

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **CONCLUSION**

Migration in Punjab is not a new phenomenon; it has a long history and dates back to the time after the annexation of Punjab by British in 1849. Various studies were done on Punjabi migration by researchers (refer chapter 2). Most of the migration of earlier days that took place from Punjab was largely confined within the boundaries of present-day India. History of Punjabi migration can be distinctively divided into two periods: the colonial period (from 1849 to 1947) and the post-colonial period (after 1947 till present). First-time migration was noticed at the time of recruitment of Punjabi men to the British Army from Majha region during the colonial period. The pioneers of Punjabi immigration from Majha, Malwa, and Doaba regions began to dominate in migration, with Amritsar, Firozepur, Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur, Nawanshahr, Jalandhar districts constituting the core zone of emigration. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Punjabis were noticed in Australia, Fiji and New Zealand (Jayaram, 2011). During the first two decades after independence, most of the migration took place from the Doaba region: the post-colonial phase is marked by a sharp increase in the international migration of Punjabis in which domination was that of Jat Sikhs followed by Ramgarhias, Chamars, and Ad-dharmis (Ballard & Ballard, 1977). The representation of Jats and Chamars has been noted among Punjabis in North America, Middle East, and East Europe (c.f Taylor & Singh 2013). In the contemporary times of globalization, migration in the guise of skilled workers has started taking place, mostly to Australia and Canada, and now migrants are not from any particular division of Punjab rather this trend has gripped almost the entire Punjab (Rajan & Percot, 2011).

Bertolani (2008) has mentioned three main caste groups as Jat, Ravidasis, and Lobanawho migrated to France. The significance of overseas migration to the economics and status of Jat Sikhs has increased in recent times (Taylor & Singh, 2013). Change has been seen in migration and another caste kamboj who otherwise resides around Kapurthala district, have also started migrating to Gulf countries, and in fact, few of them flew to England and America as well. Though a number of studies have been conducted on the Jats and Dalit Diaspora, no documentation has been found on the Kambojs who constitute ‘the lower stratum of dominant

agricultural caste of their region' (Ibbeston, 2008). Migration among the Jat caste is a pre-independence phenomenon but migration among the Kamboj caste has shown new trends. Fulfillment of economic needs is the main criteria amongst the Kambojs, who have taken to migration. Migration to Gulf countries is more from Kapurthala villages because less money is required to migrate. Migration becomes fruitful for Kambojs because they become Zamindar and NRI status is also attached to them.

The existing review of the literature on Punjabi migration is mainly confined to Punjabi Diaspora which comprises of Punjabis around the world, their experiences with the global world and the philanthropic work done by them in Punjab (Dusenbury and Tatla, 2009). Some studies also mention changing trends of migration and transnational culture in the Punjabi Diaspora in homeland countries (Taylor, 2013; Taylor and Singh, 2013). The concept of myths and realities of coming back to home and sense of belongingness to their homeland country (Kessinger, 1974; Ballard and Ballard, 1977) are the prominent issues that were discussed in earlier studies. Most of the existing studies are mainly confined towards migration of Punjabis and their surrounding areas. Although migration in Punjabis was studied from historical to present perspective( see chapter 2). Yet there are no systematic studies that will give a glance on left behind families in the Punjabi migrant households and even focus on women of left behind families especially that are impacted due to migration in Punjab. So the present study's main objectives are to analyze and understand the relationship between migration and recent economic, political and social assertion of the Kambojs in the Doaba region and the socio-economic background of the Kamboj migrant families. The study also explores the multiplicity of problems faced by women left back home by the husbands and the coping mechanisms to deal with these problems. The study also touched aspects like whether with the migration of women's husbands, it leads them to a place with new experiences where women are undergoing a process of empowerment or they are still being subjugated? Emphasis was also given to changing patterns of marriage emerging in the area and links them to processes of migration and nuances of the emerging trends of female migration.

The present work has focused on migration in Kamboj caste and its impact on left behind women. The researcher made an effort here to collect data at broader level that includes women who are married to Kamboj male migrant but are staying in Kapurthala villages (Punjab) in either joint or nuclear families. Second types of cases

taken into consideration were of those young women that due to the influence of their own family or after watching neighbor's migration were ready to migrate by opting for marriage alliances. Data was collected through semi-structured interview schedules. With the help of KII migration patterns were analyzed, Case studies and Narratives were done to understand situation of left behind women. Focus group discussion was also used to elicit data to know more about the migration in the region and its impact on left behind families. Whenever it was possible, non-participant observation was also used to gather some relevant facts related to the study. Moreover secondary data was obtained especially from studies on migration of Punjab. Narratives and cases studies of respondents have been presented in relevant chapters and findings were drawn from them. Graphs and figure where it was necessary were drawn for thorough understanding.

