

Behind the Journey: The Psychological Impact of Illegal Migration from Bangladesh to Italy on Rural Migrant's Families

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ABSTRACT

Due to limited livelihood opportunities, illegal migration from Bangladesh to Italy through Libya has been increasing day by day. While most studies focus on migration routes and economic consequences, less attention has been focused on the psychological effects on migrants' families. This study aims to explore the psychological impact of illegal migration, particularly with other special considerations to socioeconomic conditions, influencing factors, and challenges on rural migrants' family in Bangladesh. This study was conducted by following a qualitative research approach. Data were collected through a purposive sampling technique, selecting four migrants' family from two villages under Madaripur and Shariatpur districts. Data were analyzed descriptively. The findings show that before leaving the country, most of the families suffered economic hardship due to low income, seasonal employment, and limited work opportunities. These conditions, including some influencing factors (unemployment, harassment of legal migration pathways, successful migration of neighbors, high expectations of quality of life, illusory information from brokers), motivated families to illegal migration. The study discloses that illegal migration generates critical psychological stress among migrants' family members. Heavy debt burden, communication breakdown, long times of uncertainty, and fear of kidnapping by traffickers lead to constant anxiety, emotional distress, and social vulnerability. The study concludes that illegal migrant households are affected not only economically but also psychologically by illegal migration. These findings suggest the need for safer migration pathways, rural work opportunities support, and psychosocial support for migrant families.

Keywords: Illegal migration, economic hardship, psychological vulnerability, Left-behind family's stress, Bangladesh to Italy.

INTRODUCTION

Migration has long been becoming an important livelihood strategy all over the world. Official statistics suggest that within the past 45 years, the number of worldwide migrants has tripled (McAuliffe & Ruhs, 2017). From the late 1970s through the 1980s, southern European nations—particularly Italy, Spain, Portugal, and Greece—were a key final destination for both European and non-European migrants (Anthias & Lazaridis, 2020; King, 2001; King et al., 2000; Simon et al., 2008). Migration is influenced by a number of important elements,

including social networks, social standings, social prestige, greater marriage prospects for migrants, family reunification, regularization policies, integration policies, and citizenship options (Mannan & Farhana, 2023). But illegal migration is a great concerning phenomenon in recent times, where people traverse borders without authentic authorization, even by the informal agents or middlemen. The Otranto channel (Valona-Lece cost), the Sicily channel (North African cost to Sicilian cost), and the eastern Mediterranean channels (Eastern Mediterranean ports—Turkey, Egypt, Syria, Lebanon—to Apulia, Calabria, and Sicily route) are the three major pathways of irregular migration to Italy via sea borders (King & Knights, 1994; Knights, 1996; Manzini, 2010; Pastore et al., 2006).

Bangladesh is one of the countries that sends the most migrants worldwide, however a large portion of these migrants are irregular and financed by debt, particularly among rural householders with little possibilities for employment (Siddique, T. et al., 2019). The illegal migration trend is particularly seen in Bangladesh, where people think that legal migration paths are a long process. Especially for Bangladeshis, Italy has become a major European destination for South Asian migrants due to the perception of improved job possibilities, established networks, and irregular regularization ways (Rahman & Kabir, 2012). Families who want to send their family members to Italy in an illegal process, sell their land, take loans (from community leaders), and pursue help from relatives.

Many secondary sources have revealed that the people left behind by migrants face many difficulties to lead their lives. As it has been highlighted in the situation of migration to the Gulf, elderly parents, spouse, and children who are left behind may be especially vulnerable if they come from low-income and modest families (Rashid, 2008). These types of migration also affect family members who are left behind by migrants emotionally or psychologically. It increases pressure, anxiety, tension, and uncertainty in families. When the male migrants left behind their wives or children, pressure is increased on women (wives) in terms of workload and responsibility to track the family, and the adverse effects on male offspring who would have to work harder and sacrifice schooling in order to make up for their fathers' disappearance (Afsar, 2003).

