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## 9 Social and economic consequences of international migration

A study in Gujarat, India

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### Introduction

Migration is one of the important factors for bringing change both at the micro as well as macro level. The most important outcome of migration is remittance, which influences the process of development and brings changes in the consumption patterns and lifestyle of the individual, especially at the place of origin. India has the world's second largest overseas community next to China but far more diverse (Haque 2005; Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs 2010). The government of India has realized the importance of Indian emigrants in the country's progress, particularly their contribution to the foreign exchange reserve and investment in the country through remittances.

The emigration of Indian people has a long history. A huge migration of Indian labour took place during the colonial period to countries like South Africa, Mauritius, Trinidad, Tobago, Guyana and Fiji in response to the enormous demand for cheap labour that arose immediately after the British abolished slavery in 1833–34. The indentured system of labour, which was a system between slavery and free labour, was invented, and Indian labourers were shipped to the colonies of Africa, South America and the Caribbean (Davis 1951; Madhavan 1985; Sharma 2002).

The movement of Indian emigrants to Europe, North America and Australia is largely a phenomenon of the twentieth century. There are three main categories of people who migrated: first were those with agricultural background; second were entrepreneurs, store owners, motel owners and self-employed small businessmen who migrated from 1965 onwards and third were professionals like doctors, engineers (1960s onwards), software engineers, management consultants, financial experts, media people (1980s onwards) and others (Sharma 2002; Dholakia-Dave 2006). There are close to 1 million Indian emigrants in Canada (2.8% of Canada's population) and 1.7 million in US (0.6% of US population). There was also a steady outflow of migration to the Gulf in the 1970s in the wake of the oil boom.

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Migration of Indians to the Middle East increased rapidly between the late 1970s and early 1980s. But the number of Indian workers migrating fell sharply in the mid- to late 1980s. Labour migration increased substantially again during the 1990s. Today some 3 million Indian migrants live in Gulf countries. Most of the migrants come from Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab. The current number of Indian migrants overseas accounts for less than 1% of the total workforce in India, so it has little direct impact on the national labour market. However, the effects of migration are significant in major sending regions. In Kerala, for example, emigration has recently led to a considerable reduction in unemployment. Remittances are the major benefit of external migration, providing scarce foreign exchange and scope for higher levels of savings and investments. Remittances have had a considerable impact on regional economics. The most striking case is that of Kerala, where remittances made up 21% of state income in the early 1990s. International migration has also had a considerable impact on demographic structure, expenditure patterns, social structures and poverty levels. Impacts include reducing population growth, enhancing dependency burden within households, increasing consumption expenditures and reducing poverty levels.

India received the highest amount of remittances: 62.7 billion US dollars in 2016. However, in terms of share of GDP, it is not a large proportion (3%). On the other hand, there are substantial variations in the impact of remittances across states of India. It goes as high as 36% of net state domestic product in Kerala (World Bank Group 2017). Migration brings in remittances, which result in an increase in the wealth of the family, consequent improvement in education and nutrition of the members of the household and greater use of hospital facilities during times of illness of the members of the family. This chapter examines the social and economic consequences of emigration from the state of Gujarat, which has been known for migration in the past.

### **Data and methods**

The major objective of the chapter is to analyse the magnitude and pattern of remittances received by members of emigrant households in Gujarat. The present chapter gathered information on remittance (both in cash and in kind) sent by migrants to their family members; use of remittances; donations given by emigrants; investments made and perceptions of respondents of the impact of emigration on the individual, family and community. The study was conducted in Gujarat during the year 2012. A total of 10,000 households from 200 PSUs (primary sampling unit) were covered during this survey, out of which 120 were rural PSUs and the remaining 80 were urban PSUs. Both the urban and rural PSUs were selected employing the probability proportion to size (PPS) sampling method. A complete house listing of the selected PSUs was done, and a total of 50 households were

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selected from each PSU for interviewing of respondents using the systematic random sampling method. The state of Gujarat is divided into four geographical regions, southeastern Gujarat, Northern Plains, Kutchchh and Dry Areas and Saurashtra, and 25 administrative units called districts. Samples were drawn from all four regions as well as 25 districts. Information about remittances and other socioeconomic aspects of the household was collected from the family members of the emigrant.