Chapter 2 discussed the migration trends in Kamboj. First Punjabi migration happened through army recruitments in British army and later on through labour migration for sugarcane plantation in colonial period before 1947. Post-colonial migration started from all parts of Majha, Malawa and Doaba region but Doaba region dominated in migration in 20<sup>th</sup> century. So, almost all castes of Punjab were migrating all over the world. There is one caste though that was not mentioned throughout the migration history. No documentation was found on Kamboj caste migration. Some records were taken in study to dig out the history of Kamboj caste such as Jammu, 2013, Singh, 2003 and archival sources of Rose, 1919, Ibbetson, 2008 were discussed. Three phases of Kamboj migration were discussed in chapter 2 in relation to time of their migration. First phase discussed the start of migration during mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. During this period, most of the migrants went to Gulf countries. These were less educated and unskilled migrants. They acquired skills in Gulf countries and sent remittances back home every month. Twice migration was noticed among these migrants as these migrants went other developed countries after spending considerable time in Gulf countries. Second phase was during late 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this time, migrants had acquired some skills in homeland country and were willing to do same jobs in destination country after migration. Twice migration was also noticed in the second phase. Third phase involves Kamboj migration during early 21<sup>st</sup> century. In this time, it is mostly those Kamboj caste migrants who wanted to go abroad based on education and they had given preference only to developed countries. Chain

migration was also recognized throughout the history of Kamboj migration. The main reason behind migration was to take care of economic well-being and aspiration to achieve higher standards of living. It was noticed that migration is not an individual decision rather a decision of the family to gain higher standard of living and economic security of the left behind families. Moreover Kamboj caste as marginal farmer didn't have huge land holdings as compared with Jat caste. Most of them worked as mason, foreman and marble cutter in the gulf countries. Those who migrated to developed countries worked as gardener and cook in restaurant or sometimes did labour work. So it showed that early migration in Kamboj caste was to increase economic stability. In the present scenario, migration of Kamboj caste becomes fruitful and make them as a dominate caste in their respective village. They are able to purchase land and also become politically active in their respective villages. So, transnational theory also showed that migration helps to transform social capital that makes them to grow in their homeland. These transfers of socio-cultural meanings and practices occur either during the increased number of visits by immigrants taken to their home countries or improved contact made by non-migrants to friends and families living in the receiving countries through the dramatically increased forms of correspondence such as emails, online chat sessions, telephone calls, CD/VDO and traditional letters. Migration sometimes becomes permanent and they start losing their ties with homeland countries, still empirical studies have indicated that migrants may maintain strong transnational ties over sustained periods of time and such ties can become trans-generational over a period of time.

The chapter 3 discussed the marriage negotiations in Kamboj caste with 48 respondents classified in three different age categories (18-35, 35+- 45, 45+). It was noticed that during old age, expenditure on marriage ceremonies was very less and dowry was also given throughout the three phases. But with the change of time, expenditure and dowry also increased. In the young age respondent's time expenditure reached up to 10 lakh and dowry included luxurious goods. Another thing was noticed that most of the women were staying behind; migration in women was not a common phenomenon. There was no visit paid by women to their husbands' destination country especially in middle age respondent's category. 2 respondents each in young and old age respondent's category paid visit to their husband's destination country. Choice of husband and decision to choose the groom were also

discussed. It was found that during old and middle age respondent's time, parents and middle man had strong hold on mate selection. In the young respondent time no doubt parents' choice related to grooms was still strong but women had the right to show her desire. One of the new trends in middle and young age category recorded was that during engagement, women can see her fiancé's photograph and all engagement rituals were done with the photograph. Highest numbers of such cases were recorded in young respondent's category. Moreover after marriage, it was recorded that most of the women stayed the initial period of two to five months with their husbands , later on their husbands came back from time to time during their holiday visits to their home land after their successive years of migration. The longest stay with husbands was recorded in old age cases and least stay was recorded in the young age respondent's cases. In the middle age respondent's category, women had almost 10 years stay with their husbands. It was noticed that most of the time women received call from their migrant husbands. They usually discuss their daily routine and household work with their husbands on phone. So phone becomes an important way to communicate and also bind the family in togetherness. The concept of wives who have been left behind comes into existence due to such kind of male migration trends. The concept of left behind women mainly focuses on those women who are staying behind with their in-laws or children and taking care of all the household and outside chores after their husband's migration.

The chapter 4 analyses of the Social-Economic status of left behind women and their coping mechanism discussed the changes in household decision making, responsibilities, and how the Kamboj women managed and reacted to such changes. It has been observed that Kamboj migrant's families had either joint or nuclear family system. In all the respondent's cases, young age women had majority of joint families than middle and old age women. There was a change in socio-economic status of the left behind families. It was observed that in all age categories of respondents; women had basic facilities at household level. It showed that migration of their husbands did not have a negative impact on their economic life in all cases. Moreover all migrant families had their own house and all basic facilities were also present there. In some cases, women enjoyed luxurious life-style especially in the old age category and in few cases of middle and young age respondent's women also. Migration becomes fruitful for left behind families because of flow of remittances. Major share of the

remittances was used on household consumption in all the migrant families, and highest remittances were spent in the old age category. Second highest use of remittances was on education of children, in which middle age women had the highest expenses. The third area of expenses was wedding and shaguns expenses in which old age women had more control of the income than other two age category of women. The fourth area where remittances were used was in payment of debts in which again old age women had more expenses than other two age category but young age respondents in some cases were still having similar expenses as compared to old age category respondents. In young age respondent's cases, most of the debts were taken for husband's migration. In the old age respondent's category, most of debts were due to their children's marriage, migration and sometimes due to construction of big houses. Expenses on health purchase of clothes, and renovation of house did not show much difference in all the age categories. But highest expenses were found in old age category, then in middle age category and lastly in young age category. In case of savings, higher savings were found in old age and young age category than in middle age category. Data revealed that old and middle age respondents were head of household in left behind families after their husband's migration and were also handling all the remittances. On the other hand young age respondent didn't have such control and they were not head of the household in majority of cases because they were staying in joint families where other family members and in some cases husband also played the role of head of the household and had control over remittances. So in many cases of young age respondents, they were not found to have freedom to spend as per their wish and they need to mostly consult with other family members or their husband before buying anything for household. In decision making process, old age respondents were taking both major and minor decisions of the household, somehow middle age respondents in some cases were also becoming active in major and minor decisions. But in young age respondent's case, hold on minor decision was there but major decisions were mostly taken by father-in-law, brother-in-law or their husbands. Even sometimes, in minor household decisions, young age respondent didn't have any role to play. So, most of the young age women were found to have really less role in major decision making of the household as compared to middle and old age women. In cases of responsibilities, all the age category women share all the responsibilities of the household. They are taking care of all the household chores, children and even overall responsibilities of the

household are on them. In some cases in relation to major decisions, responsibilities were not on young respondents because of presence of in-laws. Still women shared major part of responsibilities.