Previous studies mainly focused on pathways, factors, and socioeconomic impacts on migrant's families, but very few studies have been covered the psychological impacts on rural families left behind. Some studies broadly explore economic impacts and hazards related to migration, while little emphasize on financial burden, long-term communication break, and ambiguity which largely effect family's psychological well-being. Considering this urgent research gap, this study tries to explore the psychological impact of illegal migration from Bangladesh to Italy on rural migrant's families. By exploring this issue, this study will contribute to the existing body of knowledge in this area. Besides, this study is also helpful for policymakers, researchers, GOs, NGOs, community members, and practitioners to improve awareness and legal migration practice.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are many existing literatures on the factors, pathways, and multiple impacts of illegal migration. The illegal migration is increasingly worldwide, not only for developed countries but also for developing countries. Several previous studies in the Bangladeshi context identified the socioeconomic and cultural factors of illegal migration. Camelia (2021) argued that illegal migration is induced by some factors, such as poverty, discrimination, lack of job opportunities, and an insufficient legal migration process. One the other hand, Dennison (2022) claimed that the factors of being willing to engage in illegal migration are gender, limited earnings, lower education, as well as contrary economic and political opinions. Gardner (2012) highlighted that social inspiration, social background, successful stories, and the practice of contribution in the family influence to take risk for illegal migration.

A significant number of Studies examined the illegal migration pathways and operative process. Morad & Choudhury (2025) argued that there are three smuggling connection phases, such as the pre-migration phase, the migration phase, and the post-migration phase, is able to make happening undocumented migration. Monzini (2007) explores the illegal migration to Italy through the Mediterranean route, where migrants from different regions cross the sea border relying on smuggling organization. This study also examined the key role of trafficking organizations in irregular migration. In the same way, Morad (2022) found in their study that illegal

migrants take risky migration routes through several geographical areas prior to arriving in Italy. Roy & Verdun (2019) showed that several types of difficulties are faced before-migration and arrival in the region by migrants.

Some studies also focused on the impacts of illegal migration on family members left behind. Soheli et al. (2025) revealed that different types of challenges (insecurity, inequality, irritation, limited health care access) are experienced by the illegal migrants. They also face different types of pressure at the worksite, such as workload, harassment, poor wages, panic of police, and cultural stress (food and religious tremor). Adele (2020) claimed that illegal migration establishes family separation and has effects on little children to generate anxiety and depression symptoms in their faces. Valtolina & Colombo (2012) focused on the impact of illegal migration on families, especially left behind children who suffer from mental trauma, psychological abuse, academic failure, anxiousness, low confidence, and depressive disorders.

Previous studies examined the psychological consequences on family members. Carling (2008) showed that illegal migration ambitions are influenced by society, and emotional and psychological stress are experienced by left behind families when the migrants cannot reach their expected destination. Kabeer (2016) argued that most of the wives who are left behind by the migrants undertake the charge for running household services, managing loan, and raising child. Gardner (2012) highlighted that poor rural households who are left behind experience greater hazard because of poor social security and loan requirement. Migrants' family members, especially children and women more than men, face emotional stress, and loneliness (Kousar et al., 2014; Silver, 2014).

Overall, previous study has broadly focused on the factors, pathways, and socioeconomic consequences of illegal migration. Nevertheless, very few studies explored the psychological impacts of illegal migration on rural family members. To address this gap, this study analyzes the factors of illegal migration, causes of psychological impacts, and the psychological impacts particularly on family members.

STUDY AIMS AND METHODS

The main aim of this study is to explore the psychological impact of illegal migration from Bangladesh to Italy on rural migrant's families. Specific objectives are as follows;

- a. To know the socioeconomic conditions of the migrant's family;
- b. To identify what are the influencing factors for choosing illegal migration pathways;
- c. To explore the key reason of psychological impacts among left behind rural family members.

