Children Living apart from Parents due to Internal Migration (CLAIM)

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FOREWORD

IPSR takes pride in presenting this research report on *"Children Living apart from Parents due to Internal Migration (CLAIM)"*, led by Dr. Aree Jampaklay, Dr. Patama Vapattanawong, Dr. Kanchana Tangchonlatip, and Dr. Kerry Richter. Migration of the working-age population does not only mean leaving behind their place of residence, but also their loved ones. Often this includes their children, who must then be cared for by others in the parental role. Parental migration is potentially consequential for children and the surrounding family. This is especially true for grandparents, who are often the chief source of support for the migrant household's adjustment after parents move. While this division of responsibility has been a common phenomenon in rural settings of Thailand, we seem to have only a limited understanding of what happens to the left-behind family. Little is known about how much children have a say in parental decision making. Nor does our society have sufficient insight into the potential impact of leaving children in the care of non-parents. Though there remains much to learn beyond the scope of this study, it has addressed these important questions along with significant areas of health and psycho-social well-being. Through presenting these key findings, the researchers prompt readers to further address the issues with more comprehensive research design and measurement as well as investigation into other possible consequences.

IPSR has a clear vision to produce high-quality research to inform the formulation of appropriate policy for the well-being of the population. It is thus our mission to maximize the use of our research findings. And it is our hope that this research will provide a good starting point for initiating discussions on how to minimize negative impacts and optimize positive impacts of parental migration.

(Associate Professor Sureeporn Punpuing, Ph.D.)

Director, Institute for Population and Social Research

Mahidol University

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Our study could not be accomplished without the invaluable support of several individuals and organizations, to whom we would like to express our genuine thanks. First and foremost, we wish to convey our heartfelt gratitude to the participants in our study: children, caretakers, and all respondents in the study settings. Their unconditional cooperation made our work less difficult and turned it into a joyful and meaningful task. Our appreciation also goes to the local staff in the study areas, Mrs. Duangrudee Choteklang, Nampong Hospital, Khonkaen, Mr. Visuvat Jindapong, Wangthong District Health Office and Dr. Nisaporn Wattanasap, Naresuan University, Phitsanuloke, who helped to coordinate many aspects. Their assistance and cooperation made the fieldwork much easier and successful.

Our special thanks go to Associate Professor Dr. Sutham Nunthamongkolchai for his expert suggestions during the proposal formulation, data analysis and report writing. We hope our collaboration will be continually cherished. Also, useful recommendations from the stakeholders in a series of conferences during the study process helped fill important gaps and truly improved the study.

Professor Dr. Bencha Yoddumnern-Attig, former IPSR director, provided unremitting support to the research team from start to finish. Her invaluable comments and advice really smoothed out the research process.

We wish to express our appreciation to Associate Professor Dr. Sureeporn Punpuing, IPSR Director, who always gave us encouraging comments on doing research. Being nested in such a friendly and academically supportive atmosphere greatly contributed to the success of our research.

We would also like to say thanks to our field staff, supervisors and interviewers. Their best efforts in fact accounted for the study's success.

Lastly, our goal to raise awareness of children left behind as an important issue for Thai society would not be possible without financial support from UNICEF, who has long seen the importance of this research topic. UNICEF staff, especially Mr. Andrew Claypole, Chief of Social Policy and Ms. Chayanit Wangdee, Program Assistant, have not only given comprehensive and thoughtful suggestions, but also become our close colleagues. We thank them very much.

The Research Team

ABSTRACT

This study examines the impact of parental internal migration on health (physical and psychological) and well-being of children left behind, as well as its impact on the well-being of caretakers and on household socio-economic status. It was conducted in rural areas of two provinces where internal migration is most prevalent. Included in the survey are 1,456 children aged 8-15, caretakers, and responsible adults in three types of households: both-parent migrant, one-parent migrant, and non-migrant parents. It is noted that the one-parent migrant households in our study mostly refer to father-only migrant households.

This study finds that the majority of children experience being apart from parents for a lengthy period, often since they were born, due to parents' work in other provinces. The main reasons for migration of parents are economically oriented. In most cases, the mother is the primary caretaker in one-parent migrant and non-migrant households, while the maternal grandparent is usually the caretaker when both parents are absent. Almost all migrant households remain in close contact with the migrant parents.

Parental migration is generally viewed as more negative than positive to children. The negative view of the impact of parental migration on the *family* is found in a lesser extent than to *children*. Mother's migration is more negatively perceived than father's migration. Respondents from both-parent migrant households have more positive views on parental migration than one- and non-parent migrant households.

In terms of outcomes indicative of positive impacts, the migrant households are wealthier than non-migrant households, especially one-parent migrant households, according to the wealth index. Remittances contribute to migrant households, and household wealth is positively associated with remittances. More than half of adult informants reported that the remittances have "a lot of benefit" for the child. Children of one-parent migrants reported that they are better off financially after their parental migration in a higher proportion than those of both-parent migrant. The more money that households receive in remittances as well as the wealthier the household is, the less likely the caretakers are to have psychological problems.

For the outcomes indicative of negative impacts, caretakers from both-parent migrant households and older caretakers are more likely to have psychological health problems than their counterparts. Children of both-parent migrants reported doing worse in school more than those of non-migrant parents and one-parent migrants. Children of one-parent migrants tended to be involved in alcohol drinking more than those of non-migrant parents and both-parent migrants. Children of one-parent migrants are less satisfied with where they live than other children.

Almost 40% of the children reported not being as close to one another in the family as they were before parents' migration. Children of migrant parents reported never or hardly ever sharing time together with their family compared to other children while the adult informants in migrant-parent households expressed lower family functioning than their counterparts in

almost all aspects. Children of both-parent migrants feel less independent and less happy than their counterparts. Consistently, children of migrant parents (both-parents or one-parent migrants) are reported to be less responsible, less independent, and less happy than children of non-migrant parents.

About 60% of the children reported being sad or missing their migrant parent(s), especially among girls, younger children, and if the mother is the migrant. Children's feelings of sadness and missing migrant parents were reported by adult informants to a lesser extent (27% if father is the migrant and 30% if the mother is the migrant).

The findings from this study indicate some possible consequences of parental migration. Policy makers should set up the plans or programs which more focus on the social impact of this type of migration, especially at the micro-level. The working as closed collaboration between related organizations is necessity.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Our study examines the impact of parental internal migration on health (physical and psychological) and well-being of children left behind, as well as its impact on the well-being of caretakers and on household socio-economic status. The study was conducted in rural areas of two provinces where internal migration is most prevalent. Included in the survey are 1,456 children aged 8-15, caretakers, and responsible adults in three types of households: both-parent migrant, one-parent migrant, and non-migrant parents. Note that the one-parent migrant households in our study mostly refer to father-only migrant households.

General Characteristics of Study Households, Parents, Caretakers, and Target Children

- The sample *households* are generally small. One-parent migrant households are found to have higher socioeconomic status than both-parent and non-migrant households. Most one-parent migrant households reported obtaining income from remittances (61%), while the main source of income among the majority of non-migrant households is agriculture (81%). Remittances and agriculture are of similar importance as the main source of income for both-parent migrant households.
- Migrant *parents* are younger and have higher education than non-migrant parents. Migrant parents shift into urban jobs. Non-working mothers are most prevalent in one-parent migrant households.
- In most cases, the mother is the primary *caretaker* in one-parent migrant and non-migrant households, while the maternal grandparent is the primary caretaker when both parents are absent. About two-thirds of caretakers have a part-time or full-time job outside the household.
- For the study *target children*, 57% are in the younger age group (8-12 years old) and 43% are aged 13-15 years old. Only 2% were not enrolled in school at the time of the survey.

Parental Migration Experience, Remittances, and Contact with Migrant Parents

- About three-fourths of fathers and about 60% of mothers have experienced being away from the child for at least a two-month period since the child was born. More than one-third of currently non-migrant fathers and about one-fifth of currently non-migrant mothers had ever spent time away from the child since he or she was born. For migrant parents, the average length of time away is around 8 years for both fathers and mothers.

- The majority of currently migrant parents live in Bangkok. The average length of time in the current destination is 10 years for both fathers and mothers, which is longer than the average length of separation from the child. This reflects the prevalence of migration before the child was born. The main reasons given for migration of parents are economically oriented. The decision regarding migration in most cases was made jointly by both parents, though joint decision making is more frequent for mother's migration than father's migration.
- Less than one-third of children reported that they were sad and missed their father and mother (27% and 30% respectively).
- Households receive remittances about once a month. Father-only migrant households receive remittances more frequently and in a larger amount than both-parent migrant households.
- Remittances are positively related to household wealth. The top three most frequent uses of remittances are children's education, basic household expenses (food/clothing/household goods), and food for children. The decision maker on the use of remittances is mainly the child's maternal grandmother. More than half reported that the remittances have "a lot of benefit" to the child.
- Almost all households remain in close contact with the migrant parents. Telephone is the most used method for keeping in touch. Visits by migrant parents to the home of origin are the second most important, followed by visits of the child to their migrant parents.

Children's Well-Being

- Most of the children reported that their *school performance* is about the same or better than their classmates. Children of non-migrant parents reported that they do better in school more frequently than those of migrant parents. The majority of children reported that they always or almost always enjoy school.
- About 8% of the target children show indications of having *psychological problems*. Younger children have psychological problems more frequently than older children. No difference was found between children of migrant and non-migrant parents. Psychological problems are negatively associated with household wealth, i.e., poorer children are more likely to show indications of psychological problems.
- For *physical health*, low birth weight was seen in 8% of target children, with no difference across genders, age groups, or household types. Almost all children had ever been immunized for at least one dose. The proportion of completion of all required vaccines is

92.2%, and is lowest in one-parent migrant households and highest in both-parent household. Almost two-thirds of the children were sick from minor illnesses in the last two weeks prior to the survey; there was no significant difference by migrant status.

- With regards to *health risk behavior*, 11% and 14% of children ever tried smoking and drinking alcohol, respectively. Boys are more likely than girls and older children than younger children to engage in smoking and drinking alcohol. Children in one-parent migrant households are most likely to be involved in alcohol drinking (19%), while those of both-parent migrant households are least likely (11%).
- The proportion of children who *watched pornographic pictures* increases with age (from about 41% for age 12 to 68% for age 15). Boys are more likely to look at these pictures than girls. Differences by household type are not found. Almost one third of older children reported that at least some of their male friends *ever had sexual experience*, while 24% reported at least some of their female friends ever had sexual experience.
- In terms of *life satisfaction*, from 5-12% of children reported being less satisfied with their family, friendship, school experience, themselves, where they live, and overall. Children of one-parent migrant households are less satisfied with where they live in the highest proportion.
- As for *care and discipline*, almost three-fourths of the children reported being always treated kindly by their caretaker, with no difference between those of migrant and non-migrant parents. More than half of the children reported being punished by caretakers for misbehaving by verbal scolding. For good behavior, receiving no reward is highest among both-parent migrant households.
- Compared to children of the same age, about half of caretakers reported that the child is better or much better in terms of *overall behavior, responsibility, independence, and happiness*, while about one-fourth reported they were better off financially. Children of non-migrant parents are reported to be more responsible, more independent, and happier than children of migrant parents.
- Almost all of the children help with *household chores*. About one-fourth of the children do any *work* outside the home to support household. More girls than boys do household chores but more boys than girls work to support household. Children of non-migrant parents do more household chores and work to support household, while those of both-parent migrant do the least.

- With regards to *family functioning*, children of migrant parents reported never or hardly ever sharing time together with family in the highest proportion. Responsible adults in migrant-parent households expressed lower family functioning than their counterparts in almost all aspects. The mean score of family functioning based on adult's report is higher among non-migrant households.
- When having problems with fathers, siblings, teachers, and caretakers, children reported turning to mother in the highest proportion. If they have problems with their mother, most would turn to their father. If they have problems with friends, most would turn to their teacher. And if they feel sad or lonely, they would turn to friends in most cases.

Caretaker's Well-Being

- About two-thirds of caretakers have medium life satisfaction scores. The caretakers in one-parent migrant household have both low and high life satisfaction scores in a higher proportion than counterparts.
- Almost two-fifths of caretakers show indications of having mental health problem. Caretakers from both-parent migrant households and older caretakers are more likely to have mental health problem than their counterparts. The higher the amount of remittances that the household receives, the less likely the caretakers are to have mental health problems.
- Almost all caretakers have someone to help them when they have problems, and usually this is their spouse or children. Female caretakers are more likely to have someone helping them than male caretakers. Caretakers from non-migrant parent households are less likely to get support from others when facing problems.

Perspectives on Parental Migration

- Adult respondents generally viewed parental migration as more negative than positive to *children.* Mother's migration is more negatively perceived than father's migration. Respondents from both-parent migrant households have more positive views on parental migration than one- and non-parent migrant households. The negative view of the impact of parental migration on the *family* is found in a lesser extent than to *children.*
- About half of the children view parental migration as good. Children of both-parent migrants are more likely to see the good side of parental migration than their counterparts.
- After parental migration, more than 40% see that their life is much easier than before. Half of the children see that they are better off financially after their parental migration.

Children of one-parent migrants reported this in a higher proportion. Half of the children report no difference after parental migration with regard to the feeling of closeness to one another in the family.

- Comparing themselves with children of non-migrant parents in the aspects of responsibility, independence, financial situation and feelings of happiness, more than half of the children perceive they are similar to others in all aspects. Children of both-parent migrants feel less independent and less happy than their counterparts.
- The majority of the children are aware of the reasons for their parents' migration. Half of them depict their education as the reason for father's and mother's migrations.
- About 60% of the children report being sad or missing their migrant parent(s), especially if the mother is the migrant; daughters and younger children are more likely to report missing their parents.

Policy Recommendations

- The government should develop policy and plans/programs which place more focus on the social impact of internal parental migration, especially at the micro-level, i.e. for families and individuals. The plan should include strategies which aim at mitigating the social cost of migration expressed by children left behind and their caretakers.
- The government should set up a mechanism at the local level to support migrant families in bringing up children left behind. The support could involve child care to facilitate caretakers to be able to work outside the home while taking care of children, and to relieve some of the responsibility of child care from time to time. Such support should be based on a deeper understanding of the psychological problems often faced by caretakers.
- The government should develop strategies that can help migrant families to optimize resources. The comparative affluence that can result from parents' remittances can bring about both positive and negative impacts on the children of migrants. While the resources can lead to a bright future, it can also put them at risk of unfavorable behaviors, e.g. smoking and drinking.
- The government should provide knowledge on money management for migrants' families through media such as leaflets, books, or organized trainings.
- In developing plans and programs, the government should seek cooperation and collaboration with related organizations, especially at the local level, such as the provincial social welfare department, schools, or community development organizations.

- The government should prepare family and children-related organizations to effectively address the issues that affect children and other family members, especially caretakers from migrant families.
- Plans and programs should target both-parent migrant households, as they seem to show more negative impacts of parents' absence compared to one-parent migrant households.
- The government should advise about the possible consequences of leaving children behind, both positive and negative, to both potential migrants and their families. As internal migration has become very common for individuals in the labor-force age group—for both males and females, and for non-parents and parents alike—individuals should be aware of and well-equipped with information of what could likely happen as they make migration decisions. This knowledge can help parents prepare for the consequences that their children and families may face.

Recommendations for Further Research

- Our study has revealed some possible consequences of parental migration. However, the measurement of some outcomes is subjective, e.g. school performance, while some were based on respondents' memory, e.g. experience of sickness in the past, the child's vaccination record. Future study should apply a more objective measurement for children's outcomes.
- Parental migration may have long-term consequences, and research with a cross-sectional design may not well capture these. Therefore, a longitudinal study is necessary for delving into impacts of parental migration on left-behind children.
- The impact of parental migration can be subtle and some issues may be too sensitive to be measured by quantitative methods alone. Thus, research using mixed methods of both quantitative and qualitative approaches is needed.
- Parental migration may impact children's well-being in multiple aspects. A comprehensive understanding of this issue needs studies that apply interdisciplinary approaches, where researchers with various areas of expertise can contribute to a complete picture.
- Very few existing studies include information from migrant parents into the picture. Therefore, further research should take into account the perspective of migrant parents.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

This report addresses the main elements of the study on "The Impact of Internal Migration on 'Children Left behind' in Thailand" conducted by the Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR), Mahidol University with support from UNICEF Thailand. This introduction chapter discusses the background and objectives of the research, previous studies in the Thai context, and the conceptual framework.

1.1 Background

Thailand, a middle-income country in Asia, has about 64 million people. Around one-fifth of its population is younger than 15, while 12% are aged 60 and older. More than one-third of the Thai population (36%) lives in urban areas. Over the past two decades, Thailand has experienced low fertility with a current total fertility rate (TFR) of 1.5 (below replacement level). The life expectancy is 76.3 for females and 69.5 for males (Institute for Population and Social Research, 2010). Though there are minorities, the Thai population is considered relatively homogeneous, especially in terms of language and religion. The majority of the Thai population speaks Thai and adheres to Buddhist ideology.

Thailand has been both a sending and receiving country. In addition to sending migrants overseas and receiving migrants from neighboring countries, over the past 30 years, internal migration, especially from the Northeast to the Bangkok metropolitan areas and surrounding provinces, and more recently from the South, has played an important role in Thailand's economic transformation. In the Thai context, working in other places than usual residence is common, with seasonal migration to Bangkok and other urban areas being common since the 19th century (Punpuing & Richter, 2011). That Bangkok and other metropolitan areas are the major destinations of the majority of internal migrants is a well-known fact. Data from the National Statistical Office suggest that around 12% of total in-migrants moved to Bangkok and other metropolitan areas[1]. As result, internal migrants comprise a substantial proportion of Bangkok residents. Research documents that around one-third of the population of Bangkok is composed of migrants from other provinces (Archavanitkul et al., 1993).

While studies of migration—to understand mobility patterns, why people move, and migration consequences on receiving places—have been ample, relatively little attention has been paid to assessing its impact on sending communities generally, and more specifically on children left behind by migrating parents. Data at the national level show that the percentage of children under age 18 living with grandparents and without both parents has increased in the past two decades, from about 2% in 1986 to 8% in 2006[2]. Answers to questions such as what is the psycho-social impact of migration on children left behind, and are these children more likely to engage in risky behaviors than their counterparts, remain vague. Providing these answers is important in designing and implementing policies in order to maximize the positive effects of migration and minimize its negative effects on migrants, their families, and communities of origin and destination.

Given the magnitude of internal migration flows and the positive and negative impacts they may have, the Institute for Population and Social Research (IPSR), Mahidol University received funding from UNICEF Thailand to conduct a research project that collects quantitative data on the impact of parental internal migration on those left behind, paying special attention to children and their caretakers. The results of this project, in addition to Thailand policy impact, would also

[1] Calculated from NSO data in 2000.

[2] Calculated from the Socioeconomic Survey of Thailand in 1986 and 2006.

be part of a larger global initiative undertaken by UNICEF on researching the impact of migration on children left behind.

The overall objective of this study is to investigate impacts of parental internal migration on health and well-being of children left behind. We are particularly interested in physical health and psycho-social dimensions of children's well-being. We further explore whether impacts of parental internal migration on children are mediated by the well-being of caretakers, household socio-economic status, and community characteristics. We are interested in capturing the well-being of older children not only in terms of their physical health, but also in the psycho-social dimension. Therefore, only children aged 8-15 are included in our study.

1.2 Impact of Migration on Children Left Behind in Thailand

Previous studies in other contexts suggest that living separately from parents affects the well-being of migrants' children in two ways. A study on the impact of migration on Mexican children's educational aspirations and performance (Kandel and Kao, 2001) shows that migration allows parents to provide more education to children and reduces the need for children's labor. At the same time, labor migration also has negative impacts on children as it provides an example of an alternative route to economic mobility. Kandel and Kao's study (2001) found that high levels of U.S. migration are associated with lower aspirations to attend a university.

In Thailand, despite the fact that migration is a common life event for many people, research on the impact of migration on the left-behind family has been limited. Recent studies on migration extensively focus on illegal immigrants and their children (from Myanmar, Lao PDR, and Cambodia), who generally live in much poorer conditions than Thai internal migrants and children left behind by them. Among a few studies addressing the impact of migration on children left behind, most are small-scale. Very few looked at mainstream migrants or compared migrants with the non-migrant population. Some existing studies seem to suggest that children of Thai migrant parents do not appear to encounter greater difficulties compared to other children. Another limitation of previous studies lies in the inability to distinguish effects of internal and international migration.

Findings from existing studies in Thailand reveal negative, positive, and mixed impacts of migration on the family left behind, especially with regard to this proposed study's interest, children. A study on intelligence development among 558 school-age children and adolescents and their caretakers in four provinces (Nanthamongkolchai et al., 2006) is one of the studies that showed negative outcomes from migration. The researchers explored migration impact on children's IQ, morbidity in the past six months, nutritional status, and development. The study finds a negative relationship between parental migration and child development as well as inappropriate child care, and found that children who live in households that have migrants are 1.4 times more likely to have lower than average IQ than their counterparts.

Past research also shows that migration is associated with family instability. A study by Puapongsakorn and Sangthanapurk (1988) suggests that international migration is related to marital disruption and a rise in child truancy. Another small qualitative study suggested the burden of taking on a caregiver role among grandparents of internal migrants who left behind small children, especially when remittances are relatively small (Jampaklay, 2009).

A few studies show no impact of migration. Jones and Kittisuksatit (2003) compare outcomes for overseas migrants and non-migrants and find no significant differences in marital disruption among households without migrants, with current migrants, and with returned migrants. The same study also indicates little evidence that children left behind by migrant parents experience a higher incidence of social problems. The authors reported that respondents saw international migration as an effective way of meeting basic material needs and as a precondition of what they

conceive as quality of life. However, the study also notes that respondents regard international migration of parents as an experience that both parents and children would rather avoid.

The study by Nanthamongkolchai et al. (2006) indicates no relationship between parental migration and nutritional status or child's illness in the past six months. It seems that whether or not migration has impacted the family left behind or children left behind, to be specific, depends on, among other things, what aspects of well-being are examined.

In a quantitative analysis using a longitudinal dataset, Kanchanaburi DSS, Jampaklay (2006) shows mixed impacts of parental absence on children's educational attainment. The analysis reveals a negative effect of the long-term absence of the mother, a negative effect of the short-term absence of the father, but a positive effect of the long-term absence of the father. Results are thus mixed, lending importance to the duration of absence as well as who is absent (mother or father). The study, however, could not detect different effects of parental migration from other types of parental absence, i.e. marital dissolution, due to data limitations.

While the studies described above suggest negative consequences of migration, positive impacts of migration on the left-behind family are also found. In their qualitative study, Knodel and Saengtienchai (2005) show that internal migration of children has positive impacts on parents of migrants and that extended family relations are maintained over geographical distances because of modern advances in communication technology. The study concludes that distance does not prevent financial assistance, emotional ties and social exchange between parents and adult children. The study, however, is concerned that the current low fertility level of Thai society may pose new challenges to maintaining a 'modified extended family' and could substantially change the implications of migration for the well-being of elderly parents.

Positive impacts of migration are also indicated in a study by Abas et al. (2009). Out-migration of all children, compared with out-migration of some or no children, was independently associated with less depression in parents. The association remained after taking social support, parent characteristics, health and wealth into account. Researchers suggest that parents with all children out-migrated received more economic remittances and they perceived support to be as good as that of those with children close by.

The most recent and most comprehensive survey is CHAMPSEA (Child Health and Migrant Parents in Southeast Asia), a comparative study conducted in Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Philippines. Especially in Thailand, the study is the first population-based survey focusing on the impact of parents' international migration on the health of children left behind. The study hypothesizes different impacts of maternal and paternal migration on sons and daughters and on younger and older children. It uses mixed methods including a survey of 1,000 households (migrant and non-migrant) in two of the highest-level sending areas in Thailand and in-depth interviews of 41 caregivers. Some observations from interviews with community leaders provide some insights, however. According to community informants, delinquency and deviant behavior among youth, mostly raised by grandparents, are due in part to a lack of parental supervision because of migration. Informants also felt that left-behind mothers tend to over-protect their children. Remittances, generally seen as the main benefit of migration for the family left behind, could also spoil migrants' children. Therefore, in the view of community informants, children of migrant parents, especially paternal migrants, are perceived to have more problems due at least in part to the money they receive from migrant parents. Despite community leaders' views of potentially negative impacts of overseas migration, they also pointed out that the return migrants and families with overseas migrants themselves feel that the positive impact outweighs any negative consequences.

Although CHAMPSEA may be the most comprehensive study undertaken to date in the Thai context, its major drawback is that it does not take into account the effects of parents' internal migration. Despite the prevalence of this phenomenon and its potential impact, especially since

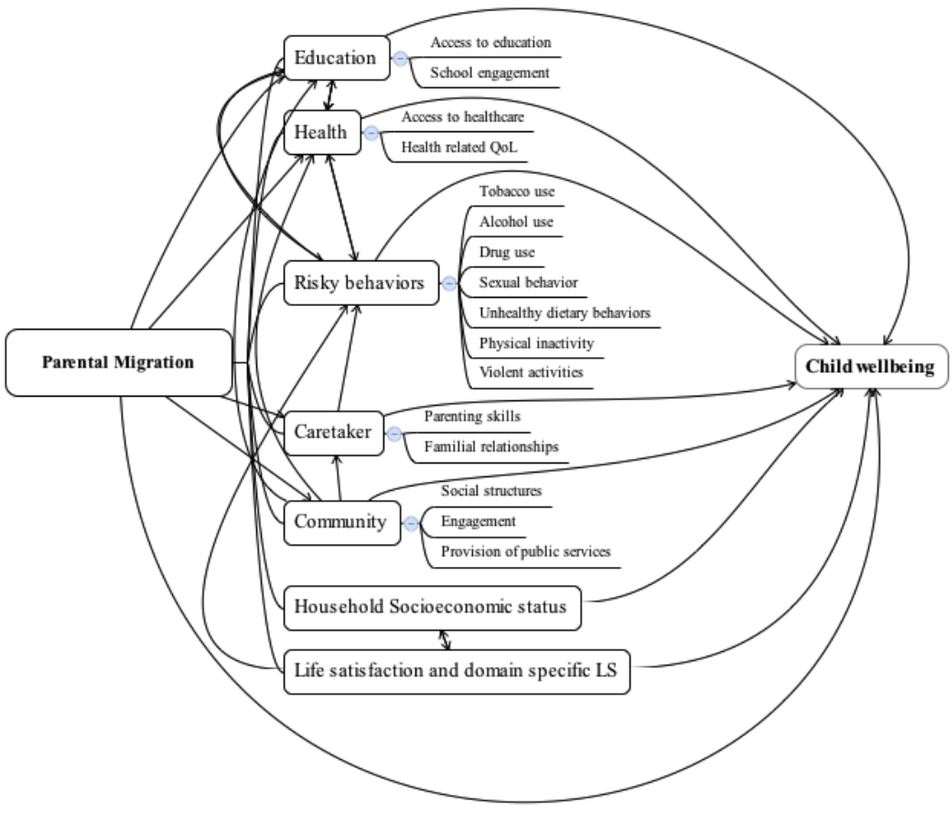
internal migration tends to be selective of disadvantaged people, systematic studies on the family left behind, including children, have been scarce. In fact, primary evidence (e.g. in CHAMPSEA study) suggests that most informants are much more concerned with the well-being of internal migrants' children than of the children of overseas migrants. Thus, while the findings of the CHAMPSEA study on international migration will make a valuable contribution to our understanding, internal migration and its impact on the family left behind can no longer be overlooked.

1.3 Conceptualization of the Impact of Migration on Children Left Behind

What seems clear is that migration may bring about both positive and negative impacts on human well-being, as suggested both in Thailand and in other contexts (e.g. Kandel and Kao, 2001). Studying the impact of the migration of parents on children, adolescents and caretakers left behind from a material and psycho-social perspective allows us to uncover these mechanisms. Focusing on only one dimension – either material or psycho-social – would give a biased assessment of the impact of migration on those left behind, and as a consequence the potential effectiveness of public policies to address the issue is diminished.

Migration may affect children, adolescents, and caretakers through a multiplicity of mechanisms. Public policies seeking to minimize the negative impact of migration, while maximizing its positive effects, should highlight the distinct causal mechanisms by which each group is affected when designing and determining policy, monitoring its implementation and evaluating its impact. Figure 1 illustrates some of the mechanisms by which parental migration may impact the well-being of children left behind using a child rights-based approach derived from the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Figure 1.1 The impact of migration on children left behind: Potential causal mechanisms



Source: UNICEF document (5 Feb. 2010)

CHAPTER 2

METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design for the study, including the target population, sampling strategy, research tools, and the fieldwork methods.

2.1 Target Population

- **Migrant Household:** A household (defined as those who eat out of the same pot and sleep in the same dwelling) with at least one child (8-15 years of age[3]) who has at least one parent currently living in a different province for at least 6 months.
- **Non-migrant Household:** A household with at least one child (8-15 years of age) who has both parents living in the household, with neither parent ever moving away from the current household in the past 6 months.

Based on the definition above, households are classified into 4 types:

- Type 1: Households with both parents of children aged 8-15 currently away for at least 6 months at the time of the survey,
- Type 2: Households with the father of children aged 8-15 currently away for at least 6 months at the time of the survey,
- Type 3: Households with the mother of children aged 8-15 currently away for at least 6 months at the time of the survey, and
- Type 4: Households with both parents of children aged 8-15 currently living with the children and never moving away from them in the past 6 months.

It is worth noting our justification for limiting the age of target children to 8-15 in our study. While it is important to understand parental migration's impact on children younger than 8 years old, and especially preschool-age children, our particular interest for this study is on physical health and psycho-social dimensions of children's well-being. Not only are these dimensions easier to measure in older children, but focusing on older children makes it possible to obtain information based on the child's perspective—that is, to interview the children themselves. Therefore, only children aged 8-15 are included in our study.

2.2 Sampling Strategy

The survey was conducted in two regions where migration is relatively more prevalent, i.e. the North and the Northeast. Steps of study sampling are detailed below:

1. For each region, a study province was chosen with a high proportion of households containing internal migrant parents (mother/father/both). Based on the Multiple Indicators Cluster Survey 3 (MICS3) data conducted in Thailand during 2005-2006, the provinces with a high proportion of households with migrant parents in the two regions are *Khonkaen* for the Northeast and *Phitsanulok* for the North. For this reason these two provinces were chosen as study sites at the regional level.
2. For each province, a district was identified according to the estimated prevalence of households with internal migration experience, based on available existing data and interviews with key informants and local officers in each province.
3. In a selected district, identify a sub-district and within the sub-district villages of relatively high prevalence of households with internal migration experience.

