










# Interpersonal Relationships in Migrant Worker Families: An Integrated Psychological, Legal, and Pedagogical Model

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**ABSTRACT:** Parental labor migration affects the socio-psychological development of children in a holistic sense emphasizing emotional, social adjustment and stability of the family unit. The precise effects of parental absence on psychological outcomes have received little attention in Uzbekistan despite the existence of community mechanisms like the mahalla system. This study explores the socio-psychological effects of parental labor migration on school-age children and seeks to shed light on the effectiveness of institutionalized support programs. A cross-sectional mixed-methods design was used, involving 150 children (95 from high-migration regional areas and 55 from Tashkent). Quantitative data were collected using René-Gilles test on emotional and social adaptation, while qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with children and families and expert questionnaires for professionals. There is a heightened emotional-social inadaptation among children of migrants, with 60% classified as moderate-to-high emotional risk. Institutional support was varying between regions, and it did not include rural areas in most cases. Qualitative data suggested inadequacies with family reintegration efforts and erratic professional intervention efforts. Findings underscore the need for structured socio-psychological support programs tailored to children affected by parental migration. There is proposed a scalable model that combines diagnostic assessment, targeted family interventions, and institutional reintegration programs to monitor the well-being of children on a systemic level, as well as to enhance family support systems in urban and regional settings.

**Keywords:** safe-makhalla, distant family, labor migration, self-government body, “René-Gilles” methods.

## I. INTRODUCTION

This is not only by protecting against the traditional threats to public safety but also against contemporary risks such as cyber fraud, digital scams, and cybercrime, or risks associated with rapid globalization and migration which have cultural and social consequences. In recent decades, international labor migration has

become an important socio-economic phenomenon that affects families, children, and communities in significant ways. To guide this study, key constructs are operationalized, as follows; (i) Safe-makhalla / Safe neighborhood: Local community networks (mahalla) that offer social, educational and safety support for children and families. It is operationalized by indicators of community cohesion, supervision programs, and child protection initiatives. (ii) Distant family/ parental absence: Families in which one or both parents have long-term labor migration, as measured by length of absence and communication. (iii) Safe childhood: Ensuring children's security, social adaptability, and the absence of socio-psychological threats, assessed through the René-Gilles test alongside qualitative evaluations of parent-child and child-child familial interactions.

The Bronfenbrenner's Theory of Social Ecology examines the interaction between the individual, family systems, community, and the social environment, while the Family Systems Theory evaluates the implications of parental absence on the overall functioning of the family, and the Attachment Theory interprets the significance of parental presence in emotional regulation and the well-being of children, and collectively these form a theoretical framework for describing how labor migration, family stability, and community correlate with child outcomes.

Despite various research efforts regarding labor migration and its socio-economic effects, there exist certain gaps when it comes to integrated concept of 'safe neighborhood's in Central Asia, more specifically Uzbekistan, where a mahalla system is in place but its exact mechanisms regarding safeguarding children safe in regard to parental migration remain uncertain. Despite the existence of the mahalla system, there is no precise knowledge regarding the influence of its social and educational mechanisms on the emotional and social well-being of children living in families affected by parental labor migration.

- Conceptualize "safe neighborhood" in socio-ecological perspective.
- Analyze socio-psychological consequences of labor migration on children and families.
- Suggest a scalable model of community safety in the migration context.
- Research questions of this work are presented as the following:
  - What is the impact of parental labor migration on the emotional health and social adjustment of children?
  - What are the institutional and family-based support mechanisms in place?
  - Are there any differences in effectiveness of support between urban and regional areas?
  - How can a scalable model of socio-psychological support be designed for migrant families?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. CONCEPTUALIZING SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS AND FAMILY STABILITY

The concept of a "safe neighborhood" extends beyond the absence of crime and encompasses a multidimensional framework that includes physical safety, social cohesion, psychological well-being, and institutional support. A safe neighborhood can be defined as an environment in which individuals and families are protected from both direct and indirect risks, including social disorganization, economic instability, and cultural disintegration. Within this framework, the notions of "safe family" and "safe childhood" are central. A safe family is characterized by stable relationships, effective communication, and the fulfillment of emotional and material needs. A safe childhood refers to conditions in which children are protected from harm, have access to education and healthcare, and develop within a supportive and nurturing environment. These dimensions are interdependent and collectively contribute to broader community safety [3, 4].

### 2. GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES ON LABOR MIGRATION AND FAMILY OUTCOMES

Labor migration is a global phenomenon affecting millions of families worldwide. According to international estimates, a significant proportion of migrants are of working age, and nearly half are women, highlighting the gendered dimensions of migration. While migration can improve household income and living standards, it often leads to prolonged family separation and changes in family roles [5]. Studies from countries such as the Philippines, Denmark, the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and China demonstrate diverse policy approaches to managing migration and supporting migrant families. For instance, integration

centers in Denmark provide comprehensive services including employment support and childcare, while foster care systems in the United Kingdom aim to maintain continuity in children's social environments. Conversely, research from China and New Zealand highlights the negative consequences of parental absence, including emotional distress, reduced educational outcomes, and weakened family cohesion [6].

### 3. SOCIO-PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT ON CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

A growing body of research indicates that children left behind by migrant parents face increased risks of psychological distress, behavioral problems, and social maladjustment. Disruptions in parent-child relationships can lead to weakened emotional bonds, reduced supervision, and increased exposure to harmful influences. Empirical studies have shown that prolonged parental absence is associated with anxiety, depression, and decreased academic performance among children. Additionally, the reconfiguration of family roles where caregiving responsibilities are transferred to extended family members can result in inconsistent parenting practices and reduced emotional support [3]. From the perspective of Attachment Theory, the absence of primary caregivers during critical developmental periods can negatively affect children's emotional regulation and social competence. Similarly, the Family Systems Theory suggests that changes in family structure disrupt the balance of roles and relationships, potentially leading to conflict and instability [7].