Research Approach

The approach of this study is qualitative. This approach is commonly used in social and human science research. Within the qualitative method, narrative type was used—where the psychological conditions of the illegal migrant family are gathered based on the storytelling method. Through using this type of qualitative method, the story of an illegal migrant family was collected, analyzed, and presented as well as their narratives of family experiences were included in this study. In this research, a qualitative approach was employed to gather families' conditions, experiences, and psychological impacts as well, an aspect that cannot be measured quantitatively.

Study Area

The study has focused on two villages under two districts. One is Chaurashi village of Rajoir upazilla under Madaripur district. Another one is Kolukathi village of Noriya upazilla under Shariatpur district. Some families of these villages are also facing some unexpected incidents, like some illegal migrants are missing, someone cannot go to their destination, someone comes back home, and some families are under pressure for huge debt burden. Therefore, considering these types of uncertainty, these villages are chosen.

Data Sources and Data Collection Tools

The data sources of this study are primary. This study was conducted based on data collection from the families whose family member intended to go to Italy in an illegal way. The data was collected based on four types of illegal migrant families as case study (the first one is illegal migrants safely reached in Italy, the second one is

illegal migrants came back home, the third one is illegal migrants stay in Libya under Mafiyas, and the fourth one is illegal migrant member missing). Eight families (4*2) were selected purposively for in-depth case study, 2 KIIs (key informative interviews) are taken including a primary school teacher and a village leader. Qualitative data collection methods such as interviews and in-depth case studies were employed using a Bengali interview. The interviews were conducted in an informal conversational manner in their home. An audio phone recorder was also used to record all information. The collected data and information were translated into English properly according to the nature, type, and characteristics of the data. Two AI tools, Mendeley for managing citation and reference, Grammarly for checking grammar and language clarity, were used for completing the research manuscript. All the ethical protocols have been properly followed in this study.

Data Analysis

Descriptive data analysis techniques were applied to get the authentic findings in different ways. In addition, field observations were used to assist with understanding the present situation of rural migrants' families. Several data sources (for example, IDIs (case), KIIs, observations) have been used for ensuring data triangulation.

FINDINGS

Socioeconomic Condition of Migrants' Families

CASE STUDY 1 (Successful Migration)

Dilu Mondal, a local carpenter aged 42, lived in a middle class family. There are 5 members in his family. His income was so little that he could not fulfill his family needs and expenses. The family thinks that if he goes abroad, their family will get financial stability. He observed some neighbors who had already gone to Italy successfully, these things motivated him to attempt migration. Although legal pathways to Romania and Singapore were tried, 4-5 lakh taka was lost in primary process. That's why, the family decided to take risk for going to Italy through Libya route. To manage money for the entire journey, they sold their own land and took huge loan about 20 lakh taka at high interest. The broker primarily promised that if Dilu were caught in Libya, he would protect him safely, but in reality, the family had to send extra money for his release. During the migration time, Traffickers had seized Dilu. The family had heard some terrific manners to him through phone calls from him. He got only one liter of water per day, had little food, facing physical torture and traffickers would threaten to kill him. Sometimes, the family face long periods without communication, spent nights crying and praying to God for his survival whereas they are under debt pressure from lenders. Finally, Dilu reached Italy safely after facing many difficulties. When he started sending money from abroad, his family conditions began well improved. Now the family is able to meet all the household needs, repay debts gradually and gift cloths for relatives. Above all, their social reputation are being improved gradually.

Before migration, all the migrants' families in rural areas face economic instability due to lack of work opportunities, seasonal employment, irregular and insufficient income, and low-wage informal work. For this reason, those families fail to meet their basic needs (e.g., nutritious food, healthcare, children's education) properly.

On the other hand, the post-migration socioeconomic condition of migrants' families totally depends on two phases, such as successful migration and failed migration. After reaching Italy, Dilu started sending money which have increased his family's economic stability and helped to meet household needs, continuously pay back loans, and improve social status in the community (Case study 1). Conversely, families of unsuccessful migrants face social and economic difficulties. They spent approximately 20-68 lakh taka (Bangladeshi Currency) for the illegal migration process by selling assets, land, house, gold, and so on (KIIs).