[3] We limit the age of the children to 15 instead of 17 as suggested by UNICEF's definition of children. This is because children after 15 years of age, especially in rural areas, usually leave household either to study in upper secondary schools outside their home region or to work elsewhere, which will reduce the fieldwork's feasibility to find eligible households.

4. Beginning from villages with the highest prevalence rate of internal migration, screen households with a short screening questionnaire and prepare a list identifying all households as migrant or non-migrant households. This method yielded a rough figure of the proportion of the four types of households specified above. We also obtained initial information on approximately how many villages would be needed and how long the fieldwork would take to meet the target sample size, as described below.

2.3 Target and Actual Sample Size

We initially aimed to survey about 800 households in each region with about 200 households for each household type. In the actual fieldwork, however, we faced difficulties in finding households with only the mother as migrant at the time of the survey (household Type 3). Thus, later in our analysis we combined household Types 2 and 3 to be one-parent migrant households (either father or mother). In total, we completed 1,456 households, 746 in the Northeastern Province and 710 in the Northern Province. Among them, 679 households had both parents migrants (Type 1), 207 households had one parent migrant (Types 2 and 3), and 570 households had both parents usually resident (Type 4).

We also planned to have a gender balance of the target children as well as the young (8-12 years old) and old children (13-15 year old). In detail, the actual sample size for each region is as follows:

Khonkaen

Household type	Male		Female		Total
	8-12	13-15	8-12	13-15	
Type 1: Both parents migrants	118	68	103	74	363
Type 2: Father migrant	28	20	16	22	86
Type 3: Mother migrant	3	3	2	0	8
Type 4: Usually-resident parents	73	72	73	71	289
Total	385		361		746

Phitsanulok

Household type	Male		Female		Total
	8-12	13-15	8-12	13-15	
Type 1: Both parents migrants	101	58	107	50	316
Type 2: Father migrant	25	26	38	15	104
Type 3: Mother migrant	3	1	1	4	9
Type 4: Usually-resident parents	70	70	69	72	281
Total	354		356		710

2.4 Research Instrument

For each household, questionnaires were developed for the household, caretaker, and one child aged 8 years and older. The questionnaires were developed based on the MICS3 survey as well as the CHAMPSEA study (see details at http://www.populationasia.org/CHAMPSEA.htm).

The questionnaires pay specific attention to issues of health-related quality of life, degree of life satisfaction, migratory information, and remittances. Based on the conceptual framework mentioned in Chapter 1, the survey covers the following aspects for children, households, and caretakers at the individual level:

Children:

- Children's characteristics (age, sex)
- Life satisfaction; care and discipline (children's report)
- Family functions (children's perspective)
- Social support
- Health (physical health, health risk behavior, sexual behavior (12-15years only))
- Children's education; school performance (children's perspective); enjoyment of school; children's domestic responsibility; work
- Perspectives on parental migration including opinions towards parental migration in general (children's perspective, knowledge/reaction of migrants' children on their parents' migration, contact with migrant parents) and opinion of own parents' migration (compare before/after parental migration, with other children)

Caretakers:

- Caretaker' characteristics
- Children's well-being (children's education; school performance (caretaker's perspective), SDQ)
- Care and discipline (caretaker report)
- Children's health (caretaker report)
- Caretaker's well-being (life satisfaction (caretaker's perspective); SRQ20; support from others)

Households:

- Household members
- Parents' characteristics (age, education, occupation)
- Socio-economic status (wealth, source of income)
- Opinion towards parental migration in general
- Parental occupation, parental migration history, contact with migrant parents
- Remittances from migrant parents (money + goods)
- Remittances from other household members; remittances (money + goods)
- Family functions (respondent adult's perspective)

Details of the 3 questionnaires can be found at:

http://www.ipsr.mahidol.ac.th/ipsr/Research.aspx?status=1

2.5 Fieldwork Methods

Pretesting of draft questionnaire:

We conducted two pretests in the following areas

- Kanchanaburi (August, 2010): a village in Nong Pra-du sub-district, Lao Kwan district and a village in Ta-kram En sub-district, Ta Maka district
- Buriram (September, 2010): a village in Sadao sub-district, Plubplachai district

Household screening:

Prior to the actual fieldwork, we did a household screening using a short questionnaire to get a rough number of eligible households, to plan in advance how many villages would be needed to complete the target sample size, and to estimate how long the fieldwork would take. The household screening was conducted primarily using household family folders collected by the

sub-district health center. The household screening was conducted in early September, 2010 for Khonkaen and in late September, 2010 for Phitsanulok.

Field interviewers and supervisors:

In each province, the fieldwork team consisted of 8 interviewers and 2 supervisors. In Khonkaen, all interviewers were Northeastern locals and held a bachelor degree. In Phitsanulok, the interviewers were year 4 undergraduate students of Naresuan University. Most of them were Phitsanulok residents, while a few were from other provinces. Most supervisors and interviewers had some research experience prior to the study.

Interviewer training:

Separate interviewer trainings were conducted in each province. In Khonkaen, the training was conducted during October 14-18, 2010. In Phitsanulok, the training was organized during November7-12, 2010. The training covered background and objectives of the study and details on each question of the three sets of questionnaires. The training also included one day of interview practice in a village of the study site.

Fieldwork timing:

The actual fieldwork was conducted from October 20 to December 16, 2010 (58 days) for Khonkaen and from November 14, 2010 to January 25, 2011 (73 days) for Phitsanulok.

Problems during the fieldwork:

As mentioned earlier in the target and actual sample size section, the main problem in the fieldwork concerned difficulties to complete the target sample size for one-parent households, especially mother migrants. Apparently, one-parent migrant households with young children at our eligible age are not prevalent. While we aimed for 400 households of one-parent households for each region, we only completed 207 households in both regions. Although our experience for the CHAMPSEA project warned us in advance that we might encounter this problem, we were optimistic that the problem might only apply for overseas migration. However, even for internal migration, father-only or mother-only migrants with young children are usually rare, especially mother-only migrants.

Except for this issue, the fieldwork went smoothly. We received good cooperation from community leaders and eligible households. In fact, the household screening conducted prior to the actual survey was proved helpful as it helped inform villagers in advance and introduced the research team to the villages.

Some general problems during the fieldwork concerned the timing of the interview. For some respondents whose working hours are unpredictable, it was quite difficult to make an appointment for the interview. Making appointment to interview the target child was even more difficult, as nearly all children were in school so only available in late afternoon after school. They also have various activities to do after school, e.g. homework, tutoring, playing sport. Thus, only a little time was given for the interview.

Research collaborators in the study areas:

Our fieldwork received helpful assistance from local health organizations and the local university. These are the Namphong District Hospital, Khonkaen, Wangtong District public health office, Phitsanulok, and Naresuan University. Their assistance includes providing venues for interviewer training, coordinating with study villages, and recruiting interviewers for the fieldwork.

2.6 Data Management and Data Analyses

Coding and data entry were carried out immediately after the completion of the fieldwork, followed by systematic data editing and cleaning. Data analysis was conducted using statistical software widely used in academic research. Our study presents findings based mainly on descriptive analyses. Bivariate analyses showing key characteristics of households, target children, and caretakers by type of household are presented. As our sampling includes children of two age groups as well as boys and girls in about the same proportion, we analyzed data by age group and sex of children. In addition, where appropriate, findings are also shown by study setting. Outcomes for the household, target children, and caretakers, hypothesized to be associated with parental migration, are also presented across type of household, children's age group and sex. The chi-square test was used to examine whether there are significant differences in outcomes by parental migration status.

2.7 Ethical Review

It is a requirement of Mahidol University that all research studies conducted under its auspices are reviewed by the MU-IRB (Mahidol University-Institutional Review Board) to assure that they meet international ethical standards for research on human subjects. For our study, the fact that children were interviewed and the sensitivity of the questions about health risk behavior made such review particularly important. Our study was approved by MU-IRB before the start of fieldwork.

In practice, we emphasized our interviewers to strictly follow standard rules of research ethics when conducting interviews, including respect to respondents, privacy, confidentiality, and obtaining informed consent to participate in the study. Interviewers gave respondents a Participant Information Sheet and went over this with each respondent as part of the consent process before the interview. For child respondents, both consent and assent forms were taken. Consent was given for all children participating in the study by a parent or other adult family member responsible for the child. The study also requires an assent from all respondents under 18 years of age, and on whose behalf a responsible adult has given prior informed consent. Interviewers will sign assent forms to confirm that assent has been given before any interview takes place.

2.8 Limitations of the Study

While this is the first study in Thailand specifically and carefully designed to investigate impacts of parental migration on children left behind in particular and on households and caretakers in general, a number of limitations of the study should be noted. Firstly, the study is conducted in two settings with a high prevalence of internal migration. The population in these areas frequently moves to work elsewhere for economically oriented reasons, and leaving children behind in the care of others is considered common. Thus, findings cannot be generalized to other settings in Thailand with different contexts. Secondly, as noted earlier, our target children are confined to those aged 8-15 only. Findings of this study, therefore, should not be taken as applicable to children of other age groups. Thirdly, no causal relationship can be assumed between parental migration and outcomes for children, households and caretakers, as the study is cross-sectional and may not take into consideration other possibly relevant factors affecting these outcomes. And lastly, it should be kept in mind that most of the measures of children's outcomes, in terms of physical and psycho-social dimensions, are self-reported. Thus, it is possible that findings from more objective measurements may give a different picture.

CHAPTER 3

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF STUDY HOUSEHOLDS, PARENTS, CARETAKERS, AND CHILDREN

This chapter describes basic information about the target children's household, including characteristics of their parents, caretakers and themselves. These background data of the study children reflect differences in significant characteristics by their residence and living arrangements.

3.1 Household Characteristics (members, wealth and sources of income)

Household characteristics include the number of household members who currently live in the household, household socio-economic status as measured by the wealth index, and sources of household income (Table 3.1).

3.1.1 Household members

Table 3.1 Number of household members by study setting and household type

Household member	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent Migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Less than 4 members	31.1	26.5	35.9	36.2	52.2	17.4
4 members	30.5	29.6	31.4	27.7	19.3	37.9
5 members	19.6	20.6	18.5	18.3	13.5	23.3
6 members and more	18.8	23.2	14.2	17.8	15.0	21.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2 = 28.19, p=0.000$		$\chi^2 = 109.62, p = 0.000$		
Mean number of household members	4.3	4.5	4.1	4.2	3.9	4.6
Median number of household members	4	4	4	4	3	4
Minimum	2	2	2	2	2	3
Maximum	11	11	11	11	10	11

Note: Number of household members who are currently living in the household at the time of the survey

The mean number of household members who are currently living in the household at the time of the survey is 4.3, which is higher than the family size of Thai households in general i.e. 3.2 (NSO, 2011). Although size does not differ much across household types, the average number of household members of one-parent households is less than the other household types. Overall, the largest family in the sample is composed of 11 people in the household while the smallest households have only 2 people.

Overall, households with 4 people or less account for two-thirds of all study households. The study province in the Northeastern region appears to have larger households than those in the North. Forty four percent of Northeastern households have 5 or more members compared to 33% of households in the North. Household size is also different by type of household. Non-migrant households are larger than migrant households. About half of households that have one parent

living away from home are composed of less than 4 household members, compared to 17% of non-migrant households.

3.1.2 Household socio-economic data

Socio-economic status of the study households is measured using the household wealth index. In addition, sources of household income can indirectly indicate the economic security of the household.

a) Household wealth index

The wealth index is calculated by conducting a principal components analysis (PCA) on household assets such as the number of beds, possession of a gas stove, washing machine, computer, etc. Results of the PCA were used to create a wealth index which was divided into three categories (Rustin and Johnson, 2004). Households are considered poor if they are in the bottom 40% (two bottom quintiles), middle if in the middle 40% (third and fourth quintiles), and rich if in the top 20% (fifth quintile).

Table 3.2 Household wealth index by study setting and household type

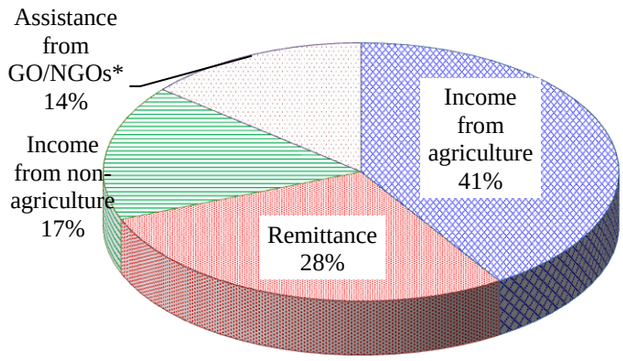
Wealth Index	Overall	Household type		
		Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Poor	40.0	41.8	29.5	41.8
Middle	40.0	41.8	37.7	38.6
Rich	20.0	16.4	32.9	19.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2=29.53,\ p = 0.000$		

There is no significant difference in the household wealth index among households in the North-eastern and Northern samples (not shown in the table). When taking household type into consideration, the study finds that one-parent migrant households seem to be in a better economic position compared to the other two types of households. About 30% of one-parent migrant households are classified as poor, while non-migrant households and both-parent migrant households account for the same proportion, 42% (Table 3.2).

b) Sources of household income

Sources of household income can indirectly reflect the economic security of the household. The study households were asked to name up to three sources of income. Therefore, for each household, more than one source of income is possible. The most prevalent source of income is agricultural sector (about two-fifths or 41 percent) (Figure 3.1). Remittance is the second most reported income source, 28 percent. It is interesting to find that 14% of study households get income from GOs or NGOs. However, we do not know whether this is the main source of income since this question was not specifically asked.

Figure 3.1 Sources of household income (all sources)



Note: *Includes money allowance for the elderly, for disabled and assistance from Christian Children's Fund (CCF) Foundation.

If we look only the first response on source of household income, half of the study households can be classified in the agricultural sector; but the findings are slightly different across the study settings (Table 3.3). Households in the Northeast province are more likely to list remittances as their first source of income than households in the North (34% and 26% respectively). By household type, it is not surprising that 80% of non-migrant households get income from agriculture, compared to 38% and 24% of both-parent and one- parent migrant households respectively. It is also found that one-parent migrant households are more likely to list remittances as their first source of income than other household types. Interestingly, the proportion of remittances as the source of household income among migrant households is somewhat different, 61 and 45% of one-parent and both-parent migrant households respectively. Also, both-parent migrant households are about evenly split in reporting remittances and income from agriculture as their first source of income, 45 and 38% respectively.

Table 3.3 Source of household income by study setting and household type (first response)

First sources of household income	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Income from agriculture	52.9	49.6	56.3	38.0	24.2	81.1
Remittance	29.9	33.7	25.9	44.6	61.4	0.9
Income from non-agriculture[1]	12.5	11.4	13.7	9.1	14.0	16.0
Assistance from GO/NGOs[2]	4.7	5.4	4.1	8.3	0.5	2.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2=13.15, p=0.004$		$\chi^2=470.71, p=0.000$		

Note: [1] Includes labor in non-agricultural work, wages or salary income of household members, and rental income.
[2] Includes money allowance for the elderly, for disabled and assistance from CCF Foundation.

3.2 Parents' Characteristics

This section describes the main characteristics of the target child's (TC) parents. Age and education of the parents are first presented to see the background of the TC's father and mother separately. Then parents' occupations including job at the time of the child's birth and current job at the time of the survey are illustrated.

3.2.1 Age and educational attainment of TC's father

The average age of TC's father is 40.6 years old, and this is not much different across household types (Table 3.4). Approximately 60% of fathers are in the 35-44 age group. It is interesting to find that fathers in both-parent migrant households are more likely to be younger than fathers in other household types: almost one-fourth of them are less than 35 years old (23%) while for fathers in other types this is less than 10 percent. Moreover, one-third of fathers in one-parent migrant and non-migrant households are 45 years old or more, compared to 11% of fathers in both-migrant households.

Table 3.4 Age and education of TC's father by household type

Age of TC's father	Overall	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrants
<35	14.8	22.6	6.8	8.4
35-44	62.4	66.1	60.0	59.0
45+	22.8	11.2	33.3	32.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(1,453)	(676)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2 = 129.44,\ p= 0.000$		
Mean age of TC's father	40.6	38.5	42.6	42.5
Median age of TC's father	40	38	42	42
Minimum	24	24	31	27
Maximum	70	64	67	70
Education of TC's father				
Primary or lower	68.1	63.2	57.0	78.1
Secondary	23.6	29.2	22.2	17.5
Higher than secondary	8.2	7.7	20.8	4.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2 = 82.37,\ p = 0.000$		

Note: * 3 missing cases

Although most fathers did not complete education beyond the primary level, the proportion with lower educational attainment is highest among non-migrant fathers (78 percent) (Table 3.4). Fathers in one-parent migrant households have higher educational attainment than fathers of other household types. They constitute the highest proportion finishing higher than secondary level (21%) compared to less than 10% of fathers in other household types.

3.2.2 Age and educational attainment of TC's mother

The average age of mothers is 37.5 years old, slightly less than father's average age i.e. 40.6. Similar to fathers, mothers from households where both parents are migrants are younger than mothers of other types of household; 44% of mothers in both–parent households are less than 35 years old compared to about 20% of mothers in one- and non- migrant households.

Table 3.5 Age and education of TC's mother by household type

Age of TC's mother	Overall	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrants
<35	31.5	43.8	19.8	21.2
35-44	57.1	52.4	61.4	61.2
45+	11.4	3.8	18.8	17.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(1,453)	(676)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2 = 128.45, \ p = 0.000$		
Mean age of TC's mother	37.5	35.7	39.5	39.3
Median age of TC's mother	37	35	39	39
Minimum	22	22	26	25
Maximum	64	58	64	59
Education of TC's mother				
Primary or lower	72.0	63.5	65.7	84.4
Secondary	22.2	30.0	20.8	13.3
Higher than secondary	5.8	6.5	13.5	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2 = 93.16, \ p = 0.000$		

Note: * 3 missing cases

Overall, almost three fourths of mothers did not study beyond the primary level (72%). When taking household type into account, non-migrant mothers have the highest proportion with no higher education. Education of mothers in one-parent migrant households is higher than mothers of both-parent migrant and non-migrant households, 14%, 7% and 2% respectively. This is a similar pattern to that of the fathers.

3.2.3 Parents' occupation

We first look at parents' job at the time of the child's birth and then current job at the time of the survey.

Parents' occupation when the child was born

At the birth of the target child, the highest proportion of ***fathers*** worked in skilled agricultural, forestry, and fishing, about one-third of the sample (Table 3.6). The second largest proportion of fathers (about one-fifth) worked as plant and machine operators and assemblers. Another one-fifth (19%) worked as craft and related trade workers. Fourteen percent worked at low-skilled jobs including cleaners and helpers, agricultural, forestry and fishery labourers, labourers in mining, construction, manufacturing and transport, etc.

Comparing father's job between the two study sites indicates that fathers in the Northern province worked in the skilled agricultural sector and as craft and related trade workers in a higher proportion than in the Northeastern province. Fathers in the Northeastern province work as plant and machine operators and assemblers or in low-skilled occupations in higher proportions than fathers in the Northern province.

When taking into account type of household, the father's job when the target child was born also varies across household type. The differences are between migrant households and non-migrant households, while both-parent migrant and one-parent migrant households are pretty much similar. More than half of fathers in non-migrant households worked in the skilled agricultural sector, while less than one fifth of fathers in migrant households did so. Fathers in migrant

households work as plant and machine operators/assemblers and as craft and related trades workers more than two times more than those in non-migrant households.

Table 3.6 Father's type of job at the child's birth by study setting and household type

Father's type of job when the target child was born	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fish	33.5	31.0	36.1	18.7	14.5	57.9
Plant and machine operators, and assembler	20.5	23.9	16.9	28.7	27.5	8.1
Craft and related trades workers	18.5	15.2	22.1	23.6	23.7	10.7
Elementary occupations	14.4	17.2	11.6	13.4	10.1	17.2
Other	13.1	12.9	13.4	15.6	24.2	6.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi2$=29.0, p=0.000		*$\chi2$=319.5, p=0.000*		

For ***mothers***, slightly more than one-third worked in the skilled agricultural/forestry/fish sector at the time of the target child's birth (Table 3.7). Given that the study setting is generally rural, the information is not surprising. About 17% of them were plant and machine operators or assemblers. Mothers who were full-time housewives when giving birth to the child account for about 16%. Mothers in the North worked in the agricultural sector in a higher proportion than do mothers in the Northeast. Across household types, mothers in non-migrant parent households worked in the agricultural sector much more than migrant households (59% vs. 19-20%). For both-parent migrant households, mothers worked in factories in the highest proportion (29%), while for one-parent migrant households, the highest proportion of mothers were full time housewives (34%).

Table 3.7 Mother's job at the child's birth by study setting and household type

Mother's job when the child was born	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fish	34.9	32.7	37.2	19.6	19.3	58.8
Plant and machine operators, and assembler	16.8	19.7	13.8	28.6	14.5	3.7
No job/housewife	16.3	17.3	15.2	13.4	34.3	13.2
Elementary occupations	14.4	15.0	13.7	14.7	9.2	15.8
Other	10.9	11.3	10.6	14.1	16.4	5.1
Craft and related trades workers	6.7	4.0	9.6	9.6	6.3	3.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi2$=27.9, p=0.000		*$\chi2$=367.8, p=0.000*		

Parents' current occupation

Type of current job of the ***father*** at time of the survey is similar to their job when the target child was born (Table 3.8). However, compared to their job at the time of the child's birth, the proportion is lower for the agricultural sector and craft and related trades work, while slightly higher for plant and machine operators/assemblers. The same patterns are also found across study settings as well as household types. Evidently, working in the agricultural sector is somewhat decreasing, while other types of job including manager, professional, technicians and associate professionals, clerical support workers, service and sales workers are increasing. This change may be associated with the age of the father or to changes in the economy since the time of the child's birth, and to the fact that the fathers have migrated from rural to urban areas.

Looking at the current job of ***mothers***, the patterns are not different from fathers (Table 3.9). Note that for both occupation at the child's birth and current occupation, the proportion of mothers who do not work or who are full time housewives is higher in one-parent households compared to both-parent migrant and non-migrant households. It is also noticeable that working in the agricultural sector substantially increases between the time of the child's birth and the time of the survey, likely indicating that the mothers took time away from their agricultural work for childbearing.

Table 3.8 Father's current type of job by study setting and household type

Father's type of current job	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fish	30.0	28.7	31.4	2.4	3.9	72.5
Plant and machine operators, and assembler	21.5	25.5	17.3	33.7	33.8	2.5
Craft and related trades workers	16.3	14.1	18.6	24.5	22.7	4.2
Elementary occupations	15.3	15.4	15.2	17.7	12.1	13.7
Other	16.9	16.4	17.5	21.8	27.5	7.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=17.0, p=0.002		*χ^2=864.5, p=0.000*		

Table 3.9 Mother's current type of job by study setting and household type

Mother's current job	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fish	33.2	32.7	33.8	1.8	29.0	72.3
Elementary occupations	19.0	16.8	21.4	23.1	18.8	14.2
Plant and machine operators, and assembler	17.0	21.7	12.0	33.6	5.8	1.2
Craft and related trades workers	6.6	4.6	8.7	11.8	3.9	1.4
No job/housewife	5.8	4.0	7.8	4.3	19.3	2.8
Other	18.3	20.2	16.3	25.5	23.2	8.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi 2=45.9$, p=0.000		*$\chi 2=870.6$, p=0.000*		

3.3 Characteristics of Primary Caretaker (PC)

3.3.1 Relationship of primary caretaker with target child

Overall, half of the target children have their biological mother and/or father as their primary caretaker (Table 3.10). Maternal grandparent(s) are the second most frequent caretaker of target children at 31 percent. About 80% of primary caretakers are female (not presented in the table). This reflects the gender influence on the household division of labor, in that women are the primary caretakers of household members.

However, when both parents of the target child are away from home, maternal grandparents (parents of TC's mother) constitute the highest proportion of caretakers at 61% while paternal grandparents (parents of TC's father) constitute the second most frequent group at 24 percent. In both-parent migrant household, aunts, siblings, and other relatives also play a crucial role in taking care of children accounting for 16 percent. This group includes mostly aunts (parents' sister) and TC's older sister and other relatives. Not surprisingly, the biological mother or father is the major caretaker of children in one-parent or non-migrant households, 87 and 94% respectively.

Table 3.10 Relationship of target child with primary caretaker by type of household

Relationship	Overall	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Biological father/mother	49.0	0.0	87.0	93.7
Maternal grandfather/mother	30.8	60.8	7.2	3.7
Paternal grandfather/mother	12.0	23.6	3.4	1.4
Aunts, siblings/other relatives	8.1	15.6	2.4	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2=12.0e+03$, p=0.000		

3.3.2 Age of primary caretaker

It is found that the average age of caretakers is 49 years old. The oldest is 87 while the youngest is 14 years old. The oldest caretaker is TC's great grandparent, while the youngest is TC's older sister. According to household type, caretakers in both-parent migrant households tend to be older, 58 years old compared to 42 years old in other types of household (Table 3.11). This corresponds to the fact that most caretakers in this household type are grandparents. However, the findings also show that a few of caretakers are very young. As shown in Table 3.11, the age of the youngest caretaker from each household type is 16, 17, and 14 years old. All of them are brother or sister of the TC.

Table 3.11 Age of primary caretaker by type of parent

	Overall	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Mean age (years)	48.9	57.6	42.1	41.1
Minimum age (years)	14	16	17	14
Maximum age (years)	87	87	77	78.0
Number	1,455*	678*	207	570
		χ^2= 450. 6, p = 0.000		

Note: * 1 missing

3.3.3 Education level of primary caretaker

More than 80% of primary caretakers completed primary education or less (Table 3.12). When taking into account the PC's age group, it is not surprising to find that the younger the age of the caretaker, the higher the educational attainment. About 49% of caretakers whose age is under 35 finished secondary or higher level of education. Similar to the findings on the TC's parents, the caretakers of one-parent migrant households have higher education than other household types.

Table 3.12 Education level of primary caretaker

Education level	Overall	PC's sex		PC's age			Type of household		
		Male	Female	<35	35-59	60+	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Primary or lower	86.1	84.8	86.3	51.4	88.0	97.7	92.9	70.5	83.5
Secondary	10.5	12.5	10.1	38.2	8.7	1.7	5.4	18.4	13.7
Higher than secondary	3.4	2.7	3.6	10.4	3.2	0.6	1.6	11.1	2.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(257)	(1,199)	(173)	(928)	(355)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2=218.11, p=0.000*			*χ^2 =86.79, p = 0.000*		

Note: ns.= not significant

3.3.4 Occupation of primary caretaker

About half of the primary caretakers said that their main occupation is in the skilled agricultural, forestry and fish sector (Table 3.13). There is not much difference among males and females in occupational engagement. However, when comparing between age groups, the highest proportion of those who work in the agricultural, forestry and fish sector are age 35-59 years of age, 63 percent. By household type, only 33% of one-parent migrant households were engaged

in the agricultural sector compared to 70 and 50% of non-migrant and both-parent migrant households respectively.

Table 3.13 Occupation of primary caretaker

Occupation	Overall	PC's sex		PC's age			Type of household		
		Male	Female	<35	35-59	60+	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Skilled agricultural, forestry and fish	55.2	62.6	54.0	48.6	63.3	38.6	50.1	32.9	70.2
Elementary occupations	12.2	11.3	12.4	17.3	13.4	6.8	9.3	15.9	14.4
Craft and related trades workers	2.5	2.7	2.5	2.3	2.2	3.7	2.8	3.4	1.9
Plant and machine operators, and assembler	0.5	1.2	0.4	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.1	1.4	0.7
Others	29.2	22.2	30.7	31.8	20.4	51.0	37.7	46.4	12.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(257)	(1,199)	(173)	(928)	(355)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=10.1,p=0.018		*χ^2=217.4, p=0.000*			*χ^2 =151.3, p = 0.000*		

3.3.5 Jobs outside the household

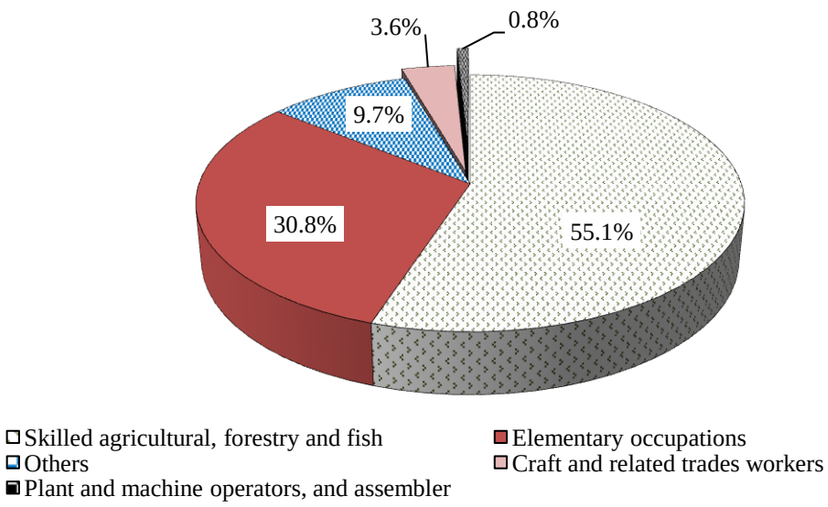
In addition to their main occupation, some primary caretakers have part-time or full-time jobs outside their households—almost 70 percent. This indicates that the majority of the caretakers are not solely taking care of the TC. Male caretakers work outside the household more than female caretakers, 76 and 66% respectively. However, less than half of caretakers whose age is over 60 are still working outside the household; the highest proportion having outside jobs are between 39-59 years (78%). Almost 80% of caretakers in non-migrant households indicate that they have full-time or part-time jobs. This would probably be because more than 90% of them are TC's biological parents. They are mainly in their forties and thus still working.

Among those caretakers who are still working either full- or part-time, half are working at skilled jobs in the agricultural/forestry/fish sector (Figure 3.2). Almost one-third of them are engaged in unskilled occupations.

