

## The Causes and Consequences of Circular Labor Migration from Bangladesh: Review of the Relevant Theories and Literatures

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### ABSTRACT:

This study aims at reviewing the existing theories and studies of circular labor migration which explore the causes and consequences of circular labor migration of a developing country like Bangladesh. According to most of the relevant studies of circular labor migration unemployment, poverty, social status, cultural, political, higher wages, better job opportunity, better living standard, economic degradation, mal adjustment of the community, are the major push factors in migration process. Although pull factors are not so prevailing, easy access of informal sector, higher income earning possibility, better service facilities, and bright future life attracted people to make a settlement in the developed countries. Based on existing literature, article, journal, reviewed document, and the significant consequences of circular labor migration are create employment and better earning, enjoying some public facilities, congestion, difficulties of waste dumping, shortage of housing, inadequate educational facilities, poor economic condition, living standard and environmental humiliation. The main objective of this article is to find out theoretically the reasons and circumstances of circular labor migration from Bangladesh.

**Keywords:** *Circular Labor Migration, Causes, Consequences, Home country, Host country*

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### INTRODUCTION

The term 'Circular Labor Migration' (CLM) consist issues of two folds, those are circular and migration. Migration can be considered to be a sort of investment of human capital, as the workforce is employed in the most effective way (Taylor et al., 1999). Circular labor migration is the term where labor movement exists between home country and one or more countries of destination. Circular migration is the way to channel of human mobility. Most of the migrations happen for economical and social purpose. By the political and economical agents,

CLM is increasing day by day in the world. Geographical factors have a great impact for circular labor migration. Circular migration describes to be the condition in international policy circles. A diversity of policy-makers within national and international institutions is supporting procedures to aid the movement of migrants' back and forth between their home country and abroad places of work. Their prime objective is the circular labor migration systems could be run in ways that bring well-known 'win-win-win' (Vertovec, 2007) output. The outputs

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for accepting countries stem through fulfill labor market shortages, for sending countries through remittances for development, and for migrants themselves through getting employment and skill development. But there are some challenges for circular labor migration. The national and international policy of circular labor migration is being aided as a possible solution to meet the challenges.

In developing countries, circular migration is widely seen among the low and mid-level skilled Labor. With increasing number of CLM, border crossing social network relation is increasing largely day by day from developing country to developed country in both legal and illegal channel. In Bangladesh, circular labor migration has been happening since 1971. Nearly nine (09) million labors have sent in around 160 countries till now from Bangladesh as the migrant labor workers. (Ministry of Expatriates' Welfare & Overseas Employment, 2018) Bangladeshi migrant workers normally choose the countries of the Middle East, Northern Africa and Southeast Asia-particularly to Malaysia and Singapore for destinations (ILO, 2015). Bangladesh earns hefty amount of foreign remittances each year from circular migration.

Conventional wisdom declares that international labor migration is a natural outcome of globalization – the process of rapid economic amalgamation among countries driven by the liberalization of trade, investment and capital flows as well as rapid technological change (Serriere, 1999).

In this study, the researcher aims to investigate to the determinants of Circular labor migration, the benefits, constraints and the challenges of circular labor migration in Bangladesh. But this article explores the causes and Consequences of Circular Labor Migration from Bangladesh based on the review of literature.

Usually, the differentials in circular migration which involves the selectivity of certain person or group to be more mobile than others have been studied mainly by age, sex, marital status, education and occupation. Some studies show that the determinants of migration vary from country to country and even from area to area cross border of the country, which depend on economic, demographic, political, social and cultural factors. The expertise of circular

migration (Nabi, 1992; Sekhar; 1993; Yadava, 1988), have mentioned in their writing that high unemployment rate, low income, high population growth, land crisis, demand for higher education, previous migration experience and dissatisfaction with housing are determinants of circular labor migration. Generally, labors migrate from Bangladesh to another country without adequate skilled or education, so they work in abroad for getting low wages.

Circular migration is the Labor movement sector in the world contributing economic and human development for the home and destination country. The migration-development nexus tends has become well known from decades of prior research and policy experience with a certain neglect of the insights (Haas, 2010). In addition, there has been a propensity to study reasons and impacts of circular labor migration separately, which constitute largely separate strands of migration literature.

Therefore, the paper reviews the different theories of migration which explore the major determinants of circular labor migration and then reviews the relevant literature about the circular labor or international migration from Bangladesh.