### 4. CENTRAL ASIAN CONTEXT AND RESEARCH GAP

In Central Asian countries, including Uzbekistan, labor migration has become a widespread socio-economic strategy. Despite policy efforts aimed at supporting migrants and their families, significant challenges remain in ensuring the well-being of children and maintaining family stability. Existing research in the region has primarily focused on economic outcomes and migration flows, with limited attention to the socio-psychological and community-level implications. In particular, there is a lack of integrated frameworks that connect migration, family dynamics, and neighborhood safety. This gap highlights the need for a comprehensive approach that combines theoretical insights with empirical analysis to better understand and address the challenges faced by migration-affected communities in the region [8, 9].

#### 4.1 main gaps

In our opinion, we can say that a "safe neighborhood" is a neighborhood where there are no obvious dangers for each of its members. This includes not only obvious risks, but also involuntary risks that do not depend on the will of a citizen of a given micro district. It is known that even in the most protected place there can be a danger to life. Therefore, we must imagine neighborhoods where these risks can be reduced to a minimum level, that is, all opportunities in a given location are aimed at maximizing risk reduction.

Within the framework of the concept of "safe neighborhood," in addition to the characteristics of the environment, health, distance from danger, threats, we must first of all pay special attention to such important factors as "safe family," "safe neighborhood", and "safe childhood". It is on the basis of well-being and peace in the family, the peace and tranquility of children and the satisfaction of all their basic needs that we can build a neighborhood and a society in which there will be crime, rape, coercion, war, conflict. , disputes do not happen or very much can happen. rarely. As we know from research and statistics, one of the main reasons is that deviant, disorganized youth grow up in more incompetent and dysfunctional families.

Thus, "safe childhood" is a set of preventive measures for children and adults to foster a culture of safe behavior in children. Children need to understand what dangers and threats exist in their environment and know the rules of safe behavior. It is important for parents to understand the level of responsibility for the safety of their children. Therefore, it is necessary to emphasize the responsibility of parents, neighbors and educational institutions for the preservation and promotion of our national values with a long history, to prevent them from being exposed to various threats, harmful trends, "mass culture" through the spiritual and educational education of the younger generation. It is sad that children are left without parental control and parental care, as well as social networks, which are one of the main reasons for poisoning the consciousness of young people with various harmful trends, "mass culture". A striking example of this is the situation when parents leave their children in their own country in search of income. There are two factors

in this - such negative situations as the invasion of foreign customs and culture into our environment and families, penetration into the education of our children, as well as the failure of parents to fully fulfill their responsibilities in raising children left without help. parental control and problems in the relationship between husband and wife.

### *3.2 comparative perspectives across developed contexts*

We received some information from foreign experience in helping to solve the problems of migrants and their families. At the international level, the countries receiving migrants are the United States, European countries, Latin America, Southeast Asian countries, South African countries, Israel, and almost 70 percent of the labor needs in these countries are met by migrants. The largest share in the list of labor supplying countries in the global labor market is occupied by India, Pakistan, Algeria, Mexico, Ireland, Turkey and the CIS countries.

It is noteworthy that 48% of the total share of migrants are women, and 38 million children are active participants in this process [3]. There are 4.4 million migrants in total. 164 million are labor migrants. 75% of migrants are people of working age (20-64 years), who spend their physical and mental energy on the economy of the country to which they moved. By continent, the share of migrants in the structure of the permanent population is 31% in Asia, 30% in Europe, 26% in North and South America, and 10% in Africa. In Oceania 3% [4].

Through the efforts of international organizations, the principle of "fair migration" is used in the regulation and management of modern migration processes. This principle was developed by the International Labor Organization in 2014, according to which the main issue in the modern migration flow has become the issue of strict adherence to the principles of fairness in the treatment of migrants [5]. According to the program developed on the basis of this principle, respect for human rights and social protection of migrant workers, creating suitable conditions for them to work and live, was identified as a priority task. After all, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said: "Safe, orderly and formal migration is consistent with universal principles. In migration processes, national issues find their effective solution in international cooperation" [6].

#### *a. Philippines*

The main goal of migration policy is the export of national labor. 10 million out of 100 million people are permanent labor migrants. 60 percent of them are women who work as teachers, housekeepers and hotel staff. There are over 60 temporary employment agreements in place for Filipino citizens, 50 of which are government-to-government agreements. An important priority of this country's emigration policy is the advance preparation of labor migrants and provision of legal protection for citizens traveling to work in other countries.

#### *b. Denmark [4]*

The Ministry of Immigration and Integration deals centrally with migrants. Firstly, in Denmark there is a widespread practice of multifunctional integration centers providing advice on employment, social support, child care and cultural programs. Secondly, these centers and other organizations do not cover all migrants, but work with a specific target audience. Third, integration practices promote networking, that is, the creation of local communities of professionals working with migrants. Organizations that bring together migrant women are widespread, with meetings such as "Akli Dushanba" discussing issues such as employment, health care, women's rights and discrimination.

#### *c. Great Britain*

Any person permanently residing in the country can become a participant in the foster family program. It is not necessary to have a strong family and successful experience in raising children: guardians can be married or unmarried couples, as well as single people. There are also no age restrictions: the program involves young people aged 18-25 years and people over 65 years old. About 37 percent of children live under the care of relatives. Foster care differs from ordinary adoption in our country primarily in legal terms:

the child's parents are not deprived of parental rights and family ties are not severed. Whenever possible, children stay in the city and area where their loved ones live to maintain contact with them [4].