Table 3.14 Having part/full time job of primary caretaker by PC's sex, PC's age group and type of household

Having part/full time job outside household	Overall	PC's sex		PC's age			Type of household		
		Male	Female	<35	35-59	60+	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Yes	67.9	76.3	66.1	62.4	78.0	43.9	60.1	68.6	76.8
No	32.1	23.7	33.9	37.6	22.0	56.1	39.9	31.4	23.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(257)	(1,199)	(173)	(928)	(355)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=10.11,p=0.001		*χ^2 = 139.33, p = 0.000*			*χ^2 = 39.94, p = 0.000*		

Figure 3.2 Type of part/full time job outside household of primary caretaker (N=988)



3.4 Characteristics of Target Child

Although the target child was purposively selected to obtain a similar proportion by age group and sex, fewer older children were available to interview in the sampled communities. For this reason the proportion of younger children who were interviewed is a bit larger than that for children in the 13-15 age group, 57% and 43% respectively (Table 3.15). The proportion by sex of children who were interviewed is evenly split.

Table 3.15 Age and sex of the target children

Characteristic	Percent	Number
TC's age (years)		
8-12	57.0	830
13-15	43.0	626
Mean age = 11.8; Median age = 12.0		
Sex		
Male	50.8	739
Female	49.2	717
Total	100.0	1,456

Regarding educational attainment, only 2% of TCs report that they are currently not studying (not presented in the table). Among those who are not in school, the main reason given is expenditure in studying and family problem (31%). About 10% said that it was due to a health problem.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter describes major characteristics of the study households. We find that overall, 60% of the households are composed of 4 and less than 4 people. The finding reflects the small family size of the study households, especially for those with migrants. Relative socio-economic status was analyzed by using the wealth index, and is classified into rich, middle and poor levels. It is interesting to find that one-parent migrant households are more likely to be classified as rich than both-parent and non-migrant households. This implies that households with one parent migrating are receiving remittances that raise them to above average status, while both-parent migrant households are not. While fully 41% of households said that they receive income from

agriculture, the main (first response) source of income is varied across the household types. One-migrant households tended to say that they obtain income mostly from remittances (61%) while non-migrant households said that their main source of income from agriculture (81%). For both-migrant households, the proportion obtained from remittances and agriculture is equally balanced (45 and 38% respectively).

Parents from both-migrant parent households are more likely to be younger than parents of other household types. Although the majority of the target children's parents had only primary education or less, migrant parents are more likely to have higher educational attainment than those from non-migrant households. By occupation, the patterns of job engagement of both father and mother at the time of the child's birth and at the time of the survey are similar. About one-third of parents engaged in skilled jobs in the agricultural, forestry and fishing sector at the child's birth and at the present time. However, there was a slight decrease in the proportion in the agricultural sector and an increase in plant and machine operators and assembler over time, with similar patterns found across the study settings and household types. This likely reflects a shift for migrant parents into urban jobs. However it should be noted that the proportion of mothers who do not work economically or are full time housewives are higher in one-parent migrant households, compared to other household types. This corresponds with the high proportion of these households relying on remittances.

When the target child's parents are in the household, they are the primary caretakers; this is the situation for children in the one-parent migrant and non-migrant households. When both parents are absent (in both-parents migrant households), the maternal grandparents (parents of TC's mother) are the main caretakers. For this reason caretakers in both-parent migrant households tend to be older (58 years old on average) while the average age of caretakers in one-parent migrant and non-parent migrant households is nearly the same (42 and 41 years). Educational attainment is closely associated with the age of the caretaker, and so both-parent migrant household caretakers tend to have lower educational attainment. At the same time, caretakers of one-parent migrant households completed higher education than caretakers of other household types. This corresponds to the earlier finding that one-parent household parents had higher education, implying that migration is selective for these households. About half of the caretakers engage in skilled agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors. When taking age group into analysis, caretakers in 35-59 age groups constitute the highest proportion of those who work in agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors, 63%. Only 33% of caretakers in one-parent migrant households work in agricultural sectors while 50% of both-parent households and 70% of non-migrant households engage in the same occupations. It is also found that almost 70% of caretakers have a part-time or full-time job outside the household. Together, these findings imply that some caretakers of the one-parent migrant households no longer engage in agriculture because there are sufficient remittances to support the household. An alternative explanation is that the grandparent generation—who are the main caretakers of children in two-parent migrant households—are more likely to continue to engage in agriculture than the mother who is caretaker in the one-parent migrant households.

A slightly higher proportion of the target children in the sample are in the younger age group (8-12 years old). Only 2% of the target children were not studying at the time of survey. The reasons reported by those who are not in school were mainly related to the expenditures for studying, family problems (31%) and health problems (10 percent).

CHAPTER 4

PARENTAL MIGRATION EXPERIENCE, REMITTANCES, AND CONTACT WITH MIGRANT PARENTS

4.1 Parental Migration Experience

As our study is cross-sectional, households were classified according to parents' migration status at one point in time (at the time of the survey). However, the survey did include retrospective questions on migration experience of parents since the child was born. Usually-resident parents at the time of the survey may actually be migrant parents at other periods of time. In order for the study to be inclusive of past migration of parents, we asked whether parents have ever been away for at least two months from the target child since the child was born. Migration experience of the target child's father and mother, respectively, is described in the following sections.

4.1.1 Parental migration experience since the child was born

As for migration experience of the target child's ***father***, the majority (three-fourths) of fathers have experienced being away from the target child for a period of at least two months since the child was born (Table 4.1). No significant difference is found between study settings. A significant difference is found by household type, as the proportion of fathers ever being away from the target child is higher among migrant households compared to non-migrant parent households. Note, however, that even in the non-migrant parent households (i.e. where both parents live with their children) more than one-third of fathers have ever left the child since the child was born. The data suggest how common migration of people in the labor force age group is, even after having children.

Let us now move to ***mother***'s migration experience (Table 4.1). Overall, 60% of mothers had moved away for at least two months since the child was born, and this is not different between study settings. The proportion of households with mother's migration experience varies by household type. The proportion of mothers who have ever been away from the target child in one-parent migrant households is significantly higher compared to non-migrant parent household (36.4% vs. 20.9%). Compared to father's migration, although mother's migration is less prevalent it is not uncommon. This is true even among currently non-migrant parent households, where about one-fifth of mothers had ever moved since the child was born.

Table 4.1 Parental migration experience since the child was born by study setting and household type

Parental migration	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Father ever moved since the child was born	74.4	72.5	76.3	100.0	96.6	35.8
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ2 ns.		*χ2=733.1, p=0.000*		
Mother ever moved since the child was born	60.0	60.2	59.9	100.0	36.7	20.9
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ2 ns.		*χ2=863.1, p=0.000*		

Note: ns.= not significant

4.1.2 Length of being away from the child since the child was born

Among parents who have ever moved away from the target child, we further explored how long fathers had lived separately since the child was born. We categorize length of separation into three groups, i.e. 5 years or less, 6-10 years, and more than 10 years. For ***fathers***, overall, the three categories are about evenly split. The highest proportion or 37% of fathers separated from the child for 6-10 years. Those separating from the child for 5 years or less and more than 10 years account for 30% and 33% respectively. The percentage distribution of father's length away from the target child is not different between study settings. It is different by household type, however: in both-parent and one-parent migrant households the majority of fathers left the child for more than 5 years (84% and 74% respectively). By contrast, among non-migrant parent households, most fathers (81%) separated from the child for not more than 5 years. A long absence of fathers over the child's life course, i.e. more than 10 years, accounts for 40% and 36% in both-parent and one-parent households, while it is only 5% in non-migrant parent households. The findings reflect continuity in the pattern of father's migration both among migrant and non-migrant households.

For ***mothers*** who have ever lived separately from the target child since birth, the highest proportion had a separation of 6-10 years (38%). The proportion of mothers who had ever left the child for more than 10 years and for 5 years or less was 31% and 30% respectively. The length of separation from mothers is not significantly different by study setting, but it is significant by household type. Results suggest that the proportion of mothers ever having been apart from the child for more than 10 years is highest in both-parent households (37%) and lowest among non-migrant parent households (3%). This reflects the fact that many migrants are repeat migrants, who may leave and come back several times within a few years.

Table 4.2 Length of separation from the child since birth

Length of separation from the child since birth	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Fathers						
5 years or less	30.1	29.0	31.2	16.0	26.1	80.9
6-10 years	37.4	36.4	38.4	44.1	38.2	14.2
>10 years	32.5	34.6	30.4	39.9	35.7	4.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,083)	(541)	(542)	(679)	(200)	(204)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2*=318.6, p=0.000*		
Mean (s.d.)	8.0 (4.3)	8.1 (4.4)	7.8 (4.2)	9.3 (3.5)	8.5 (4.1)	3.1 (3.3)
Mothers						
5 years or less	31.1	30.9	31.3	19.0	52.2	86.6
6-10 years	38.6	37.1	40.2	43.9	36.4	10.1
>10 years	30.3	32.0	28.5	37.1	11.7	3.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(875)	(450)	(425)	(679)	(77)	(119)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2*=238.3, p=0.000*		
Mean (s.d.)	7.8 (4.2)	7.9 (4.3)	7.7 (4.1)	9.0 (3.7)	5.6 (2.7)	2.7 (7.8)

Note: ns.= not significant

The following sections present data on migration experience of currently migrant fathers and mothers separately, thus, including only households with migrant parents (i.e. in both-parent migrant and one-parent migrant households). It examines characteristics of the migration, whether the migration was explained to the child, and the child's reaction. This information was reported by adult respondents in the household.

4.1.3 Current destination and length of stay in the current destination among currently-migrant parents

The majority of migrant parents currently live in Bangkok (69% for migrant fathers and 73% for migrant mothers). The second most popular destination is Chonburi, accounting for 7% for migrant fathers as well as for migrant mothers. Note that for both-parent migrant, the majority of them (95%) moved to the same destination (results not shown).

First, we look at length of stay at the current destination of migrant parents, starting with migrant fathers. Among households with a ***migrant father***, the overall picture shows that the sample is about evenly distributed with regard to the length of time in the current destination (Table 4.3). The mean number of years living in the current destination is about 10 years. Between study settings, data show that fathers in the Northeastern province tend to stay longer; 25% had stayed for more than 15 years in the current destination vs. 12% in the Northern province. Between both-parent migrant and father-migrant households, we see an absence of the father for more than 10 years among both-parent migrant households in a higher proportion than of father-migrant households (45% vs. 38%).

Table 4.3 Father's length of stay in the current destination (among households with father migrants)

Father's length of stay in the current destination (only households with father migrants)	Overall	Study setting		Household type	
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
5 years or less	29.3	33.7	24.8	25.8	41.8
6-10 years	27.7	24.6	31.0	29.7	20.6
11-15 years	24.7	17.1	32.6	25.5	21.7
16+	18.3	24.6	11.7	19.0	15.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(859)	(439)	(420)	(669)	(190)
		$\chi 2=49.6$, p=0.000		*$\chi 2=19.9$, p=0.000*	
Mean (s.d.)	10.3(7.4)	10.8(8.7)	9.8(5.7)	10.7(7.5)	8.8(7.0)

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

Only a few of households with one parent migrating had the mother absent, so to examine mother's migration we did not separate households into both-parents migrant and mother only migrant. In Table 4.4 we see that ***migrant mothers*** stay in the current destination for about 10 years. Categorizing length of stay into groups, the Chi-squared test suggests that length of stay is significantly associated with study setting. Current migrant mothers in the Northeastern province stay in the current destination for more than 15 years in a higher proportion than migrant mothers in the Northern province (20% and 10% respectively). However, the proportion of migrant mothers in the Northeastern province that stay in the current destination for 5 years or less is also higher compared to their counterpart (33% and 22% respectively). This may indicate a higher degree of short-term, circular migration in the Northeast. Meanwhile, migrant mothers in the Northern province stay in the current destination for 6-15 years in a higher proportion than those in the Northeastern province (68% and 47% respectively).

Note that for both migrant fathers and mothers, the average length of stay in the current destination is longer than length of separation from the child since the child was born. This data reflects that parents who have been migrants before the child was born are not uncommon. It indicates that many parents send their child to live with relatives after migrating, and that the child may be born in the place of destination. The proportion of migrant parents who live in the current destination longer than length of separation from the child is about one-third (32%), similar for both fathers and mothers.

Table 4.4 Mother's length of stay in the current destination (among households with mother migrants)

Mother's length of stay in the current destination (only households with migrant mothers)	Overall	Study setting	
		Northeast	North
5 years or less	27.8	32.8	22.2
6-10 years	29.8	24.9	35.4
10-15 years	27.2	22.1	32.9
16+	15.2	20.2	9.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(691)	(366)	(325)
		χ2=33.7, p=0.000	
Mean (s.d.)	9.8 (6.1)	10.0 (6.9)	9.7 (5.0)

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

4.1.4 Decision making on parental migration among currently-migrant parents

Turning to the findings on migration decision making, among households which have a migrant ***father***, the highest proportion (58%) of respondents said that the decision was made jointly by both father and mother (Table 4.5). However, the dominance of men as the decision maker still shows, as the proportion who said that the decision was made by father only is quite substantial (35%). Across study settings, joint decision making of both father and mother is higher in the Northern province, while father-only decision making is higher in the Northeastern province. Between household types, the higher participation of mothers is more evident among households with both parent migrants (61% vs. 47%). These findings may reflect that the participation of the mother in decision making may have to do with their participation in migration, or vice versa.

Table 4.5 Decision maker about father's migration (among households with migrant father)

Decision maker about father's migration	Overall	Study setting		Household type	
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Father and mother	58.1	44.6	71.9	61.3	46.8
Father only	35.3	45.6	24.8	31.3	49.5
Other	6.6	9.8	3.4	7.5	3.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(844)	(428)	(416)	(658)	(186)
		χ2=66.1, p=0.000		*χ2=21.7, p=0.000*	

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

For ***mother***'s migration, joint decision making (by both parents) is found for more than three fourths (77%) of the sample, which is higher than the proportion of joint decision making on father's migration seen in the table above (58%). This reflects that father is part of decision

making on mother's migration more than the mother taking part in decision making on father's migration. Mother-only decision making accounts for 29%, which is lower than father-only decision maker on father's migration (35%). Again, data indicate the dominant role of father over mother regarding decision making on migration. The participation of others in deciding whether or not the parents should migrate to work is relatively negligible.

Comparing households in the Northeastern and Northern provinces, a significant difference is found in the decision maker by study setting. The pattern is consistent with the findings on decision making on father's migration; joint decision making is higher in the Northern province while mother-only decision making is higher in the Northeastern province (Table 4.6). Also, joint decision making is more common in the Northern province than in the Northeastern province (77% and 52% respectively). Meanwhile, the proportion of households in the Northeastern province reporting the mother only as the decision maker is higher than households in the Northern province (37% and 19% respectively).

Table 4.6 Decision making about mother's migration (among households with migrant mother)

Decision maker about mother's migration	Overall	Study setting	
		Northeast	North
Father and mother	64.0	52.3	77.2
Mother only	28.6	36.7	19.4
Other	7.4	11.0	3.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(689)	(365)	(324)
		$\chi 2=47.7, p=0.000$	

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

4.1.5 Main reason for migration among currently-migrant parents

The main reason for migration found in our survey confirms what have been documented in previous studies —that it is economically oriented. The highest proportion of respondents reported that the ***father*** moved for the family's general living condition (31%), followed by better income (28%) and having no job available at home (26%) (Table 4.7). Note that all the reasons mentioned are related with economic aspects of the migrant's household. The proportion of respondents giving reasons regarding children's education accounts for only 9%. Taking into consideration the study setting, the findings show that respondents in the Northeastern province mentioned children's education as the main reason of father's migration in a higher proportion than their counterparts. Respondents in the Northern province gave the reason of family's general well-being more often than those in the Northeastern province. Across household types, both-parent migrant households reported being motivated by better income and availability of jobs more than respondents in father-migrant households, among whom reasons about family's general well-being was raised in a higher proportion.

Table 4.7 Main reason for father's migration (among households with migrant father), according to adult respondents by study setting and household type

Main reason of father's migration	Overall	Study setting		Household type	
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
For family's general well-being	30.7	24.4	37.0	29.5	34.7
For better income	28.3	29.7	27.0	29.3	24.7
No job available at home	25.7	26.3	25.1	27.2	20.5
For children's education	9.3	11.2	7.4	9.1	10.0
Other	6.0	8.4	3.6	4.8	10.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(837)	(418)	(419)	(647)	(190)
		χ2=31.1, p=0.000		*χ2=28.4, p=0.001*	

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

The main reason for ***mother***'s migration is consistent with reasons for father's migration (Table 4.8). The highest proportion (32%) was reported as moving for general family well-being followed by for better income (28%) and because there is no job available at home (25%). Also consistent with reasons for migration of the father, the same difference between the two study settings is observed.

Table 4.8 Main reasons for mother's migration (among households with migrant mother) according to adult respondents by study setting

Main reason of mother's migration	Overall	Study setting	
		Northeast	North
For general family well-being	31.8	24.1	40.4
For better income	27.9	31.0	24.4
No job available at home	24.5	24.7	24.4
For children's education	9.9	10.8	9.0
Other	5.8	9.4	1.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(685)	(361)	(324)
		χ2=38.1, p=0.000	

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

4.1.6 Whether the target child was informed and given an explanation for parents' current migration

Our study is also interested whether the child was informed and given an explanation for why the parent(s) are living away, which may be indicative of the child's participation in parental migration. Results show that more than half of the respondents (55%) reported that the child was given an explanation about why the ***father*** was away (Table 4.9). The proportion is higher among respondents in the Northern province than the Northeastern province (62% vs. 48%). Between household types, it is evident that respondents of father-migrant households reported that the child was given an explanation about father's migration in a higher proportion than of both-parent migrant households (65% vs. 52%). It is possible that the person who explained the reasons for father's migration to the child was the mother who stays behind. Interestingly, we also found that boys were explained about father's being away more often than girls (61% and 49% respectively).

Table 4.9 Whether the child was given an explanation about why the father is away

	Overall	Child's sex		Study setting		Household type	
		Male	Female	Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Yes (N)*	54.6 (869)	60.4 (444)	48.5 (425)	41.7 (449)	61.9 (420)	51.8 (679)	64.6 (190)
		χ2=12.4, p=0.000		*χ2=17.8, p=0.000*		*χ2=10.2, p=0.001*	

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

Regarding why the ***mother*** was away, about the same proportion of children were given an explanation as was seen for fathers (54%); the proportion is higher among households in the North (63%) than in the Northeast (47%) and among boys (58%) than girls (50%) (Table 4.10).

Table 4.10 Whether the child was given an explanation about why the mother is away

	Overall	Child's sex		Study setting	
		Male	Female	Northeast	North
Yes (N)*	54.2 (696)	58.3 (355)	49.9 (341)	46.9 (371)	62.5 (325)
		χ2=5.01, P=0.025		*χ2=16.90, P=0.000*	

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

4.1.7 Reaction of the target child to parental migration

Table 4.11 examines children's reported reaction to their parents' migration. Regarding the ***father's*** separation, according to adult respondents about two-thirds of the children did not express any noticeable reaction, i.e. they acted as normal as usual. About 27% reported the child was sad and missed the father. Only a small proportion reported that the child was happy or both sad and happy at the same time (6%). Reaction of the target child at father's separation is different across study settings; respondents in the Northern province (29%) reported the child was sad and missed the father more than those in the Northeastern province (25%).

The child's reaction upon ***mother***'s being away follows the same pattern (Table 4.11). The majority of the children were reported to be acting as normal as usual (64%), while about 30% expressed their sadness about missing their mother. In addition, children in the Northern province were also reported as sad in a higher proportion than children in the Northeast.

Table 4.11 Parental migration and the target child's reaction by study setting

	Overall	Study setting	
		Northeast	North
Target child' s reaction when *father* left			
As normal as usual	66.8	66.4	67.1
Sad/miss father	26.9	24.8	28.6
Other	6.3	8.9	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(746)	(327)	(419)
		χ2=7.1, p=0.028	
Target child' s reaction when *mother* left			
As normal as usual	63.9	65.1	62.8
Sad/miss mother	29.7	26.0	32.9
Other	6.5	8.9	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(617)	(292)	(325)
		χ2=7.61, P=0.022	

*Respondents with no answer and children whose father left since very young or before being born excluded

4.2 Remittances from Migrant Parents

Information about remittances is instrumental to understanding the effects of migration on family outcomes. Previous studies often claim the important role of remittances sent by migrant parents in mitigating or offsetting the adverse effects of parental absence from children. Our survey captures information about remittance behavior in the past 12 months prior to the survey, including regularity, amount of remittance, use of remittances, decision making on use and allocation of remittances, and benefits of remittances on children. Both in-cash and in-kind remittance are discussed in the following sections. Again, as only a few cases of mother-only migrant households were found, findings on migrant mothers' remittances are not presented here. Findings on remittances are presented separately for both-parent migrant households and father-only migrant households. Note that for both-parent migrant households where both parents moved to the same destination, data on remittances were derived from one parent only to avoid double counting. For migrant fathers and mothers who moved to different destinations, which accounted for only a small proportion of cases (4.5%), remittances from both father and mothers were combined.

Our analysis focuses on in-cash remittances from migrant parents among both-parent and father-migrant households in terms of regularity and amount and plan and actual use of remittances.

4.2.1 Regularity and amount of remittances

According to adult respondents, our survey finds that the majority of migrant parents sent money back at least once in the past 12 months; only a few households reported never receiving remittances from migrant parents (2.5%) (Table 4.12). About two-thirds sent money 12 times, or approximately once a month. Around 10% sent money more than 12 times last year. On average, households received remittances about once a month. Comparing households of both-parent migrant and father-only migrants, interestingly, father-only migrant households received remittances more times than both-parent migrant households (15% receiving more than 12 times vs. 10% for both-parent households).

Looking at the amount of remittances sent by migrant parents, about half sent between 24,000-59,000 baht or about 2,000-5,000 baht monthly. About one fourth of households received 60,000 baht or more or about 5,000 baht a month or more. The fraction of households receiving less than

24,000 baht in the previous year is almost one fourth. The average amount of remittances received from migrant parents in the previous year is 45,242 baht. Households with father-only migrants received remittances in a higher amount compared to households with both parent migrants. Migrant fathers are more likely to remit when the mother is home with the children than when mothers also migrated. Also, when both parents migrate, the amount remitted on average is less than half that of one–parent migrant households. One of possible reasons is that when both parents are migrant, they are more likely to take children (besides the target child) with them than when only father migrated, so remittance to household of origin is less. Data support this hypothesis; the percentage of TC's siblings living outside the interviewed household is higher in both-parents migrant household than in father-only migrant household (13% VS 4%). Another possible reason is that when mother is the migrant herself, she may keep a fraction of the earnings with her instead of remitting.

Table 4.12 Number of times and amount of money sent by migrant parents in the past 12 months among migrant households

	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Number of time sent remittance in the last 12 months			
0	2.5	2.5	2.7
1-11	19.8	21.5	13.8
12	66.9	66.4	68.8
13+	10.7	9.6	14.8
Total		100.0	100.0
(N)	(868)	(679)	(189)
		$\chi 2=8.4$, $p=0.028$	
Mean (S.D.)	11.7 (6.3)	11.3 (5.7)	13.1 (7.8)
Median	12	12	12
Amount of money sent in the last 12 months			
0	2.5	2.5	2.7
<24,000 baht	23.6	27.4	10.1
24,000-59,000 baht	49.5	54.9	29.8
60,000 baht+	24.3	15.2	57.5
Total		100.0	100.0
(N)	(867)	(679)	(188)
		$\chi 2=145.6$, $p=0.000$	
Mean	45,241.6	34,302.5	84,750.53
(S.D.)	(53,599.1)	(26,751.3)	(93,005.0)
Median	36,000	30,000	60,000

It is widely assumed that remittances from migrants contribute to a rise in household economic status (e.g. De Hass, 2005, Hugo, 2005). We explored whether remittances are associated with higher household economic status, using results from a wealth index categorized into poor (first and second quintile), middle (third and fourth quintile), and rich (fifth quintile).[4] The amount of remittance is categorized into low (<24,000 baht), middle (24,000-59,000 baht), and high (60,000 baht or more). Non-migrant households are also included as another category.

Clearly, households classified as rich account for the highest proportion among migrant households which received a high amount of remittances (36%). The proportion of rich households is lowest for migrant households with low (14%) and middle amount of remittances (16%). Non-migrant households classified as rich account for a proportion (20%) in between migrant households with a high level of remittances and migrant households with a low or

[4] Wealth index is constructed from a principal components analysis of household characteristics and possessions; see details in the methods chapter.

middle level of remittances. On the one hand, this information indicates remittances contribute to household economic status. On the other hand, although this information does not say anything about the causal relationship, data seem to suggest that remittances must reach a certain level to boost household economic status. Also, household wealth seems to reduce the likelihood of household members out-migrating.

Table 4.13 Economic status, household type, and amount of remittance

Economic status	Overall	Non-migrant	Remittance from migrant parents		
			Low	Middle	High
Poor	40.0	41.8	51.5	41.2	20.8
Middle	40.0	38.6	34.3	43.0	43.5
Rich	20.0	19.7	14.2	15.9	35.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,454)	(570)	(233)	(435)	(216)
		χ2=66.1, p=0.000			

Note: Migrant households with no remittances in the last 12 months are included in the "low" category.

4.2.2 Plans for and actual use of remittances

We then explore how households of origin planned to use remittances received from migrant parents. We present findings from the first response to the question, which implies the first priority of the plan (Table 4.14). More than half of the migrant households reported that they planned to use remittances for daily necessities such as food, clothes and other household consumption (57%). Previous research mentioned that one of the main benefits of remittances from migrant parents is on children's education. Our survey indicates that 28% of the households planned to use money from remittances for education of the migrant(s)' children. About 13% reported plans for investment, savings, to buy or renovate the house and/or to buy or rent more land. We find that households with father-only migrants are more likely to plan to use remittances on investment or the like compared to household with both-parent migrant.

Table 4.14 Plans for using remittances by type of household

Intention to use remittance	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Food/clothes/household consumption	56.5	58.0	50.8
Child's education	28.1	28.4	27.1
Investment/saving/buy-renovate house/buy-rent land	12.6	11.0	18.2
Others	2.9	2.6	3.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(829)	(648)	(181)
		χ2=8.1, p=0.044	

Note: * No answer excluded

When we look at the actual use of remittances, results show that the top three highest proportions of households reported using remittances on children's education (93%), followed by spending on food/clothes/household consumption (92%), and food for children (70%) (Table 4.15). Interestingly, more than half of the study households spend remittances on social activities (57%) and about half on donations for religious activities. Almost one fifth used remittances to pay debts. Using remittances for investment accounts for small proportions, e.g., 18% for agricultural activity, 6% for buying agricultural tools, and 2% for non-agricultural activity.

How useful the remittances are for the family of origin is partly dependent on who makes decision on how to spend the money (Table 4.16). Our survey finds that 42% of households said that the decision maker on the use of remittances is the child's maternal grandmother, while about one fifth reported the child's mother. The paternal grandmother takes the role of decision maker on remittance use in 14% of households. In this regard, the results suggest that maternal relatives, especially maternal grandmothers, play a more important role than paternal relatives in deciding how to utilize migrants' remittances (51% vs. 19%). This is particularly true for households with both-parent migrant, where more than half reported maternal grandmother is the decision maker (53%), because they take care of the child. When comparing between grandmothers and grandfathers, with regards to remittance use decision making, grandmothers take a more evident role (66% vs. 13%). For father-migrant households, the decision makers are almost solely the stay-behind mothers (95%).

Table 4.15 Actual use of remittances by type of household (multiple answers possible)

	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Child's education	93.2	93.5	91.9
Food/clothes/household consumption	91.8	91.4	93.0
Food for children	70.2	71.6	64.9
Donation for social activity	57.0	53.7	68.7
Donation for religious activity	49.2	47.5	55.1
Child's health	29.7	28.7	33.5
Other donation	23.5	20.4	34.6
Toy for children	20.9	18.0	31.4
Saving	19.1	15.1	33.5
Pay debt	17.6	12.5	35.7
Invest in agricultural activity	17.5	15.5	24.3
Buy household appliance	17.0	14.6	25.4
Child's milk	5.9	5.6	7.0
Buy agricultural tools	5.5	4.8	8.1
Travel	5.3	3.6	11.4
Renovate a house	4.8	2.7	12.4
Child's sanitary pad	2.6	2.1	4.3
Buy car	2.5	0.9	8.1
Invest in non-agricultural activity	1.7	1.4	2.7
Build a house	1.4	1.1	2.7
Child's caretaker	1.3	1.4	1.1
Help other member to move	1.2	0.6	3.2
Hold party	1.1	0.8	2.2
Buy animal for agricultural work	0.7	0.8	0.5
Buy land	0.6	0.5	1.1
Expand business	0.5	0.0	2.2
Improve land	0.2	0.0	1.1
Rent land	0.2	0.2	0.5
N	848	663	185

Table 4.16 Decision maker on remittance use by household type

Decision maker of remittance use	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Maternal grandmother	42.0	53.4	1.1
Mother	20.9	0.2	95.1
Paternal grandmother	14.0	17.8	0.5
Maternal grandfather	8.7	11.0	0.5
Paternal grandfather	4.5	5.7	0.0
Maternal aunt	4.4	5.6	0.0
Others	5.6	6.3	2.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(848)	(663)	(185)

We are also interested in how much the remittances from migrant parents benefit the child. More than half of the adult respondents (58%) reported that the remittance has "a lot of benefit" to the child and around 30% said it benefits the child "some" (Table 4.17). Still, more than one tenth perceives that remittances benefit the child "only a little" or "not at all". The perception of how much the remittance benefits the child is not different between both-parent and father-only migrant households.

Table 4.17 Perception of how much remittances benefit the child

	Overall
A lot	58.4
Some	29.8
A little/not benefit as it should/not at all	11.0
Total	100.0
(N)*	(847)

Note: * No answer excluded

We further explore whether the benefit of remittances for children depends on the amount of remittances. Table 4.18 shows that the benefits are associated with the amount. According to the adult respondents, the higher the amount of remittance, the more it benefits the child. For example, while 68% of households that receive a high amount of remittance perceive that the child benefits "a lot", only 52% of households that receive a low amount of remittances perceive this.