Chapter 5 discussed mobility and the problems faced by women in social and psychological front after their husband's migration. The last part of the chapter discussed the changes from both positive and negative sense on the left behind families. In relation to mobility of women outside their household, it was noticed that old age respondents didn't have any restrictions on them, they have freedom to go anywhere and also they do not need to tell anyone about their visits outside their household. In the middle age respondent's cases, they have freedom of mobility, in very few cases they need to tell their husbands. But in the young age respondent's cases, women's mobility was restricted by their husbands and in-laws. They can't go outside alone and most of the time they need to take permission to go outside. But due to migration, there were positive affects also for left behind Kamboj women. It was noticed that women take active participation in the agricultural matters, land or property purchase and also use their rational mind to take decisions in family sphere. To govern their household, they took their decision more sincerely and also discussed all matters with their husbands. Children's education, shaguns to relatives, household grocery, all expenses were paid and purchased by women themselves. They took the decision towards their land, construction of home and also marriage decisions of their children too (highest cases were recorded in middle and old respondent's cases). Sometimes family quarrels happened but still' women tried to maintain their household efficiently. Especially in the old age and middle age category, women took their decisions independently and fulfill their responsibilities also. Such phenomenon was also observed to be growing in the young age respondent's cases but at a very slow pace. Women visit the official places like banks, passport office, post office and their children's school too. Women maintain a daily diary so as to maintain their household budgets and also to show their husbands about household expenses, so that their husband can't blame them later. Even most of the time during conversations it was revealed by women that phone is the easiest way to communicate with their husbands. Women mostly discussed on their family matters via phone and also told their husband about the decisions taken by them. It was also found that in many cases, husbands showed no interest in family decisions and women take their own decisions.

Women also become much more active after their husband's migration as they open their small household business. They had individual income that can be utilized by them during hour of need. So migration of their husband brings many positive changes in their life. Especially, women become head of the household; take decisions, handle their responsibilities and also manage all household affairs alone. But migration of husband had negative impacts also such as social-psychological problems faced by migrant's women. Women suffered with problems at children front that their children sometimes misbehaved and disobey them. Such cases were mostly in middle and young age category. Stubbornness was found to be highest in old age category children. Even many children have lack of interest in education especially in young and middle age respondents and dropout rates were high in old age respondent's children. Some children face emotional sickness due their father's absence especially in young age respondents. No doubt positive outcome on children's life are also observed that they were getting best education facilities, good life-style and are also able to migrate to developed countries when they grow up. So Kamboj women tried to tackle with all problems and they maintained strict control over their children. They even discussed the matters of children with their husbands in order to ensure that they are doing everything from their side to take care of the children so that nobody can blame on them later. Another area was discussed that is depression and loneliness in the migrant women due to their husband's migration. It was recorded that highest cases of depression and loneliness were found in the young age respondent's cases because due to migration, very small time was spent by these respondents with their husbands and they were under subjugation by their in-laws. Moreover the family quarrels such as fighting with mother-in-law or *Jethani* (elder sister-in-law) leads to unwanted tensions in the left behind families. There is strict control exercised by their mother-in-law and sometimes, mother-in-law makes taunting remarks on the dressing sense of their daughter-in-law in order to control their mobility. So in such cases women feel subjugated by their in-laws that cause depression because no one is available to listen to their sorrows and worries. Even they also burry their emotions inside their heart because of lack of availability of their husbands at that time. This caused loneliness and sorrow in the left behind women. Such cases were mostly recorded in young age respondent's cases. So women remained in the four walls of their house and no one was there to listen to them on emotional front. Young women also have burden of children's up-bringing and no one

is available to help them. In some cases, even their husbands also try to subjugate them. Strict control was present over their mobility which also leads to depression and loneliness in the young age respondent's cases. Second highest numbers of cases of depression were found in middle age respondents. Reason behind that was overburden of household responsibilities, future worries and children's upbringing puts further stress on them. Somehow loneliness was not more in middle age respondents as they get used to the situation in the family and take up responsibilities proactively. In the old age respondents, very few cases of depression and loneliness were found because of prolonged migration and women become used to handling the household tensions. Rather, these women are head of the household and actual decision maker; no one is over and above to control them. Moreover they don't have future worries because of handsome flow of remittances and children were also well-settled. Loneliness was also not found in them because of habit of staying alone due to prolonged migration and they remained busy in handing household affairs. So in actual sense, old age women were enjoying their life in more active way. Changes were noticed in the migrant families that migration of their husbands bring higher standard of living, flow of technological remittances, modern gadgets, big houses, better education of children, even handsome dowry was paid during their daughter's marriage. Moreover women become decision maker and handle all household affairs. Women were taking part in agricultural matters, property issues and also construct their own house with their own wish. It was also noticed that women were taking part in ritual and ceremonies where sometimes male presence is necessary. Now women become active in these areas also. Even shaguns on wedding were also managed by migrant's women. So it is kind of structural change in the family and also a setback to patriarchal norms. Male domination seemed to be totally missing in the old age respondent's category. So the structure of migrant families changes completely with the migration of male. Somehow negative impacts were also recorded such as debt was seen on some families and children's lack of interest in education increases. Children are more attracted towards technological gadgets, and chain of migration in the family increases. In young age respondent's cases, subjugation by family members was seen and no-participation in family matters was recorded. So overall, left behind women from different age category had seen both positive and negative impacts of migration.