#### *d. New Zealand*

New Zealand has observed a negative impact of external labor migration on family relationships: a negative impact on the education, health and social status of relatives or children left in someone else's family in their own country; Labor migration also has a negative impact on marital relationships. In the family of 76.5% of labor migrants, the long absence of a spouse increased the risk of divorce. 66.9% The psychological climate in the families of many migrants is unsatisfactory due to the instability of the situation. 5% of migrants said that they personally had a bad relationship with their spouse. 82.4% of older people whose adult children work abroad said they would be left without the necessary support, care and maintenance.[7]

#### *e. China*

In China due to rapid urbanization, the number of migrant workers is increasing. The number of Chinese migrant workers could reach 307 million in 2025 and 327 million in 2030 [8, 9]. Large-scale population migration has become a noticeable social phenomenon. Constrained by institutional and economic factors, migrant workers find it difficult to bring their children to the cities where they work, leaving a large group of children in rural China. According to China's Ministry of Civil Affairs, there are 6.97 million minors whose parents both went to the city to work, or one of the parents went to the city to work and the other did not have custody. Children abandoned in Chinese villages [9].

As it turned out, the children left in the village are in many ways at a disadvantage. After parents moved to the cities, family members became smaller, their roles changed, children left at home had to be separated from their parents, and they could not communicate with their parents as before, which can affect parent-child relationships and family functions. In particular, long-distance migration of parents, disruption of family structure, and weakening of family functions can put the remaining children at a disadvantage and jeopardize their mental health [10].

According to the results of V.V. Gritsenko, M.N. Efremenkova, N.V. Murashchenkova, T.N. Smotrova's research, the forced separation of spouses as a result of labor migration can become a kind of catalyst for the system of marriage relations that has developed in the family: in this case, the forced separation strengthens families or destroys families, who are on the verge of divorce. As a result of labor migration, the spouse (less often the wife) is forced to leave the family for a long period (one or two years or more) in order to earn enough money. For this reason, families in which spouses are forced to separate can be classified as distant families [11-13].

Researchers Ilene Hyman [14], Sepali Guruge [15], and others [16] conducted a case study of the impact of migration on marital relationships in the example of Ethiopian immigrants in Toronto. Little research has examined the impact of migration on marital relationships or the adaptation processes of immigrant couples to new circumstances. A research project involving newly arrived Ethiopians living in Toronto who are married, divorced, or separated, aims to examine post-migration changes in the lives of newly arrived couples and the impact of post-migration changes on marital relationships. The study included 25 participants, all of whom were Ethiopian migrants in Toronto. Both individual and focus group interviews were conducted. The main types of post-migration changes described by study participants were loss of household support, emotional support, changes in income and status, and changes in gender roles. The impact of these changes on marital relationships has been described as increased marital conflict, increased women's autonomy, increased interdependence, more shared decision making, and changes in communication and intimacy [17]. Researchers have also suggested that positive and negative changes in couples' relationships after migration may inform organizations to develop violence prevention strategies for newly arrived couples and communities [18].

According to Mattila, in modern times a new type of family has appeared - "temporarily separated" or "distant families". Such families have become commonplace in recent years and are becoming an alternative family form. In his opinion, a distant family- is a family in which one of the parents leaves for a long time to work in another city or country in order to improve the family's conditions. Communication between parents

in extended families and their children is inconsistent, which affects the development of a teenager's personal sphere and the formation of a sphere of self-awareness [18-20].

The fact that children are not raised in a two-parent family, leaving them to other relatives, can lead to their inability to acquire family skills important for social integration, manage their emotions and form interpersonal relationships. Neglect from parents and close relatives can lead to the development of behavioral disorders, in particular deviant behavior.

*f. Working conditions and hazards.*

Many migrant women may face unfavorable conditions in the workplace. The main negative factors include: unfavorable working conditions in the open air or associated with certain means of production, night work, lack of rest and lunch breaks, heavy lifting, lack of sanitary conditions. In addition, most employers do not want to bear the costs of migrant workers when they become sick or injured [21].

Many families do not have access to social assistance and benefits for low-income families due to a lack of information and difficulties in justifying the need and right to such assistance. It has not been confirmed whether cash transfers are sufficient or insufficient to fully meet the needs of families, especially the psychological well-being of children. Due to the migration of parents, children left unattended may suffer from the consequences of family breakdown, lack of proper care, and may fall under the influence of various harmful trends due to lack of supervision. This can especially affect the psychological and emotional health of children. At the same time, it is necessary to draw the attention of public activists to the fact that various social, everyday and psychological difficulties may arise due to the fact that adult men in the family (father, brothers) go abroad, and women and their young children are left alone in the family. The increase in the scale of migration processes puts forward the requirement to further strengthen the protection of the interests of migrants and members of their families.

According to the first quarter of 2021, the number of permanent residents of the Republic of Uzbekistan is 34,695,553 people, and the average number of people who went abroad to work in 2018 was 1,209.4 thousand people, and in 2019 – 2,365.3 thousand people, in 2020 during the pandemic [1]. Considering that even after the easing of quarantine restrictions, 1 million 800 thousand people left our country, it is known that the rate of citizens leaving to work abroad is increasing sharply. The volume of cross-border remittances from individuals to Uzbekistan is undoubtedly an important resource that improves the standard of living of the population and contributes to the growth of the country's economic condition [22].

As part of large-scale reforms in the field of public administration and the development of international cooperation in Uzbekistan, the attitude towards migration issues has radically changed. For citizens who have gone to work abroad (including those who find themselves in difficult situations), the relevant departments and departments take measures such as comprehensive support, protection of their rights, and the creation of decent working conditions. In particular, self-government of citizens in the system of social support and reintegration of labor migrants in order to ensure the implementation of the decision of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan dated September 15, 2020 "On measures to introduce a system of safe, orderly and legal labor migration" DP-4829 [19, 23], the role and role of the authorities' activities is increasing. According to this decision, heads of district and city industries, chairmen of citizens' assemblies and labor inspectors regularly receive information from family members of citizens who have gone to work abroad, identify problems and needs and provide practical assistance in solving them, as well as improve their financial and social situation, provide them with the necessary medical care, provide patronage services, provide housing on the basis of mortgage loans, resolve issues of education for their children, and help ensure the employment of their able-bodied members [24, 25].