### **Research Objectives**

The main objective of this study is to explore issues relating to circular migration including its broader implications, and migrant rights and protection, especially those relating to low skilled workers. The specific objectives are-

1. to explore the determinant factors of CLM in the context of Bangladesh
2. to identify the benefits of CLM for the immigrant households
3. to explore constraints of CLM in the context of Bangladesh; and
4. to investigate the migrant rights and the conditions of migrant workers in the destination countries in light with international labor laws.

### **RESEARCH METHOD**

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. This study is basically qualitative research, supplemented by quantitative analyzes in a limited scale. The methodology segment comprises major aspects of nature of the study, sample size, nature and sources of data, preparation of data collection tool, and techniques

of data analyzes. This situation can be termed as a dominant-less dominant design. Here the dominant design is the qualitative data, while less dominant one is quantitative data. Denzin termed it as “triangulation” in order to refer application of a combination of methodologies in the study of the similar phenomenon.

#### **Study Area and Population of the Study**

Circular labor migration from Bangladesh is seen all over the country. There are 64 districts in Bangladesh. From all the districts labors have the movement circularly over twenty (20) countries in the world. Top five and the bottom five labor sending districts of Bangladesh for overseas employment of labor from the year 2005 to 2018 is selected purposively for proposed study. The top five districts are Comilla, Chottogram, Brahmanbaria, Tangail, Dhaka and the bottom five districts are Khagrachari, Lalmonirhat, Panchagarh, Rangamati, and Bandarban. Migrant people are selected for the study population of the research who moved to and back to home country at least once upon a time.

#### **Sample Size Determination and Distribution of Samples**

It is found that the purposively selected 10 districts of highest and lowest overseas employment. The total number of migrant labor is 2654563. From the ten districts, 100 (hundred) migrants are selected randomly. Each district contains 10 (ten) respondents for questionnaire survey. These respondents constitute overseas migrant labors. In some cases, in their absence, their family member, household head or spouse can be taken as respondents.

Table 1 shows the highest and lowest districts of international migration from Bangladesh. The highest migration districts are the Cumilla, Chattogram, Brahmanbaria, Tangail, and Dhaka. The lowest migration districts are the Khagrachari, Lalmonirhat, Panchagarh, Rangamati, and Bandarban. These highest and lowest ten migration districts are selected purposively and 100 circular migrated labors have selected randomly from the selected ten numbers of districts. All migrated labors have selected under the two conditions. The conditions are that the migrated labors who have moved at least two countries and those who have returned after their finishing of the migration period.

#### **Data Sources**

There are two types of data sources, one is the primary data sources and another one is the secondary data sources. Both types of sources shall be used for proposed study.

#### **Primary Data**

Primary data is collected from the respondents of the study area using questionnaire survey, and In-depth Interviews, Case Study, Key Informant Interview and Focus Group Discussion.

#### **Secondary Data**

Secondary data collected from various reports, books, journals, working papers, dissertations, research reports, websites of various organizations and newspapers etc.

#### **Data Preparation and Analyzes**

After collection of data, it has scrutinized thoroughly and edited manually to remove all types of inconsistencies. Qualitative data has analyzed through inductive reasoning process for drawing appropriate descriptive statistics. Quantitative data, collected through questionnaire survey, analyzes has carried out using descriptive statistics. For primary data, the descriptive statistics has been used to explore the existing situation and in some cases to draw inference or prediction of CLM of the proposed study. Quantitative data has also presented by tables, graphs, or charts. Errors and other pitfalls have addressed in compliance with the standard rules accepted by research community.

For finding the association between the variables for socio-economic, political and cultural factors that determined the migration boost up. In this case, we have used chi-square and likelihood ratio test for identifying the association between two categorical variables (Nominal or Ordinal). Migration is a binary or categorical variable. It has two levels. One is migration to Muslim countries and another is migration to Non-Muslim countries.

But in this article only literatures and various theories are analyzed. We have tried to identify the causes and consequences of circular labor migration from Bangladesh in the perspectives of analyzing the previous literatures and some existing determining theories.