## Results and discussion

The information on percentage distribution of remittances received by households is presented in Table 9.1. Overall, about two-thirds (67.5%) of migrant households (which includes both interstate outmigrants as well

Table 9.1 Percentage distribution of remittances received by households

Particulars	Migrant households	Emigrant households
	Interstate out migrants and emigrants (n = 288)	(n = 259)
<b>Remittances received</b>	67.4	63.7
<b>Frequency of receiving remittances</b>		
Monthly	31.4	19.4
Once in two months	15.5	18.2
Once in three months	11.3	13.3
Once in six months	12.4	14.5
Once in a year	13.4	15.8
Whenever need arose	16.0	18.8
<b>Amount of remittances received during last 12 months (in Rs.)</b>		
Up to 15000	8.2	6.1
15001–25000	8.8	6.7
25001–50000	23.7	23.6
50001–100000	36.6	38.8
100001 and above	22.7	24.8
Mean annual amount (in Rs.)	122977	135979
<b>Remittances received by</b>		
Parents	60.9	60.1
Son/daughter	1.5	1.8
Brother/sister	3.6	3.6

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Migrant households</i>	<i>Emigrant households</i>
	<i>Interstate out migrants and emigrants</i>	
Spouse	33.0	33.3
Others	1.0	1.2
<b>Mode of transfer of remittances</b>		
Through bank	78.8	78.9
Through cheques/drafts	2.1	2.4
Through other financial institution (Western Union, Money Gram, etc.)	2.6	1.2
Electronic money order	5.2	4.2
Through relatives/friends coming on leave	7.7	9.1
Hawala	2.1	2.4
Others	1.5	1.8
Number of households	194	165

\*Note: Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher.

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as emigrants) reported receiving remittances, while it was 64.0% for emigrant households. The frequency of receiving remittances by household shows that about two-fifths (37.6%) of households received them within two months, followed by 19.0% of households reporting that they received remittances whenever need arose. About 16.0% of respondents reported receiving a remittance only once a year. The proportion of migrant households (31.4%) receiving a monthly remittance is higher than the proportion of emigrant households (19.4%).

The mean annual amount of remittance received by emigrant households is 135,979 rupees, while the figure for migrant household is 122,977. About a quarter (24.8%) of emigrant households reported receiving remittances above 100,000 rupees during the past year. A total of 38.8% of respondents reported remittance amounts in the range of 50,000–100,000 rupees, while only 23.6% reported receiving between 25,000 and 50,000 rupees. About three-fifths (60.1%) of respondents reported that parents receive the remittance, followed by one-third (33.3%) reporting the son or daughter to be the recipient of the remittance. About four-fifths (78.9%) of households reported that the mode of transfer of remittance to family members was through a bank, while less than one-tenth (9.1 %) reported relatives and friends as the means of transferring remittances.

Table 9.2 contains information pertaining to percentage distribution of households receiving remittances by background characteristics. Of the

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Table 9.2 Percentage distribution of households receiving remittances by background characteristics

Background characteristic	Remittance received	
	Interstate outmigrants and emigrants	Emigrant households
<b>Residence</b>		
Rural	71.1	73.3
Urban	28.9	26.7
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	64.4	62.4
Muslim	32.5	34.6
Jain	2.6	2.4
Others	0.5	0.6
<b>Caste</b>		
Scheduled caste	12.9	12.1
Scheduled tribe	3.6	4.2
OBC	27.3	24.9
Others (general)	56.2	58.8
<b>Standard living and wealth index (SLWI)</b>		
Lowest	2.1	2.4
Second	10.3	9.7
Middle	20.1	20.0
Fourth	27.3	23.7
Highest	40.2	44.2
Number of households	194	165

\*Note: Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher.