However, despite this, due to the lack of stability in the provision of services, there are still family members who went abroad to work and who need government support. This causes an increase in the number of citizens planning to travel abroad among other family members. Labor migration is a factor that has a direct impact on the development of socio-psychological problems in society and the family.

Labor migration although it provides citizens with the freedom of self-employment, also causes a number of problems and difficulties. People who cannot find work at their place of residence or do not have a stable source of income that allows them to fully cover their living needs are especially forced to travel abroad in

search of work. This can cause the following losses in the family system in the various relationships that make it up:

- disturbances in the system of family relations: disruption of live communication between the older generation and the younger generation, functional disturbances in the relationship of the couple; mistrust, divorce, betrayal;
- problems in parent-child relationships. This, in turn, causes problems in the child's personality, emotional-volitional sphere, characteristics of interpersonal relationships, the reputation of parents and other similar relationships;
- children left without the control of their parents or one of them experience various changes in the personality structure: awareness of their own sphere of belonging, disruption of the formation of emotional ties with relatives, changes in the daily routine and responsibilities of children when parental functions are transferred to the eldest child in the family, fading educational interests etc.
- In a family, the presence of both parents, especially the mother's labor migration, the psychological distress of her children, isolation, isolation, and social similarity of behavior have negative indicators.
- In particular, according to the results of research and analysis conducted by the Mahalla va Oila Research Institute, aimed at studying the impact of labor migration on family stability in our republic, a number of pressing problems and shortcomings still need to be resolved. In this direction. First of all, there is a negative impact of external labor migration on family relationships, including:
- negative impact on the education, health and social status of children of labor migrants who remained in their own country with relatives or in someone else's family;
- a crisis in the institution of the family, including an increase in the number of people who are unable to get married (especially women), an increase in the number of divorces (real and fictitious), and second families (second marriages with women of the host country). a country).
- 76.5% of labor migrants decided to get a divorce due to the long absence of their spouse from the family. 66.9% The psychological climate in the families of many migrants is unsatisfactory due to the instability of the situation. 5% of migrants said that they personally had a bad relationship with their spouse. And 82.4% of older people whose adult children work abroad said they would be left without the necessary support, care and maintenance.

It should also be noted that during 2020, civil courts considered 302 claims related to divorce due to labor migration. In global experience, innovative methods of working with children and families, such as mediation programs for reconciliation with the participation of mediators, group family conferences, are effectively used by the local community to solve family problems, prevent disputes, and ensure the rights and interests of children.

The optimal condition for the growth and development of a child is a reliable family in which he feels protected. 62.6 percent of migrant parents are fathers, 9.6 percent are mothers, and 24.9 percent are both parents. In 45% of migrant families, at least two children remained in the country of origin, and 37% remained with the father or other relatives [5], this negatively affects children's relationships with parents and their socialization processes:

- family members, especially mothers, leave their children and migrate, often before the age of 6, during an important period of their development. Parents, leaving their children, often do not take measures to establish guardians or trustees for them in the manner prescribed by law. Some of them try to solve the problem by sending the child to a state educational institution, such as an Orphanage or a House of Mercy:
- about 45% of those caring for children had at least two children, 29% had three or more children, 27% had one child. The largest percentage of caregivers of street children were women, of whom 61% were mothers, 29% were grandmothers, 2% were fathers, and 8% were other relatives.

As of 2021, the number of children of labor migrants or relatives raised in completely state institutions away from the family is 935 people, of which 75 have both parents being labor migrants. Of these, about 46.0% are in Samarkand (17.8%), Khorezm (14.7%), Fergana (13.3%) regions. Including 158 children in 17 Houses of Mercy and 4 Children's Towns, 20 children in 3 SOS Children's villages, 757 children in special boarding schools, which clearly shows the impact of labor migration on children's education. For many years, children are forced to grow up away from their family environment, without feeling the love and care

of their parents. However, Articles 7, 13, 19, 20 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Articles 13, 24 of the Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “On Guarantees of Children’s Rights”, Article 65 of the Family Code of the Republic of Uzbekistan, it is stipulated that a child must live in a family and grow up in an acceptable family environment to develop life skills that cause violations of rights.

The study found that migration of parents can have a negative impact on the emotional state and behavior of children. When both parents, especially the mother, are in labor migration, about 33% of their children feel unhappy and 21% feel anxious. In addition, about 33% of children have increased household responsibilities due to the absence of one or both parents, which affects their mood, physical and psychological health.

Children from such families develop various psychosomatic diseases (chronic diseases of the upper respiratory tract, allergic diseases, nervous and mental disorders, deformities of the body structure, skin diseases, chronic anemia, hyperthyroidism, etc.). In addition, the cooperation, support and responsibility of relevant professionals in monitoring the health of their children who remained in their country while both their parents worked abroad, promptly identifying their diseases and restoring their health were not defined.

It should be noted that the future health of migrant children may be at risk as approximately 14% of children under 1 year of age have not received vaccines, possibly due to lack of awareness among caregivers or lack of access to immunology centres. About 37 percent of children live under the care of relatives. Only 28% of guardians are aware of the existence of social services for children, and only 19% of them receive social assistance from various services [5, 26].

Migration can lead to minors growing up without maternal love and being abused by relatives. Although parents trusted their children to relatives and sent money for their maintenance, the age, individual characteristics of the children, the behavior that developed in the family, the attention and care of adults in the family influenced their socialization in different ways. This may reflect the influence of the following pedagogical and psychological factors:

- physical and psychological violence against a child by family members;
- 12% of children were deprived of benefits during the absence of their parents, 3% were discriminated against as crazy, lazy, etc., 8% were subjected to violence. 7% of children note that physical punishment used by guardians after their parents’ trip creates various risks for their physical and mental health;
- what the child does during the day, not under control, etc.