**Table 1: Respondents of Questionnaire Survey**

Sl	High/Low	District	Migration in year 2005-2018*	Sample size
1	High	Cumilla	833,626	10
2		Chattogram	660,053	10
3		Brahmanbaria	412,235	10
4		Tangail	375,033	10
5		Dhaka	347,731	10
6		Khagrachari	7,361	10
7	Low	Lalmonirhat	6,166	10
8		Panchagarh	4,558	10
9		Rangamati	4,251	10
10		Bandarban	3,549	10
<b>Total</b>				100

### Causes and Consequences of CLM in the Perspectives of Theories

For circular migration or international migration, there are some theories which determine the causes for movement. One of the researchers named Chojnicki (2011) illustrated that the approaches of socio-economic forecasting referred to as deductive-nomological model that is to think about the prospect of migration directly on the source of theories or laws leading migration characteristics (Chojnicki, 2011). Many theories have some factors that influence for migration. Some theories are developed on the basis of sociology; some are economical and geographical basis. Basically, migration process doesn't follow specific theory and it is not possible rather application of various theories provides suggestions more forecasting migration model. Four categories of various models of migration are shown below as a chart table (Bijak, 2006).

Table 2 shows various theories of migration. Migration theories are characterized by its' movement nature, time of migration, purpose of migration, political views of migration, social, and cultural views of migration. The discussion and reflection of the short coming arranged chart into the migration process among the

sociological, economic, geographical, and unifying by theoretical perspectives of individual migration flows are seen in chart. It has to be mentionable that the existing migration theories are by no means complete and no specific theory can claim the full migration concept, so it's' need more inclusive discussion suggested by (Massey et al., 1993) and (Jennissen, 2004). There are seven sociological theories about migration. These are discussed below:

### Intervening Opportunities

The sociological concept has developed on the basis of sociology. The name of the first sociological theory is the inventing opportunities theory developed by Stouffer in the year 1940 on basis of sociological purpose (Stouffer, 1940). In the year 1940 and the year 1960 mentioned in his approach that the migration event is proportionately equal to the job opportunities at the destination (Stouffer, 1960). At the same time from the origin places equal number of existing opportunities is being closed. There is an inverse relation between the origin and destination countries. Under this theory it is not directly related with the migration like geographical theory, but it measures between the opportunities available and prospective distance for future migrants.

**Table 2: Various Theories of Migration**

Sociological	Economical		Geographical	Unifying
	Macro	Micro	Spatial interactions	
<b>Intervening opportunities (Stouffer, 1940)</b>	Classical (Lewis, 1940)	Neo-classical (Sjaasted, 1962; Todaro, 1970; Boraj, 1980)	Gravity theory (Stewart, 1941; Zipf, 1946; Isard, 1960; Lowry, 1966)	Migration system theory (Kritz <i>at al.</i> , 1992)
<b>Push-Pull factors (Lee, 1966)</b>	Neo-classical (Itarris and Todaro, 1970)	Value-expectency (DeJong and Fawcett, 1981)	Entropy (Wilson, 1967)	Multidisciplinary approach plus mobility transition (Massey, 2002)
<b>Migrant network (Taylor, 1986)</b>	Keynesian (hart, 1975)	New economics of migration Stark and Bloom, 1984)	Catastrophe theory and bifurcations (Wilson, 1981)	
<b>Transnational social spaces (Pries, 1999, Faist 2000)</b>	Dual Labor market theory (Piore, 1979)	Including: relative deprivation (Stark and Taylor, 1989), migration without wage differentials (Stark, 2003)	Mobility transition (Zelinsky, 1971)	
<b>Cumulative causation (Massey, 1990)</b>				
<b>Institutional theory (Massey <i>at al.</i>, 1993)</b>				
<b>World system theory (Wallerstein, 1974)</b>				

**Push-Pull Factors**

Push-pull theory for migration was first established by Ravenstein in 1885 who recommended that pull factors were more important than some other push factors of circular migration (Ravenstein, 1885). In the year 1966 Lee developed the idea of opportunity on the basis of push-pull factors approach which is called basically push-pull theory (Lee, 1966). He explained in his theory that generally migration is determined by the existence of appealing factors at targeted place is called pull, and repulsing factors at source is called push. These factors also categories as hard and soft ones for international migration. The pull factors include theatrical situations like benevolent crises, safety from armed conflicts, environmental destruction, etc., while the push factors include less critical problems, like social exclusion, poverty, unemployment, etc. Migrating population characteristics is determined by pull factors and considered this policy as human capital. Whereas push factors are inducing the movement process and play a vital role at origin place.