total households which received remittance, about three-fourths (73.3%) were in urban localities, while only one-fourth (26.7%) were rural. The religious background of the emigrant households who received remittances shows that a majority (62.4%) of households were Hindu, followed by 34.6% Muslim. Similarly the caste distribution of remittance-receiving emigrant households shows that about three-fifths (58.8%) belonged to the general category (others), followed by about one-fourth (24.9%) belonging to the OBC category. The standard of living and wealth index (SLWI) of the emigrant households who received remittances shows that 44.2% of households belonged to the highest SLWI quintile, followed by 23.7% in the fourth SLWI quintile. The previous finding points out that emigrant

Table 9.3 Mean remittances received by background characteristics

Background characteristic	Mean remittance (in Rs.)	
	Migrant households Interstate outmigrants and emigrants	Emigrant households
<b>Residence</b>		
Rural	125674	137107
Urban	116332	132877
<b>Religion</b>		
Hindu	145021	166608
Muslim	76984	80632
Jain	136000	120000
Others	200000	200000
<b>Caste</b>		
Scheduled caste	64520	74650
Scheduled tribe	60429	60429
OBC	76132	83098
Others (general)	163180	176429
<b>Standard living and wealth index (SLWI)</b>		
Lowest	47500	47500
Second	56400	57750
Middle	61154	65455
Fourth	184925	236897
Highest	132738	135940
Total mean amount (in Rs.)	122977	135979

\*Note: Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher.

households receiving remittances have higher standards of living and belong to the upper echelon of society.

Information pertaining to mean remittances received by emigrant households by background characteristics is presented in Table 9.3. Out of the total emigrant households who received remittance, the mean remittance among rural households is 137,107 rupees, while among urban households, the figure is 132,877. The higher amount of mean remittance for rural households in comparison to urban households may be due to the higher need for remittance among rural households in comparison to urban households. Among emigrant households who received remittances, the mean remittance is highest (200,000 rupees) among the other religious category,

followed by Hindu (166,608 rupees) and Jain (120,000). Caste distribution of households receiving remittances shows that the annual mean remittance is highest (176,429 rupees) among others followed by OBC (83,098 rupees) and SC households (74,650 rupees). The standard of living and wealth index of emigrant households receiving remittances reveal that the mean remittance is highest (236,897 rupees) among those households belonging to the fourth quintile, followed by households belonging to the fifth quintile (135,940 rupees). It appears that there is a positive correlation between standard of living and wealth index of the household, and the mean remittance received by the household as the mean remittance increases with an increase in SLWI.

Information was also collected from the respondents about how they use remittances. Information pertaining to use of remittance by the emigrant households is presented in Table 9.4. A majority (88.6%)

Table 9.4 Percentage of households by use of remittances

Particulars	Migrant households	Emigrant households
	Interstate outmigrants and emigrants	
<b>Mode of using remittances*</b>		
Household consumption	88.7	88.6
Education of children	48.2	48.2
For medical/health-related expenses	62.6	60.8
To pay utility bills	78.5	77.7
Deposited in bank	40.5	41.0
Cash in hand	40.0	38.6
Investment	1.5	1.8
For purchase of scooter/car/other vehicles	5.6	6.6
For dowry/marriage expenses	8.2	9.0
To repay debts	39.0	42.8
To purchase agricultural land	3.6	3.6
To build/purchase new house/renovation of old house	14.9	15.1
To embark new business/enlarging the existing one	4.1	4.2
On agricultural expenses, seeds, fertilizers, etc.	10.8	11.4
For charity/donations	9.2	10.8
Refinancing migration	3.6	3.6
Number of households	194	165

Note:

\* Multiple responses may add up to more than 100%.

\* Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher.

of households use remittances on household consumption, followed by payment towards utility bills (77.7%), medical and health expenses (60.8%), education of children (48.2%) and repayment of debts (42.8%). Remittances can be received both in cash and in kind. Information on remittances received in kind was also collected from the respondents of the households. Table 9.5 contains information on the households who received remittances in various other forms (other than cash). The table shows that of the total emigrant households, only 15.4% of households received remittances in the form of clothes, followed by cosmetics (4.2%). A total of 6.2% of emigrant households reported that emigrants visited them during the last year. Information on reasons for bringing money along with the emigrant while visiting the origin place during the last year shows that the most important reason for bringing money while coming home is to build a house or purchase land (18.8%).