Chapter 6 “Is It Any Road to Women Empowerment”, with the help of case studies found that despite that woman had role in decision making power, still they are not empowered in all the cases. The comparison of three age groups of Kamboj women showed that the concept of empowerment in the young age respondent was very less than middle and old age respondents. No doubt, some successful stories of women’s independence were discussed but not all the young age respondents were enjoying freedom. In the young age respondents, only those women had freedom and power in family sphere who are either staying in nuclear families and had control of remittances or they had their own small businesses at household level. It is also noticed that those women who were staying in joint families and their in-laws had control on remittances, in such cases women’s autonomy and concept of empowerment was totally missing. On the other hand, in middle age respondent’s cases women had freedom and independence that also showed growing sign of empowerment but it happens mostly after separation from in-laws. So these women are socially and economically empowered when they are independent. Those middle age women who had control over remittances and also were head of household showed more empowerment. In most of the cases either these women had their own business or if they didn’t then they were playing role of head of the household with their control remittances. Still not in all the cases, women enjoyed complete autonomy and decision making power; somehow their husband’s showed their dominance and control over them. So the concept of empowerment was in growing stage for middle age respondents rather than missing as in young age respondent’s cases. In old age respondent’s cases, it has been recorded that they had complete authority of decision making and also acted as head of the household. Moreover old age respondents had control over remittances of their husbands which showed that they are economically also empowered. It was also recorded that not many old age respondents have their own small businesses at household level because of sufficient flow of remittances and also due to good hold on remittances. As compared to young and middle age respondents, old age respondents enjoyed more freedom and decision making power, moreover no such case was found where women didn’t have any authority at their household level. So the concept of social and economic empowerment was completely found in the old age respondent’s category as compared to young and middle age respondent. No doubt, old age category respondents were in a better situation as compared to young and middle age category women, but it was also found

during field work observation that Kamboj women especially from middle age category and in some cases of young age category, not only empowered themselves because of the remittances being sent by their husbands. They also start doing jobs and open their small businesses by taking loans from any means which are available; in order to have some control over their life and have strong hold in the family arena. It showed that these Kamboj respondents were not completely dependent on remittances. Rather, they took their own stand in their life after they were left alone to take care of themselves and their family after husband's migration. But when the concept of political empowerment or women's participation in village politics was observed then not a single case of Kamboj migrant's women case was found. It showed the women's negligible role in village Panchayat and community participation. Women's role and independence was a controlled one, which is only covered in the sphere of household. They don't have a role at community level. It showed that all age categories of women had partial empowerment at social and economic front but in political front they can only give vote but cannot stand in election. Thus the women were still in the backstage both at household and community level. They were over shadowed by their male counterparts. Women were not allowed to take their independent decisions for their position and also had obligation to keep their tradition well maintained. So overall, it shows that women were empowered to take their own decisions but their participation is still restricted based on the stage in the society, in which they want to have a role, making it a controlled empowerment.

Chapter 7 focused on "Perception and Experiences of Women about Migration" After conversation with women through the help of case studies and FGD methods, one thing becomes clear that "Charm of Migration" has effect on Kamboj caste women also. Like men of the community, they also want to migrate to foreign land through any means. For young girls, it is a dream world where they can fulfill their dream of higher standard of living, wearing fashionable clothes and having different life-style. Moreover they want to enjoy freedom and independence that is difficult to attain while staying in villages. Many girls want to migrate individually for higher studies but the main motive behind such migration is to settle down in developed countries permanently. The second way chosen by girls for migration is through marriage alliance with NRI groom. It is another way to migrate permanently

abroad. Through marriage alliances they want that their whole family will be able migrate to abroad. Sometimes girls clear IELTS and try to find a groom that is ready to migrate with her. Another thing was noticed that the charm of “*vilayati paisa*” (remittances), attracts both children and their parents. They believed that after migration to foreign land, they will be able to fetch handsome salary in the developed countries. Even girl’s parents have this notion that higher economic standard can only be enjoyed after migration to developed countries. For such kind of migration, they are ready to spend huge amount that is needed during migration. It is felt that it is a one-time investment which will have huge returns in terms of changing their life style. After that, they will enjoy higher economic standard. Moreover, it has become a way of life that if a girl will migrate with marriage alliance or on educational basis, she will open a door for the whole family for migration. After migration of girl, her whole family will also settle in developed country and it will raise their status in front of village people and relatives. Emphasis is given that after girl’s migration, parents will help their son to migrate to developed country and their son will also settle down. Moreover migration has becomes so commercial that many private agencies are providing coaching for migration with attractive advertisements. Such advertisements have a great influence upon the youths. Migration has becomes a status symbol among the Kamboj caste. Everyone wants to show off their power through money and other luxurious items that are accumulated after migration. Cases were found in Mexican, Bangladeshi, Keralan women cases where their husband and other family member are staying behind and women use migration as a survival strategy for their whole family. The noticeable feature was that female migration to overseas do increase favoritism towards their daughters. As found in a study done in Vietnam (2011) country where parents have preference towards their daughter to migrate, as their status increases in marriage market because of migration of daughters. But such evidences were not found in the Punjab. Even many studies noticed that migration of daughter gives a setback to patriarchal structure at homeland country but such phenomena was not noticed in the Kamboj families. Rather, after migration of daughter through marriage alliances, they don’t have any significant role to play in their in-laws home. They do not even have individual authority to send remittances to their parents. Migrant girl’s status rather degrades in their in-law’s family than in their