Table 4.18 Remittance benefit for the child by amount of remittances sent in the past 12 months

How much remittance benefit the child	Overall	Amount of remittances sent		
		Low	Middle	High
A lot	58.7	52.2	57.0	68.5
Some	29.4	30.6	30.8	25.5
A little/not at all	11.9	17.2	12.2	6.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(860)	(209)	(435)	(216)
		$\chi 2=18.1$, $p=0.001$		

Remittances may not only be sent for the benefit of the household, but also for the benefit of the community. More than one fourth (27%) of the adult respondents reported migrant parents have sent money to donate for community social or religious activities (Table 4.19). The proportion of households reporting migrant parents donating to the community are not different between both-parent migrant and father-only migrant households, but they vary by amount of remittance.

Migrant parents who sent a high or middle amount of remittances donated money to the community in higher proportions (32% and 28% respectively, compared to 20% among migrant parents who remitted a low amount of money).

Table 4.19 Whether remittances used to donate for community social activities by amount of remittance

Migrant parents ever sent money to donate to community's social activity	Overall	Amount of remittance		
		Low	Middle	High
Ever donated	27.0	20.3	27.7	32.1
Never donated	73.0	79.7	72.3	67.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(837)*	(202)	(426)	(209)
		$\chi 2=7.4$, $p=0.024$		

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

In addition to remittances in the form of money, our survey also captures in-kind remittance from migrant parents. The percentage of migrant households sending in-kind remittances is 28%, and is not different between both-parent migrant and father-migrant households or amount of cash remittance (results not shown).

4.3 Remittances from Other Household Members

Besides the parents of the children that are the focus of this study, households may have other out-migrants. This is the case for households classified as having non-migrant parents as well, and these households may also receive remittances from other household members. However, we find that the majority of our study households (86%) did not receive remittances from other household members (Table 4.20). The proportion received remittance from other household members is not significantly different across types of household (84% for both-parents migrant, 86% for one-parent migrant, and 88% for non-migrant parent household – data not shown in the table). Of the small proportion of households who did so, 8% received remittances of less than 24,000 baht in the past 12 months and 7% received at least 24,000 baht a month or more. Among households that received remittances from other members, the average amount of remittance was about 23,000 baht and the median is 18,000 baht. It is possible that the remittance from other migrants (besides the target child's parents) is for other children in the household. Unfortunately, we do not have additional details in the data to analyze this further.

Table 4.20 Remittances received from other household members

	% of household
Not received	85.6
Received less than 24,000 baht	8.0
Received 24,000 baht or more	6.5
Total	100.0
(N)	(1,456)
Mean* (baht)	23,008.6
S.D.	21,459.5
Median* (baht)	18,000

Note: *Household with no remittance not included

4.4 Contact with Migrant Parents: *Adults' and child's report*

Communication and contact between migrant parents and the family left behind is crucial for the family's and children's well-being. Close contact can mitigate potential negative impacts of parental migration. Our survey asked about communication and contact between migrant parents and family in the past 6 months from both adult respondents and from the target child. Results based on both reports (adult and the target child) are presented here separately.

4.4.1 Contact with migrant parents

According to adult respondents, results indicate that almost all households in the survey remain in touch with the migrant ***fathers***. Only 7 households out of 869 households reported no contact in any form with the migrant fathers in the past 6 months (Table 4.21). Among households that have contacted with the migrant father, telephone is the most used method of communication (99%). Other methods beside the telephone used substantially are visits by the father to the home of origin (71%), visits of the child to their migrant father (44%), and visits of other household members to the migrant father (26%).

From the target child's response, the findings confirm the adult reports that almost all households still keep in contact with the migrant ***fathers*** (99%). The adult and child's reports for contact via telephone (both cell-phone and landline phone) is in exactly the same proportion (99.2%), while other contact methods are reported in nearly similar proportions.

Table 4.21 Contact with migrant father–adult respondent's report and target child's report

Method of contact	Adult's report[1]	Child's report[2]
Contact via telephone	99.2	99.2
Father visited home	71.0	73.1
Target child visited migrant father	44.3	46.4
Family member visited migrant father	26.0	24.6
N	862	863

Note: [1]7 out of 869 (0.8%) reported no contact at all with the migrant father during the last 6 months. All are both-parent migrant households

[2]6 out of 869 (0.7%) reported no contact at all with the migrant father during the last 6 months.

Reported contact with migrant ***mothers*** is not much different (Table 4.22). Consistently adults and children report that the most popular method used is via telephone (almost everyone), followed by mothers visiting home, the target child visiting the migrant mothers, and family members visiting the migrant mother. Children's reports of mother's contact appear to be slightly higher than adults' reports.

Table 4.22 Contact with migrant mother–adult respondent's report and target child's report

Method of contact	Adult's report[1]	Child's report[3]
Contact via telephone	99.5	99.9
Mother visited home	69.9	72.2
Target child visited migrant mother	46.5	50.4
Family member visited migrant mother	22.9	23.6
N	691[2]	688

[1]5 out of 696 (0.7%) reported no contact at all with the migrant mother during the past 6 months.

[2]Respondents with no answer excluded and multiple answers possible

[3]8 out of 696 (1.1%) reported no contact at all with the migrant mother during the past 6 months.

4.4.2 Frequency of contact via telephone

Based on adult's reports, the high prevalence of utilizing the telephone (both cell-phone and landline) is consistent across study settings and household types (results not shown). For migrant ***fathers***, 48% reported contact every day, while 32% reported contact a few times a week (Table 4.23). The frequency of contact is not different across study settings. By household type, reporting of contact via phone every day is much higher among father-migrant household compared to both-parent migrant households. Meanwhile, less frequent contact (< once a week) is higher among both-parent migrant households.

Comparing data reported by the adult respondents with children's reports gives interesting information. Adult respondents appear to report more frequent contact via telephone than children. The highest prevalence reported by adults is every day (48%, see Table 4.23), while a few times a week is the highest proportion reported by the target child (44%). However, a higher proportion of father's calling every day among father-only migrant households than both-migrant household is consistent for child's and adult's responses.

Table 4.23 Frequency of contact with migrant father via telephone

Frequency of contact with father via telephone	Adult's report			Child's report		
	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Every day	47.6	41.7	36.8	31.7	54.8	54.8
A few times a week	31.9	36.1	44.0	47.3	32.4	32.4
Once a week	8.7	9.2	10.0	11.8	3.7	3.7
Less than once a week	11.8	13.1	9.2	9.1	9.0	9.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(855)	(665)	(190)	(856)	(668)	(188)
	$\chi 2=7.4$, $p=0.024$			*$\chi 2=51.2$, $p=0.000$*		

Patterns of contacting migrant ***mothers*** via telephone are similar to fathers; almost half of adult respondents (45%) reported talking to migrant mothers every day and more than one-third do a few times a week (Table 4.24). Due to the small number of mother-only migrant households, we do not separate frequency of contact by type of household. Children's reports on talking to mothers every day is smaller than adult's report (35%). The lesser frequency reported by the child may be due to their absence when the migrant mother called home or vice versa. However, the proportion reporting contact by telephone once a week or less is nearly the same, about 18 percent, between adult's and child's report.

Table 4.24 Frequency of contact with migrant mother via telephone

Frequency of contact with mother via Telephone	Adult's report	Child's report
Every day	45.4	35.2
A few times a week	36.1	46.4
Once a week	9.0	10.9
Less than once a week	9.6	7.4
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(687)	(688)

4.4.3 Frequency of parents' visit

As seen previously (Table 4.21), while altogether 71% of respondents reported a ***father's visit*** in the past 6 months, respondents in the Northern province reported a visit more frequently than the Northeast province and father-migrant households more frequently than both-parents migrant households (results not shown). In terms of number of father's visit in the past 6 months, the percentages reporting 1 visit, 2-3 visits, and at least 4 visits, according to adult's report, are 40%, 41%, and 19% respectively (Table 4.25). The number of father's visits is not different across the study settings. Across household types, respondents of father-migrant household reported more frequent visits of the father compared to those of both-parent migrant households.

Overall, there is not much difference in frequency of ***father***'s visits from the reports of the adult and the target child. Almost 60% of migrant fathers visited home. Similar findings are found when taking household types into consideration. In the past 6 months, based on the child's report, father-only migrants visited home more often than fathers who moved with the mother (36% VS. 13%).

Table 4.25 Frequency of migrant father's visit

Frequency of migrant father's visit	Adult's report			Child's report		
	Overall	Both-parents migrant	Father migrant	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
1 time	40.4	44.9	24.0	41.0	44.2	32.5
2-3 times	41.0	44.5	32.0	40.3	43.3	32.0
4+ times	18.6	10.6	39.8	18.7	12.6	35.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(612)	(443)	(169)	(631)	(462)	(169)
	$\chi 2$=91.5, p=0.000			*$\chi 2$= 42.9, p= 0.000*		

Moving on to ***mother's*** visit, according to adult respondents, 45% of migrant mothers visited family of origin once during the past 6 months, 43% visited 2-3 times and 12% visited at least 4 times (Table 4.26). The target child reported that migrant ***mothers*** visited home in a nearly similar proportion as adult's report. In the past 6 months about half of mothers visited their households more than one time.

Table 4.26: Frequency of migrant mother's visit

Frequency of migrant mother's visit	Adult's report	Child's report
1 time	44.9	45.5
2-3 times	42.7	41.2
4+ times	12.4	13.3
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(497)	(483)

4.4.4 Frequency of target child's visit

Not only did the migrant father visit the family, but the family and the child may also visit migrant fathers. We asked more specifically whether the child had ever visited the migrant father in the past 6 months. As shown in Table 4.21, about 44% of respondents reported that the target child visited the migrant father. Interestingly, a higher proportion of child visits to the migrant father is found among both-parent migrant households than father-migrant households (46% and

37% respectively, results not shown). When considering frequency of visit, we see that the child from father-migrant households visited fathers more than once in the past 6 months in a higher proportion compared to their counterpart (23% and 13% respectively). However, this is true only for adult's report, but no different across household type for child's report. Overall, the target child reported a visit to their migrant ***father*** more frequently than adults. About 20% of children reported that he/she visited their father 2 times or more in the last 6 months, compared to 12% from adult's report (Table 4.27).

Table 4.27 Frequency of the target child's visit to migrant father

Frequency of the target child's visit to migrant father	Adult's report			Child's report		
	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant	Overall	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
1 time	85.3	87.1	77.5	79.8	79.4	81.5
2+ times	12.0	12.9	22.5	20.3	20.6	18.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(382)	(311)	(71)	(400)	(335)	(65)
	$\chi 2=4.3, p=0.038$			*$\chi 2$ ns.*		

Note 1: Children do not have any contact with migrant father, whose parents lived with them and mother only migrant are excluded.

Note 2: Children who did not have telephone contact with migrant father, whose father did not visit, who did not visit father and who had no family member visited migrant father are excluded.

Note 3: ns.= not significant

Among households reporting the target child visiting their migrant ***mother***, the majority visited their mother once in the past 6 months (87% for adult's report and 83% for child's report) (Table 4.28).

Table 4.28 Frequency of the target child's visit to migrant mother

The target child visited migrant mother	Adult's report	Child's report
1 time	87.3	82.7
2+ times	12.7	17.3
Total	100.0	100.0
(N)	(347)	(321)

The results seem to suggest that contact between the migrant ***father*** and family is of greater concern in both-parent migrant households than father-migrant households. It seems that when both parents are migrants, contact between the migrant father and family of origin is less frequent whether considering telephone contact, fathers' visits home, or visits by the target child. Results from our survey imply that when only the father is the migrant, contact with the family of origin is closer than when both parents are away. Thus, the person behind close contact between migrants and family may actually be the left-behind mothers. This is consistent with results from the CHAMPSEA-Thailand study which illustrates that left-behind mothers keep close contact between the overseas migrant father and the children left behind (Jampaklay et al., 2011).

4.4.5 Issues talked with migrant parents when they contact: child's report

Issues discussed with migrant fathers

As mentioned earlier, almost every child has frequent contact with migrant parent(s) through various means of communication. Our study further investigates the issues that were talked about with the migrant parent(s) when they made contact (Figure 4.1). For the migrant *father*, when taking all three responses into analysis, one-third of the topics discussed regarded the well-being of either the child or migrant father. The target child's education is the second most frequent topic mentioned; slightly more than one fourth talked about school or the grades of the child. The well-being of the family constitutes 16% of respondents. Only 10% of the study children reported that they asked for toys, sweets or money from the migrant father. It is interesting to find that 9% of children asked their father to come home.

Figure 4.1 Issues target child discussed with migrant *father* (all three responses)

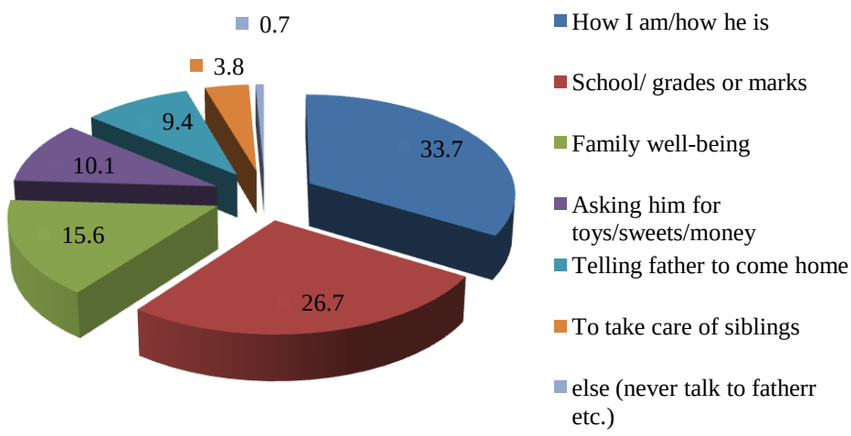


Table 4.29 examines relationships between communication issues and some characteristics of the target child including sex, age-group and household types by looking at the first response for issues discussed. Overall, the study finds that the most frequent topic mentioned first is education of the child (47%) while when all three responses are taken into account the top issue is asking about well-being (Figure 4.1). When considering topics of discussion by sex of the child, the fathers more frequently talked to their daughters about education than to their sons, 53% and 41% respectively. When taking age of the child into consideration, fathers were more likely to talk about school/ grades with an older child (13-15 years old) than a younger child (8-12 years old), 54% and 42% respectively. We also find that younger children asked their father for toys/ sweets/ money more than the older ones, 16% compared to 7%. Regarding the household type, children in both-parent migrant households appear to ask for toys/ sweets/ money more than children in father-migrant households. However, the difference is not significant.

Table 4.29 Issue that target child discussed when father contacted by sex, age group and household type (first response only)

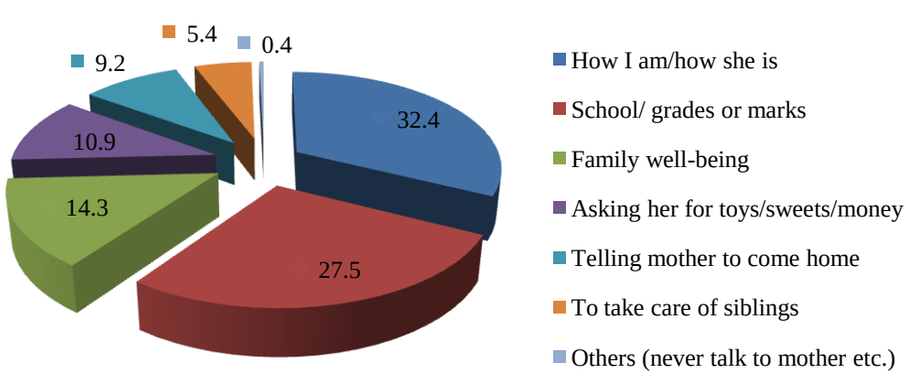
	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type	
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
School/ grades or marks	46.4	40.6	52.5	41.5	54.4	46.5	46.3
How I am/how he is	19.7	21.4	17.9	20.6	18.3	19.9	19.0
Family well-being	12.8	14.5	11.1	11.4	15.0	12.2	14.7
Asking him for toys/sweets/money	12.7	15.8	9.4	16.1	7.2	13.7	9.0
Telling father to come home	4.4	3.8	4.9	6.0	1.8	4.3	4.7
To take care of siblings	2.9	2.9	2.8	3.2	2.4	2.4	4.7
Others (never talk to father etc.)	1.2	0.9	1.4	1.3	0.9	1.0	1.6
		χ^2=18.0, p=0.006		χ^2= 31.6, p=0.000		χ^2 ns.	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(868)	(443)	(425)	(535)	(333)	(678)	(190)

Note: *Children whose parents lived with them and whose mother-only migrant are excluded.
ns.= not significant

Issues discussed with migrant mothers

When looking at three responses, similar results to migrant fathers are found on the issues that the target child discussed with their migrant ***mother*** (Figure 4.2). The frequency of issues discussed with the mother is distributed in almost the same proportions as issues discussed with father. For example, 32% communicated about the well-being of the child or of the mother compared to 34% of father's response, followed by child's school or grades (28% and 27%), family well-being (14% and 16%), asking mother for toys/ sweets/ money (11% and 10%) and telling mother to come home (9% and 9%) .

Figure 4.2 Issues that target child discussed with migrant mother (all three responses)



When looking only at the first response, the results for mothers reflect similar findings regarding issues discussed with the father (Table 4.30). Education of the child is still the most frequent topic discussed (50%). Regarding child's sex, mothers talked to daughters on education more than sons, 56% and 44% respectively. The fact that girls are more likely to talk to parents on education than boys may probably be due to their concern with schooling and grades. As shown later in Chapter 5, girls perceive themselves doing better than others in school than do boys, indicating that girls pay more attention to school than boys. They, thus, tend to talk about school/education to their father more than boys. And similar to issues discussed with the father, there is a tendency of mother talking about school/ grades with older children more than with younger children, 59% and 44% respectively. Younger children are more likely to ask for toys/ sweets/ money from mother than do the older ones, 17% compared to 8%. The findings are not presented across the household types due to the very few cases of mother-only migrant households.

Table 4.30 Issues that target child discussed when mother contacted by sex, age group and household type (first response only)

	Overall	PC's sex		PC's age	
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15
School/ grades or marks	49.6	43.7	55.8	44.0	58.9
How I am/how she is	17.9	20.6	15.0	19.5	15.1
Asking her for toys/sweets/money	13.7	16.1	11.2	17.0	8.1
Family well-being	11.4	13.8	8.9	10.6	12.8
Telling mother to come home	4.0	2.8	5.3	5.5	1.6
To take care of siblings	2.9	2.3	3.5	2.8	3.1
Others (never talk to mother etc.)	0.6	0.9	0.3	0.7	0.4
		$\chi 2=19.4$, p=0.004		*$\chi 2=25.5$, p=0.000*	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(694)	(355)	(339)	(436)	(258)

Note: *Children whose parents lived with them and whose father only migrant are excluded.

4.4.6 Last time the target child saw the migrant parent

Parents and target children can keep contact via various means including telephone, visits of parents to the household or of the target child to parents at their place of destination. Face-to - face contact may have more potential for affection than other types of contact. For this reason the study investigates the last time the child saw his or her parent(s).

Last time target child saw migrant father

Overall, we find that the majority of target children (74%) saw their ***father*** within six months of the survey. About one-fifth of children did not see their migrant father for 6-12 months. Children who do not see their father for more than a year constitute only 2%. We find that 3% of fathers were currently visiting their origin household at the time of the survey. (Table 4.31)

Regarding TC's age, the proportion of older children who last saw their migrant father in less than 6 months is slightly more than younger children, 78% and 71% respectively. (Table 4.31)

When taking into account household type, children of migrant fathers are more likely to report face-to-face contact with their father in less than 6 months than children of both-parent migrant, 82% and 71% respectively. (Table 4.31)

Table 4.31 The last time target child saw migrant father by TC's age group and household type

Latest time TC seeing father	Overall	TC's age		Household type	
		8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Less than 6 months	73.6	70.7	78.4	71.3	82.0
6-12 months ago	19.2	22.2	14.4	21.5	11.1
1 year and more	2.2	1.9	2.7	2.5	1.1
Now father visits home	3.0	2.8	3.3	2.7	4.2
Others	2.0	2.4	1.2	2.0	1.6
		χ 2= 10.5, p=0.032		*χ 2= 13.6, p=0.00*	
Total	100.0	100.0	100	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(869)	(536)	(333)	(679)	(189)

Note: *Children whose parents lived with them and whose mother only migrant are excluded.

The last time target child saw migrant mother

Findings on face-to-face contact of the child with their migrant ***mother*** are similar to those of the father. About 70% of the children report seeing their mother in the last 6 months (Table 4.34). This finding reflects that both fathers and mothers still keep in touch with the child, probably visiting home during the major holidays such as New Year's or the Songkran festival. Children may also visit their parents during school holidays.

Across age groups, there is no significant difference in how recently the children their mother, and the same is true by sex.

Table 4.32 The last time target child saw migrant mother by TC's age group and household type

Latest time TC seeing mother	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age	
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15
Less than 6 months	72.7	74.6	70.7	70.1	77.1
6-12 months ago	20.8	18.9	22.9	23.7	15.9
1 year and more	2.0	1.7	2.3	2.1	2.0
Now mother visits home	2.6	2.3	2.9	2.3	3.1
Others	1.9	2.5	1.2	1.8	1.9
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0
(N)*	(696)	(355)	(341)	(438)	(258)

Note: *Children whose parents lived with them and whose father only migrant are excluded.
ns.= not significant

4.5 Conclusion

Parents' migration experience

Our findings suggest that migration of people in the labor force age group is very common even after having children. About three-fourths of fathers and about 60% of mothers have experienced being away from the target child for a period of at least 2 months since the child was born. For currently non-migrant parents, more than one-third of fathers and about one-fifth of mothers had ever moved from the child since born. Among parents who have ever moved away from the target child, the mean length of being away is around 8 years for both fathers and mothers.

Parents' current migration

Among currently migrant parents, the majority currently live in Bangkok. When both parents are away, the majority of them moved to the same destination. The mean length living in the current destination is about 11 years for father about 10 years for mother. The average length of stay in the current destination is longer than the length of separation from the child since born. This reflects the prevalence of parents who have been migrants before the child was born.

The main reason for migration of parents is economically oriented. The decision regarding migration in most cases was made jointly by both parents. The joint decision is higher for mother's migration than father's migration. Findings indicate that father is part of decision making on mother's migration more than vice versa.

Children's reaction towards parents' migration

More than half of the respondents reported that the child was given an explanation about why parent(s) are away. The majority of the children acted as normal as usual at their parents' migration. However, the proportions reporting that the child was sad and missed the father and mother are substantial, about 27% and 30% for father and mother respectively.

Remittances

The majority of migrant parents sent money home at least once in the past 12 months prior to survey. On average, households received remittances about once a month. Father-only migrant households received remittances more frequently and in a higher amount than both-parent migrant households. The average amount of remittances received from migrant parents in the previous year is 45,242 baht. Thus, findings suggest that migrant fathers are more likely to remit when the mother is home with the children than when mothers also migrated. One of the possible reasons for this is that when both father and mother moved, they also took along other children (siblings of the TC) with them to the destination household. This would explain why they remit less to the household of origin than father-only migrant households. It is also possible that when the mother is the migrant herself, she may keep a fraction of the earnings with her instead of remitting.

Remittances are positively related to household wealth, indicating the contribution of remittances to household economic status. The top three highest uses of remittances are on children's education, food/clothes/household, and food for children. The decision maker on the use of remittances is mainly the child's maternal grandmother. More than half reported that the remittances have "a lot of benefit" to the child. Migrant parents have also sent money for community's social or religious activities in a substantial proportion.

Contact with migrant parents

Almost all households remain in close contact with the migrant parents and telephone is the most used method. Visits of the migrant parents to the home of origin is second most important, followed by visits of the child to their migrant parents, and visits of other household members to the migrant father.

CHAPTER 5
CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

This chapter presents information on an important focus of our study, the well-being of children as a result of their parents' migration. Children's well-being is measured in aspects of physical and psychological health as well as other relevant characteristics which reflect or support their well-being. Note that throughout this chapter, the term "target child" is abbreviated to TC.

5.1 School Performance and Enjoyment

5.1.1 School performance

Two questions were used to evaluate TC's school performance. One is from TC's self-evaluation: *'How do your grades/marks compare to the grades/marks of your classmates?'*, and the other was taken from caretaker's perspective: '*How would you describe the {TARGET CHILD NAME}'s performance at school during the past six months?'*

From the first question, about 23% of TC report that their grades are better or much better than their classmates, while 68% of them reported about the same grades. Only 10% of TC reported worse or much worse grades than their friends. Furthermore, this reporting is different by sex, age groups, as well as household types of TC. Girls are more likely to report better/much better grades than boys (28.3% vs. 17.0%) and less likely to report worse/much worse grades (7.5% vs. 12.1%). Younger children, aged 8-12 years, are more likely to report both better/much better and worse/much worse grades than the older children, aged 13-15 years, (23.3% vs. 21.7% and 11.9% vs. 6.8%, respectively). Children who live in both-parent migrant households are less likely to report better/much better grades than those who live in either one-parent migrant or non-migrant households (19.7% vs. 22.8% vs. 26.1%).On the other hand, they are more likely to report worse/much worse grades than their counterparts (12.0% vs. 5.9% vs. 8.5%) (Table 5.1)

Table 5.1 Percentage of TC's grades/marks comparing to his/her classmates

TC's grades / marks	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Better/much better	22.6	17.0	28.3	23.3	21.7	19.7	22.8	26.1
About the same	67.6	70.9	64.3	64.8	71.5	68.3	71.3	65.4
Worse/much worse	9.8	12.1	7.5	11.9	6.8	12.0	5.9	8.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,429)	(718)	(711)	(829)	(600)	(675)	(202)	(552)
		χ^2=30.34, p=0.000		χ^2=12.00, p=0.002		χ^2=13.66, p=0.008		

Looking at the caretaker side, findings show that 46% and 49% of all caretakers reported that the TC's performance is good or neither good nor bad, respectively. Only 5% of them report that the TC's performance is bad. *However, these patterns of the caretaker's opinion on TC's school performance are not statistically significant when they are compared by household type*. (Table 5.2)

Table 5.2 Percentage of TC's performance at school during the past six months, according to caretaker's opinion

TC's performance at school	Overall	Household type		
		Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Good/very good	45.9	43.6	51.2	46.7
Neither good nor bad	49.4	52.2	45.8	47.4
Bad/very bad	4.8	4.3	3.0	6.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,433)	(675)	(203)	(555)
		χ^2 *ns.*		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.1.2 School enjoyment

Besides the school performance of TC, school enjoyment is another aspect of well-being that we measured. The results of TC's school enjoyment are shown in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3 Percentage of TC by level of school enjoyment and TC's sex, age group, household type

School enjoyment	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Never	0.4	0.7	0.0	0.6	0.0	0.6	0.5	0.0
Hardly ever	0.4	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.0	0.2
Some of the time	18.9	19.9	17.9	19.1	18.7	19.7	19.8	17.6
Almost always	17.1	16.2	18.0	15.3	19.5	16.3	16.8	18.1
Always	63.3	62.7	63.9	64.5	61.5	62.7	62.9	64.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,429)	(718)	(711)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*		

Note: ns.= not significant

Less than 1% of children reported that they never or hardly ever enjoyed school. One-fifth (19%) of them enjoy school some of the time. Most of children (80%) almost always/always enjoy school. This pattern of school enjoyment is not different when classifying by TC's sex, age group, and type of household. Further analysis combining never, hardly ever, and some of the time together still yields no significant differences by TC's sex, age group, or household type.

5.2 SDQ

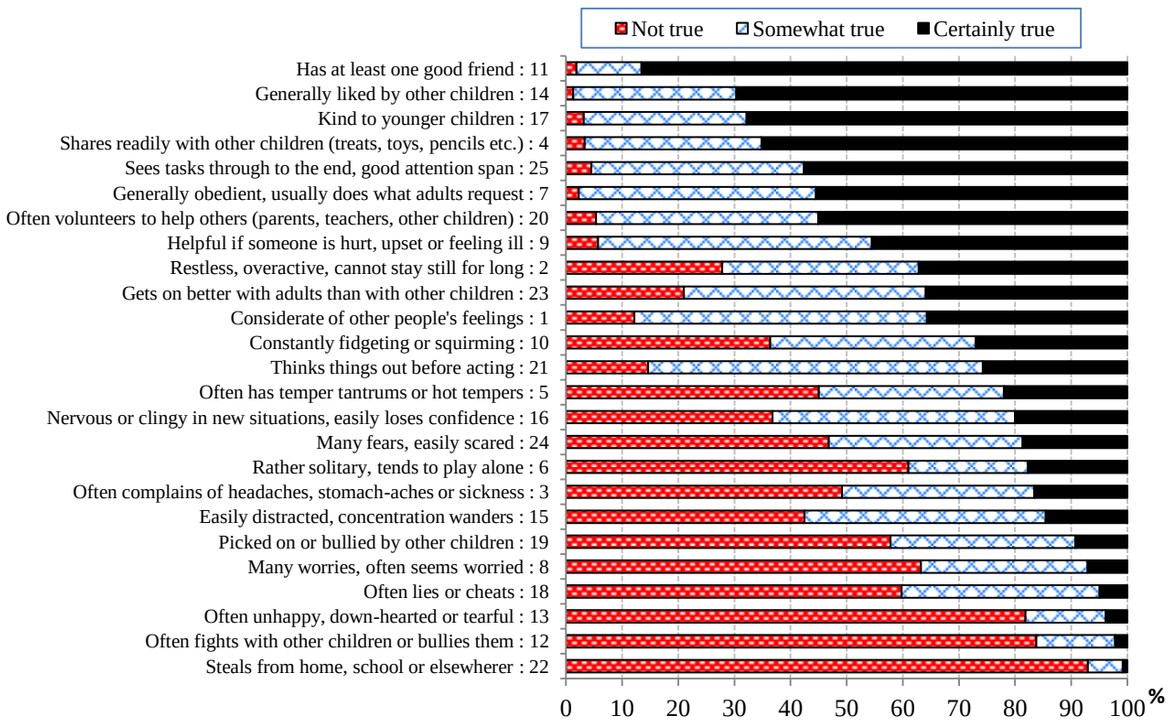
5.2.1 Psychological well-being of target child by SDQ item

The term 'SDQ' is from the 'Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire'. It is a well-accepted standardized behavioral screening questionnaire for children aged 3-16 years old, developed by the English pediatric psychiatrist, Dr. Robert Goodman (1997). Nowadays, it is translated into

more than 50 languages and used in countries around the world[5].SDQ has 25 items, positive and negative, used to capture five dimensions of behaviors, i.e. conduct disorder (item 5, 7, 12, 18, 22), emotional disorder (item 3, 8, 13, 16, 24), hyperactivity/inattention (item 2, 10, 15, 21, 25), peer relationship problems (item 6, 11, 14, 19, 23), and pro-social behavior (item 1, 4, 9, 17, 20).This tool is developed to be used by children (self-report), a caretaker, or even a teacher. In this study, we evaluate the TC's psychological well-being by using the SDQ which is based on the caretaker's rating. Results of TC's SDQ by item are shown in Figure 5.1.