Table 9.5 Percentage of households receiving remittances in other forms

Particulars	Migrant households	Emigrant households
	Interstate outmigrants and emigrants	
	(n = 311)	(n = 259)
<b>Other forms of remittances*</b>		
Clothes	12.9	15.4
Cosmetics	4.5	4.2
Ornaments (diamond, gold, silver, stones, etc.)	1.0	1.2
Electronic equipments	4.2	3.9
Others	0.6	0.4
	(n = 22)	(n = 16)
<b>Visited during the last 12 months</b>	<b>7.1</b>	<b>6.2</b>
<b>Reason for bringing money along with him/her*</b>		
To build house/purchase land	13.6	18.8
To buy a car/scooter/taxi, etc.	4.5	6.2
For education	9.1	6.2
For medical expenses	18.2	6.2
For repayment of debts	9.1	6.2
Others	63.6	68.8

Note: Some migrants (interstate outmigrants as well as emigrants) didn't visit their native place during the last 12 months, but they sent remittances in kind through friends or relatives.

\* Multiple responses may add up to more than 100%.

\* Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher.

Emigrants, in addition to sending remittances to their family members both in cash and in kind, also donated money for various philanthropic and social causes to various non-governmental organizations (NGOs), trusts and religious bodies. The emigrants are also concerned about the welfare of society at their places of origin. This is also another way of paying back to the society to which they belong and are also concerned about. Table 9.6 provides information on emigrants giving donations for various social causes. Of the total emigrants, 15.8% reported donating money for any social cause. Of the more than half (54.4%) of those who donated for any social cause, the amount of donation was 20,000 rupees and above. The mean amount of donation during the last 10 years was 45,795 rupees. Among those emigrants who donated, the majority (69.6%) donated for building religious places, like a temple/mosque/church, followed by the desire to help the poor (34.8%) and

Table 9.6 Percentage of emigrants giving donations

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Number<sup>#</sup></i>
		( <i>n</i> = 292)
<b>Emigrants donating for any social cause</b>	15.8	46
<b>Amount of donation (in Rs.)</b>		
Up to 5000	17.4	8
5001–10000	13.0	6
10001–15000	6.5	3
15001–20000	8.7	4
20000 and above	54.4	25
<b>Mean amount of donation in the last 10 years (in Rs.)</b>		45795
<b>Purpose of social cause*</b>		
Building school/college	23.9	11
Building temple/mosque/church/others	69.6	32
Building hospital	10.9	5
Natural disaster	6.5	3
Helping poor	34.8	16
To NGOs	2.2	1
Donation in kind	10.9	5
<b>Channels of donation</b>		
Direct to the organization, NGO or trust	41.3	19
Through family members	56.5	26
Through village panchayat/municipal corporation	2.2	1

Note:

# Number of emigrants is selected by process of outmigration.

\* Multiple responses may add up to more than 100%.

\* Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher.

Table 9.7 Percentage of emigrants who made investments

Particulars	Percentage	Number <sup>#</sup>
		(n = 292)
Made investment	3.6	10
Mean amount of investment (in Rs.)		498500
Details of investment*		
Housing	70.0	7
Business enterprise	10.0	1
Ornaments	30.0	3
Others	10.0	1

Note:

# Number of emigrants is selected by process of outmigration.

\* Multiple responses may add up to more than 100%.

\* Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher.

building educational institutions like schools and colleges (23.9%). The data reveal that the most important channel of donation is through family members (56.5%), followed by direct sending of money to organizations (41.3%).

Table 9.7 displays information on emigrants who made investments. Only 3.6% of the total emigrants made investments of any kind. The mean amount of investment was 498,500 rupees. A majority of the emigrants were in the housing industry, which is booming in all the major urban centres of India in general and Gujarat in particular.