The following pedagogical and psychological factors can be identified that negatively affect parent-child relationships:

- leaving the child to other family members from an early age;
- disagreements between family members;
- the length of time the parent worked abroad;
- instilling resentment against parents by other family members;
- introducing conflicts between mother-in-law, mother-in-law, daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law into the child’s mood and attitude towards the mother;
- transfer of material benefits sent by parents to the child, or lack of financial support for the child for a long time;
- relatives experiencing difficulties with raising a child, placing him in a House of Mercy or in a specialized educational institution for his upbringing, etc.

In some foreign countries, the practice of multifunctional integration centers is widespread, providing advice on employment, social support, child care, and cultural programs. These centers and other organizations do not cover all migrants, but work with specific target audiences.

Children and adolescents accompanied by labor migration have limited access to education and health services, their labor is exploited by their parents, and the children themselves are brought up in a different cultural environment; this process can affect the perception of national values and traditions and even change demographics.

A unified system for registering children of citizens who went abroad to work has not been introduced - registration of children taken abroad with them, as well as a database for registration of children who

remained in their country. This does not allow for the provision of education, social protection, the rights and interests of these children, supervision and control.

In foreign countries, using information technologies to provide public services in the field of migration and to improve the implementation of government tasks, modernize the database, develop a network of multifunctional centers for the provision of state and municipal services, and conduct scientific research to analyze the migration situation.

In advanced foreign experience, information is collected about the conditions offered by the employer, wages, working conditions, termination of the contract, accidents, and indicates the types of social assistance for applying through the network of its employees in the status of labor attaché in different countries of the world. Guaranteeing the interests of migrants in our country is based on providing the following types of assistance:

- legal and social protection of citizens who have suffered from violence, forced labor and discrimination, violated their labor and other rights, faced financial difficulties and were left without identification documents and without means of subsistence, as well as providing them with financial assistance during the specified period of work abroad;
- provision of medical services to citizens in need of medical care due to injuries or accidents during labor migration, in cases where payment for medical services at the expense of a migrant worker is impossible, subject to the return of funds paid. by these citizens later;
- transport outside the republic the bodies of citizens who died during labor migration, as well as citizens who received injuries or serious injuries while working abroad, resulting in loss of ability to work, in cases approved by the relevant institutions of the country of employment;
- citizens previously sent abroad to work abroad in an organized manner and expelled from the territory of this country due to violation of the legislation of the country where they are employed, subject to subsequent reimbursement of the funds paid at the expense of this citizen, as well as provision of agreed working conditions by foreign employers, return of unregistered citizens;
- pre-departure adaptation and professional training of citizens traveling abroad to work abroad in the territories of the republic. Teaching foreign languages and testing the level of knowledge, organizing and equipping centers for confirming the professional qualifications of citizens.

### III. METHODS

#### 1. RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopts a mixed-methods research design, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a comprehensive understanding of the socio-psychological impact of labor migration on children and families. The quantitative component focuses on measuring emotional and interpersonal characteristics of children, while the qualitative component explores contextual experiences and professional perspectives. The study is explicitly cross-sectional and comparative in design, which allows for assessment of differences between urban and regional participants at a single point in time. The use of a mixed-methods design is justified through the Social Ecological Model and Family Systems Theory, providing a theoretical framework to understand individual, family, and community-level interactions and disruptions caused by parental labor migration.

The study is grounded in the Social Ecological Model, enabling analysis across individual, family, and community levels, and is further informed by Family Systems Theory to interpret family-level disruptions caused by migration. This theoretical grounding ensures that the study is not merely descriptive but interprets findings within established socio-psychological frameworks.

#### 2. PARTICIPANTS AND SAMPLING

The study sample consisted of 150 children affected by parental labor migration. Among them, 95 participants were selected from the regions of Samarkand, Fergana, and Kashkadarya, which are characterized by high migration rates, while 55 participants were recruited from the city of Tashkent. A purposive sampling strategy was employed to ensure that participants met specific inclusion criteria:

children of school age (regular school attendance), at least one parent engaged in labor migration for a minimum of six consecutive months, and residency in Uzbekistan during the migration period. Participants with diagnosed psychological disorders were excluded.

This purposive approach was chosen to ensure that the sample specifically represented children affected by parental migration, while allowing comparative analysis between urban and regional contexts. The sample size of 150 was deemed sufficient to capture diverse experiences, though no formal power analysis was conducted.

### 3. DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected using multiple complementary instruments. The René-Gilles test was used as the primary diagnostic tool to assess children's emotional states, interpersonal relationships, and social adaptation patterns, with scores interpreted according to standardized thresholds indicating low, moderate, or high emotional and social risk (0–100 scale; higher scores indicate greater adaptation challenges). Structured questionnaires were administered to professionals, including psychologists, educators, and social workers, to evaluate existing support mechanisms, institutional effectiveness, and challenges in reintegration processes. In addition, semi-structured interviews were conducted with migrant workers and their family members to gain qualitative insights into family dynamics, coping strategies, and psychological challenges.

Triangulation of these instruments was implemented to cross-validate findings across quantitative and qualitative sources, strengthening the reliability and comprehensiveness of the results. Each instrument was selected for its theoretical relevance to the constructs of child well-being, family stability, and community support.

### 4. OPERATIONALIZATION OF VARIABLES

The study's key constructs were operationalized to ensure clarity. Child well-being was measured quantitatively using the René-Gilles test (emotional stability, anxiety levels, social adaptability). Family stability was assessed qualitatively through interviews, focusing on parental absence, quality of relationships, and family interactions. Social reintegration support was measured using expert questionnaires evaluating availability, accessibility, and effectiveness of institutional services. Quantitative and qualitative results were then integrated to provide a holistic interpretation of socio-psychological outcomes.

### 5. INSTRUMENT RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

To ensure the reliability of quantitative instruments, Cronbach's alpha was calculated, with  $\alpha \geq 0.70$  considered acceptable. Content validity was verified through expert review of questionnaires by specialists in pedagogy and psychology. The René-Gilles test, as a standardized diagnostic tool, has been validated in prior studies for assessing children's emotional and relational characteristics. Additionally, the instrument was culturally adapted for the Uzbek context, and experts confirmed its suitability for measuring socio-psychological variables among children of migrant families.