From Figure 5.1, most of the children were reported to behave well and have positive characteristics and very few were rated by caretakers with bad behavior or negative characteristics. Less than 10% of caretakers said that the following negative behaviors were "certainly true"; 1) steals from home, school or elsewhere (0.8%) 2) often fights with other children or bullies them (2.2%) 3) often unhappy, down-hearted or tearful (3.9%) 4) often lies or cheats (5.0%) 5) many worries, often seems worried (7.1%) and 6) picked on bullied by other children (9.3%). There are also less than 6% of children who were rated as not having these positive or good behaviors; 1) helpful if someone is hurt, upset or feeling ill (5.7%) 2) often volunteers to help others (5.4%) 3) generally obedient, usually does what adults request (2.3%) 4) sees tasks through to the end, good attention span (4.5%) 5) shares readily with other children (3.3%) 6) kind to younger children (3.2%) 7) generally liked by other children (1.3%) and 8) has at least one good friend (1.9%).

Figure 5.1 Psychological behaviors of children by SDQ item



[5]'SDQ Information for researchers and professionals about the Strengths & Difficulties Questionnaires' available at http://www.sdqinfo.com/

5.2.2 Psychological well-being of target child by SDQ dimension

To evaluate the psychological well-being of children, each SDQ item (except item 7, 11, 14, 21, and 25) is rated on a 3 point scale; 0 = 'not true', 1 = 'somewhat true', and 2 = 'certainly true'. For SDQ item 7, 11, 14, 21 and 25, they are rated in reversed scale; 0 = 'certainly true', 1 = 'somewhat true', and 2 = 'not true'. The scores from each dimension are summed to create a score for each dimension. The scores for each of the first four dimensions indicate difficulties while those of the last dimension (pro-social behavior) indicate the strength of a child. In this study, we use the cut-off point recommended by the Department of Mental Health[6] in order to classify the child into psychological well-being groups. The cut-off points for the SDQ scores are shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4 Cut-off point of parents' rating of SDQ scores recommended by Department of Mental Health

Dimension	Difficulties			Strength	
	Normal	Risky	Problematic	Strength	Weakness
- Conduct disorder	0-3	4	5-10		
- Emotional disorder	0-4	5	6-10		
- Hyperactivity/inattention	0-5	6	7-10		
- Peer relationship problems	0-4	5	6-10		
- Pro-social behaviors				5-10	0-4
- Total difficulties*	0-15	16-18	19-40		

Note: *All dimensions except pro-social dimension

Considering each SDQ dimension, findings suggest that most of the TC (3/4 or more) have no difficulties in any of conduct disorder, emotion disorder, hyperactivity/inattention, and peer relationships measures. The most prevalent of difficulties is found in hyperactivity/inattention, following by emotional disorder, conduct disorder, and peer relationship problems. There are 14.1%, 10.2%, 7.0%, and 3.7% of children who have these problems, respectively. Moreover, our study also finds that almost all of the children (93.3%) score in the "strength" range in terms of pro-social behaviors, and vice versa, only 6.7% of children have weakness in this dimension (Table 5.5).

Comparing by sex, the prevalence of difficulties is statistically different in some dimensions. The prevalence of emotion disorder among girls is higher than among boys (11.9% vs. 8.5%). By contrast, the prevalence of hyperactivity/inattention among boys is higher than among girls (17.3% vs. 10.0%). For the other dimensions, no statistical differences are found between boys and girls (Table 5.5)

By the TC's age, the prevalence of difficulties is found to be statistically different only for the hyperactivity/inattention dimension. The younger children (aged 8-12 years) are more likely to have this problem than the older children (aged 13-15 years) (18.6% vs. 8.1%). However, by household type, results do not show any significant differences in the prevalence of difficulties or strengths (Table 5.5)

[6]Bureau of Mental Health Technical Development, Department of Mental Health. Online available at: *www.moe.go.th/wijai/babytestbehavior.pdf*

Table 5.5 Percentage of TC by SDQ dimension and TC's sex, age group, household type

SDQ dimension	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12.	13-15.	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Conduct disorder								
Normal	81.9	80.0	84.0	81.6	82.4	84.2	82.6	78.9
Risky	11.1	11.5	10.6	11.6	10.4	9.9	9.7	13.0
Problematic	7.0	8.5	5.4	6.9	7.2	5.9	7.7	8.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2ns.*		
Emotional disorder								
Normal	80.5	83.2	77.7	78.8	82.7	79.8	84.1	80.0
Risky	9.3	8.3	10.5	9.8	8.8	9.6	9.2	9.1
Problematic	10.2	8.5	11.9	11.4	8.5	10.6	6.8	10.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=7.25, p=0.027		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2ns.*		
Hyperactivity/ inattention								
Normal	73.8	66.4	81.3	66.7	83.1	76.1	73.4	71.1
Risky	12.2	16.2	7.9	14.7	8.8	10.3	14.0	13.7
Problematic	14.1	17.3	10.0	18.6	8.1	13.5	12.6	15.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=42.67, p=0.000		*χ^2=50.60, p=0.000*		*χ^2ns.*		
Peer relationship problems								
Normal	88.7	89.6	87.9	88.6	89.0	87.0	88.9	90.7
Risky	7.6	7.6	7.5	7.7	7.3	8.4	8.2	6.3
Problematic	3.7	2.8	4.6	3.7	3.7	4.6	2.9	3.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2ns.		*χ^2ns.*		*χ^2ns.*		
Pro-social behaviors								
Normal	93.3	92.0	94.6	93.4	93.1	92.5	92.8	94.4
Risky	6.7	8.0	5.4	6.6	6.9	7.5	7.2	5.6
Problematic								
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2ns.*		*χ^2ns.*		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.2.3 Total difficulties

When focusing on SDQ's total difficulties scores, findings indicate that 79.3%, 12.7%, and 8.0% of total children are normal, risky, and problematic respectively. Boys are more likely to have difficulties than girls (13.7% vs. 11.7% for risky, 8.8% vs. 7.1% for problematic). The percentage of younger children who are in the risky and problematic groups is significantly higher than the older children (15.2% vs. 9.4% and 8.9% vs. 6.7% respectively). There are no significant differences in total difficulties by household type (Table 5.6)

Table 5.6 Percentage of TC by SDQ total difficulties and TC's sex, age group, and household type

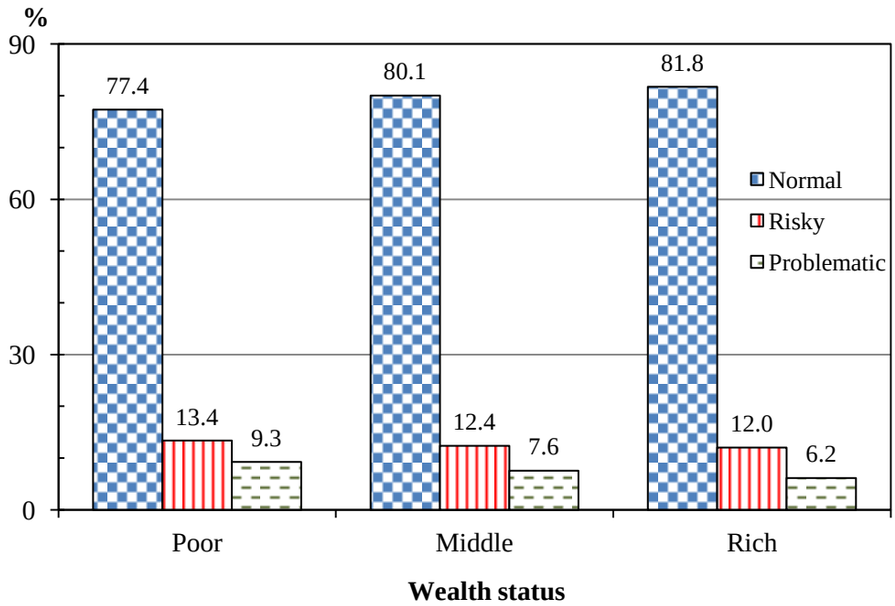
SDQ total difficulties	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Normal	79.3	77.5	81.2	75.9	83.9	80.7	78.7	77.9
Risky	12.7	13.7	11.7	15.2	9.4	12.8	12.1	12.8
Problematic	8.0	8.8	7.1	8.9	6.7	6.5	9.2	9.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns		χ^2=14.34, p=0.001		χ^2 ns		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.2.4 Total difficulties and wealth

The association between total difficulties and wealth status was tested. Findings indicate that that a higher proportion of risky and problematic children is found in the poor households than in the middle or rich households (13.4% vs. 12.4% vs. 12.0% for risky children and 9.3% vs. 7.6% vs. 6.2% for problematic children). However, there is no significant statistical association between total difficulties and wealth status (Figure 5.2)

Figure 5.2 Percentage of TC by total difficulties and wealth status



5.3 Health

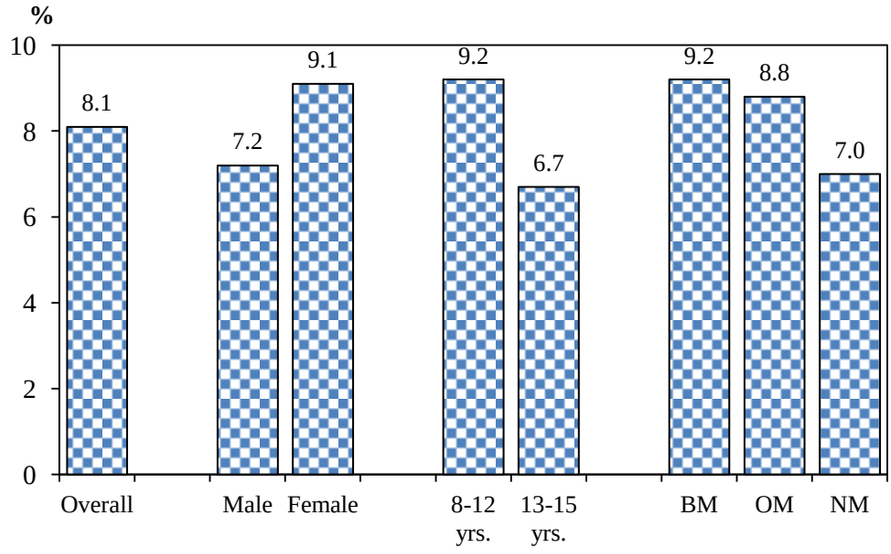
5.3.1 Physical health

Our study measures physical health of TC in three main aspects including birth weight, immunization, recent and past illness and accidents as the current health status of children may be affected by the health status at birth and by the basic health services received during their early life.

a) Birth weight

Information on birth weight of TC was asked from the caretaker. The answer is from his/her recall, not from the health record book. For this reason the results may be recall-biased, and the interpretation of the data should be made with caution. There are 1,217 caretakers (83.6%) who reported that they knew the birth weight of TC exactly. However, when comparing by household types, the percentage of caretakers from both-parent migrant households who know the TC's birth weight exactly is only 70.7%, while the other categories are higher than 90 percent. Among those who knew the birth weight, 'low birth weight' (LBW) or less than 2,500 grams is 8.1%. By sex, 7.2% of male and 9.1% of female TCs were reported as LBW. A higher percentage of LBW was reported among younger children than among older children (9.2% vs. 6.7%). The percentage of LBW of TC in both-parent migrant household is 9.2%, higher than that of TCs in one-migrant parent households (8.8%) and non-migrant parent households (7.0%), respectively. However, these differences of LBW by sex, age of TC, and household type are not significant (Figure 5.3)

Figure 5.3 Percentage of low birth weight by TC's sex, age group, and household type



Note: BM = Both-parent migrant household, OM = One-parent migrant household, NM = Non-migrant parents household

b) Vaccination

Besides the birth weight of each TC, our study also asked caretakers to report whether the TC received the complete EPI (Expanded Program on Immunization) series. Six vaccines were included: OPV (Oral Polio Vaccine), DPT (Diphtheria, Pertussis, Tetanus Vaccine), HBV (Hepatitis B Vaccine), Measles/MMR (Mump, Measles, Rubella Vaccine), BCG (Tuberculosis

Vaccine), and JE (Japanese Encephalitis Vaccine). Similarly to birth weight, the answers from caretakers may be recall-biased.

All caretakers except one reported that the TC had been vaccinated. However, some children received the complete series of vaccinations while others did not. The number of TC who received each vaccine is shown in Figure 5.4. The proportion receiving the complete series of vaccinations is 98.7%.

The proportion receiving complete vaccinations is not different by sex (98.7% for male, 98.6% for female) or age group (99.0% for younger child and 98.3% for older child) of TC. Nonetheless, the difference is significant by household type. Receiving the complete vaccination series is found to be lowest in one-parent migrant households (96.9%) and highest in both-parent migrant households (99.4%). The percentage of complete vaccination of TC living in non-migrant parents household is 98.5% (Table 5.7)

Figure 5.4 Complete vaccination of TC reported by caretaker

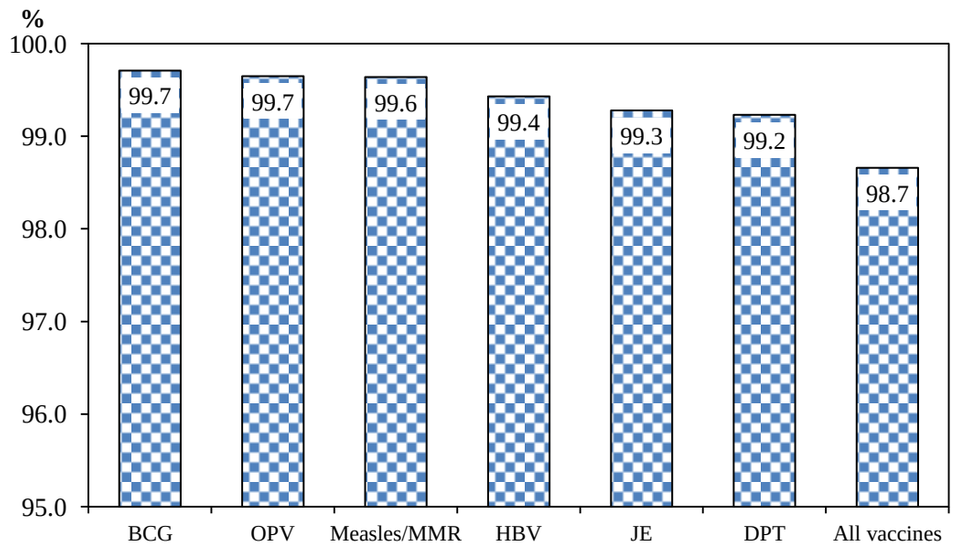


Table 5.7 Percentage receiving complete vaccination series by sex, age group and household type

	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Complete	98.7	98.7	98.6	99.0	98.3	99.4	96.9	98.5
Incomplete	1.3	1.3	1.4	1.0	1.7	0.6	3.1	1.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,342)	(674)	(668)	(764)	(578)	(621)	(191)	(530)
		χ^2 ns.		χ^2 ns.		χ^2=7.07, p=0.029		

Note: ns.= not significant

c) Minor illness

The terms 'minor illness' is defined as having any of the following signs or symptoms within the last two weeks prior to the survey; a) cold, cough, fever, flu; b) headache; c) stomach ache; d) loss of appetite; e) diarrhea; f) toothache and; g) eye problems. By this definition, it is common to find that about 2/3 of all TC (or 62.3%) were sick with a minor illness within two weeks prior to the survey. The percentage of illnesses among boys is slightly lower than girls (59.4% vs.

65.3%), but this is not significant. Younger children (age 8-12 years) are significantly more likely to have an illness than the older children (age 13-15 years) (65.4% vs. 58.2%). The prevalence of minor illnesses among TC by household type is not different (Table 5.8).

Table 5.8 Percentage of TC having at least one minor illness within two weeks prior to the survey

Minor illness	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Yes	62.3	59.4	65.3	65.4	58.2	61.9	62.8	62.6
No	37.7	40.6	34.7	34.6	41.8	38.1	37.2	37.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2*=8.04, p=0.005*		χ^2 *ns.*		

Note: ns.= not significant

d) Serious illness / serious injury / physical or mental disability

Child health is also measured in terms of serious or life-threatening illnesses or injuries in the past six months prior to the survey. In addition, any physical or mental disabilities are also captured. The results show a low prevalence of serious illnesses and injuries, about 5 and 2% respectively. Moreover, the evidence of physical/mental disabilities is even lower than of serious illnesses or injuries, only 1%. Serious health problems are not significantly different by TC's sex, age group, or household type (Table 5.9).

Table 5.9 TC's serious illness, injury, physical or mental disability

Illness/ injury/ disability	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Serious illness								
Yes	5.1	5.9	4.3	5.3	4.9	4.7	7.2	4.9
No	94.9	94.1	95.7	94.7	95.1	95.3	92.8	95.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*		
Serious injury								
Yes	2.2	2.4	2.0	1.6	3.0	2.2	1.9	2.3
No	97.8	97.6	98.0	98.4	97.0	97.8	98.1	97.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*		
Physical/ mental disability								
Yes	0.9	1.2	0.6	0.7	1.1	0.6	0.5	1.4
No	99.1	98.8	99.u	99.3	98.9	99.4	99.5	98.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.3.2 Health risk behaviors

This study focuses on two health risk behaviors of TC, i.e. smoking and drinking. We asked the child whether he/she had ever tried smoking (even one or two puffs of tobacco) or drinking (a sip of alcohol or taking a sip from someone else more than two or three times). We used flash cards for all smoking and drinking related questions so that the child could point at the answers instead of responding aloud. This strategy helped the child feel more comfortable to answer.

Table 5.10 shows the interesting finding that 10.5% and 13.9% of TC ever tried smoking and drinking, respectively. For smoking, the proportion of boys who ever tried smoking is significantly higher than girls, 9 times greater (18.8% vs. 2.0%). Similarly, the prevalence who ever tried smoking is significantly different by TC's age group. The proportion is almost one-fifth for the older children while only 3.5% for the younger. This percentage is not significantly different for children living in different household types.

Regarding drinking, the percentage who ever tried drinking is significantly different by all three characteristics—sex, age group, and household type. The percentage of boys who ever tried drinking is twice that of girls (18.3% vs. 9.5%). The percentage of older children whoever tried drinking is greater than of younger children by 5 times (25.3% vs. 5.4%). Children living in one-parent migrant households have a higher proportion who ever tried drinking than children living in both-parent migrant and non-migrant parent households by 8% and 3%, respectively.

Table 5.10 Percentage of TC who tried smoking and drinking

Health risk behaviors	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Tried smoking								
Yes	10.5	18.8	2.0	3.5	19.8	9.1	12.1	11.6
No	89.5	81.2	98.0	96.5	80.2	90.9	87.9	88.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=109.96, p=0.000		*χ^2=101.00, p=0.000*		*χ^2 ns.*		
Tried drinking								
Yes	13.9	18.3	9.5	5.4	25.2	10.8	18.8	16.0
No	86.1	81.7	90.5	94.6	74.8	89.2	81.2	84.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=23.40, p=0.000		*χ^2=116.81, p=0.000*		*χ^2=11.85, p=0.003*		

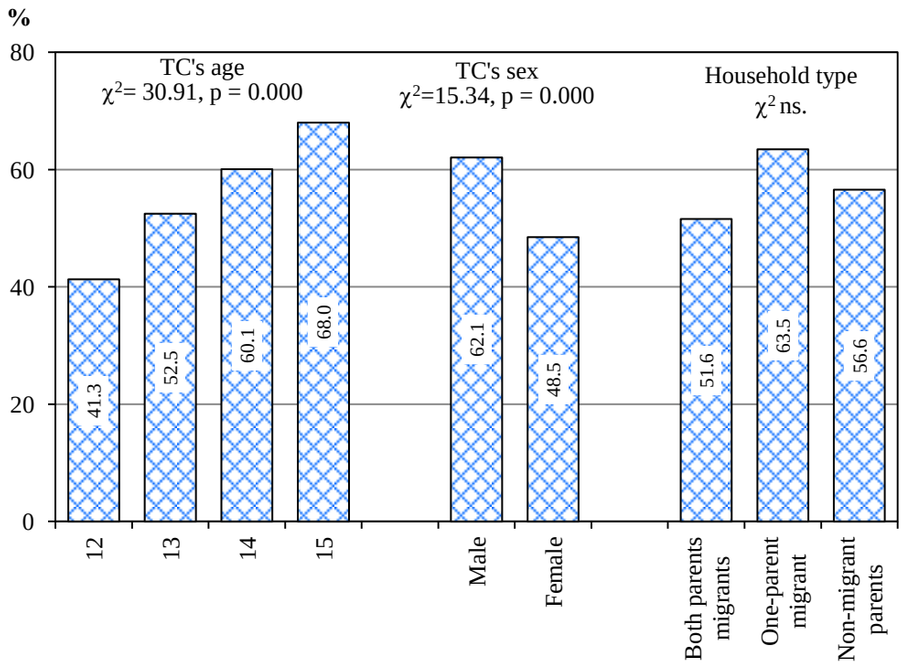
Note: ns.= not significant

5.3.3 Sexual behavior

Sexual behavior of TC is another source of concern as nowadays children can easily access many arousing mediums that can put them at risk. Whether the absence of parents due to migration would increase or decrease the chance to get exposed to sexual-risk behavior is our main interest in this respect. If children are exposed to these inappropriate expressions, they may induce children to have risky sexually behavior (Piya-Anant, Chiravacharadej, and Patcha, 2002). In our study, there are two questions related to sexual behavior of children, looking at pornographic pictures from magazines, books, CDs, VDOs, cell phones and the internet in the past 12 months, and the sexual experience of TC's close friends. These questions were asked *only of 12-15 year-old* respondents and flash cards were used.

The findings indicate that the percentage of TC who said that they watched pornographic pictures increases with age. The lowest percentage (41.3%) is found in 12-year-oldsand gradually increases to 52.5%, 60.1%, and 68.0% in 13, 14, and 15-year-old TCs. Boys are more likely to report watching these pictures than girls (62.1% vs. 48.5%).By household type, the highest percentage is found in children of one-parent migrants (63.5%), followed by children of non-migrant parents and both-parent migrant (56.6% and 51.6% respectively). However, the difference by household type is not significant (Figure 5.5).

Figure 5.5 Percentage of TC who ever looked at pornographic pictures in the past 12 months



The survey asked TC aged 12-15 years old how many of his/her close friends ever had sexual experience. Note that we asked the child to point at a flash card in order to answer this question.

According to the data in Table 5.11, about 30% of TC reported that their male close friends ever had sexual experience while about 24% of TC reported that their female close friends ever had sexual experience. About 40% of TC reported that their close friends, both males and females, had no experience. The percentage of TC who reported sexual experience of their close friends is not different by household type.

Table 5.11 Percentage of TC reporting sexual experience of their close friends

Sexual experience of TC's close friends	Male friends		Female friends	
	Number	%	Number	%
Overall				
Everyone ever experienced	10	1.2	3	0.4
Most of them ever experienced	25	3.1	22	2.7
Half of them ever experienced	47	5.7	23	2.8
Someone ever experienced	166	20.2	147	17.9
No one ever experienced	306	37.3	332	40.4
No idea/ not sure	136	16.6	141	17.2
Don't know/ don't answer	131	16.0	153	18.6
Total	821	100.0	821	100.0
Both-parent migrant				
Everyone ever experienced	3	0.9	0	0.0
Most of them ever experienced	10	2.9	5	1.5
Half of them ever experienced	21	6.1	13	3.8
Someone ever experienced	67	19.5	63	18.4
No one ever experienced	128	37.3	140	40.8
No idea/ not sure	49	14.3	59	17.2
Don't know/ don't answer	65	19.0	63	18.4
Total	343	100.0	343	100.0
One-parent migrant				
Everyone ever experienced	1	0.9	0	0.0
Most of them ever experienced	4	3.5	5	4.4
Half of them ever experienced	5	4.4	1	0.9
Someone ever experienced	22	19.3	20	17.5
No one ever experienced	49	43.0	53	46.5
No idea/ not sure	22	19.3	15	13.2
Don't know/ don't answer	11	9.6	20	17.5
Total	114	100.0	114	100.0
Non-migrant parents				
Everyone ever experienced	6	1.6	3	0.8
Most of them ever experienced	11	3.0	12	3.3
Half of them ever experienced	21	5.8	9	2.5
Someone ever experienced	77	21.2	64	17.6
No one ever experienced	129	35.4	139	38.2
No idea/ not sure	65	17.9	67	18.4
Don't know/ don't answer	55	15.1	70	19.2
Total	364	100.0	364	100.0

5.4 Life Satisfaction

To reflect on TC's life satisfaction, we used questions asking TC about their satisfaction in seven different areas of life, including family, friendships, school experience, with themselves, with where he/she lives, and with life overall. Responses on the level of life satisfaction were on a scale of 1 to 5: 1) very satisfied, 2) somewhat satisfied, 3) neither satisfied nor unsatisfied, 4) somewhat unsatisfied, and 5) very unsatisfied. However, in the analysis, the responses were reclassified into 3 groups as very satisfied, satisfied, and less satisfied (those who gave a score of 3 to 5 were combined due to the very small percentage responding with a low degree of satisfaction). The results of TC's life satisfaction in different areas are shown in Figure 5.6.

Figure 5.6 Percentage of TC's life satisfaction

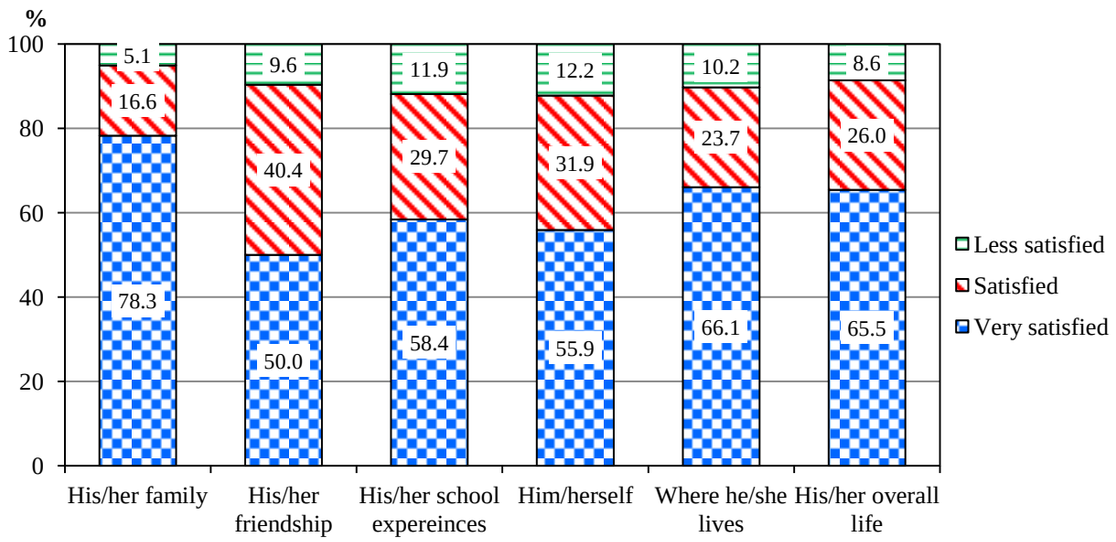


Figure 5.6 shows that the majority of TC are very satisfied in each of the six areas. Note that the percentage reporting "very satisfied" is lowest in the area of friendship. About 1/3 of TC are satisfied with school experiences and him/herself, while about 1/4 of them are satisfied with where he/she lives and life overall. Finally 1/5 of them are satisfied in the area of family. The percentage of TC satisfied with friendships is about 40%. Only a minority of children (less than 13%) reported that they were less satisfied with each area of life. The percentage reporting being less satisfied is lowest in the family dimension and highest in him/herself.

Comparing by sex, girls are significantly more satisfied with their school experiences, with themselves, and where they live than boys (Table 5.12).By age group, the older children are more likely to be satisfied with their friendship than the younger. By contrast, the younger children are more likely to be satisfied with their school experiences and themselves than their older counterparts (Table 5.12).

Table 5.12 TC's life satisfaction by TC's sex, age group, household type

Satisfaction with	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
	Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
His/her family							
Very satisfied	75.9	80.8	78.8	77.6	77.3	72.9	81.4
Satisfied	18.0	15.2	15.8	17.7	17.1	19.3	15.1
Less satisfied	6.1	4.0	5.4	4.6	5.1	7.7	3.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
	χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2 ns.*		
His/her friendship							
Very satisfied	49.3	50.8	48.0	52.7	49.9	44.9	51.9
Satisfied	40.2	40.6	40.5	40.3	39.5	44.0	40.2
Less satisfied	10.6	8.6	11.6	7.0	10.6	11.1	7.9
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
	χ^2 ns.		*χ^2=9.27, p=0.010*		*χ^2 ns.*		
His/her school experiences							
Very satisfied	56.3	60.7	62.5	53.0	59.8	57.0	57.4
Satisfied	28.3	31.1	24.5	36.6	28.0	29.0	31.9
Less satisfied	15.4	8.2	13.0	10.4	12.2	14.0	10.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
	χ^2=18.03, p=0.000		*χ^2=25.26, p=0.000*		*χ^2 ns.*		
Him/herself							
Very satisfied	58.7	53.0	60.7	49.5	53.8	53.6	59.3
Satisfied	27.7	36.1	27.5	37.7	33.0	31.4	30.7
Less satisfied	13.5	10.9	11.8	12.8	13.3	15.0	10.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
	χ^2=12.26, p=0.002		*χ^2=20.00, p=0.000*		*χ^2 ns.*		
Where he/she lives							
Very satisfied	68.3	63.7	66.7	65.2	66.7	58.0	68.2
Satisfied	21.0	26.5	22.0	26.4	22.1	27.5	24.2
Less satisfied	10.7	9.8	11.2	8.9	11.2	14.5	7.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
	χ^2=6.16, p=0.046		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2= 12.91, p=0.012*		
His/her overall life							
Very satisfied	65.1	65.8	67.8	62.3	65.4	63.8	66.1
Satisfied	24.8	27.2	23.6	29.1	24.7	25.1	27.7
Less satisfied	10.1	7.0	8.6	8.6	9.9	11.1	6.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
	χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2 ns.*		

Note: ns.= not significant

The distribution of TC's satisfaction in any area of life compared by household type is not significantly different, except for the satisfaction with where they live. It is found that TCs living in one-parent migrant households are more likely to be less satisfied with where he/she lives (14.5% compare to 11.2% and 7.5%) (Table 5.12).