own family. So migration of female in Kamboj caste does not show improvement in status of girl. Rather, they become more like a puppet in the hand of in-laws, acting only as per their wishes. It shows that feminization of migration was not always fruitful for all Kamboj women. For the present study researcher also made an attempt to study on Abandoned Women, i.e. those women who are abandoned by their husbands after their migration. But surprisingly no such case was found for Kamboj caste male migration. The simple reason is that most of the migration in Kamboj caste was to the Gulf regions. Permanent stay in the Gulf nations is not permitted and hence, they are compelled by the laws of the land to compulsorily return back to their home country.

### **8.1 Key Findings of the Study**

It is already mentioned that previous studies that are done on Punjabi migration mainly focus on migration trends and changing status of Punjabi Diaspora in their place of migration and homeland. Yet no documentation was found on left behind women and how migration of male has impact on women who are left behind. So researcher mainly depends upon the field work findings and observation that was done during data collection. KII, Interviews and FGD methods were used to get empirical insight about how male migration impacts those women who are left behind. Moreover Kamboj caste were chosen for study because of their emerging gulf migration, and also they are a dominant caste in Kapurthala villages and still Kamboj caste remained less studied in Punjabi caste migration history (refer chapter 2). So this study first digs out the facts that when migration started in the Kamboj caste and what are the main reasons of the migration in Kamboj caste. The destination countries of migration and moreover how migration become the status symbol in the migrant families. How migration helps to grow Kamboj caste as dominant caste in the migrant villages. Focus was given on how migration in the Kamboj caste has impact on the left behind women. How women cope up without their husband, decision making, responsibilities, mobility, depression and loneliness also discussed. Third chapter also discussed Transnationalism in the migrant families after male migration. Study also discussed road of empowerment in women after their husband's migration. Study also

through light that how male migration has impact on females to be enthusiastic towards migration and aspires to have experiences of such migration.

- It was found that migration in Kamboj caste was not an old phenomenon, most of the migration started after 1947 or during post-colonial period in mid of 20<sup>th</sup> century. During KII (see chapter 2), questions were asked to the respondents about migration in Kambojs and even facts were also collected from different village people about who were the first migrants from their village and where migration took place. Even migrant's houses were visited to dig out the facts about Kamboj migration.
- Kamboj caste migration was divided into three phases based on time of their migration after data collection and facts were collected through KII and FGD's. It was estimated that first phase of migration started around mid-20<sup>th</sup> century after discussion with return migrants. These return migrants were generally from the old age category or in very few cases from the middle age category as well.
- It was estimated that first migration stated in 1970's. The first phase of migrants basically belonged to the peasantry class who had basic education (10<sup>th</sup> or illiterate). Migrants during this phase were mostly unskilled. Their destination was gulf countries and they worked as drivers, watchman, carpenters and masons.
- It was also found that during first phase the migrants used to get a group visa that is called in Punjabi as "*Benami Visa*" (No name on visa)", that is no single name on visa card and it was also called a labourer visa. Only, those people who had money could migrate because agents were required for it. Gulf companies required labourers for their company's work so they told the agents about the required amount of labour. So it was in agent's hand as to whom they wanted to send. So the person who was able to give required the amount of money to the agent, was sent to the Gulf as labour.
- The second phase of migration includes those migrants of Kamboj people, who migrated around late 20<sup>th</sup> century. They were early migrant to the Gulf

countries. Noticeable feature of these migrants was that they were either unskilled or semi-skilled but in majority of cases they were semi-skilled. In the second phase of migration, the Kamboj were mostly literate and knew one or two skills (driving, electrician, mason etc.).

- People who were not well educated were still able to migrate because of already acquired skills (carpenter, masons, service station workers etc.) in their homeland country. Those who had completed twelfth or were graduates even managed to migrate to developed countries especially to Spain, Australia, and England.
- Those who were below thirty five years of age either directly migrated to developed countries such as Spain, Germany or England or as hidden migrants or on the basis of work permit. Some were able to migrate to Gulf countries with the help of family, friends and relatives who were already established migrants there. The most favourable destination of the migrants was the Gulf countries (special consideration was given to Dubai, Qatar, Abu-Dhabi, and Saudi-Arabia) and in case of other developed countries, preference was given to western countries like Canada, Germany, Italy, Spain, and Australia.
- Those who migrated to the Gulf countries especially Dubai, Abu-Dhabi, and Saudi-Arab mostly were semi-skilled migrants. They knew the work of carpentry, electrician, masonry, welding, mechanics and working there in these fields.
- It is to be noted that twice migration was found in both first and second phase of migration in Kamboj caste in the region. Such data was collected after discussions with the return migrants. These migrants first migrated to Dubai as their favourable destination of migration and after spending ten to fifteen years; they changed their migration route to developed countries. The other destination countries were Italy, England, Germany, and Greece. Twice migration was specially found in old and middle age category male but mostly it was found in old age people, who were more than forty five years old.

Destination countries in first phase were mostly Dubai, lower Qatar, Malaysia, Greece and Germany.

