)
Various organization do not support/advice you in job searching.	243 (75.5)	79 (24.5)	322 (100)
The lack of Institutional assistance program deprived you from home, food, or other daily cost of living.	195 (60.6)	127 (39.4)	322 (100)
The absence of vocational training opportunity is a hurdle to get job or establish your own business.	188 (58.3)	134 (41.6)	322 (100)
Social support network do not supported you to start micro-business, forms, cottage or other small scale industries.	185 (57.5)	137 (42.5)	322 (100)
Government have no policy to sponsors you in the form of state pension or any other public relief.	195 (60.6)	127 (39.4)	322 (100)
You receive ruthless response/attitude in public offices.	197 (61.2)	125 (38.8)	322 (100)
Ineffective monitoring programs are available for the earning of deportees.	196 (60.9)	126 (39.1)	322 (100)

Values in the table shows frequencies and values in parenthesis representing percentage

Bi-Variate Analysis

Table 1.4: Association between Access to Organizational Support Network and Re-Integration challenges to Labor Deportees

Independent Variable	Attitude	Dependent Variable		Total	Statistics of Chi-Square & P-Value
		Re-integration challenges			
		Socially disintegrated	Socially integrated		
You received inadequate return preparation by any organization prior to deportation.	Agree	149 (46.3)	36 (11.2)	185 (57.5)	$\chi^2 = 14.548$ P = 0.000
	Disagree	84 (26.1)	53 (16.5)	137 (42.5)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	322 (100.0)	
Unsustainable re-engagement program for deportees are available in your home country.	Agree	139 (43.2)	34 (10.6)	173 (53.7)	$\chi^2 = 11.923$ P = 0.001
	Disagree	94 (29.2)	55 (17.1)	149 (46.3)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	322 (100.0)	
Various organization do not support/advice you in job searching.	Agree	195 (80.6)	48 (14.9)	243 (75.5)	$\chi^2 = 30.803$ P = 0.000
	Disagree	38 (11.8)	41 (12.7)	79 (24.5)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	322 (100)	
The lack of Institutional assistance program deprived you from home, food, or other daily cost of living.	Agree	151 (46.)	44 (13.7)	195 (60.6)	$\chi^2 = 6.368$ P = 0.012
	Disagree	82 (25.5)	45 (14.0)	127 (39.4)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	233 (100.0)	
The absence of vocational training opportunity is a hurdle to get job or establish your own business.	Agree	159 (49.4)	36 (11.2)	195 (60.6)	$\chi^2 = 20.824$ P = 0.000
	Disagree	74 (23.0)	53 (16.5)	127 (39.4)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	322 (100.0)	
Social support network do not supported you to start micro-business, forms, cottage or other small scale industries.	Agree	151 (46.9)	34 (10.6)	185 (57.5)	$\chi^2 = 18.648$ P = 0.000
	Disagree	82 (25.5)	55 (17.1)	137 (42.5)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	322 (100.0)	
Government have no policy to sponsors you in the form of state pension or any other public relief.	Agree	151 (46.9)	44 (13.7)	195 (60.6)	$\chi^2 = 6.368$ P = 0.012
	Disagree	82 (25.5)	45 (14.0)	127 (39.4)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	322 (100.0)	
You receive ruthless response/attitude in public offices.	Agree	152 (47.2)	45 (14.0)	197 (61.2)	$\chi^2 = 5.839$ P = 0.016
	Disagree	81 (25.2)	44 (13.7)	125 (38.8)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	233 (100.0)	
Ineffective monitoring programs are available for the earning of deportees.	Agree	152 (47.4)	44 (13.7)	196 (60.9)	$\chi^2 = 6.748$ P = 0.009
	Disagree	81 (25.2)	45 (14.0)	126 (39.1)	
	Total	233 (72.4)	89 (27.6)	322 (100.0)	

Values in the table shows frequencies and values in parenthesis representing percentage. (χ^2) indicates chi-square value while (p) shows the level of significance.