**Migrant Network**

A limitation has occurred in the case of pull-push factors determined by Taylor 1986 on the basis of sociological perspectives (Taylor, 1986).

He observed that the factors are the occurrence of interpersonal migrant networks between the sending and receiving country which are related with relationship of population and friendship of people. This type of movement is related with family or known people by any chance. They assist to others to move or migrate. Taylor mentioned this network as network theory. Network theory plays a crucial role for social networking. It is generally based on interpersonal relationship between each other. This relation acts as crucial factors for circular migration or international migration. The earlier migrants and back migrants have built a network between the non-migrants at home country. They have a tendency to motivate non-migrant people to move internationally at lower cost by their support. They also inform them about the risk of migration. Once the network is built, it is continuing naturally. One by one network system is running. The first destination country is unknown and makes the cost high for first migrant but the second one be benefited.

**Transnational Social Spaces**

Transnational social spaces theory for the movement of migration was first introduced by Pries 1999 and then it is used by Faist, 2000 on the measures by sociological characteristics of

circular labor migration (Pries, 1999 and Faist, 2000). Their concept regarding this theory is based on networking system of migration. Under the transnational social spaces theory, network is considered as globalized system. It provides the meso level systematical framework for circular migration or international migration. The theory builds a relationship between individuals and group of a community or a country. This relationship is called the cross-border connection of different types of migration. In several countries transnational social spaces is seen as the networking system of sample bondage, organizational position and so on. This system is not an inspiration, but it is a process of ties. The networking system approach expresses the concept of the social capital and the social capital considered as a resource of the country of origin that help people to increase assets.

#### **Cumulative Causation**

Cumulative causation theory is an interdisciplinary theoretical approach that supporting by the economic theories. This theory was first used in the year 1990 by Massey (Massey 1990). He mentioned that the concept of cumulative causation is a cross cutting approach where migrating population contribute in both countries. It is an economical position and this process is supported by socio economic change. According to him feedback of migration mechanism can be benefited of both origin and destination countries. Under this process the return migrants treat as human capital in social context. Some potential factors such as distribution of land, income from agricultural land, cultural change, and segmentation of human capital are affected in migration process as a cumulative way.

#### **Institutional Theory**

Institutional theory is another sociological theory drawn by Massey et al. in the year 1993 for labor migration internationally (Massey et al., 1993). This theory is developed on the aspects of population movement by regular, irregular, permanent, temporary and circular migration. This theory also concerns about job recruitment process and the human trafficking. All migrating processes are not supported by the laws. Sometimes the legal entity is found absence. The undocumented and the illegal migrants may be

suffered sometimes in the developed country. To protect them as victim, some voluntary institutions like human rights help them to back their origin country in safe. There are some voluntary institutions in developed county who support them by getting some fees. But through these types of institutions government can be benefited financially and documentary. Various (Non Government Organizations) NGO's and private organizations provide them for processing visa, counseling, shelter, legal advice etc. These types of observations are seen in the institutional theory.

#### **World System Theory**

All the factors related migrant cultures are expecting the positive gains from the migrant process. In this regard Wallerstein 1974 influenced to identify the links of migration (Wallerstein, 1974). He focused that the web system of migration is moving worldwide. He mentioned the process is the world system theory. Under this theory the world structure is considered as the division of labor market as well as national economic development has a link with migration. Thy process of 'brain-drain' from sending country turns into the 'brain-gain' under this theory. This theory is further supported by Stark and Wang 2001 considered as microeconomic framework (Stark et al., 2001). They said that increasing of human capital depends on the expected positive return of the migrants. The world system theory is the process of capitalist development by maintaining natural accrual of staving and deviation.

#### **Economic Theories of Circular Labor Migration**

Economic theories of circular labor migration are discussed in terms of literature. There are some theories of circular labor migration that are Classical, Neo-Classical, Keynesian, Dual Labor market theory, Value-expectancy, and New economics of migration. Within these theories value-expectancy and New economic migration theories are discussed in micro level. Rests of these theories are discussed in macro level. Only Neo-classical theory is discussed in both micro and macro level.