5.5 Care and Discipline

5.5.1 Kind treatment: TC's report

The environment or atmosphere within the household may increase or lessen life satisfaction of the children. So, we asked the children to express their opinion about how they are treated by their caretaker. From TC's opinions, almost three-quarters of TC (72.0%) said that they were always kindly treated by their caretaker. Nearly 15% of them are often or less often kindly treated. The percentages are not different by sex, age, or household type (Table 5.13).

Table 5.13 TC's opinion on how often their caretaker treated them kindly

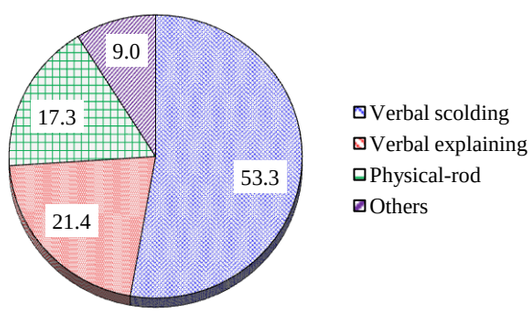
How often caretaker kindly treated	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Type of parent		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Always	72.0	73.2	70.9	71.0	73.5	74.7	68.6	70.2
Often	13.2	13.4	13.0	12.9	13.6	12.2	15.9	13.3
Less often	14.8	13.4	16.2	16.1	12.9	13.1	15.5	16.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns.		χ^2 ns.		χ^2 ns.		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.5.2 Punishment: TC's report

The children's reports on being punished for misbehavior (N=1,548) revealed that, verbal scolding is the most prevalent type (53%) followed by verbal explaining (21.4%). Physical punishment using materials such as a rod is found at 17% (Figure 5.7).

Figure 5.7 Percentage of TC by type of caretaker's punishment based on TC's report



Since physical punishment is found to constitute almost 20% of all types of punishment, we further explored the prevalence of punishment using objects such as a rod or belt and whether it is different by sex, age group or household type. The results show that about 35% of TC reported being punished using an object for misbehavior. This percentage is significantly different by TC's sex and age group. A higher proportion of boys than girls (38.8% vs. 31.2%) and of younger than older children (40.2% vs. 28.3%) said they had ever been physically punished using an object. Significant differences by household type are not found, however (Table 5.14).

Table 5.14 Being punished using an object

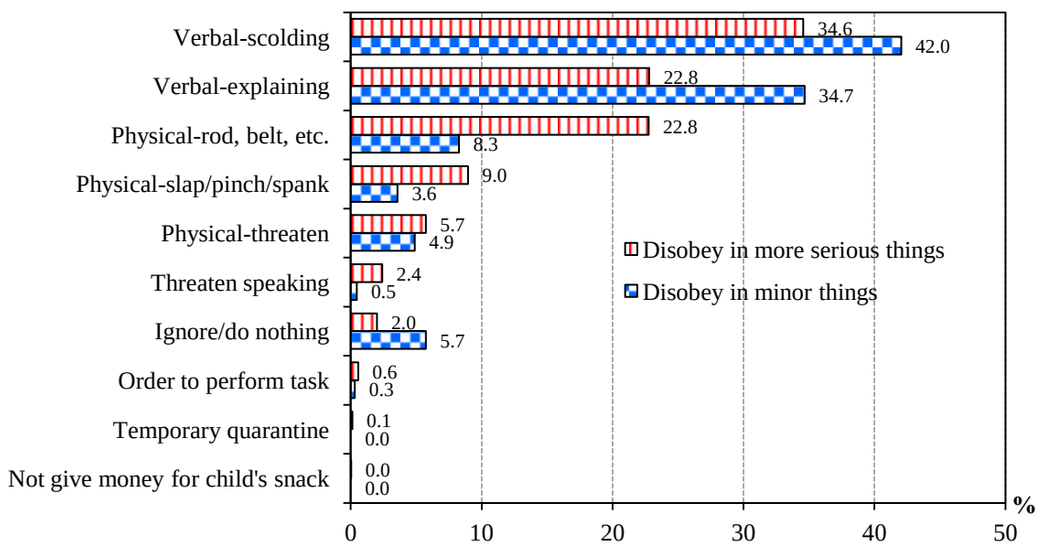
Ever been punished using an object	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Yes	35.1	38.8	31.2	40.2	28.3	34.9	37.2	34.6
No	64.9	61.2	68.8	59.8	71.7	65.1	62.8	65.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=9.22, p=0.002		χ^2=22.43, p=0.000		χ^2 ns.		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.5.3 Punishment: Caretaker's report

Besides the reports on punishments provided by TC, caretakers were also asked to report how they punish the child for misbehavior. The top three punishments reported by caretakers when children disobey in minor things are verbal scolding (42.0%), verbal explaining (34.7%) and physical punishment using a rod, belt, etc. (8.3%). Methods of punishment are not different when children disobey in serious things. However, the percentage of physical punishment using a rod goes up to 22.8%, almost threefold (Figure 5.8)

Figure 5.8 Percentage by type of punishment based on caretakers' reports



By household type, the patterns of punishment performed by caretakers are similar among both-parent migrant households, one-parent migrant households and non-migrant parent households. As for minor disobedience, caretakers in both-parent migrant households punish the TC using less verbal (explaining), but more physical (e.g. rod) punishment compared to caretakers in the other two household types. (Table 5.15)

Table 5.15 Type of punishment classified by household type based on caretakers' reporting

Type of punishment*	Household type		
	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Disobey in minor things			
Verbal – explaining	32.0	39.8	35.8
Verbal – scolding	41.0	40.1	44.0
Physical – rod, belt, etc.	10.2	5.4	7.1
Others	16.8	14.7	13.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(871)	(279)	(748)
Disobey in more serious things			
Verbal – explaining	19.1	25.3	26.3
Verbal – scolding	35.6	30.2	35.0
Physical – rod, belt, etc.	22.8	22.4	22.9
Others	22.5	22.1	15.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,041)	(344)	(860)

Note: * The significance differences are not tested due to multiple answering.

5.5.4 TC's relative behavior and financial status: Caretaker's report

Our study asked the caretakers to compare TC's behavior to other children of the same age in the aspects of responsibility, independence, happiness, financial status and overall behavior. For overall behavior, more than half of the caretakers (54.7%) reported that the children are better/much better than other children of the same age while about two-fifths (43.2%) reported that they were same as other children. Only 2% of total caretakers reported that the TC behaves worse/much worse than other children of the same age. This report does not differ by sex, age group, or household type (Table 5.16).

For more specific aspects of TC's behavior, the reports of TC's behavior in the aspects of responsibility, independence, and happiness follow the same pattern; about 53% better/much better, 41-43% same, and only 3-5% worse/much worse. However, the caretakers' perceptions of the TC's financial status shows different a pattern: about three-fifths (61.5%) report that the TC is similar to other children of the same age financially, while only 21% reported that the TC is better off or much better off (Table 5.16).

Some significant associations are found between TC's reported behavior and sex, age, and household type. Girls were more often reported as being comparatively more responsible than boys (52.8% vs. 47.9%); and children living in non-migrant parent households are reported as having better responsibility at a higher rate than children in other household types (Table 5.16). Also, more girls than boys, more older children than younger children, and more children of non-migrant parents than children of other household types were reported as being 'more/much more independent'. Differences in happiness are also found by TC's age group and household type. Older children and children of non-migrant parents are more likely than their counterparts to be reported as happier or much happier (Table 5.16).

Table 5.16 TC's behavior comparing to other same aged children (caretakers' reporting)

Behavior	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Overall								
Better/much better	54.7	54.0	54.7	52.7	57.3	53.8	54.6	55.7
Same	43.2	43.6	43.2	45.4	40.3	44.0	44.0	42.0
Worse/much worse	2.1	2.4	2.1	1.9	2.4	2.1	1.4	2.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2 ns.*		
Responsible								
More/much more	52.8	47.9	52.8	50.7	55.6	49.1	49.8	58.3
Same	42.2	46.1	42.2	44.6	39.0	45.4	44.4	37.4
Less/much less	5.0	6.0	5.0	4.7	5.4	5.3	5.8	4.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=15.12, p=0.001		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2=11.23, p=0.024*		
Independent								
More/much more	53.4	50.2	56.8	50.1	57.8	48.7	55.1	58.4
Same	40.7	43.4	37.8	44.2	35.9	46.2	38.2	34.9
Less/much less	5.9	6.4	5.4	5.7	6.2	5.0	6.8	6.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=6.30, p=0.043		*χ^2=10.17, p=0.006*		*χ^2=17.45, p=0.002*		
Happy								
Happier/much happier	53.2	51.0	55.5	52.3	54.5	44.8	52.2	63.7
Same	43.7	46.4	40.9	45.5	41.2	51.1	44.0	34.7
Worse/much worse	3.1	2.6	3.6	2.2	4.3	4.1	3.9	1.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2=7.16, p=0.028*		*χ^2= 46.84, p = 0.000*		
Well off (financial)								
Better/much better	21.1	21.5	20.6	20.6	21.7	20.2	24.2	21.1
Same	61.5	62.5	60.4	63.3	59.1	63.5	61.4	59.1
Worse/much worse	17.4	16.0	19.0	16.1	19.2	16.3	14.5	19.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2 ns.*		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.5.5 Rewarding children

It is very common for caretakers to reward children for their good behavior. As shown in Table 5.17, verbal praise is the most prevalent type of reward, reported by 55% while giving gifts/toys/money is the second most common (33%). Two percent of caretakers reported that they do good things together with their children when they behave well. However, the proportion who said they do not give rewards accounts for 10%. These patterns of giving rewards to TC by

caretakers are not different by sex or age group but are significantly different by household type. Caretakers of children in both-parent migrant households are more likely to not give rewards than those of other household types, especially when compared to non-migrant parent households (13.4% vs. 6.8%).

Table 5.17 Reward given to TC for good behavior

Reward	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12.	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant
No reward /doing nothing	10.4	10.8	9.9	9.5	11.5	13.4	10.1	6.8
Gifts/toys/money	33.0	30.7	35.3	34.0	31.6	30.3	33.8	35.8
Verbal – praising	54.7	56.6	52.7	54.5	55.0	55.2	52.2	54.9
Doing good things together	2.0	1.9	2.1	2.0	1.9	1.0	3.9	2.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2=23.41, p=0.001*		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.6 Domestic Responsibilities and Work Outside the Household: TC Reports

The target child was asked about their responsibilities for domestic work and whether they do other paid work outside the household. Overall, almost all TC (93.4%) do household chores while about one quarter of TC (25.9%) does work for pay to support the household. The proportion having domestic responsibilities is significantly different by TC's sex, age group, and household type. Girls do more household chores but do less outside work to support the household than boys (96.0% vs. 90.9% for household chores, 21.3% vs. 30.3% for work to support household). Older children do both more domestic work and outside work than younger children (96.5% vs. 91.1% for household chores, 41.4% vs. 14.2% for work to support household).Interestingly, children of non-migrant parent households do more household chores and work outside the home in higher proportions than those in both-parent migrant households (Table 5.18).

Table 5.18 Domestic responsibility/work of TC

Domestic responsibility / work	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant
Doing household chores								
Yes	93.4	90.9	96.0	91.1	96.5	91.2	94.2	95.8
No	6.6	9.1	4.0	8.9	3.5	8.8	5.8	4.2
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	((739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=14.90, p=0.000		*χ^2=16.90, p=0.000*		*χ^2=11.02, p=0.004*		
Doing any work to support household								
Yes	25.9	30.3	21.3	14.2	41.4	19.3	22.7	34.9
No	74.1	69.7	78.7	85.8	58.6	80.7	77.3	65.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(739)	(717)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		χ^2=15.27, p=0.000		*χ^2=137.16, p=0.000*		*χ^2=40.67, p=0.000*		

5.7 Family Function

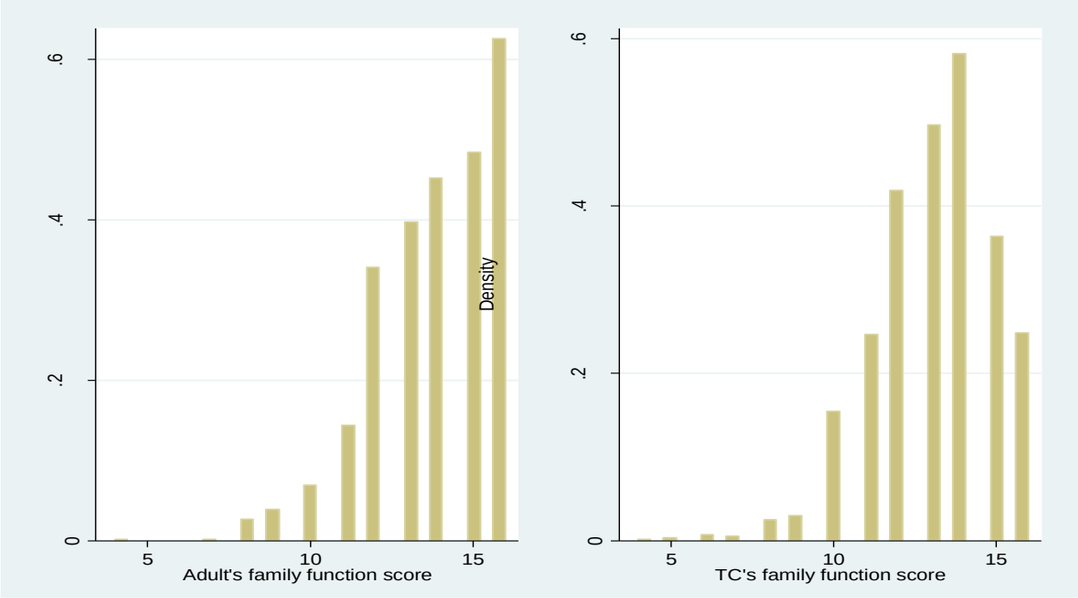
We asked both TC and a responsible adult (who may or may not be the caretaker) about 'family function', using the Family APGAR in exploring how parental migration affects family functioning and child health. Family APGAR has been widely used to study family function and health problems in family practice offices (Gardner *et al*., 2001). The acronym APGAR stands for adaptation, partnership, growth, affection, and resolve, the five domains of perceived family support that it attempts to measure.

The questions about family function include 1) 'When something is bothering/ troubling you, how often can you turn to your family for help?' 2) 'How often can you talk things over with your family and share problems with them?' 3) 'How often does your family let you try new things that you want to do?' and 4) 'How often do you and your family share time together?'

The responses to each question are scored as: never = 1, hardly ever = 2, some of the time = 3, always = 4. The scores for the four questions are summed to create the 'family function score', which varies between 4 and 16.

Figure 5.9 shows that both adults' and TC's family function scores are concentrated at a high level (to the right of the graphs). However, adult reports have a higher proportion of high scores than TC's reports: in other words, adults give higher scores on family function than do the TCs.

Figure 5.9 Histogram of family function scores (left: adult's, right: TC's)



The mean family function scores based on the adult and TC perspective are 13.8 and 13.1, respectively. This reflects that the family function in this setting is quite good: both responsible adults and TC *almost always* turn to their family for help, share problems, are allowed to try new things and share time together. As observed from the figure, the family function score based on the adult perspective is significantly higher than TC's score (paired t-test = 11.08, $p < 0.001$).

In Table 5.19, adults' family function scores are presented by household type while the TC's scores are compared by sex, age group, and household type. For adults, mean family function scores by type of household are statistically different at $p < 0.01$ using an F-test. After testing pair-by-pair, the mean family function score of non-migrant households is significantly higher than that of both-parent migrant households. TC's scores, however, are not different by sex, age group, or household type.

Table 5.19 Family function score based on adult's and TC's perspective

Family function score	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type		
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant
Adult's								
Mean	13.8					13.6	13.9	14.0
Minimum	4					8	7	4
Maximum	16					16	16	16
Number	1,456					679	207	570
						F=6.35, p=0.002		
TC's								
Mean	13.1	13.1	13.2	13.1	13.2	13.0	13.0	13.2
Minimum	4	7	4	4	6	4	8	5
Maximum	16	16	16	16	16	16	16	16
Number	1,456	739	717	830	626	679	207	570
		T-test ns.		*T-test ns.*		*F-test ns.*		

Note: ns.= not significant

5.8 Social Support

When asked who they turn to when they have problems, feel unhappy or feel lonely, TCs report that the mother is the first person children turn to when they have a problem with their father (54.7%), siblings (45.4%), teachers (30.5%), or their caretaker (if their mother is not the caretaker) (33.4%). The father is the first person children turn to when they have problem with their mother (32.4%). Children turn to friends (18.6%) when they have problems with homework/school exams, while they turn to their teacher(s) (18.6%) when they have a problem with friends or classmates. It is surprising that the mom or dad is not the first person children turn to when they feel sad or lonely. They turn to their friends first (37.9%) then they turn to mom (24.1%) (Table 5.20)

Table 5.20 First three persons whom TC turned to (talked to) when he/she has a problem

Problem	Person whom TC turned to (%)					
• Having a problem with his/her mother	Father	(32.4)	Maternal grandmother	(18.3)		
• Having a problem with his/her father	Mother	(54.7)	Maternal grandmother	(10.4)		
• Having a problem with his/her siblings	Mother	(45.4)	Both father and mother	(12.9)		
• Having a problem with his/her teacher	Mother	(30.5)	Friend	(21.9)	Both father and mother	(12.8)
• Having a problem with his/her caretaker (if caretaker is not mother)	Mother	(33.4)	Both father and mother	(15.1)	Father	(11.7)

Table 5.20 (cont.) First three persons whom TC turned to (talked to) when he/she has a problem

Problem	Person whom TC turned to (%)					
• Having a problem with homework/school exams	Friend	(18.6)	Mother	(17.3)	Teacher	(16.6)
• Having a problem with his/her friends/classmates	Teacher	(29.1)	Friend	(19.6)	Mother	(15.8)
• He/she's feeling lonely or sad	Friend	(37.9)	Mother	(24.1)	Both father and mother	(14.8)

5.9 Conclusion

The survey included a number of measures of children's well-being, with the aim of investigating whether children's well-being is affected by parents' migration. We found that most of these indicators do not show significant differences between children of migrant- and non-migrant parents. Indicators with no significant differences by parental migrant status include:

- School performance of most target children is about the same or better than their classmates. Eighty percent of TC always or almost always enjoy school.
- The standard Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), used to measure psychological well-being of children found that 8% of TC score as "problematic" on the total difficulties score. The most prevalent of difficulties is hyperactivity/inattention behaviors, accounting for 14%; the least prevalent is peer relationship problems, accounting for 4%. Prevalence of difficulties is associated with the wealth of TC's household: those in the highest quintile have the lowest percentage of children with difficulties.
- Most children were born with normal weight (equal or higher than 2,500 grams) and there was no difference by migrant status.
- About 2/3 of target children (62.3%) were sick from minor illness (e.g. cold, cough, headache, diarrhea) in the two weeks prior to the survey while 5.1% and 2.2% had serious illness and serious injury respectively in the past six months. Less than 1%of children in the survey were physically or mentally disabled. No differences were found in children's illness or disability by parents' migrant status.
- Smoking was tried by 10.5% of children but with no difference by household type.
- Among children aged 12-15 years old, the percentage who watched pornographic pictures increases with age (from about 41% for aged 12 to 68% for aged 15). Boys are more likely to watch the pictures than girls.
- These children also report that 30% and 24% of their male and female close friends respectively ever had sexual experience.
- About 3/4 of the target children (72%) reported that they are always kindly treated by their caretaker. When children misbehave, the most prevalent type of punishment given by the caretaker is verbal scolding (53%). Similarly, the most prevalent type of reward given to target children for good behavior is verbal praising (55%).
- When caretakers compare the target child to the children of the same age, they report that TC is better or much better in overall behavior, responsibility, independence, and

happiness. Only21% of caretakers reported that the financial well-being of TC is better or much better than other children of the same age.

- Almost all TCs (93%) do household chores, though more girls (96%) and older children (97%) do so.
- Both responsible adults and TC *almost always* turn to their family for help, sharing problems, and sharing time together.
- When target children have a problem with their father, siblings, teacher, or caretaker (if their mother is not the caretaker), they will turn to their mother. If they have a problem with their mother, they will turn to their father. In case of having problems with friends/classmates, TC will turn to their teacher(s). When they feel sad or lonely, they say that they would most likely turn to friends. There were no differences in social support by parental migrant status.

Despite the fact that most measures of children's well-being did not find differences by parents' migrant status, some indicators point to issues of concern for these children. They include vaccination history, health risk behavior (drinking), life satisfaction, perceived behavior relative to other children of the same age, children's work outside the household to provide support, and family functioning. A summary of these findings is as follows:

- While almost all children had been immunized, the percentage receiving the complete vaccination series is lowest in one-parent migrant households (96.9%) and highest in both-parent migrant households (99.4%). The percentage receiving complete vaccination of TC living in non-migrant parent household is 98.5%
- While 13.9% ever tried drinking, a higher percentage of children with migrant parents did so: 18.8% for those with one migrant parent and 16.0% for those with two.
- While the children surveyed are generally satisfied with all aspects of their lives, children of one-parent migrants are less satisfied with where they live in the highest proportion (14.5%).
- Significant differences are found between TC's reported behavior in comparison to other children and parents' migrant status. Children living in non-migrant parent households are reported as having better responsibility than other children at a higher rate than children in other household types. Children of non-migrant parents were also more likely to be reported as being 'more/much more independent'. Differences in happiness are also found by TC's age group and household type. Finally, children of non-migrant parents are more likely than their counterparts to be reported as happier or much happier than other children. These findings are interesting as they reflect the fact that non-migrant household caretakers are parents rather than grandparents, and the contrast is between more positive reports for these children rather than negative reports of migrant parents' children.
- Also of interest is the fact that children who live in non-migrant parent households work outside the household in higher proportions than children of migrant parents. This may be because these households do not receive cash remittances to the same level as migrant households
- Reports on family function were collected both from a household adult and from the TC; the score was 13.8 and 13.1 (full score = 16) for adults and TC, respectively. For TCs, the proportion from migrant-parent households reporting never or hardly ever shared time together with family was higher than that for migrant families, for obvious reasons. Adult reports on family functioning showed those in migrant-parent households expressed lower family functioning than their counterparts in almost all aspects. The mean score of family functioning based on adult's report is higher among non-migrant household.

CHAPTER 6

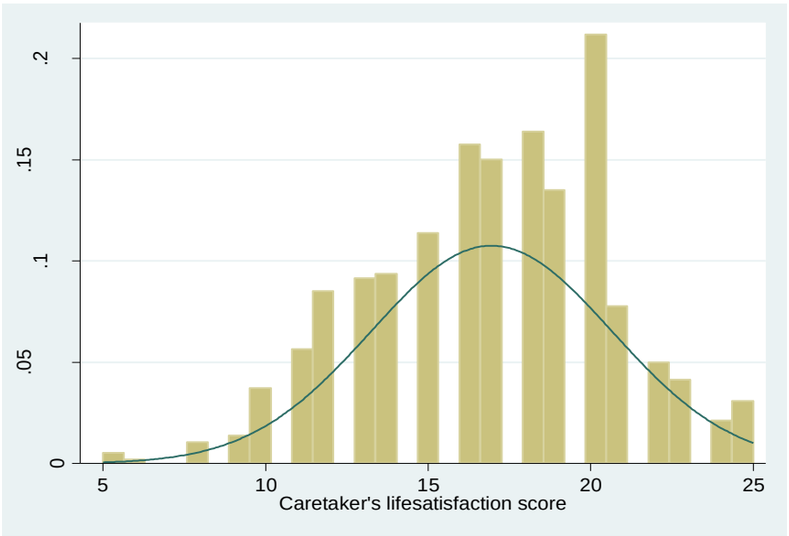
CARETAKER'S WELL-BEING

To nurture a child while they are growing up is tough work for a caretaker, especially when she/he has to raise a child alone or she/he is not the child's parent. This study pays attention to the well-being of not only the target children (as already presented in the previous chapter) but also of the caretakers. On the one hand, caretaker's well-being may affect target child's well-being, but the target child's well-being may affect caretaker's well-being as well. In this chapter, the analyses of caretaker's well-being focus on three main issues: life satisfaction, mental health screening by the Self-Reporting Questionnaire—20 items (SRQ20), and support from others.

6.1 Life Satisfaction

To assess the caretakers' life satisfaction, the caretakers were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the following5 statements, i.e. 1) In most cases my life is close to my ideal; 2) The conditions of my life are excellent; 3) I am satisfied with life;4) So far, I have gotten the important things I want in life;5) If I could live my life over, I would change almost nothing. The level of agreement on each statement is measured on a 5-point (Likert) scale, i.e., 1 = disagree, 2 = slightly disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = slightly agree, and 5 = agree. Scores on each statement are summed to create a 'life satisfaction score' which ranges between 5 and 25.

Figure 6.1 Histogram of primary caretakers' (PC) life satisfaction score



The distribution of life satisfaction scores shown in Figure 6.1 follows the shape of the normal distribution, with scores concentrated between 12 and 22. The mean life satisfaction score among all caretakers is 16.9 (standard deviation: S.D. = 3.7). The minimum and maximum scores are 5 and 25 respectively. The distribution shows that the caretakers tend to slightly agree with those statements, reflecting that they are quite satisfied with their life.

Concerning sex, age, and household type of caretakers, the mean life satisfaction scores of female caretakers are slightly higher than of males (17.0 vs. 16.6). The scores are highest among 35-59 year-old caretakers compared to their<35 and 60+ year-old counterparts (17.0 vs. 16.6 vs. 16.9). The mean scores of caretakers in both-parent migrant, one-parent migrant, and non-migrant households are 17.0, 16.9, and 16.9 respectively. However, these mean scores are not significantly different across any of these characteristics (Table 6.1).

Table 6.1 PC's life satisfaction scores by sex, age, and household type

Life satisfaction scores	PC's sex		PC's age			Household type		
	Male	Female	<35	35-59	60+	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Mean	16.6	17.0	16.6	17.0	16.9	17.0	16.9	16.9
Minimum	5	5	8	5	5	5	5	5
Maximum	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25
Number	257	1,199	173	928	355	679	207	570
	T-test ns.		*F-test ns.*			*F-test ns.*		

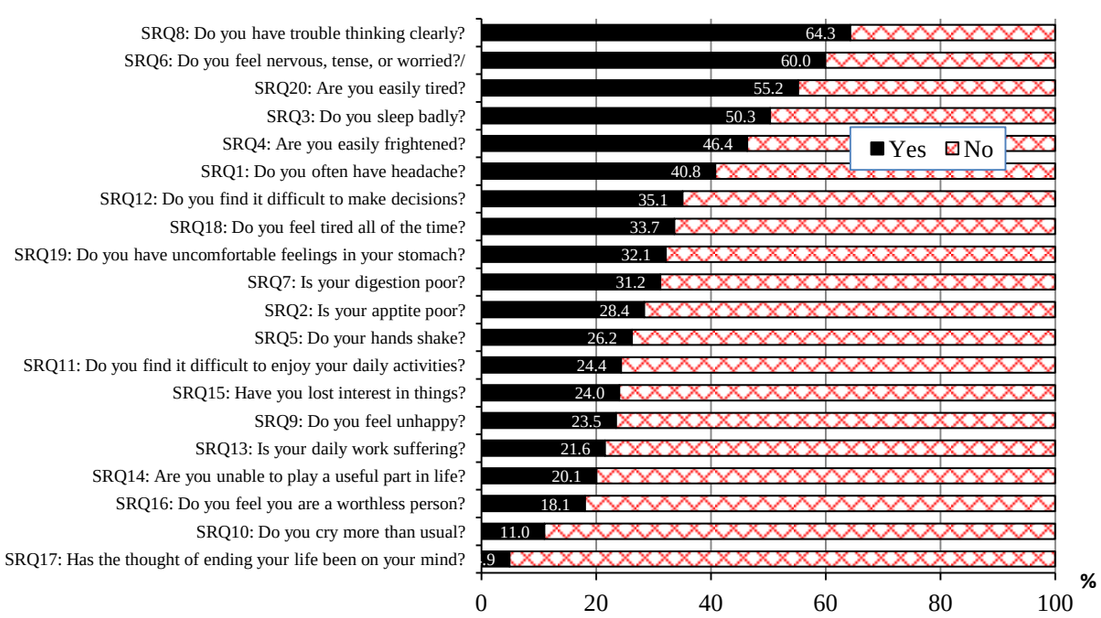
Note: ns.= not significant

6.2 SRQ20 on Mental Disorders

The full name of the 'SRQ20' is 'Self-Reporting Questionnaire 20 items', which was developed by Harding et al (1980) (Harding et al., 1980) for a WHO collaborative study to screen for common mental disorders. It has been recommended by WHO to be used as a standard self-reporting questionnaire to measure mental disorders since 1994. The SRQ20 reflects three dimensions of mental disorder; 1) somatic factor (e.g. headaches, appetite, digestion, sleep); 2) depressive/anxiety symptoms (e.g. frightened, unhappy, crying, feeling worthless); and 3) cognitive/decreased energy factor (e.g. can't think or make decisions, work suffering, can't enjoy daily activities) (Harpham et.al., 2003). This questionnaire can be used as a screening tool for an individual as well as a community. For each item of the SRQ20, the respondent just answers 'yes' or 'no' which equals '1' and '0', respectively. In this way, the SRQ scores must vary between 0 and 20.