DISCUSSION

The role of different charity organizations whether governmental or non-governmental, and formal and informal organizations should be recognized in the process of reintegrating the returnees as the deportees or other affectees cannot survive without aid. The opinions of the deported people regarding their access to organizational support network is highlighted in Table. 4.3.5. Most of the respondents (57.5%) had inadequate return preparation by any organization prior to deportation. Moreover, 53.7% respondents disclosed that no sustainable re-engagement program for deportees was available in the home country. The deportees from Saudi Arabia were forced to leave empty handed because they were arrested suddenly and deported. They had no time to collect their belongings, and there were no aid program on offer for deportees at home to address their economic, social and psychological stress.

Furthermore, 75.5% respondents revealed that no organization had supported or advised them in searching for jobs. 60.6% of the respondents answered that the institutional assistance program had not provided

them with home, food, or other daily costs of living, and 58.5% of the respondents shared that the absence of vocational training opportunity was a hurdle in employment and entrepreneurship. For instance, 57.5% of the respondents verified that social support network did not provide assistance with starting micro-businesses, forms, cottage or other small scale industries. 60.6% respondents revealed that the government did not have a policy for sponsoring them in the form of state pension or any other public relief. Likewise, 61.2% respondents said that they had faced an inimical attitude in public offices. 60.9% of the respondents confirmed that ineffective monitoring programs were available for monitoring the earning of deportees. The deportees received no assistance, and there were no programs to provide them with homes, food, skills training and professional training or daily costs of living. The government has no special policy program to sponsor the deportees in the form of cash and any other benefits. The deportees were often disappointed by the delays related to getting services in the public offices like building permits, vehicle licensing, registering a business, obtaining water

and electricity services. There were no monitoring program to supervise the daily routine activities of the deported people.

Sustainable reintegration should be based on an effective and sustainable support network so that deportees who have been abruptly repatriated and come back empty handed are assure of proper support for successful readjustment into their own society. IOM (2011) states that the major issues in return migration arise from the lack of a sustainable or successful return program. The relationship between access to organizational support network and re-integration challenges of labor deportees are presented in Table 1.4.

The relationship between reintegration challenges of labor deportees and received inadequate return preparation by any organization prior to deportation was found to be significant ($P = 0.000$). The deportees did not know about their time of departure but they were suddenly arrested and repatriated which shows that forcible expulsions allow for no opportunity to prepare for returning home. This is supported by earlier research carried out by David (2015) who notes that the migrants are underprepared and have never

discussed their return which implies unpreparedness and unwillingness to leave the host destination. This in turn can adversely impact successful return and lead to a situation where the majority of the migrants plan for remigration. De Regt and Tafesse (2016) too found that the migrants were quickly detained and then deported, thus being left with no time to save money and other belongings. Many migrants thus had to leave Saudi Arabia empty handed due to this sudden crackdown. It is evident that well preparedness and willingness guarantee successful reintegration. Moreover, again the reintegration challenges was found to be highly significantly ($P = 0.001$) associated with unsustainable re-engagement program for deportees are available in the home country. The lack of sustainable aid programs was found to have hindered integration which is borne out by earlier research that has found a dearth of aid programs for deportee facilitation and reintegration to be an obstructing factor (Kamal, 2013) and aid conditionality and limitation to be a poor tool for the management of return migration (Ratha, Plaza, Schuettler, Shaw, Wyss, & Yi, 2017). Again a relationship between reintegration challenges and various

organization do not support/advice you in job searching ($P = 0.000$) and the lack of Institutional assistance program deprived you from home, food, or other daily cost of living was found to be highly significant ($P = 0.012$). This is in line with findings of other studies that have attributed poor integration to the lack of emergency aid and privileges and assistances for the deported people in Pakistan (Arif, 1998) and Armenia (Johansson, 2008), neglect of migrants deported from Libya and Morocco (Kleist & Bob-Milliar, 2013) and dearth of food and shelter relief programs for Ethiopian deportees from Saudi Arabia (De Regt & Tafesse, 2016).