- Old age people and Middle age people's migration to the developed countries was generally through illegal or hidden means as these people are generally from agriculture background. They did not have enough skills to migrate and earlier they migrated to Gulf countries on labour Visa. They worked as gardeners, or in restaurants as cooks and some of them worked in service stations. They could not make holiday visits to their home land country. Such type of migration was found to be made to England, Germany and in some cases U.S.A as well.
- The third phase of migration included those who started migrating in 21<sup>st</sup> century. These were generally young Kamboj children who had recently passed their higher secondary education or in some cases graduation also. They were eager to migrate to developed countries for higher education or for better employment opportunities. After watching the migration of their fathers, siblings, relatives and people in the neighbourhood, they were also influenced to migrate.
- The migration aspired children who belonged to the (18 to 25 age) age group. They were ready to migrate to developed countries especially England, New Zealand, Germany, Spain, Canada and Australia. No doubt migration to the Gulf countries was also found in this age group but it was very less in numbers. The elders were already in Gulf countries and their children knew the situation and opportunities available there. So their children did not prefer these destinations (Gulf countries) as they were not as lucrative as they used to be. They wanted to migrate on permanent basis to developed countries and settle down there. Moreover many IELTS coaching centres were also found in Kapurthala city, where these children took coaching class after the completion of higher secondary. Majorly students aspired to migrate to New Zealand, Canada or Australia on study basis.

- Economic factor is the biggest cause of Kamboj caste migration. Because Kambojs are marginal farmers, they do not have huge land holdings, at the maximum, what they have is ten acres of land. This amount of land is not common in all the Kamboj caste people; very few people enjoy such huge land holdings. Another thing was noticed that migration for betterment of future was done. Kamboj caste knew other set of skills as well, such as the work of electrician, mason, driver, smith, and welder; they were not able to fetch better income in Punjab. So after migration to the Gulf countries, they were able to earn handsome salary which was not possible in Punjab.
- The charm of “*Vilayati Paisa*” (remittances) always influenced people; the charm of a big house, luxurious lifestyle, good standard of living, social status always mattered to the people and became a cause of migration.
- Another reason for migration was “**culture of migration**”. Many results showed that a major reason for migration was that a majority of people in the village had migrated. Relatives and close family members too had migrated. All this influenced the thought process of those who had stayed behind. Such a culture of migration influenced those who were in early age and eager to migrate.
- Massey et al. (1993) also emphasized this point that “**culture of migration**” always remained a huge cause of migration from developing countries to developed countries. The main reason of such migration is to uplift the social and economic standard of living.
- “**Pure altruism**<sup>383</sup>” that is based upon the concept of welfare of the family members always works strongly. Another reason of migration in Kambojs is that the amount spent on migration is just around 1,00,000 to 2,00,000 Rupees and the earning’s received on monthly basis after migration can help them to raise their family status making it a fruitful investment.
- Noticeable fact was that the present study was conducted only in those villages where Kamboj caste was in majority and enjoyed the dominant position. The

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<sup>383</sup> Many researchers suggested that altruism ensure enforcement of implicit contracts between the migrant and household units specially the remittances- receivers (Stark and Lucas, 1998; Sana and Massey, 2005).

reason was not only their high numbers but also because of the qualities attached to them which led them to become ruling caste of the villages. Migration made changes in the existing Kamboj caste because they were able to fetch handsome remittances.

- With money in flow they were able to buy more land in the adjoining villages and were also able to construct large houses. Political status also changed as most of the villages Sarpanchs belonged to the Kamboj caste and most of them were return-migrants from the Gulfs and some other countries.
- Such kind of changes at the micro-level in Kapurthala villages changed caste hierarchy. According to Ibbetson, 2008, Kamboj constituted the lower stratum of dominant agricultural caste of their region but now they are in dominant position economically, politically and socially<sup>384</sup>.
- Changes have been recorded in the study that after their international migration, with the flow of wealth or remittances, economically they became powerful in the villages of Kapurthala. They are called as *Zamindar* (landlords) by lower castes in their respective villages. Study of the villages Rampur Jagir, Thea, Boolpur, Habitpur, Nassirpur, Parvez Nagar, Dograwal, Nawapind, and Dewlanwal showed that in all the places Sarpanch belonged to the Kamboj caste and the highest land concentration was among the Kamboj caste.
- They tried to maintain their status and standard of living. Big houses to show off wealth became a fashion in the Kapurthala villages. New changes that were visible included hiring labour for agricultural land work. Labour workers called Kambojs as *Zamindars* of the villages.
- The new emerging Kamboj caste creates new transition in its own caste and other castes. Lower castes showed their resentment against the Kamboj being in the majority and their powerful growth at the village level. On the other hand Kamboj staying in the non-migrant families have resentment against migrant families who show superiority in the village. The migrated people showed the power of wealth and higher standard of living by constructing

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<sup>384</sup> See also in Ibbetson Denzil, 1916 Punjab castes, the Superintendent, Government Printing Punjab, Lahore.

huge houses in the village. Such new transitions have been recognized at the village level especially in Kapurthala's villages.