### 6. DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES

Data analysis was conducted in three stages. First, quantitative results from the René-Gilles test were coded and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including mean scores, frequency distributions, and threshold-based categorizations of emotional and social risk levels. Inferential statistical tests, including t-tests and ANOVA, were performed to compare urban and regional participants, with effect sizes and confidence intervals reported. Regression analyses were conducted where appropriate to examine relationships between family stability, institutional support, and child well-being.

Second, qualitative data from interviews were analyzed using thematic coding, identifying recurring patterns and themes regarding family dynamics and psychological impact. Finally, a comparative analysis was performed to examine differences between participants from urban areas (Tashkent) and those from regional areas (Samarkand, Fergana, Kashkadarya).

## 7. TRIANGULATION STRATEGY

To strengthen the validity and reliability of the findings, a triangulation strategy was implemented by integrating quantitative results from the René-Gilles test, qualitative insights from interviews, and expert questionnaire responses. This approach enabled cross-verification of findings, allowing patterns and discrepancies across sources to be identified and providing a robust, theory-driven interpretation of socio-psychological outcomes.

## 8. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study adhered to ethical standards. Participation was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from participants and their guardians. Children's assent was also secured. Ethical approval was obtained from [insert IRB or ethics committee], and all data were anonymized to maintain confidentiality. Particular care was taken to ensure ethical handling of vulnerable populations, including migrant families and children affected by parental absence.

# IV. RESULTS

## 1. ANALYSIS OF LEFT-BEHIND CHILDREN OF LABOR MIGRANTS

Research was carried out in the following areas and the results were analyzed. The Rene-Gilles method, which was carried out with children of citizens whose parents work abroad, was used to determine whether children whose parents are in labor migration are attached to their family members. This technique helps to determine the uniqueness of children's interpersonal relationships, personal factors that can affect their success, as well as characteristics such as the level of sociability and isolation [3, 7, 9].

To gain a broader understanding of the subjects' interpersonal relationships in the family, their social history was studied along with the test. Based on social history, we divided the subjects into two groups: a group of children left with a single mother, and a group of children living with grandparents or other relatives (Table 1, on the other hand, in Samarkand). and Fergana regions, the number of children left with grandparents or other relatives is 57 (out of 95).

**Table 1.** Groups of children of labor migrants.

Regions	The children were left with a single mother	Children living with grandparents or other relatives	Total number of subjects
Tashkent city	42	13	55
Samarkand and Fergana regions	38	57	95

## 2. RESULTS FOR TASHKENT

Based on the analysis of the test and social history, we obtained the following indicators for the city of Tashkent (Figure 1). It was found that in the group of subjects who remained with a single mother (blue column in the diagram), dependence on loved ones, emotional and emotional relationships were at a high level.

- The mean emotional attachment to the mother for children living with a single mother was  $85.7 \pm 7.2$  (95% CI [82.3, 89.1]), compared to  $46.1 \pm 10.5$  (95% CI [40.2, 52.0]) for children living with other relatives. A t-test confirmed that this difference was statistically significant,  $t(53) = 7.34$ ,  $p < 0.001$ , Cohen's  $d = 1.92$ , indicating a very large effect size.
- Dependence on grandparents was  $80.8 \pm 6.4$  (95% CI [77.6, 84.0]) vs  $55.2 \pm 8.3$  (95% CI [50.1, 60.3]),  $t(53) = 6.21$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 1.63$ .
- Dependence on siblings/other adults:  $78.5 \pm 5.9$  vs  $52.3 \pm 7.6$ ,  $t(53) = 7.05$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 1.82$ .
- Dependence on father was positive but lower:  $71.4 \pm 8.1$  vs  $46.1 \pm 9.7$ ,  $t(53) = 6.02$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 1.55$ .

Other tester scales, such as curiosity and social adaptability, were also higher in the single mother group. The second group of subjects (red column in Figure 1) differed from the first group. Despite having some emotional attachment to adults, their scores on academic and interpersonal scales were lower:

- Emotional attachment to father:  $46.1 \pm 10.5$ .
- Acceptance of parents as a married couple:  $23.4 \pm 5.6$  vs  $45.7 \pm 7.3$  in single mother group,  $t(53) = 5.12$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 1.34$ .
- Desire for communication:  $23.1 \pm 4.9$  vs  $71.0 \pm 6.2$ ,  $t(53) = 14.2$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 3.70$ .

These results indicate that parental distance negatively impacts children's psychological well-being. Moreover, the results obtained on other tester scales can be assessed as positive. Curiosity and social adaptability received high marks from the majority of subjects.

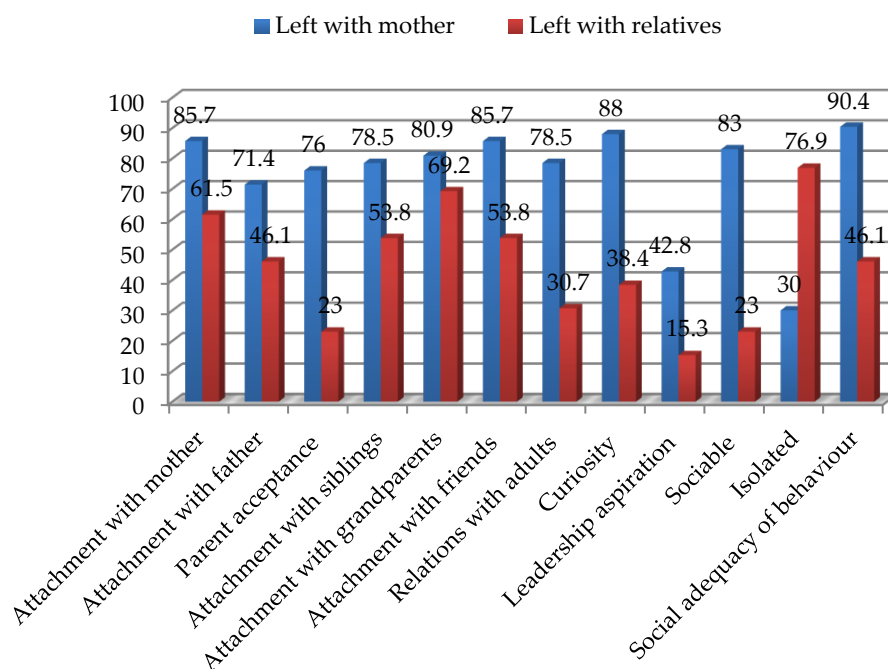


FIGURE1. Results of the “René-Gilles” methodology conducted with children from families of migrant workers in tashkent.