The reintegration challenges of labor deportees were highly significantly associated with the absence of vocational training opportunity is a hurdle to get job or establish own business ($P = 0.000$) and social support network do not supported you to start micro-businesslike forms, cottage or other small scale industries ($P = 0.000$). The absence of professional and vocational training further makes deportee reintegration difficult because they considered themselves unfit to acquire employment or establish own business. When the deportees are not trained for getting employment and

starting business, they are more likely to try for re-migration. This finding is supported by earlier research that has identified a link between a dearth of vocational training and probability of returnee unemployment (David, 2015), unsuitability of training for available employment opportunities and lack of economic resource provision available to deportees (De Regt & Tafesse, 2016) and social, financial and emotional instability due to lack of social support in deportee homes (Rodriguez, 2013).

The reintegration challenges was found to have significant association with the statement that the Government have no policy to sponsor you in the form of state pension or any other public relief ($P = 0.012$). The government has no intention and no policy to assist the deported people in the form of cash money and other benefits in Pakistan which finding has resonates with the results of earlier research by Boodram (2018) suggesting that deportees who spend a long time in foreign country are unable to secure old age pension and other public assistance.

Furthermore a highly significant ($P = 0.016$) relationship was found to exist between reintegration challenges and receiving a ruthless response/attitude in public offices. The hard and harsh

attitude in the public offices negatively affects the readjustment of deportees. Once they seek facilitation and experience negative attitudes, they are unlikely to want to go again. These findings are line with those of Setrana & Tonah (2014) who explain that deportees were found to be frequently frustrated by the delays associated with obtaining services in the public offices such as the registration of land, building permits, vehicle licensing, registering a business, obtaining water and electricity services. Many returnees were also worried about the poor work ethics and behavior of most public offices and workers in the city. They were impatient with the slow rhythm of life in general, and the laid-back attitude of residents towards work. The returnees also had problems with the attitude of most residents to time. People were generally late to meetings which usually started 30 minutes or an hour later than the advertised time. The situation was even worse with respect to social events such as funerals, weddings, church services and family gatherings which often started several hours late and continued well beyond the scheduled time. Likewise, a highly significant ($P = 0.009$) relationship was found between

reintegration challenges and ineffective monitoring programs available for monitoring the earning of deportees. The lack of monitoring and evaluation further complicates the situation being faced by deportees in Pakistan which can also lead to a hindering of readjustment. Existing research reports similar findings. For instance, De Regt & Tafesse (2016) report that the city administration took no interest in the deportee reintegration problems and were not well prepared to address the situation in Ethiopia. The lack of monitoring only exacerbated the situation. The main causes of effective monitoring were the lack of effective coordination, duplication of efforts, lack of clarity on mandate and lack of comprehensive guideline (Mengesha, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The limited organizational support in their home country was the major obstacle in the reintegration process of the deported people. Their deportation was very sudden and they had little time to prepare on their own or with the help of any organization prior to deportation. There was no sustainable re-engagement program in their home country upon their return to supported or advise them in job searching and in

providing shelter or help with food, or other daily cost of living. The deported people had no vocational training opportunities to secure job or establish own businesses whether micro-business, farms, cottage or other small scale industries. The government had no policy to sponsor them in the form of state pension or to provide them with any other public relief, and they faced negative responses and inimical attitudes in the public offices.

It is the moral and social responsibility of concerned stakeholders to organize a sustainable reengagement program for deportees so as to provide jobs, shelter, food and other necessary costs of living. Provision of various training opportunities for the deported people should be encouraged through which they can establish their businesses and employment. The Government should establish coordination mechanism amongst the various departments to create policies to provide relief to the returnees and to monitor their earning capacities.

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