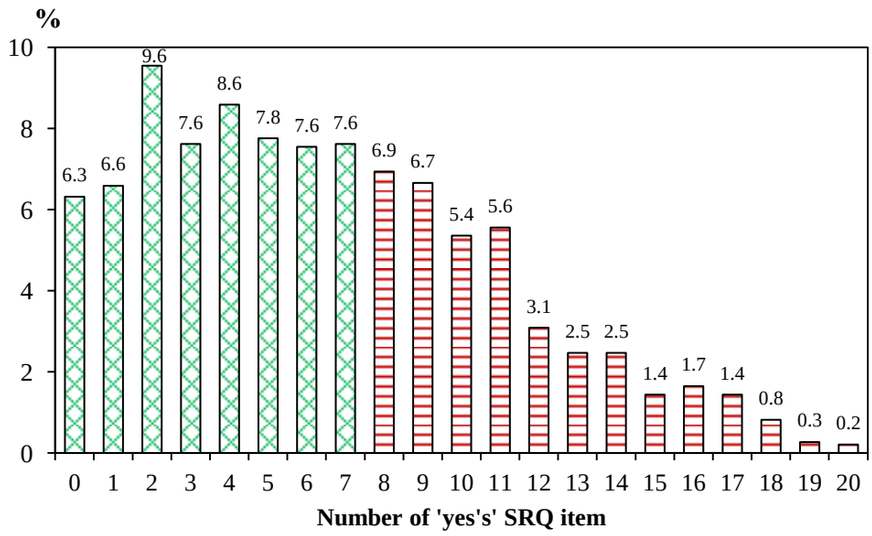
Our study finds that the top five most prevalent SRQ problems among caretakers are having trouble thinking clearly (64.3%), feeling nervous, tense or worried (60%), easily tired (55.2%), sleep badly (50.3%), and easily frightened (46.4%). On the other hand, the five least prevalent mental problems of caretakers are having the thought of ending life (9%), crying more than usual (11%), feeling like a worthless person (18.1%), unable to play a useful part in life (20.1%), and suffering in daily work (21.6%) (Figure 6.2).

Figure 6.2 Percentage of PC's mental problems by SRQ item



The survey found that 6.3% of caretakers answered 'no' for all SRQ items (no 'yes' answers) while 0.2% of them answered 'yes' for all items. In order to screen mental health problems among caretakers in this study, the cut-off score 7/8 according to the validity and reliability study in Vietnam (Tuan, 2004) is selected to determine probable mental health problem cases. The 'cut-off score 7/8' means 7 'yes' answers a non-case and 8 'yes's' a case. The distribution of 'yes' answers are depicted in column chart (Figure 6.3). According to the cut-off point '7/8', 38.4% (cumulative % of 8 'yes's to 20 'yes's) of caretakers are probable for having mental health problem.

Figure 6.3 Percent of PC by number of 'yes's' SRQ item



We further analyze the association between caretaker's mental health problems and sex, age, and household type. Findings show a strong association between mental health problems and PC's age and between mental health problems and household type. The proportion of caretakers aged 60+ who are probable to have a mental health problem (50.1%) is 2.1 and 1.4-fold comparing to those aged <35 and 35-39 years respectively. By household type, the highest prevalence of mental health problems among PCs is found in both-parent migrant household (45.4%): higher than one-parent migrant and non-migrant parent households by 1.7 and 1.3 times, respectively. (Table 6.2)

Table 6.2 Primary Caretaker's mental health problems by PC's age and household type

Caretaker's mental health*	Overall	PC's age			Household type		
		<35	35-59	60+	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Normal	61.6	76.3	63.4	49.9	54.6	73.4	65.6
Risk of mental health problem	38.4	23.7	36.6	50.1	45.4	26.6	34.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(173)	(928)	(355)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2 = 37.71, p = 0.000$			$\chi^2 = 30.04, p = 0.000$		

Note: 1.* Using SRQ20 cut-off point 7/8
2. No significant association between SRQ scores and PC's sex

Since the prevalence of mental health problems is different across household types, it is important to analyze whether this is further related to differences in remittances received as

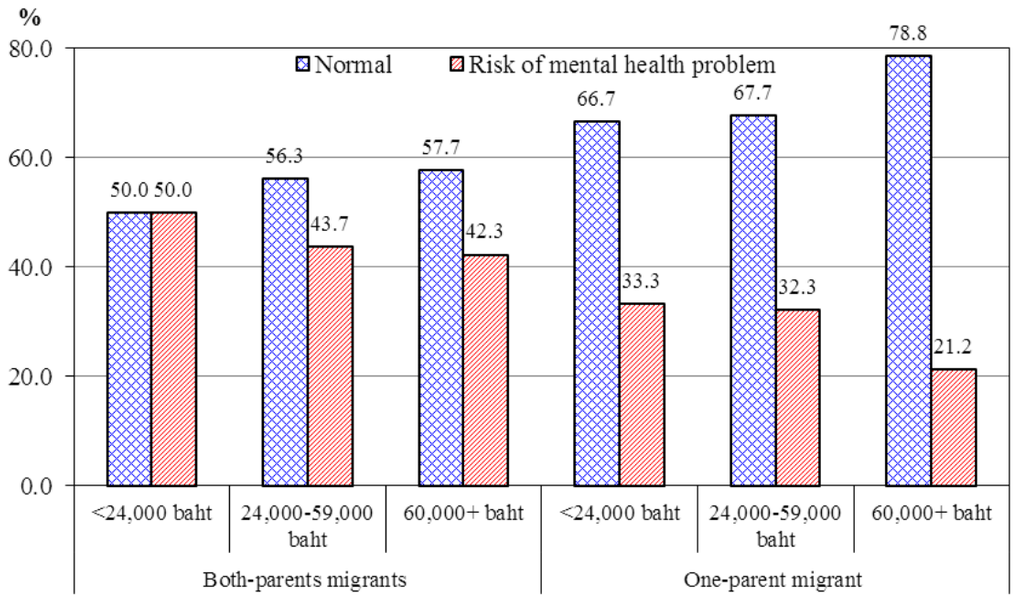
related to migrant status. The results show that the percentage having mental health problems among caretakers is highest in household receiving the lowest amount of remittances (<24,000 baht) (47.6%) and is lowest in households receiving the largest amount of remittances (>60,000 baht) (31.5%) (Table 6.3). Further exploration including household type (one-parent & both-parent migrant household), we see the same pattern across both types of migrant households that risk of mental health among caretakers is smallest in high remittance household and highest in low remittance households. However, the percentage of caretaker's mental health problems is not different across remittances within household type (Figure 6.4).

Table 6.3 Primary Caretaker's mental health problems by household type and remittances

Caretaker's mental health	Household type and remittances			
	Non-migrant household	Migrant household and remittances*		
		<24,000 baht	24,000-59,000 baht	60,000 baht+
Normal	65.6	52.4	57.9	68.5
Risk of mental health problem	34.4	47.6	42.1	31.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(570)	(233)	(435)	(216)
		$\chi^2 = 19.14, p = 0.000$		

Note: * 2 missing

Figure 6.4 Mental health problems by remittances of caretakers from both-parent migrants and one-parent migrant households



Note: No significant association between remittances and PC's mental health problems within each migration household type

Moreover, the association between caretaker's mental health problems and household wealth was also examined, and found to be significant. The lowest percentage having mental health problems is found among caretakers in rich households (23.7%) while the highest is found among the poor households (45.5%) (Table 6.4). From these results, it may be said that mental health problems of caretakers is related to or associated with the wealth of household.

Table 6.4 PC's mental health by wealth index

Caretaker's mental health	Overall	Wealth		
		Poor	Middle	Rich
Normal	61.6	54.6	61.3	76.3
Risk to mental health problem	38.4	45.5	38.7	23.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(583)	(582)	(291)
		$\chi^2 = 38.83, p = 0.000$		

6.3 Support from Others

The study asked each caretaker whether there was someone who would help him/her if he/she had a problem. Overall, 92.6% of caretakers said they have someone who helps them. This percentage varies by sex of caretaker and by household type. More females have someone to help than males (93.4% vs. 88.7%), and caretakers from one-parent migrant households have someone to help them more often than caretakers from other household types (Table 6.5).

Many types of people help caretakers when they have problems. Almost half (45.4%) are caretakers' spouse and about 1/4 (26.9%) are caretakers' children. Furthermore, the type of helper is related to the caretaker's relationship to the target child. If caretakers are the parent of the target child, the first person to help them is most frequently their spouse. If caretakers are grandparents of the target child, the most frequent helpers are their children (Table 6.6).

Table 6.5 PC receiving help by PC's sex, household type

Receiving help	Overall	PC's sex		Household type		
		Male	Female	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Yes	92.6	88.7	93.4	93.4	96.1	90.4
No	7.4	11.3	6.6	6.6	3.9	9.6
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(257)	(1,199)	(679)	(207)	(570)
		$\chi^2 = 6.79, p=.009$		$\chi^2 = 8.56, p=0.014$		

Note: No significant association between receiving help and PC's age group.

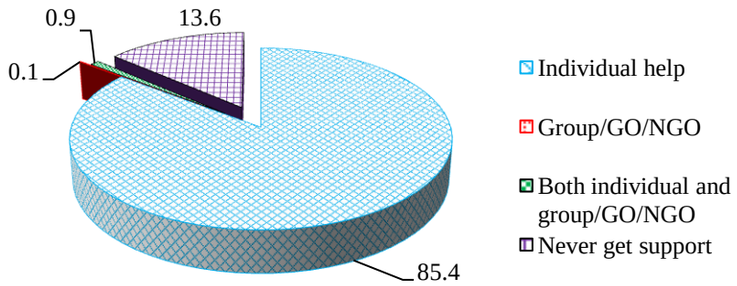
Table 6.6People who help PC by relationship of PC with target child

Who providing help to PC	Relationship of PC with TC			
	Father/ mother	Grandfather /mother	Others	Overall (N)
Overall				
PC's parents	13.9	0.5	30.7	9.6 (129)
PC's children	5.4	55.0	7.9	26.9 (363)
PC's siblings/relatives	18.2	8.6	19.3	14.2 (191)
PC's spouse	59.0	31.7	36.8	45.4 (612)
Others	3.5	4.1	5.3	3.9 (53)
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(654)	(580)	(114)	(1,348)
Both-parents migrants household				
PC's parents		0.6	26.5	4.7 (30)
PC's children		53.4	8.8	46.2 (293)
PC's siblings/relatives		8.5	19.6	10.3 (65)
PC's spouse		33.3	41.2	34.5 (219)
Others		4.3	3.9	4.3 (27)
Total		100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)		(532)	(102)	(634)
One-parent migrant household				
PC's parents	19.8	0.0		18.6 (37)
PC's children	5.8	68.2		12.6 (25)
PC's siblings/relatives	22.7	9.1		21.1 (42)
PC's spouse	45.9	18.2		41.7 (83)
Others	5.8	4.5		6.0 (12)
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0
(N)	(172)	(22)	(5)*	(199)
Non-migrant parents household				
PC's parents	11.8	0.0		12.0 (62)
PC's children	5.2	76.9		8.7 (45)
PC's siblings/relatives	16.6	11.5		16.3 (84)
PC's spouse	63.7	11.5		60.2 (310)
Others	2.7	0.0		2.7 (14)
Total	100.0	100.0		100.0
(N)	(482)	(26)	(7)*	(515)

Note: *Not show percentage distribution in this group due to small number of cases (N).

Besides the question about who helps the caretakers when they have problems, the survey also asked about who helps caretakers to provide care for target children. The result shows that 86% of all caretakers ever got help from someone for this; 85.4% received help from an individual, while less than 1% received help from a group/Government Organization (GO)/Non-Government Organization (NGO). The remainder (13.6%) said that they never got help from anyone or any organization to provide care for the target child (Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5 Percentage of caretakers by type of helper in providing care for TC



Among those who never got help from anyone in providing care for the target child, 68.2% of caretakers are from non-migrant parent households, 24.7% are from both-parent migrant households, and 7.1% are from one-parent migrant households. *So, those caretakers, even though not a large number, should particularly be concerned*.

6.4 Conclusion

Among all caretakers, the mean life satisfaction score is 16.9 out of 25. This score reflects that they are quite satisfied with their life. The caretakers' life satisfaction scores do not differ by sex, age group or household type. The survey screened caretakers for mental health problems using the standard questionnaire named 'SRQ20'. Approximately 38% of caretakers indicated that they have some mental health problems. Older caretakers are more likely to have mental health problems than younger ones, and caretakers from both-parent migrant households are more likely to have such problems than those from other household types. Mental health problems of caretakers are also related to the wealth of the household and the amount of remittances, with caretakers from richer households and with higher remittance amounts less likely to have mental health problems. In terms of support when caretakers have problems, almost all of them (92.6%) have someone to help. About half of the supporters are the caretaker's spouse and one-quarter are the caretaker's children. Female caretakers are more likely to have someone helping them than males. Caretakers from non-migrant parent household are less likely to have someone helping them when they face problem. The majority of caretakers (86%) also get help from someone in providing care to target children. Among those who never got help, 68.2%, 24.7%, and 7.1% are from non-migrant parents household, both-parents migrants household, and one-parent migrant household, respectively.

CHAPTER 7
PERSPECTIVES ON PARENTAL MIGRATION

This chapter focuses on perspectives on parental migration. Opinions of the adult respondent who is responsible for taking care of the target child (the caretaker) and of the target child towards parental migration are examined. The perceptions of adult respondents on family well-being will also be investigated. The target child's perceptions on parental migration in various aspects are presented via two comparisons: of the child before and after the parents' migration, and of the child with non-migrant parent children. Knowledge and awareness of the child on parental migration are introduced to examine the family's prior preparation of the child, through giving them information on the reason of migration. In addition, the children's reaction to the father's and mother's migration is presented.

7.1 Opinion towards Parental Migration

7.1.1 Respondent adults' report

Our study asked a responsible adult in the household to voice whether they think it is good or bad if parents work in a different province from their child's residence. In our survey, the majority of these responsible adult respondents (83%) are also the child's main caretaker. The question was posted separately for mother's and father's migration and for reflecting on the benefits for children and the family. Our descriptive results in this section start with opinions towards migration of the mother followed by opinions towards migration of the father. For each sub-section, we first describe opinions of respondents on maternal and paternal migration with regards to children followed by with regard to family.

Respondent's opinion towards maternal migration

With regards to ***mother's*** migration, overall, interviewed respondents see mother's internal migration as being more negative than positive for children. Data in the table below show that more than half of respondents (55%) think that having their mother working in another province is more negative than positive for children. Almost one fourth (24%) see it as having both positive and negative effects about equally for children. The smallest proportion thinks that mother's migration brings about more positive than negative effects (16%).

The table below also presents data by study setting and by household type. By study setting, we see that respondents in the Northeastern province have more positive opinions towards mother's internal migration than those in the Northern province. While almost one fifth (19%) of respondents in the Northeastern province reported that it is more positive than negative for children if their mother works elsewhere, the proportion is 13% among those in the Northern province. At the same time, 59% of respondents in a Northern province think that mother working elsewhere is more negative than positive for children as compared with 52% among those in a Northeastern province.

Considering respondents' opinion towards the effect of mother's migration for children by household type, it is clear that respondents from non-migrant households see mother's migration more negatively than migrant households. Among migrant households, respondents from one-parent migrant households view mother's migration negatively more than those from households with both parent migrants. The proportion reporting that it is more negative than positive for children if mother works elsewhere among those from one-parent migrant household is about two times higher than respondents from households with both-parent migrants (65% vs. 33%). It should be noted that one-parent migrant households in our survey is biased towards father-migrant, thus seeing the negative side of mother migration is quite high. The proportion is highest among respondents from non-migrant households (79%). Consistently, seeing mother's

migration as more positive than negative for children is highest among respondents from both-parent households (29%), followed by one-parent migrant households (12%), and least among those from non-migrant households (3.2%). In short, those households with a migrant mother (from both-parent migrant households) are most likely to see such migration positively.

When asked respondents' opinion towards the effects of mother's migration on the family, it seems that they view these as less negative than the effects on children. While more than half of respondents view mother's migration more negative than positive for children, the proportion is about 43% when its impact upon the family was asked. Similarly, the proportion seeing mother migration more positively than negatively with regards to the family is higher than that for children (27% vs. 16%). These findings reflect the general concern about mother migration's impact upon children, in a context where migration is common and its beneficial effects for the family as a whole are well accepted. When taking into account the study settings, results again show that respondents in the Northeastern province are more positive towards mother's migration for the family than those in the Northern province (30% vs. 25%).

Regarding type of household, findings on the impact on the family are in accordance with opinions towards mother's migration for children. Respondents from both-parent migrant households—which have mothers as migrants— are most positive, whereas respondents from non-migrant households are most negative about mother migration's impact on family. The proportions reporting mother migration is more positive than negative for family among those from both-parent migrant, one-parent migrant and non-migrant households are 41%, 19%, and 14%, respectively. By contrast, the proportions reporting mother migration is more negative than positive for family among those from both-parent migrant, one-parent migrant and non-migrant households are 23%, 50%, and 63%, respectively.

Table 7.1 Respondent's opinion towards mother's migration by study setting and household type

Opinion towards mother's migration	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Good or bad for children if mother works in another province						
More positive than negative	16.2	19.2	13.1	28.4	12.1	3.2
More negative than positive	55.4	51.5	59.4	32.6	64.3	79.3
Equally positive and negative	23.8	27.1	20.4	33.9	17.9	14.0
Neither positive nor negative	4.6	2.3	7.0	5.2	5.8	3.5
		$\chi2=37.1$, p=0.000		*$\chi2=307.7$, p=0.000*		
Good or bad for family if mother works in another province						
More positive than negative	27.1	29.6	24.5	40.8	19.8	13.5
More negative than positive	42.5	42.2	42.8	23.4	49.8	62.6
Equally positive and negative	26.1	26.3	25.9	31.1	25.6	20.4
Neither positive nor negative	4.3	1.9	6.8	4.7	4.8	3.5
		$\chi2=23.9$, p=0.000		*$\chi2=219.8$, p=0.000*		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)

Respondent's opinion towards paternal migration

We then move to look at respondents' opinion towards father's being away from children due to work in another province. Results are shown in the table below. Similar to mother's migration, we first explored whether it is good or bad for children if the father is away for work elsewhere. Compared to opinions on mother's migration shown earlier, the results show that, overall, people see father's migration more positively. While 16% of respondents perceive that mother's migration due to work is more positive than negative, about 10% higher (26%) perceive that father's migration brings more positive effects than negative. Consistently, the percentage of those who see father's migration more negative than positive is lower than those for mother's migration (42% vs. 55%).

Taking study setting into consideration, respondents in the Northeastern province perceive migration of fathers more positively than those in the Northern province. This is in line with the opinion towards mother's migration shown in previous table. About one third of respondents in the Northeastern province reported seeing father's migration as more positive than negative, whereas the percentage is only 17% among respondents in the Northern province. By contrast, while only 32% of respondents in the Northeastern province see father's migration as more negative than positive, more than half (53%) of the Northeastern province's respondents thought so.

By household type, we see a somewhat different pattern from the opinions on mother's migration. With regard to father's migration, respondents from both-parent migrant households and from one-parent migrant households are closer together in terms of their opinion, while those from non-migrant parent households are evidently different. Note again that one-parent migrant households are mostly father migrants. Thus, those in one-parent migrant households are mostly those experiencing father's migration, and they hold more positive perceptions on father's migration than respondents from households with both parents resident (33%, 31% and 15% respectively). At the same time, respondents from both-parent and one-parent migrant households see the negative side of father's migration to a lesser extent than respondents from non-migrant parent households (29%, 31%, and 61% respectively).

Next, we explored whether it is good or bad for the family left behind if the father is away to work in another province. Overall, the percentage of respondents seeing father's migration as more positive than negative for the family is slightly higher than those seeing it as more negative than positive (34% vs. 32%). The percentage of positive opinions on migration of the father is higher compared to migration of the mother (34% in the below table vs. 27% in the above table). Across the provinces of study, again positive opinions towards the effects of father's migration on the family are more clearly seen in the Northeastern province than in the Northern province. With regards to household type, respondents in migrant households (both-parent and one-parent) are more likely than those in non-migrant households to see father's migration as more positive than negative for the family (42% for both-parent migrant households, 39% for one-parent migrant households, and 23% for non-migrant households). This is consistent with what we found for opinions towards mother's migration.

7.1.2 Knowledge on migration of other people and opinions towards parental migration in general: Target child's report

Opinions of target children on parental migration are also examined. All target children were asked whether they know about the migration of people who live nearby and to reflect their opinions on parental migration in general, not from their own experiences. Over 80% of the children have heard about other people who went away to work in other provinces. There are different perceptions by age group and household type. Older children (13-15) are more likely to know about migration of other people than the younger ones (8-12), 91% compared to 75% respectively. Interestingly, children from non-migrant households are more likely to be aware of

other people's migration than children in other household types, 86% compared to 79% and 82% of both- and one- migrant households respectively.

Table 7.2 Respondent's opinion towards father's migration by study setting and household type

Opinion towards father's migration	Overall	Study setting		Household type		
		Northeast	North	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Good or bad for ***children*** if ***father*** works in another province						
More positive than negative	25.5	33.9	16.6	32.6	31.4	14.9
More negative than positive	42.1	31.5	53.2	29.5	30.4	61.4
Equally positive and negative	28.0	32.7	23.0	33.1	32.4	20.2
Neither positive nor negative	4.5	1.9	7.2	4.9	5.8	3.5
		$\chi 2=118.9, p=0.000$		*$\chi 2=146.67, p=0.000$*		
Good or bad for ***family*** if ***father*** works in another province						
More positive than negative	34.2	40.6	27.5	41.8	39.6	23.2
More negative than positive	32.4	27.1	38.0	21.7	24.6	48.1
Equally positive and negative	29.5	30.7	28.2	32.3	30.0	26.0
Neither positive nor negative	3.9	1.6	6.3	4.3	5.8	2.8
		$\chi 2=53.4, p=0.000$		*$\chi 2=112.9, p=0.000$*		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(746)	(710)	(679)	(207)	(570)

Children's opinions on parental migration also show some different perceptions by age group and household type and when comparing between father's and mother's migration. Overall, 54% of children see ***father*** migration as good while 46% perceive ***mother's*** migration as good. When taking age group into consideration, younger children appear to have a more positive perception of parental migration than their older counterparts: 60% of children 8-12 years of age respond that ***father*** migration is good compared to 47% of those aged 13-15. Also 52% of younger children see ***mother's*** migration as good while only 38% of older children perceive the same.

Interesting results are found when comparing between migrant and non-migrant households. Generally, children from migrant households have more positive perceptions on parental migration than those in non-migrant households. However there are some differences when comparing across each household type. For example, 65% and 59% of children from both- and one- migrant households respectively see father migration as good compared to 40% of children from non-migrant households. Perceptions on father and mother migration also vary when taking each household type into consideration. While children from both parent migrant households are closer in terms of their positive opinion on both father and mother migration from (65 and 62% respectively), those from one parent migrant households perceive mother's migration as good to a lesser extent than father's migration, 38% and 59% respectively. As we know, one parent migrant households in our study are constituted of nearly all father migrants rather than mother migrants. The majority of target children may probably feel more accustomed to the absence of their father than their mother. This may affect their different views on father and mother migration.

Table 7.3 Target children's knowledge on migration of people who live nearby and their opinions on parental migration in general by age group and household type

	Overall	TC's age		Household type		
		12-13	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant	Non-migrant parents
Knowledge on migration of people who live nearby						
Yes	82.0	75.1	91.2	78.5	81.6	86.3
No	18.0	24.9	8.8	21.5	18.4	13.7
		χ^2=63.10, p=0.000		χ^2=12.86, p= 0.002		
Child's opinion on father migration in general						
Well	54.2	59.5	47.1	65.1	58.9	39.5
Not good or bad	21.4	14.6	30.4	18.6	26.1	23.0
Poor	24.5	25.9	22.5	16.4	15.0	37.5
		χ^2=53.4, p=0.000		χ^2=109.7, p=0.000		
Child's opinion on mother migration in general						
Well	45.5	51.5	37.5	61.9	36.7	29.1
Not good or bad	21.8	16.1	29.4	19.0	30.9	21.9
Poor	32.7	32.4	33.1	19.2	32.4	49.0
		χ^2=43.9, p= 0.000		χ^2=171.6, p=0.000		
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(1,456)	(830)	(626)	(679)	(207)	(570)

7.1.3 Perceived well-being after parental migration: Perspective of adult respondents in migrant households

When we asked the adult respondents how they perceived their own well-being after the migrant ***father*** left, the highest proportion of them reported that their life is easier or much easier (43%), while about one third perceived their well-being as the same as before. However, more than one fifth of respondents reported that their life was harder or much harder than before after the father left. The response may imply many burdens increasing upon the absence of the father. The perception of respondents regarding their well-being after father's migration is not different across household type, but it is different by study setting. Those who reported their life is easier or much easier is higher among respondents in the Northern province compared to the Northeastern province (47% vs. 39%). At the same time, the proportion of those who reported their life became more difficult or much more difficult is higher among respondents in the Northeastern province than in the North (27% vs. 19%).

After ***mother***'s migration, similar to the perception of well-being after father's migration, the highest proportion of respondents reported that their well-being is easier or much easier (47%) and about one third perceive it as the same as before (33%). However, opposite to father's migration, respondents in the Northeast view their well-being easier or much easier after mother's migration in a higher proportion than those in the North (42% and 37%). At the same time, the proportion of respondents in the North reporting their life became more difficult or much more difficult is higher than respondents in the Northeastern province (29% vs. 25%).

As for the ***child***'s perceived well-being after ***father***'s migration in the adult respondents' perspective, almost half (48%) see the child's life as easier after the father migrated. Only a

minority of respondents (15%) perceived that the child's life became harder or much harder after father's migration. This is consistent across study settings and household types. After ***mother***'s migration, ***child***'s perceived well-being is reported by adult respondents as easier or much easier for about 47%, as the same as before for 37%, and as more difficult or much more difficult for 16%. The child's perceived well-being after mother's migration is not different across study settings and household type.

Table 7.4 Perceived well-being of respondents after parental migration: Adult respondent's report

	Overall	Study setting	
		Northeast	North
Respondents' perceived well-being after father's migration			
Easier/much easier	43.2	39.2	47.2
Same as before	34.2	34.2	34.1
More/much more difficult	22.6	26.6	18.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(606)	(301)	(305)
		χ2=6.42, p=0.040	
Respondents' perceived well-being after mother's migration			
Easier/much easier	47.3	41.7	37.3
Same as before	32.6	33.0	33.3
More/much more difficult	20.2	25.4	29.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)*	(497)	(279)	(218)
		χ2=7.0, p=0.03	

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

Table 7.5 Perceived well-being of the target child after father's migration: Adult respondent's report

	Overall
Target child's perceived well-being after father's migration	
Easier/much easier	48.1
Same as before	37.4
More/much more difficult	14.5
Total	100.0
(N)*	(578)
Target child's perceived well-being after mother's migration	
Easier/much easier	47.0
Same as before	36.7
More/much more difficult	16.3
Total	100.0
(N)*	(455)

Note: * Respondents with no answer excluded

7.1.4 Opinions of migrants' children on their parents' migration (compared before and after parental migration and compared with children of non-migrants)

Opinions of the target child from their own experiences of parental migration were also measured. The study focused on children's opinions of family situations by asking them to compare the household financial status and feelings of closeness to parents before and after their migration.

Comparing before and after parental migration from target child's perspective

With regards to their financial situation, overall about half of the children reflected that their family is financially better off after the migration of their parents. Less than 10% of the children report being worse off financially. There are no differences by child's sex or age group. However when taking household type into consideration, there are slightly different results for both- and one- parent migrant households. Children from both parent migrant households opine that their financial situation is worse off more frequently than children from one parent migrant households, 10% and 3% respectively.

Reflections on whether parents and children feel closer to one another as reported by the children are a bit different from reports of the financial situation. Although about half of the children depict that the family feels closer or the same as before parental migration, the findings varied by sex and age of the children. Daughters of father migrants are more likely than sons to say that they feel less close than they used to be, 43% and 32% respectively. Older children (13-15 years old) are more likely to feel the same as before than younger children (8-12 years old), 57% and 48% respectively. There is no difference by household type.

Comparisons with other children who have parents living with them

Target children were asked to compare themselves in some aspects with children whose parents did not migrate. The comparisons include behavioral, financial and emotional aspects.

Regarding the perception of responsibility, almost 60% of the children of migrant parents feel that they are as responsible as children of non-migrant parents. When taking child's age into consideration, older children are more likely to report that they are more responsible than children who have parents living with them than younger children, 32% and 22% respectively. Children from both parent migrant households are slightly more likely to feel less responsible than children with non-migrant parents than children who have only one parent migrating, 17% and 12% respectively.

Table 7.6 Target child's opinions when comparing family situations before and after ***parental*** migrations by sex, age group and household type

	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age		Household type	
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant
Better off financially	52.9	51.9	54.8	51.5	55.0	52.4	54.3
The same as before	39.2	40.7	37.7	40.3	37.6	38.2	42.3
Worse off financially	7.9	8.3	7.5	8.2	7.4	9.5	3.4
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*		*χ^2=6.61,p= 0.037*	
Closer to one another	11.3	10.3	12.3	13.5	7.8	11.2	11.4
The same as before	51.5	58.2	44.6	47.8	57.3	51.0	53.1
Not as close as we used to be	37.2	31.5	43.1	38.7	34.9	37.8	35.4
		χ^2=12.84,p=0.002		*χ^2= 8.14,p= 0.017*		*χ^2 ns.*	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(683)	(349)	(334)	(414)	(269)	(508)	(175)

Note: ns.= not significant

The children's perceptions of feeling independent reflect a similar pattern to that of responsibility. Overall, more than half of migrant parent children feel that they have the same level of independence as non-migrant parent children. Interestingly, older children are more likely to feel more independent than younger children when compared themselves to non-migrant parent children, 43% and 27% respectively. Children in both- migrant parent households feel less independent than children in one-parent migrant households, 12% and 7% respectively. One explanation for this may be that the caretakers may have to make a greater effort to control left behind children than the children's own parents.