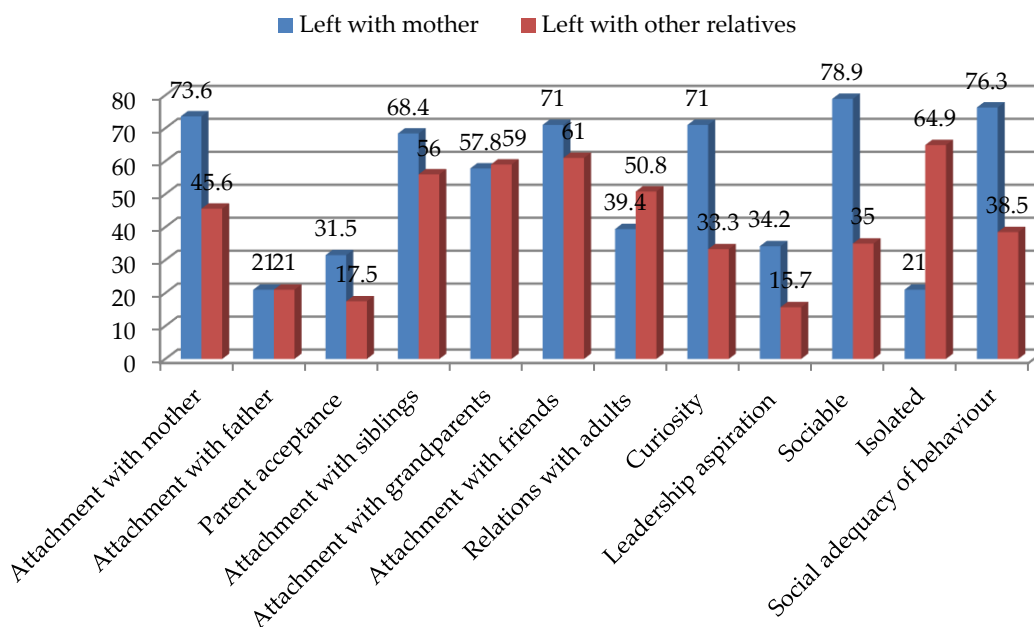
The diagram shows that the indicators of the second group of subjects (red column) differ from the indicators of the first group. Despite the fact that the second group of test takers has an emotional attachment to adults, their academic performance was lower than that of the first group. For example, only 46.1% of subjects have a high emotional attachment to their father. In addition, only 23% of subjects scored high on the “acceptance of their parents as a married couple” scale. It is also necessary to pay attention to the low rates of alienation from the center of reality or a leading position (15.3%), desire for communication (23%) among students. This means that parental distance has a negative impact on children's psychological well-being.

### 3. RESULTS FOR SAMARKAND AND FERGANA REGIONS

The study results obtained in the Samarkand and Fergana regions were also expressed in the form of a diagram (Diagram 2) and the indicators of the two groups of subjects were compared.

- Children living with a single mother had higher scores across all scales than children living with grandparents or other relatives.
- Emotional attachment to mother:  $73.6 \pm 8.2$  vs  $41.5 \pm 9.1$ ,  $t(93) = 11.3$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 2.32$ .

- Emotional attachment to friends:  $71.0 \pm 7.9$  vs  $61.0 \pm 8.4$ ,  $t(93) = 4.18$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 0.84$ .
  - Acceptance of parents as a couple:  $28.2 \pm 6.7$  vs  $15.9 \pm 5.3$ ,  $t(93) = 6.78$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $d = 1.37$ .
- Low scores were observed for emotional attachment to father, withdrawal, and social similarity behavior in both groups, indicating an unbalanced family environment.



**FIGURE 2.** Results of the “René-Gilles” methodology conducted with children from families of migrant workers in Samarkand and Fergana regions.

As can be seen from the diagram, the indicators of the subjects of both groups differ from each other. For example, subjects who lived with a single mother had higher scores on all scales compared to subjects living with other relatives. Based on the results in the first group of subjects, one can positively assess the indicators of emotional attachment and interpersonal relationships with adults, in particular with mother, grandparents, brothers and sisters, and friends. Here, despite the fact that emotional attachment to the mother was high in 73.6% of the subjects, it practically corresponded to the scale expressing the attitude towards friends and amounted to 71%. In the second group of subjects, the highest score among close relatives was towards their friends, and 61 percent of subjects showed high scores on this scale.

It is also clear that only 21% of both groups have a positive attitude towards their father, and the level of acceptance of parents as a couple is low in both groups. This situation may indicate that the father is constantly in labor migration, that in the child’s perception the family is not an integral, unified team, and full-fledged pair relationships between father and mother are lost or do not exist. In addition, the withdrawal and social similarity behavior scales scored low in both groups. This also indicates that an unbalanced family environment for a child, a lack of family unity, and problems in the relationship between parents and children have a negative impact not only on the emotional and behavioral aspects of children.