Several studies on emigration in India highlighted the impacts on the place of origin (Nangia and Saha 2001; Premi and Mathur 1995; Rajan 2003; Zachariah, Kannan and Rajan 2008). In the context of Gujarat, information on perception of the respondents of the impact of emigration on individual lifestyle, family and society is presented in Table 9.8. More than four-fifths (81.9%) of the respondents reported that due to emigration, there was an increase in the economic status of the family, while 84.6% reported there was an increase in the social status of the family. Emigration also increases expenditure on consumption (35.9%), as well as increasing savings and investment (25.9%). To the question if emigration brings a change in adoption of lifestyle, 39.0% of the respondents reported that emigration has had an impact on dressing and socializing of family members, followed by impact on communication and languages (37.5%). Emigration also brings changes in the food habits of the household members. More than one-fourth (28.6%) of respondents reported that emigration brought a change in the eating habits of household members, followed by one-fifth (19.7%) of respondents reporting people are eating more fast food due to emigration. Information was also gathered on the impact of emigration on values and attitudes of individuals. The data (Table 9.8) show that a little more than three-fifths (60.2%) of respondents reported that, due to emigration, there is increased attachment to family and

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Table 9.8 Perception of respondents on impact of emigration on family, society and lifestyle

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Number</i>
<b>Impacts of emigration on your family*</b>		
Increase in economic status	81.9	212
Increase in social status/prestige among neighbours/relatives/friends	84.6	219
Increase in consumption expenditure/use of luxurious items	35.9	93
Increase in savings/investments	25.9	67
Increase in power and political influence	13.9	36
<b>Change in adoption of lifestyles*</b>		
Dressing and socializing	39.0	101
Recreational activities	15.8	41
Communication and language	37.5	97
Others	2.7	7
<b>Change in food habits*</b>		
Eating more fast food	19.7	51
Changes in eating habits	28.6	74
Consumption of alcohol	3.5	9
Smoking cigarettes/other form of tobacco products	5.0	13
Others	0.8	2
<b>Change in values and attitudes*</b>		
Increased acceptance for intercaste/class marriage	10.8	28
Increased acceptance for interreligious exchanges	12.4	32
Increased preference for gender equality	24.3	63
Greater sense of national/community pride	32.8	85
Increased attachment to family/home	60.2	156
Others	3.9	10
<b>Impact of emigration on your society*</b>		
Increase in intercaste and interreligion marriage	12.0	31
Increase in love marriage	12.7	33
Increase in trend towards nuclear family	18.1	47
Weakening of caste system	8.9	23
Increase in aspiration for international migration	47.1	122
Self pride	44.0	114
Others	1.2	3
Number of households		259

Note:

\* Multiple responses may add up to more than 100%.

\* Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher

home, followed by 32.8% reporting that there is a greater sense of national and community pride, while 24.3% reported an increased preference for gender equality. Emigration not only brings changes at the individual and family levels but also of the community at large. The most important influence of emigration on society as reported by the respondents is increase in aspiration for international migration (47.1%), followed by self-pride (44.0%) and an increase in trends towards nuclear family (18.1%).

The information on percentage distribution of migrant households using remittances by background characteristics is presented in Table 9.9.

Table 9.9 Percentage distribution of migrant households using remittances by background characteristics

Background characteristic	Use of remittances				
	Household consumption	Education of children	Medical/health related	To pay utility bills (electricity, water, etc.)	To repay debts
<b>Residence</b>					
Rural	72.3	75.5	74.6	73.2	80.3
Urban	27.7	24.5	25.4	26.8	19.7
<b>Religion</b>					
Hindu	61.8	58.5	63.1	63.4	60.5
Muslim	35.3	39.4	33.6	34.6	38.2
Jain	2.3	1.1	3.3	2.0	1.3
Others	0.6	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Caste</b>					
Scheduled caste	13.3	17.0	14.8	15.0	19.7
Scheduled tribe	4.0	5.3	4.9	4.6	7.9
OBC	28.9	27.7	28.7	28.8	21.1
Others (general)	53.8	50.0	51.6	51.6	51.3
<b>Standard living and wealth index (SLWI)</b>					
Lowest	2.3	2.1	1.6	2.6	2.6
Second	11.6	11.7	13.1	10.5	13.2
Middle	22.5	28.7	21.3	23.5	26.3
Fourth	27.8	27.7	27.1	28.1	25.0
Highest	35.8	29.8	36.9	35.3	32.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of households	173	94	122	153	76

Note:

\* Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher

Of the total households who use remittances on household consumption, about three-fourths (72.3%) are in rural areas. Similar is the trend in the case of use of remittances in education of children, health care expenses, payment of utility bills and repayment of debts, as the majority of such households are rural. The religious background of households using remittances shows that among households using remittances for any purpose, the majority are Hindu, followed by Muslim. The caste distribution of the households using remittances shows that households belonging to others (general caste) have a higher proportion of remittances used in various aspects like household consumption, education, health care, utility bills and so on, followed by households belonging to the OBC category. Use of remittances by standard of living and wealth index shows that as there is an increase in SLWI, there is an increase in use of remittances in various ways.