With regards to their financial situation, about 60% of children in migrant households feel that they have the same financial status as non-migrant parent children. However the perceptions vary across children's age and household types. Younger children are more likely to feel that their families are financially worse off than families of non-migrant parent children, 19% and 12% respectively. When taking household type into consideration, 27% of children in one migrant parent households report that their family is financially better off than non-migrant parent children, compared to 19% of children who have both parents migrate.

Lastly, we asked the left behind children to compare their feelings with non-migrant parent children. Overall, about half of the children reflected that their feelings do not differ from children who live with their parents. There are slight differences by child's age, as the proportion of younger children who say that they feel happier than non-migrant parent children is a bit higher than that of older children, 25% and 20% respectively. It is interesting to find that children of both parent migrant households are more likely to report being less happy than children of one migrant parent, 25% and 16% respectively. The finding may probably indirectly tell us that having at least one parent living with them can avert feelings of unhappiness.

Table 7.7 Target children's opinion when compare themselves with other children who have parent living with them by age group and household type

	Overall	TC's age		Household type	
		8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	One-parent migrant
More responsible	26.1	22.2	32.3	25.6	27.5
The same	58.5	61.1	54.3	57.7	60.9
Less responsible	15.5	16.7	13.5	16.6	11.6
		χ^2=11.21, p=0.004		*χ^2ns.*	
More independent	33.4	27.2	43.4	34.0	31.4
The same	55.6	58.5	51.0	53.8	61.8
Less independent	11.0	14.3	5.6	12.2	6.8
		χ^2= 33.33, p=0.000		*χ^2= 6.51,p=0.039*	
Better off financially	20.3	19.5	21.7	18.7	25.6
The same	63.8	62.0	66.6	64.4	61.8
Worse off financially	15.9	18.5	11.7	16.9	12.6
		χ^2=7.30, p=0.026		*χ^2ns.*	
Happier	23.0	25.1	19.7	22.2	25.6
The same	54.4	52.5	57.5	53.0	58.9
Less happy	22.6	22.4	22.9	24.7	15.5
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2=7.86, p=0.020*	
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(886)	(545)	(341)	(679)	(207)

Note: ns.= not significant

7.2 Knowledge and reactions of migrants' children on their parents' migration

Letting the child know the reason of their parent(s)' migration may probably lessen their feeling of distress. Thus the study asked whether the left-behind children know why their parents have gone away to work in other province. We will discuss this knowledge of father's and mother's migration separately and then their reaction to the migration of their parent(s) will be examined.

7.2.1 Target child's knowledge of father's migration

Overall, 70% of the children know the reason of their father migration. When comparing across age groups, older children aged 13-15 years old are more likely to know the reason than their younger counterparts (80% and 65% respectively). However, there is no difference by household type.

The most frequent reason reported by target children is for children's education, 53%. The second highest proportion is for family's well-being (38%) followed by realizing that there are no jobs at the origin place (5%). There are slight differences by child's age. Although half of the children of both age groups depict children education as the reason for their father's migration, younger children are more likely to report family well-being as a reason than their older counterparts, 40% and 34% respectively. Older children seem to report economic reasons (no jobs for father at the origin place) more than the younger ones (9% compared to 2%).

The person who told the target child about their father's migration would likely one who is in a position to clearly explain the reasons for the migration. More than 60% of the children can remember who told them about the migration of their father. Interestingly, almost one fifth of the children reported that their fathers have always been away, instead of responding whether they remember the person who told them or not. There is no difference in remembering the informant when comparing children of different ages, however, children whose fathers only migrated are more likely to report remembering than children with both parents migrating, 74% and 62% respectively. This evidence can be clarified by realizing that more than 90% of the informants were the child's biological mother or father. Mothers who are taking care of the children at home are the most likely informant and may also be more eager to inform their children about the father's migration. The second most frequent informant was the maternal relatives, 25%, followed by paternal relatives (only 10%). This reflects the importance of the maternal line in Thai familial relationships and the fact that the maternal relatives are most likely to care for children in the absence of their parents.

Table 7.8 Target child's knowledge on father migration by age group and household type

	Overall	TC's age		Household type	
		8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
TC's knowledge on reason of father migration					
Yes	70.5	64.6	80.2	70.7	70.0
No	29.5	35.5	19.8	29.3	30.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(869)	(536)	(333)	(679)	(190)
		χ^2=24.1397, p=0.000		*χ^2ns.*	
Reason of father migration					
For children education	53.2	53.2	53.2	55.2	45.9
Family well being	37.5	40.2	34.1	35.6	44.4
No jobs/ no work here	4.7	1.7	8.6	4.6	5.3
Household projects (e.g. building house)	3.8	4.3	3.0	4.2	2.3
Others	0.8	0.6	1.1	0.4	2.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(613)	(346)	(267)	(480)	(133)
		χ^2=17.84, p=0.001		*χ^2ns.*	

Note: ns.= not significant

Table 7.9 Person who told target child about father's migration by age group and household type

	Overall	TC's age		Household type	
		8-12	13-15	Both-parent migrant	Father migrant
Remember person who told about father migration					
Yes	64.3	62.9	66.7	61.6	74.2
No	16.7	18.7	13.5	18.6	10.0
Father always been away	19.0	18.5	19.8	19.9	15.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(869)	(536)	(333)	(679)	(190)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2=11.52, p=0.003*	
Person told about father migration					
Biological mother/ father	63.9	59.4	70.7	53.6	94.3
Maternal relative	24.5	27.9	19.4	31.6	3.6
Paternal relative	9.8	10.7	8.6	12.9	0.7
Others	1.8	2.1	1.4	1.9	1.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(559)	(337)	(222)	(418)	(141)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2=77.32, p=0.000*	

Note: ns.= not significant

7.2.2 Target child's knowledge of mother's migration

The findings on the knowledge of mother's migration are similar to father's migration. About 70% of the children report knowing the reason that their mother migrated. Older children are more likely to know than their younger counterparts, 78% and 68% respectively. We do not take household type into consideration since the number of mother-only migrant parents is rather small (only 17 cases). Regarding the reason for mother's migration, children's education constitutes the highest proportion (53%), with the second again being family well-being, 38%. There is some difference by child's sex. Daughters are more likely to give children's education as the reason for mother's migrant than sons, 57% and 49% respectively. Sons report children's education and family well-being in nearly the same proportion, 49% and 43% respectively.

Table 7.10 Target child's knowledge on mother migration by sex and age group

	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age	
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15
TC's knowledge on reason of mother migrant					
Yes	71.0	68.7	73.3	66.7	78.3
No	29.0	31.3	26.7	33.3	21.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(696)	(355)	(341)	(438)	(258)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 = 10.66, p = 0.001*	
Reason of mother migration					
For children education	53.0	48.8	57.2	54.8	50.5
Family well-being	37.7	42.6	32.8	37.3	38.1
No jobs/ work here	4.9	4.5	5.2	3.4	6.9
Household projects (e.g. building house)	3.9	4.1	3.6	3.8	4.0
Others	0.6	0.0	1.2	0.7	0.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(494)	(244)	(250)	(292)	(202)
		χ^2 ns.		*χ^2 ns.*	

Note: ns.= not significant

Children were also asked if they remembered who informed them about their mother's migration. Overall, 68% reported remembering the informant, with 16% responding that their mother has always been away. Males are more likely to respond that "mother has always been away" than females, 19% and 12% respectively. There is no difference by child's age.

The biological father or mother constitutes the highest proportion of informants about mother's migration (49%), however this figure is much lower than that reported for father's migration (64%). This finding may confirm that it is the mother who plays a significant role in explaining the father's migration. Therefore when mothers themselves migrate, the proportion of biological parents who are informants is lower. In this case the maternal relatives become more important as informants (35% vs. 25% for father's migration). When compared by child's sex, there is not much difference. Older children are more likely to be informed by their biological mother/ father than younger children, 59% and 43% respectively.

Table 7.11 Person who told target child about mother migration by sex and age group

	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age	
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15
Remember person who told about mother migration					
Yes	65.7	63.1	68.3	65.5	65.9
No	18.8	18.3	19.4	19.4	17.8
Mother always been away	15.5	18.6	12.3	15.1	16.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(696)	(355)	(341)	(438)	(258)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2 *ns.*	
Person told about mother migration					
Biological mother/ father	49.2	50.5	48.1	43.2	59.4
Maternal relative	35.0	32.6	37.3	41.1	24.7
Paternal relative	12.9	13.0	12.9	13.6	11.8
Others	2.8	4.0	1.7	2.1	4.1
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(457)	(224)	(233)	(287)	(170)
		χ^2 *ns.*		χ^2*=15.72, p=0.001*	

Note: ns.= not significant

7.2.3 Reaction of TC on parental migration

Children were also asked about their feelings on the experience of parental migration. Overall, 58% of children report being sad and/or missing ***fathers*** compared to 63% reporting being sad/missing ***mothers***. Some reported feeling the same as usual towards father's and mother's migration, 26% and 22% respectively. Only 6% of children said that they feel happy due to getting presents or money from their parents.

When taking sex into consideration, daughters are more likely to report of feeling sadness or missing either their father or mother than sons. For example, 65% of females (daughters) feel sad or miss their fathers compared to 51% of sons who report the same. Interestingly, the proportion of sons and daughters who report missing mothers are slightly higher than their reports of missing fathers. There are also some differences by age group. Younger children are more likely to feel sad or miss either fathers or mothers than older children; 62% of children aged 8-12 years report feeling sad or missing their fathers while 52% of children in the 13-15 age group report the same.

Table 7.12 Target children's feeling about their parent migration by sex and age group

	Overall	TC's sex		TC's age	
		Male	Female	8-12	13-15
Target child's feeling about father migration					
Sad; miss him	58.0	50.9	65.4	61.9	51.7
Nothing/as usual	26.0	30.9	20.9	21.5	33.3
Both sad and happy	9.9	10.4	9.4	8.8	11.7
Happy due to get toys/ presents from him	6.1	7.9	4.2	7.8	3.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(869)	(444)	(425)	(536)	(333)
		χ^2= 21.03, p=0.000		χ^2=23.61, p=0.000	
Target child's feeling about mother migration					
Sad; miss her	62.9	55.5	70.7	66.7	56.6
Nothing/as usual	22.0	27.0	16.7	17.8	29.1
Both sad and happy	9.2	8.2	10.3	8.7	10.1
Happy due to get toys/ presents from her	5.9	9.3	2.4	6.9	4.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
(N)	(696)	(355)	(341)	(438)	(258)
		χ^2=29.90, p=0.000		χ^2=14.18, p=0.003	

7.3 Conclusion

Opinions on parental migration of both adult respondents and target children were measured. Adult respondents view parental migration as more negative than positive to ***children,*** but their opinion on mother's and father's migration is somewhat different. They see father's migration more positively than mother's migration. Not surprisingly, migrant households see parental migration more positively than non-migrant households. Respondents from both-parent migrant households have more positive views on parental migration than one- and non- migrant parent households. In addition, adult respondents have negative views on parental migration's effect on the ***family*** to a lesser extent than their views regarding effects on the ***children***. Similar patterns are also found across household types.

From the target child's perspective on parental migration, the majority of the children know about migration of parents in their community. About half of them view parental migration as good. Both-parent migrant households are more likely to see the good side of parental migration than other household types.

Regarding perceptions of well-being after parental migration, opinions are not much different between adult respondents and children. More than 40% of them see that their status is much easier than before.

When target children compare their financial situation before and after their parental migration, half of them see that they are better off financially, with slight differences by household type. For feelings of closeness to one another within the family, half of the children reported no difference after parental migration. There are some differences in perceptions of closeness by child's sex and age.

For the comparison between children of migrant and non-migrant parents, children were asked about aspects including responsibility, independence, financial situation and feeling of happiness. Overall, more than half of the migrant parent children perceive themselves to be the same in every aspect. However, older children see themselves as more responsible, independent and financially better off than non-migrant parent children to a greater extent than younger children. Children from both parent migrant households feel more independent, but also less happy than non-migrant parent children.

The majority (about 70%) of the children is aware of the reasons for their parent(s)' migration. Half of them depict children's education as the reason of father's and mother's migrations. The biological mother/ father constitute the highest proportion of informants about parental migration. Maternal relatives are the second most frequent informant.

According to children's feeling about parental migration, about 60% of them reported being sad or missing their parent. The proportion of feeling sad or missing the mother is slightly higher than that for fathers. Daughters are more likely to feel sad or miss their parents than sons, especially for maternal migration. Younger children reported being sad or missing their parent in a higher proportion than the older ones.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 About the Study

Our study aims to investigate impacts of parental internal migration on health and well-being of children left behind, particularly physical health and psycho-social dimensions of children's well-being. The well-being of caretakers and household socio-economic status were also explored. In Thailand, internal migration of labor-force-age people including those with young children has been a long-standing phenomenon. Yet, our understanding about what happens to the children and family left behind remains limited. Migration of parents may affect children left behind and caretakers through a multiplicity of mechanisms. Public policies seeking to minimize the negative impacts of parental migration, while maximizing its positive effects, should highlight the distinct causal mechanisms by which each group is affected in order to inform the design and choice of policy, monitor its implementation and evaluate its impact.

Our study was conducted in two provinces, one in the North and the other in the Northeast, of which internal migration is most prevalent. We interviewed a number of children (aged 8-15), caretakers, and responsible adults, 1,456 for each group, from four types of households: households with both parents of children migrants, households with only the father of children migrant, households with only the mother of children migrant, and households with both parents of children currently resident at the time of the survey. However, due to the small number of households with mother-only migrants, father-only and mother-only migrant households were combined into one-parent migrant households in the analyses.

8.2 Summary of Findings

General characteristics of the study household, parents, caretakers, and target children

Household

The majority of households (60%) are composed of 4 or fewer members, reflecting the small family size of the study households, especially among migrant households. Using wealth index to assess relative economic status, findings suggest that one-parent migrant households (mostly father-only migrant) are more likely to be classified as rich than both-parents and non-migrant households. This may imply that households with one parent migrating receive remittances that can boost up household's financial status to above average, while both-parent migrant households cannot. About two-fifths (41%) of households receive income from agriculture. However, the main source of income varies across the household types. Most of one-migrant households reported obtaining income from remittances (61%) while the main source of income among the majority of non-migrant household is agriculture (81%). For both-parents migrant households, the proportion obtained from remittances and agriculture is about balanced (45% and 38% respectively).

Parents

Both-parents migrants are younger than parents of other household types. Migrant parents also have higher educational attainment than non-migrant parents. About one third of parents engaged in skilled jobs in the agricultural, forestry, and fishing sector. Parents' job engagement at the time of the child's birth and at the time of the survey is virtually similar, indicating continuity rather than change. However, there was a slight decrease in the agricultural sector and an increase in plant and machine operators and assembler over time by the study settings and household types. This likely reflects a shift for migrant parents into urban jobs. The proportion of mothers who do not work economically or are full time housewives is higher in one-parent

migrant households, compared to other household types. This corresponds with the high proportion of these households relying on remittances.

Caretaker

In one-parent migrant and non-migrant households, mothers are the primary caretakers. When both parents are absent, the main caretakers are the maternal grandparents. This explains the fact that caretakers in both-parent migrant households tend to be older (mean age = 58 years old) than while those in one parent migrant and non-parent migrant households (42 and 41 years, respectively). And as educational attainment is closely associated with age, caretakers in both-parent migrant household have lower educational attainment than their counterparts. Caretakers of one parent migrant households completed higher education than those in other household types. About two-thirds of caretakers have a part time or full time job outside the household. About half engage in skilled agriculture, forestry, and fishery sectors. Caretakers of young age groups (35-59) constitute the highest proportion of those who work in agriculture, forestry and fishery sectors. Only a third of caretakers in one parent migrant household works in agricultural sectors, while half of both-parents migrant household and 70% of non-parent migrant households engage in the same occupations. Together, the findings imply that some of the one-parent migrant households no longer engage in agriculture, probably due to sufficient remittances to support the household. An alternative explanation is that, compared to one-parent migrant household, the grandparent generation — the main caretakers of children in two-parent migrant households—are more likely to continue to engage in agriculture than the mother who is caretaker in the one-parent migrant households.

Target child

In our study sample, 57% are in younger age group (8-12 years old) and 43% aged 13-15 years old. Only 2% were not enrolled in school at the time of survey. The reasons for not enrolling in were mainly related to the expenditures for studying and family problems (31%) and health problems (10 percent).

Parental migration experience, remittances, and contact with migrant parents

Parents' migration experience

Our findings suggest that migration of people in the labor force age groups is very common even after having children. About three-fourths of fathers and about 60% of mothers have experienced being away from the target child for a period of at least 2 months since the child was born. For currently non-migrant parents, more than one-third of fathers and about one-fifth of mothers had ever moved from the child since birth. Among parents who have ever moved away from the target child, the mean length of being away is around 8 years for both fathers and mothers.

Parents' current migration

Among currently migrant parents, the majority currently live in Bangkok. When both parents are away, the majority of them moved to the same destination. The mean length living in the current destination is about 10 years for both father and mother. The average length of stay in the current destination is longer than the length of separation from the child since birth. This reflects the prevalence of parents who have been migrants since before the child was born. The main reason for migration of parents is economically oriented. The decision regarding migration in most cases was made jointly by both parents. However, joint decision making is more frequent for mother's migration than father's migration and the findings indicate that fathers are part of decision making on mother's migration more than vice versa.

Children's reaction towards parents' migration

More than half of the respondents reported that the child was given an explanation about why parent(s) are away. The majority of the children responded to parental migration as normal as usual. However, the proportions reporting that the child was sad and missed the father and mother are substantial, accounting for 27% and 30% for father and mother respectively.

Remittances

The majority of migrant parents sent money home at least once in the past 12 months prior to the survey. On average, households receive remittances about once a month. Father-only migrant households receive remittances more frequently and in larger amounts than both-parent migrant households. The average amount of remittances the households received from migrant parents in the previous year is 84,751 baht for father-only migrants and 34,303 baht for both-parents migrant. Thus, findings suggest that migrant fathers are more likely to remit when the mother is home with the children than when mothers also migrated. This may be because when both father and mother migrated, they also took along other children (siblings of TC) to the destination household, thus remit less. It is also possible that when the mother is a migrant herself, she may keep a fraction of the earnings with her instead of remitting.

Remittance is positively related to household wealth, indicating the contribution of remittances to household economic status. The top three highest uses of remittances are on children's education, food/clothes/household, and food for children. The decision maker on the use of remittances is mainly the child's maternal grandmother. More than half reported that the remittance has "a lot of benefit" to the child. Migrant parents have also sent money for community's social or religious activities in a substantial proportion.

Contact with migrant parents

Almost all households remain in close contact with the migrant parents and telephone is the most used method. Visits of the migrant parents to the home of origin are secondly important, followed by visits of the child to their migrant parents, and visits of other household members to the migrant father.

Children's well-being

School performance and enjoyment at school

Most of the target children reported their school performance as about the same or better than their classmates, but the caretakers have more positive perceptions of the target child's school performance than the children evaluate themselves. Children of non-migrant parents reported they do better in school more frequently than those of migrant parents. The majority of target children (80%) reported always or almost always enjoying school, with **no difference found between children of migrant and non-migrant parents**.

Psychological well-being

The standard Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) is used to measure psychological well-being of children. Less than one tenth (8%) of the target children were found to be problematic in terms of total difficulties. The most prevalent of difficulties is hyperactivity/inattention behaviors, accounting for 14%. The least prevalent is peer relationship problems, accounting for 4%. Boys are more problematic than girls in terms of hyperactivity/inattention, while girls are more problematic than boys in terms of emotion disorder. Younger children are more likely to have psychological problems than older children. Regarding parental migration, **the findings suggest no differences in psychological status**

between children of migrant and non-migrant parents. Note, however, that difficulties of the target children are associated with the wealth of their household. The richer they are, the less prevalent are psychological problems.

Physical health

Most of the target children were born with normal weight (equal or higher than 2,500 grams); those who were low birth weight accounted for 8.1%. **No significant difference is found by** gender, age group, or **parental migrant status** (household type). Almost all children had ever been immunized, at least one dose of vaccine. The proportions receiving complete vaccination for OPV, DPT, HBV, Measles/MMR, BCG, and JE among the target children are 97.6%, 97.6%, 95.9%, 96.6%, 95.7%, and 94.9% respectively. For all vaccines, the proportion complete is only 92.2%. **Findings indicate a significant difference by household type: the proportion of completion is lowest in one-parent migrant households and highest in both-parent household.**

Almost two-thirds of the target children (62.3%) were sick from minor illnesses (e.g. cold, cough, headache, and diarrhea) in the last 2 weeks prior to survey, while 5.1% and 2.2% had serious illness and serious injury respectively in the past 6 months. There are only 0.9% of children who are physical/mental disability. **No significant difference in experiencing sickness was found by** gender, age group or **parental migrant status** (household type).

Health risk behavior

With regards to smoking and drinking, 10.5% of children ever tried smoking while 13.9% ever tried drinking. Boys are more likely than girls and older children than younger children to engage in smoking and drinking alcohol. **Children of one-parent migrant households are most likely to be involved in alcohol drinking (19%), while those of both-parent migrants have the smallest chance (11%) compared to their counterparts.**

The proportion of children who watched pornographic pictures increases with age (from about 41% for aged 12 to 68% for aged 15). Boys are more likely to look at these pictures than girls. **Differences by parental migrant status (household type) are not found.** When asked about their friends' sexual experience, 30% of them reported at least some of their male friends ever had sexual experience, while 24% reported at least some their female friends ever had sexual experience; there were again no differences by parents' migrant status.

Life satisfaction

The proportions of children less satisfied with their family, friendship, school experiences, themselves, where they live, and overall life range from 5-12%. Girls are more satisfied with school, with themselves, and with where they live than boys. Older children are more satisfied with their friendship and with school experience than younger children. By contrast, younger children are more satisfied with themselves than their older counterparts. **Children of one-parent migrants are less satisfied with where they live in the highest proportion.**

Care and discipline

Almost three-fourths of the target children (72%) reported that they are always treated kindly by their caretaker. **No significant difference is found by parental migrant status (type of household).** Regarding punishment for the children's misbehavior, the most prevalent type of punishment that target children were given by their caretaker is verbal scolding (53%) followed by verbal explaining (21%). Physical punishment such as using a rod or belt accounts for 17%. Physical punishment reported by caretakers is smaller (8%) for minor disobedience but higher for serious disobedience (22%). Rewards for good behavior include verbal praising (55%),

followed by giving gifts, toys, or money (33%). **Giving no rewards for good behavior is highest among both-parent migrant households.**

Compared to children of the same age in terms of overall behavior, responsibility, independence, and happiness, about half of caretakers reported that the target child is better or much better. But for financial status, only 21% of caretakers reported that the target child is better or much better than of other children of the same age. **Children of non-migrant parents are reported to be more responsible, more independent, and happier than children of migrant parents.**

Almost all target children (93%) do household chores. About one-fourth work to support the household. More ore girls than boys do household chores but more boys than girls work to support household. **Children of non-migrant parents are most likely to do household chores and work to support household, while those of both-parents migrant are least likely.**

Family Functioning

With regard to information on family functioning, more than half of the target children reported that they can always turn to family for help, 35% can always talk to family about things over and share problems, 41% always are allowed by their family to try new things, and 44% always share time together with family. **Children of migrant parents reported never or hardly ever share time together with family in the highest proportion. For responsible adults' perspective, those in migrant-parent households expressed lower family functioning than their counterparts in almost all aspects.**

Social support

When target children have problems with fathers, siblings, teachers, and caretakers (if the mother is not the caretaker), they would turn to their mother in the highest proportion. If they have a problem with their mother, they would turn to their father in most cases. In case of having problems with friends/classmates, the target children would turn to teacher most. When they feel sad or lonely, they would turn to friends in the highest proportion. **No differences were found in social support by parents' migrant status.**

Caretaker's well-being

Most caretakers (68%) have medium life satisfaction scores and about 1/4 (28%) have high scores. **Life satisfaction scores of caretakers significantly differ by type of household, i.e. the proportions of low and high life satisfaction scores among caretakers from one-parent migrant household are higher than counterparts.**

Using the standard questionnaire named 'SRQ20' and the cut-off score of 7/8, approximately 38% of caretakers were identified as having mental health problems. Older caretakers are more likely to have mental health problem than the younger. **Caretakers from both parents migrants household are more likely to have mental health problem than those from other household types.** Note that mental health problem of caretakers relates to the wealth of migrant household. The wealthier the household is and the more the household receive remittances, the less likely the caretakers are to have mental health problem.

When caretakers have problems, almost all of them (92.6%) have someone helping. About half receive support from spouse and one-fourth receives it from children. Female caretakers are more likely to have someone helping them than male caretakers. **Caretakers from non-migrant parents household are less likely to have someone helping them when they face a problem.** The majority (86%) of caretakers also get help from someone in providing care to the children.

Perspectives on parental migration

Respondent adults in general view parental migration as more negative than positive to ***children.*** However, they see father's migration more positively than mother's migration. Respondents from both-parents migrant household have more positive views on parental migration than one- and non-parent migrant households. The proportion of adult respondents' negative views on parental migration to ***family*** is in a lesser extent than to ***children***.

From target child's perspectives on parental migration, majority of the children know about the migration of people living nearby. About half of them view parental migration as good. Children of both-parents migrants are more likely to see the good side of parental migration than other household types.

There is not much difference between adult respondents and children regarding perception of their well-being after parental migration. More than 40% of them see that their well-being is much easier than before.

Half of the children see that they are better off financially after their parental migration. Children of one-parent migrants reported this in a higher proportion. Half of the children report no difference after parental migration with regard to the feeling of closer to one another. **There was no significant difference in either of these factors by type of household.**

Comparing themselves with children of non- migrant parents in the aspects of responsibility, independence, financial situation and feeling of happiness, more than half of the children perceive they are similar to others in all aspects. Older children see that they are more responsible, more independent, and financially better-off than children of non-migrant parents than younger children. Children of both-parent migrants feel less independent and less happy than their counterparts.

The majority (about 70%) of the children are aware of the reasons of their parents' migration. Half of them depict their education as the reason of father's and mother's migrations. The mother/ father constitute the highest proportion of the persons who inform children about migration of their parent. Maternal relatives are the second most of those who told the children.

About 60% of the children report of being sad or missing their migrant parent. The feeling sad or missing mother is slightly more than feeling sad or missing father. Daughters are more likely to feel sad or miss their parent than sons, especially to maternal migration. Younger children report of being sad or miss their parent in a higher proportion than the older ones.

8.3 Policy Recommendations

While our findings are not alarming in terms of the impact of parental migration on children's physical and psychological health, some findings are indicative of adverse well-being of children due to being apart from parents. Parental absence due to migration negatively influences children's school performance, life satisfaction, health risk behavior and work. At the same time, findings suggest that one-parent migrant households are wealthier compared to both-parent and non-migrant households. For these reasons, the government should initiate setting up mechanisms aiming at maximizing benefits and mitigating adverse effects of parents' migration.

Policy recommendations corresponding to our study findings are proposed as follow:

- The government should develop policy and plans/programs which place more focus on the social impact of internal parental migration, especially at the micro-level, i.e. for families and individuals. The plan should include strategies which aim at mitigating the social cost of migration expressed by children left behind and their caretakers. For example, responsible

organizations, particularly Ministry of Social Development and Human Security and Office of the Basic Education Commission (OBEC), Ministry of Education should develop programs to tackle the psychological issues we found among children left behind for a long period of time: feeling sad, missing migrant parents, perceptions of doing worse in school, and feeling less independent and less happy than other children.

- The government should set up a mechanism at the local level to support migrant families in bringing up children left behind via Provincial Office of Social Development and Human Security (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security) and Tambon Administrative Organization (TAO) (Ministry of Interior). The support could involve child care to facilitate caretakers to be able to work outside the home while taking care of children, and to relieve some of the responsibility of child care from time to time. Such support should be based on a deeper understanding of the psychological problems often faced by caretakers.
- The Community Development Department, Ministry of Interior should develop strategies that can help migrant families to optimize resources. The comparative affluence that can result from parents' remittances can bring about both positive and negative impacts on the children of migrants. While the resources can lead to a bright future, it can also put them at risk of unfavorable behaviors, e.g. smoking and drinking.
- The Community Development Department, Ministry of Interior should also provide knowledge on money management for migrants' families through media such as leaflets, books, or organized trainings.
- In developing plans and programs, the government should seek cooperation and collaboration with related organizations, especially at the local level, such as the provincial social welfare department, schools, or community development organizations.
- The government should prepare family and children-related organizations (e.g. Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, Department of Health, OBEC) to effectively address the issues that affect children and other family members, especially caretakers from migrant families.
- Plans and programs should target both-parent migrant households, as they seem to show more negative impacts of parents' absence compared to one-parent migrant households.
- The government should provide information about the possible consequences of leaving children behind, both positive and negative, to both potential migrants and their families via Provincial Office of Social Development and Human Security (Ministry of Social Development and Human Security), Provincial Labor Office (Ministry of Labor) and Tambon Administrative Organization (TAO) (Ministry of Interior). As internal migration has become very common for individuals in the labor-force age group—for both males and females, and for non-parents and parents alike—individuals should be aware of and well-equipped with information of what could likely happen as they make migration decisions. This knowledge can help parents prepare for the consequences that their children and families may face.

8.4 Recommendations for Further Research

- Our study has revealed some possible consequences of parental migration. However, the measurement of some outcomes is subjective, e.g. school performance, while some were based on respondents' memory, e.g. experience of sickness in the past, the child's vaccination record. Future study should apply a more objective measurement for children's outcomes.
- Parental migration may have long-term consequences, and research with a cross-sectional design may not well capture these. Therefore, a longitudinal study is necessary for delving into impacts of parental migration on left-behind children.
- The impact of parental migration can be subtle and some issues may be too sensitive to be measured by quantitative methods alone. Thus, research using mixed methods of both quantitative and qualitative approaches is needed.

- Parental migration may impact children's well-being in multiple aspects. A comprehensive understanding of this issue needs studies that apply interdisciplinary approaches, where researchers with various areas of expertise can contribute to a complete picture.
- Very few existing studies include information from migrant parents into the picture. Therefore, further research should take into account the perspective of migrant parents.

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