Influencing Factors of Illegal Migration

Lack of Work Opportunities

In rural areas, the major income sources of migrant's family are seasonal agriculture, daily labor, and others low paid work which offer limited income to fulfill the family needs and improve their quality of life. Most of the families think, taking as a case, that remaining in the village has no future across generations due to limited income and job uncertainty. In this regard, one respondent mentioned that *Pora ses kore desha kono chakri nai tahole polapan khabe ki kore? Sorker jodi chakri dito taohle to kew risk niya Italy jaito na*. "There is no hope for a job in this country after finishing study, so how will the children survive? If the Bangladeshi government provided employment, no one would leave the country for going to Italy taking life risk". For being uncertain better future in rural Bangladesh encouraged them to choose illegal migration as a survival strategy. Families considered that sending a family member to abroad is an investment for future survival.

Successful Illegal Migration Stories of Neighbors

Case Study 2 (Returnee migrants)

Sanju, aged 22, worked as a farmer. His family lived hand to mouth and struggled to provide required needs. His family was consisted of 6 members. His income was so little due to limited job opportunities in the local area. Then he decided to go to abroad and he thought if he goes to abroad, he will improve their family condition. Although he tried to legal way to go to abroad but failed. Then a broker /agent motivated that the Libya route was safe and affordable but needed only 12 lakh taka. He promised sanju's family that this money will be given back if he does not reach Italy. But in reality his family spent around 32 lakh taka, yet he could not reach. During the migration Sanju was seized in Libya by traffickers that's why his family could not any contact with him for 14 days and they did not know he was alive or death. After 14 days, he contacted with them through phone calls and he said that he got minimal food and only half liter water per day to complete all task and experienced physical torture by trafficker. Later, traffickers wanted 20 lakh tk for his release. Then his family also took huge loans under high interest from lenders and sold their whole land to save him. Sanju's family faced emotional panic with constant crying, fear of his death and tolerate money pressure by lenders. Although his family spent a huge money of about 52 lakh taka for completing his journey and faced worse conditions than before, he could not reach Italy. Becoming frustrated at last he came back home. Eventually they have not been able to repay their loan so far.

In Bangladeshi rural areas, many people choose illegal migration and they become success to go Italy without any restrictions or within a few days. These types of successful stories of illegal migration inspire many people to choose this illegal pathway. When they listen this type of successful stories, they think that if they follow illegal routes, they will reach their destination without any difficulties. One participant indicated that *Are baba ai amar passer ghar er amar akta batija 17 diner moddhe Italy cole gace. jar janno amar cele o jaoar shahos paice*. (My nephew, lived beside my house, has already reached in Italy within 17 days. For this reason, my son got brave in his mind for going Italy). On the other hand, improved quality of life, money flows, and increased social status in the community of successful migrants' families deeply influence others to go to Italy through illegal ways.

High Expectations of a Better Quality of Life

Mainly, human beings always want to lead a better quality of life. But rural families experience economic instability to lead well expected life. That's why, they think if one member of their families goes to Italy through illegal pathways, their income will increase and lead a better life. They also believe that it will develop their housing quality, social status in the community, children's education, and meet other essential needs. These types of high expectations of a better quality of life influence people to choose illegal migration.

Failure of Legal Migration Pathways

There are a few legal ways to go Italy from Bangladesh. Because of limited information, poor governmental policy, and other restrictions, rural families face many challenges in the legal process to go to Italy. These difficulties generate anxiety, economic losses, irritation, and doubt on legal migration process. These factors of the legal process insist on rural families to select illegal migration. The real condition of the legal process of migration from Bangladesh is revealed by one respondent's statement, "*amra prothome amar cele k Romania ar Singapore pathanor janno sarkari upay onak chesta korci ebong onak taka o lagce kintu amra visa pai nai, jar janno sakari upay lhake amader varosa uthe gace tai libiya diya amar cele k pathaici*". (Firstly, we tried to send my son to Romania and Singapore through legal ways, with spending much money. But we didn't visa. For this reason, we don't trust the legal migration process, and eventually I have sent my son through Libya). Besides, high financial cost, multifaceted process, and visa rejections influence illegal migrations.