Information pertaining to impact of emigration on emigrant households by background characteristics is presented in Table 9.10. Among those emigrant households who reported that, due to emigration, there was an increase in economic and social status, the majority of the households are located in rural areas. The religious background of emigrant households reporting impact of emigration shows that under all categories of impact, the majority of the households are Hindu, followed by Muslim. Similarly, the caste distribution of households reporting impact of emigration reveals that the majority of households belong to other castes (general category), followed by the OBC category. Similarly, the standard of living and wealth index of emigrant households reporting impact of emigration shows that among those households who reported an increase in socioeconomic status of the household, the majority of them belonged to a higher SLWI.

### Summary and conclusion

International migration has positive as well as negative consequences on the area of origin. But the positive consequences are much higher than the negative consequences and completely outweigh the negative aspects of migration. They affect the area of origin positively in a number of ways and most importantly in terms of socioeconomic development of households and the community at large. International migration from Gujarat is quite significant in the development process of Gujarat (Hirway 2000). The most important outcome of such migration is the flow of remittances to households and its impact on the social and economic life of household members. Emigrants send remittances to their family members both in cash and in kind. The mean annual amount of remittances received by emigrant households is quite substantial. The most important uses of remittances in Gujarat are household consumption (89%), medical care (63%) and education of children (48%). This chapter shows that

Table 9.10 Percentage distribution of impact of emigration on emigrant households by background characteristics

<i>Background characteristic</i>	<i>Impact of emigration</i>				
	<i>Increase in economic status</i>	<i>Increase in social status/prestige among neighbours/relatives/friends</i>	<i>Increase in consumption expenditure/use of luxurious items</i>	<i>Increase in savings/investments</i>	<i>Increase in aspiration for international migration</i>
<b>Residence</b>					
Rural	71.2	68.9	65.6	62.7	71.3
Urban	28.8	31.1	34.4	37.3	28.7
<b>Religion</b>					
Hindu	69.3	72.6	73.1	73.1	66.4
Muslim	27.8	25.1	26.9	23.9	32.0
Jain	2.4	1.8	0.0	3.0	1.6
Others	0.5	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>Caste</b>					
Scheduled caste	10.4	10.0	5.4	6.0	1.6
Scheduled tribe	4.2	4.1	3.2	1.5	4.9
OBC	23.6	25.6	22.6	20.9	27.0
Others (general)	61.8	60.3	68.8	71.6	66.4
<b>Standard living and wealth index (SLWI)</b>					
Lowest	1.9	1.8	1.1	0.0	5.7
Second	7.1	5.0	5.4	7.4	7.4
Middle	16.5	16.9	5.4	7.5	14.7
Fourth	21.7	23.8	19.3	20.9	18.9
Highest	52.8	52.5	68.8	64.2	53.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of households	212	219	93	67	122

Note:

\* Computed from primary field data collected by the researcher

remittance plays a very important role in the overall socioeconomic development of households and the community in the state. Emigration also brings a change in lifestyle as well as values and attitudes of household members, as reflected in the findings of the study in Gujarat. It weakens the rigid caste system in society due to exposure to the outside world. It also increases inter-caste and intercommunity marriages. The social prestige and esteem of households with international migration is quite high due to the increase in the economic condition of the households. Migration induces further migration by increasing aspirations for international migration. The chapter shows that migration is positively linked to the process of development at the household as well as community level in Gujarat. There is a need for policies by the government which will induce more high-quality and skilled international migration from Gujarat to boost the process of development in the state. There should be policies to protect living and working conditions, safety and security of migrants in the destination countries.

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