- According to Singh (2003) marriages among all the Kamboj caste are done by mutual negotiations among the near kinsman. A Kamboj marriage is generally monogamous in nature. Dowry is given by the well-to-do families only. Groom's family offers “*vari*” (clothes and ornaments) to the bride, while the bride's family offers “*daj*” (clothes, utensils, ornaments and furniture, etc and also called Dowry) to the groom.
- Data was collected from 48 women in three age category (18 to 35 young age, above 35+ to 45 middle age and above 45+ old age) to see the changes in all age groups marriage with the passage of time and generational changes. It was noticed that during old age, expenditure on marriage ceremonies was very less and dowry was also given throughout the three phases. But with the change of time, expenditure and dowry also increased. In the young age respondent's time, expenditure reached up to 10 lakh and dowry included luxurious goods.
- Choice of husband and decision to choose the groom were also discussed. It was found that during old and middle age respondent's time, parents and middle man had strong hold on mate selection. In the young respondent's time no doubt parents' choice related to grooms was still strong but women had right to show her desire.
- One of the new trends in middle and young age category recorded was that during engagement women can see her fiancé's photograph and all engagement rituals were done with the photograph. Highest numbers of such cases were recorded in young respondent's category.
- Moreover after marriage it was recorded that most of the women stayed initial two to five months with their husband's family. Later on their husbands came back from time to time during their holiday visits to their home land countries after their successive years of migration.
- There was no visit by women to their husbands' destination country especially in middle age respondent's category. 2 respondents each in young and old age respondent's category paid visit to their husband's destination country.

- In all the respondent's cases, young age women had majority of joint families than in middle and old age women. There were changes in social-economic status of the left behind families. It was observed that all age categories of women had basic facilities at household level. It showed that migration of their husbands did not have a negative impact on their economic life in all cases.
- In some cases women enjoyed luxurious life-style especially in the old age category, few cases of middle and young age respondent's women also. Migration becomes fruitful for left behind families because of flow of remittances. Major share of the remittances was used on Household consumption in all the migrant families, and highest remittances were spent in the old age category. Second highest use of remittances was on education of children, in which middle age women had highest expenses. The third area was wedding and shaguns expenses in which old age women had more use of their income than other two age category of women. The fourth area where remittances were used was in payment of debts in which again old age women had more expenses than other two age category.
- In the old age respondent's category, most of debts were due to their children's marriage, migration and sometimes due to construction of big houses. Expenses on health services, and purchase of clothes, renovation of house did not show much difference in all the age categories. But highest such expenses were found in old age category, then in middle age category and lastly in young age category. In case of savings, higher savings were found in old age and young age category than in middle age category.
- Data revealed that old and middle age respondents were head of household in left behind families after their husband's migration and also handling all the remittances. On the other hand young age respondent didn't have such control and they were not head of the household in majority of cases because they were staying in joint families where other family members also played the role of head of the household and had control over remittances.
- So in many cases of young age respondents, they were not found to have freedom to spend as per their wish and they need to mostly consult with other family members or their husband before buying anything for household. In

decision making process, old age respondents were taking both major and minor decisions of the household, somehow middle age respondents in some cases were also becoming active in major and minor decisions. But in young age respondent's case, hold on minor decision was there but major decisions were mostly taken by father-in-law, brother-in-law and their husbands. Even sometimes, in minor household decisions, young age respondent didn't have any role to play. So, most of the young age women were found to have really less role in major decision making of the household as compared to middle and old age women.

- In cases of responsibilities, all the age category women share all the responsibilities of the household. They are taking care of all the household chores, children and even overall responsibilities of the household are on them.
- In relation to mobility of women outside their household, it was noticed that old age respondents didn't have any restrictions on them, they have freedom to go anywhere and they also need not tell anyone. In the middle age respondent's cases, they have freedom of mobility, in very few cases they need to tell their husbands. But in the young age respondent's cases, women's mobility is restricted by their husbands and in-laws. They can't go outside alone and most of the time they need to take permission to go outside.
- It was noticed that women take active participation in the agricultural matters, land or property purchase and also use their rational mind to take decisions in family sphere. To govern their household they took their decision more sincerely and also discussed all matters with their husbands. Children's education, shaguns to relatives, household grocery, and all expenses were paid and purchased by women themselves, they took decision towards their land, construction of home and also marriage decisions of their children too. Women's visits to official places, banks, passport office, post office and their children school too.
- Women maintain daily diary to maintain their household budgets and also to show their husbands about household expenses, so that their husband can't

blame them later. Even most of the time during conversations on phone with their husbands, women mostly discussed their family matters and also tell them about the decisions taken by them. It was also found that in many cases, husbands showed no interest on family decision and women take their own decisions. Women also become much more active after their husband's migration as they open their small household business.

- Migration of husband had a negative impact also as social-psychological problems were faced by migrant's women. Women suffered with problems at children front that their children sometimes misbehaved and disobeyed them. Such cases were mostly in middle and young age category but stubbornness was found to be highest in old age respondent's category children. Many children have lack of interest in education especially in young and middle age respondents and dropout rates were high in old age respondent's children. Some children face emotional sickness due to their father's absence especially in young age respondents. No doubt positive outcome on children's life are also observed that they were getting best education facilities, good life-style and are also able to migrate to developed countries when they grow up.
- It was recorded that highest cases of depression and loneliness were found in the young age respondent's cases because due to migration, very small time was spent by these respondents with their husbands and they were under subjugation by their in-laws. Young women have burden of children's upbringing and no one is available to help them. In some cases, even their husbands also try to subjugate them. Strict control was present over their mobility which also leads to depression and loneliness in the young age respondents. Somehow second highest cases of depression were found in middle age respondents. Reason behind that was overburden of household responsibilities, future worries and children's upbringing puts further stress. But somehow loneliness was not more in middle age respondents as they get used to the situation in the family and take up responsibilities proactively. In the old age respondent's cases, very few cases of depression and loneliness were found, as due to prolonged migration and women become used to

handling household tensions. Rather, these women are head of the household and actual decision maker; no one is over and above to control them. Moreover they don't have future worries because of handsome flow of remittances and children were also well-settled. Loneliness was also not found in them because of habit of staying alone due to prolong migration and they remained busy in handing household affairs. So in actual sense, old age women were enjoying their life in more active way.