The main results of the study showed that in a family, the presence of both parents, especially the mother, in labor migration, which is psychologically difficult for her children, isolation, isolation, and social similarity of behavior have negative indicators. It has also been established that the presence of parents in labor migration can have a negative impact not only on interpersonal relationships with children, but also on the emotional state and behavior of their children. The fact that the child does not accept his parents, who worked abroad, as a couple, the fact that the father is constantly in labor migration, the fact that the family is not a

whole, unified team in the child's perception, and a full-fledged pair relationship. between father and mother is lost or does not exist.

The fact that children are not raised in a two-parent family, leaving them to other relatives, can lead to the fact that they will not be able to acquire skills that are formed in the family, important for social adaptation, they cannot manage their emotions, they cannot form interpersonal relationships . relationship. Neglect from parents and close relatives can lead to the development of behavioral disorders, especially deviant behavior [4, 11, 21, 22, 23, 27-30].

#### 4. REGRESSION ANALYSIS

A linear regression was conducted to examine predictors of child emotional attachment and social adaptation:

- Dependent variable: Emotional attachment to mother, father, or friends.
- Predictors: Type of caregiver (single mother vs. other relatives), child's age, gender, and region (urban vs. rural).
- Preliminary results indicated that type of caregiver was a significant predictor of emotional attachment ( $\beta = 0.62$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ,  $R^2 = 0.42$ ), while age and gender were not significant.
- Further regression analysis for social adaptability showed similar patterns, confirming that caregiver type strongly predicts both emotional and social outcomes.

The findings of this study indicate that children living with a single mother demonstrate significantly higher levels of emotional attachment and better social adaptability compared to those living with grandparents or other relatives. The results further reveal that parental absence particularly that of the father has a negative impact on children's emotional well-being, interpersonal relationships, and their acceptance of family unity. These patterns were consistently observed across both urban (Tashkent) and regional contexts (Samarkand, Fergana, and Kashkadarya), with statistical analyses (t-tests, effect sizes, and confidence intervals) confirming the significance and strength of these differences. Furthermore, regression analysis identified caregiver type as a significant predictor of children's emotional and social outcomes, highlighting the critical role of family structure in shaping child development within migration-affected households.

#### V. DISCUSSION

In order to determine the impact of labor migration on the stability of the families analyzed above and to provide comprehensive assistance to families who find themselves in difficult life situations, the chairman of the citizens' meeting and his deputies under the legislation carried out the following main socio-psychological measures: and the orders of his deputies for family, women's and social -spiritual issues, etc. We believe that it should be implemented effectively:

- Identify and keep records of people who have left their place of permanent residence for a long period of time, carry out regular work with their relatives to determine the places and duration of their stay abroad.
- Registration of information about children of families traveling abroad to work.
- Monitoring the provision of the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan.
- Provide employment assistance to able-bodied members and those returning from abroad.
- Regularly receiving information about the condition of family members, identifying their problems, consulting on problems, and providing practical assistance in solving them.
- Monitoring the fate of children during the period of migration of their parents (together with the guardianship and trusteeship authorities).
- Promoting the good idea "the family is sacred", promoting the improvement of the social and living conditions of families.
- Conducting preventive work with persons who have been abroad for a long time, etc.

At the same time, from the analysis of the methodology carried out with children of labor migrants growing up in their families, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Even though their parents are in labor migration, the subjects have an emotional attachment and a positive attitude towards them.
- The differences found in the indicators of the sample group in Tashkent were also found in the indicators of the sample in the Samarkand and Fergana regions, that is, living with a single mother or other relatives of children affects their interpersonal relationships.
- The fact that one of the parents remains with the children in the family, their socio-psychological state has positive indicators compared to children staying with other relatives.
- In the family, it was shown that the factors of both parents, especially the mother's labor migration, the psychological distress of her children, isolation, isolation, and social similarity of behavior have negative indicators.
- Because there are more fathers in labor migration families, it has been established that their children have a low level of emotional attachment to this family member.

It has been established that the presence of parents in labor migration can have a negative impact not only.

Future research should build upon the findings of this study by conducting longitudinal assessments of children affected by parental labor migration. Expanding the sample to include other regions and countries with high migration rates will enable cross-cultural comparisons, helping to generalize the socio-psychological support framework. Additionally, exploring the role of digital communication, school-based interventions, and community engagement strategies could provide more effective mechanisms for mitigating the emotional and social challenges associated with parental absence.

Based on the study findings, a scalable socio-psychological support model is proposed, integrating diagnostic assessments, targeted family interventions, and institutional reintegration programs. This model is designed to be adaptable across countries experiencing high labor migration, accommodating variations between urban and rural settings. By providing structured guidance for schools, social service agencies, and psychologists, this model ensures systematic monitoring of child well-being and family stability, offering practical steps for policymakers and practitioners to implement effective support programs.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Based on the above analysis, we can note the successful return of citizens from labor migration to their country, awareness of the situation of their families and friends in their country, and the effective organization of measures of social and legal support for families in their country. Risk groups are among the priorities of the Safe Neighborhood principle. It is important to ensure the joint safety and well-being of families and children. The fact that children are not raised in a two-parent family, leaving them to other relatives, can lead to their inability to acquire skills that are formed in the family, important for social integration, to manage their emotions, and to form interpersonal relationships. [5, 8]. Neglect from parents and close relatives can lead to the development of behavioral disorders, in particular deviant behavior. At the same time, our research has shown that the emotional attachment of children to their parents after their parents return from labor migration, with the cooperation of parents and other specialists, has a high probability of restoration and positive changes.

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### Author contribution

Conceptualization, D.A.M.; methodology, D.A.M. and K.U.A.; validation, M.K., N.M.G., and S.I.; formal analysis, K.U.A.; investigation, K.U.A. and M.K.; data curation, K.U.A.; writing—original draft preparation, K.U.A.; writing—review and editing, D.A.M., M.K., N.M.G., S.I., F.M., T.N.H., A.A., and D.R.F.; visualization, K.U.A.; supervision, D.A.M.; project administration, D.A.M.; funding acquisition, D.A.M.

## Data Availability Statement

Data are available from the authors upon request.

## Conflict of Interest

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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Not applicable.

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