Some theories on circular migration that are harmonized to determinants of circular migration can explain the reason for international migration. Most theories are categorized on the basis of pull

and push theories by economists. Theory of neo-classical economics creates the equilibrium rational markets conducted by the individual migrants or the migrant's households. The neo-classical equilibrium theory moves on both condition of micro and macro level. This theory identifies the migration process in the perspective of supply and demand factors of labors. Sometimes this theory relies on the geographical condition. Labors move from one country to another country, one area to another depends on the causes of low wages, labor scarcity etc. Labors move from surplus area to labor shortage area. This migration theory shows the individual benefit, cost for migration and social effect of a migrant labor. It also discusses about the freedom of choice for the migrating people (Harris et al., 1970). Under this theory, labors are independent to go anywhere in the world for work. Generally, labors seek for higher wages in this regard. But the wages of labors depend on the skills and educational condition.

#### **The Causes and Consequences of CLM in the Perspectives of Literature Review**

Generally, the concept of CLM is the decision to return to the home country after spending a certain period of time in the host country and going again to another country for seeking better opportunities. In addition, with the idea of return migration is at odds with the perceived impression of migration which is seen as a strategic choice by individuals to move from a low-wage, high unemployment country to the one where has comparatively higher wages and employment rates (Vadean et al., 2009). Migrant labors naturally remain home and abroad until retirement due to receive benefits. So, the increase of CLM is quite natural in the world. To measuring this situation, Reuben's extends the concept of determinants of migration (Reubens, 1983). Courageous has investigated the possibility of return migration before the end of the individual's active life cycle by analyzing behavioral and aggregate population models to identify the determinants and constraints factors of migration (Courgean, 1995).

The conceptual framework of the proposed research is a composite one, taking up specific analytical frameworks for the problems addressed in each chapter. The first chapter focuses on the circular migration overview and the proposed

research plan. In the second chapter, it points out the conceptual keystones and definitions of circular labor migration in different contexts. Determinants factors of CLM and advantages of CLM are discussed in chapters three and four respectively. Chapter five and six focus on the obstacles to CLM in the context of Bangladesh and right of CLM worker by national and international standard. Finally, chapter seven summarize the research findings, outlines limitation of the research and shed light on the direction of future research based on the findings of the study.

During the past three decades, significant evidence has been derived concerning migrant characteristics, migration patterns, and the major causes of circular labor migration (Adepoju, 1990). Circular migration is historically the way of life in Bangladesh. In this section, an attempt has been made to review the article, research paper, conference paper, books, and valuable empirical studies on the determinants, benefits, and constraints of Circular labor migration. A summary of the literature reviewed is identified for searching the research gap which is formed the basis for the development of the conceptual model.

Circular migration to the host and home country currencies, and returns to the human capital accumulated in the host country mentioning Stark, 1991 for circular labor migration strategies (Stark, 1991); (Djajic and Milbourne, 1988); and (Dustmann 1995, 1997, and 2003). Explaining Economical, Security, labor market gap, Information technology, Govt. policy, Trade, mutual recognition agreements on skills, dual citizenship, and portability of social entitlements, political and academic discussions around migration and mobility as determinants of Circular Labor Migration (CLM) by Michael P. Todaro on sociological and economical perspectives migration (Todaro, 1969), (Babayan, 2010), Engman, 2009), (Castles, S. 2010).

Benefits of Circular Labor Migration (CLM) indicates employment, earning, resident advantages, livelihood opportunities, future advantages are discussed by Vadean and Piracha, (2009), and Beguy, Bocquier and Zulu, (2010).

Geographical location, high health risk for sustaining population, policy for migration and settlement indicates the constraint factors for

circular labor migration those explained by (Tanvi Rai et al. 2014) and (Steven Vertovec, 2007).

## CONCLUSION

The discussion on various concepts of circular migration based on theories and literatures is related with three categories of migration. They are the temporary migration, permanent migration and circular migration. All concepts of circular migration are discussed by the international migration perspectives. The process of circular migration is addressed by time and condition of home country. Actually, circular migration is the movement by socio cultural and socioeconomic perspectives between home country and destination country. It is the process of global phenomena in current scientific world. From the sociocultural aspect, migrants are influenced by changing of culture. On the other hand, migrants are directly and indirectly affected by economically that push them to move circularly towards the developed countries. Analyzing of various concept of circular migration, it can be concluded that migration and development has inter relationship between each other. It should be mentioned that there is a positive relationship between them. It indicates that, if the circular migration increases, the development also increases whereas if the circular migration decreases, the development also decreases. The above definitions of circular migration in different context are the common conceptual understanding for mutual interest of both countries.

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