- Changes were noticed in the migrant families that migration of their husbands bring higher standard of living, flow of technological remittances, modern gadgets, big houses, better education of children, even handsome dowry was paid during their daughter's marriage.
- It is also noticed that women were taking part in ritual and ceremonies where sometimes male presence is necessary. Now women become active in these areas also. Even shaguns on wedding were also managed by migrant's women. So it is kind of structural change in the family and also a setback to patriarchal norms. Even male domination was totally missing in the old age respondent's category. So the structure of migrant families changes completely with the migration of male members.
- Somehow negative impact was recorded that debt was seen on some families and children's lack of interest in education increases. Children are more attracted towards technological gadgets, and chain of migration in the family increases. In young age respondent's cases, subjugation by family members was seen and no-participation in family matters was recorded.
- The comparison of three age groups of Kamboj women showed that the concept of empowerment in the young age respondent was very less than in middle and old age respondent. No doubt some successful stories of women's independence were discussed but not all the young age respondents were enjoying freedom. In the young age respondents only those women had freedom and power in family sphere who are either staying in nuclear families and had control of remittances or they had their own small businesses at household level. It is also noticed that those women who were staying in joint

families and their in-laws had control on remittances, in such cases women's autonomy and concept of empowerment was totally missing.

- In old age respondent's cases it has been recorded that they had complete authority of decision making and also acted as head of the household. Moreover old age respondents had control over remittances of their husbands which showed that they are economically also empowered. It was also recorded that not many old age respondents have their own small business at household level because of sufficient flow of remittances and also due to good hold on remittances. As compared to young and middle age respondents, old age respondent enjoyed more freedom and decision making power, moreover no such cases were found where old age women didn't have any authority at their household level.
- So the concept of social and economic empowerment was completely found in the old age respondent's category as compared to young and middle age respondent.
- But when the concept of political empowerment or women's participation in village politics was observed then not a single case of Kamboj migrant's women was found. It showed the women's negligible role in village Panchayat and community participation.
- "Charm of Migration" still has effect on Kamboj caste women. Like men of the community, they also want to migrate to foreign land through any means. For young girls it is a dream world where they can fulfil their dream of higher standard of living, wearing fashionable clothes and having different life-style.
- Marriage as way for migration in Kamboj girls is most prevalent.

**8.2 Significance of the Study:** The study revealed the migration pattern of the particular caste and also sheds light on the Gulf migration from Punjab that is one of the untouched areas of study by earlier researchers. Reason behind migration is not only the push and pull factor, NELM theory also provided a significant explanation which emphasizes that migration took place for family welfare and decision of migration is collective decision of family. Moreover this study also gives emphasizes chain migration and culture of migration theory to understand migration pattern in

Punjab. Network and transnational theory are also used to understand how migration brings changes in the left behind families and how people live in transnational families. Study is also important to understand migration of a particular caste that is OBC caste which is one of the less studied areas. It is an up gradation in Punjabi migration history.

Second major area of study was how migration of particular caste took place from Punjab, and how such migration impacted the left behind women. This area is not studied much in the Punjabi migration history. So, this study undoes the gender bias and helps the researcher to understand, how migration made an impact on the women that are in left behind families. Area such as changing roles of women in family sphere, sharing of responsibilities, decision making are discussed. It discusses about women in different age groups who become head of the household after husband's migration. It also discusses how such changes in roles lead to women empowerment. Loneliness and depression in women after male migration was also understood. Women's changing status in the left behind families and using migration as a survival strategy for them is studied. This study also sheds light on how male migration influenced the left behind women to also start taking part in migration process that is called as Feminization of migration. Various related aspects of migrant family were also studied such as how belonging to migrant family becomes a status symbol for the left behind families and more and more money was being invested in construction of big houses to maintain luxury life style. So, overall this study touches various facets in relation to migration of a particular caste in Punjab and gives an in-depth analysis of the impact of migration on the left behind women.

### **8.3 Limitation of the Study:**

- The Study specially deals with the impact of migration on Kamboj caste left behind women which forms very small part of the Punjabi society.
- Due to limited resources and time-span of the study, researcher had to depend only on field work data to do the analysis and determine various findings. So this is a small study done with 48 Kamboj caste respondents which is a largely qualitative in nature.

- This research could have been done on large scale using longitudinal or survey method to get a wider glance on the research area. Even though the research is focused more on Kapurthala district, if large scale survey method was used, then comparative study among two or three more districts could have been carried out.
- Since the present study was carried out by doing case studies and analysing narratives from the respondents after field work, it was a very time consuming process to represent the findings from the research.

#### **8.4 Suggestions for Future Research:**

- Research on migrants can be done as a comparison of various castes in the region so as to understand the overall trends of migration.
- Studies can also be done on impact of migration on women in migrant families from different castes in the region.
- Through survey method, impact of migration on women in different age groups can be studied to get a wider view.
- Comparison of migrant and non-migrant families can be done in order to see whether women from migrant families get empowered after migration or they are still restrained in comparison to women in non-migrant families.
- Comparison of behaviour of children and their priorities for future can be done between migrant and non-migrant families.