Perception of Better facilities and opportunities in Italy

Case study 3 (Hostage in Libya)

Kiron lived in a low-income family. He was 26 years old. He cultivated his own land and worked for other land as day labour. There were 7 members in his family. Motivated by his neighbor, who had gone Italy through illegal way within one month, he decided to go Italy. He also thought that he would be able to go Italy without any obstacles. But unfortunately, he was caught four times by traffickers. The family had to send money continuously for his release. Till now the family have spent about 68 lakh taka for his migration journey. To manage all the money, they took huge loans at high interest, sold their own land, house, gold and other assets. Now they have no money for survive. That's why all the family members are working now to meet their daily needs. For nearly six months, there was no communication with Kiron. As a result, the family suffered emotional distress, skipped meals, cried continuously, worried about his aliveness. On the other side, continuous debt pressure, high level of interest charges, and verbal bullying from moneylenders lead to their mental stress. According to their family's thought, if the illegal migrant comes back home, there will be no way to survive. Because, they believe that if he may go to Italy somehow, their economic vulnerability will be improved one day.

Migration to Italy is considered as a high opportunity provided country for migrants to rural families. Successful neighbors' migration stories and broker narratives generate this perception. In Bangladesh, whereas they work for earning money and that the amount of works if they do in Italy, they will get much more money (convert Euro to BDT). Besides, the rural Bangladeshi people think that the Italian government provides some facilities to illegal migrants like easily receiving process, informal process of getting legal citizenship within a few months, available work opportunities, and so on.

Reasons for Psychological Impacts on Illegal Migrants' Family

Illegal migration from Bangladesh to Italy has different types of psychological impacts on the left behind family members. They go through several psychological breakdowns during the illegal migration journey, which are triggered by some major reasons.

Debt Burden and Financial Stress

To go to Italy through illegal pathways, a large amount of money is needed, approximately 20 lakh takas. But rural families have no ability to accumulate all the money needed by themselves. That's why, they have to sell their lands, house and other properties as well as take financial help from relatives and moneylenders. Most of the portion of needed money is collected from moneylenders at high interest rates. This burden of debt creates mental stress for families who are left behind. When the moneylender's pressure to pay back their money, family members become traumatized. It mostly affects those migrants' families who failed to go to Italy that is clearly expressed in another participant's (case study-2) statements, "*Ami 52 lakh taka kharoc korci kintu ami Italy jaite*".

pari nai aber desh a fire asci. akhon jader kac thake taka dhar nici tara prodin amake bole taka dao, ami to amar sob bikri kore dici akhon ar kicu na bikri korar mato. kotha thake taka dibo, ai taka r tension a ami rate gumate pari na". (I spent 5.2 million taka (Bangladeshi currency), but I fail to reach in Italy and have returned to my country again. Now, the people who had paid money to me as a loan want their money back to me. I already sold everything what I have, and there is nothing to sell. How I will repay my debt I don't know, and this economic pressure keep disturbance to sleep).

Communication Breakdown with Migrants

There are several reasons of psychological impact on migrants' family whereas communication breakdown with migrants is a very effective cause. During the illegal migration process, migrants fail to communicate with family due to worry about detention by the mafia (local word), trafficking, and lack of mobile access. In most of the case, they are seized by the mafia, and the family member cannot communicate with them. Sometimes mafia leader contact with migrants' families and demands ransom. It has been seen in very few cases that they don't detent by the local mafia of Mediterranean routes. This irregular communication and detection by the mafia made left behind family members sleeplessness, despair, crying, and mental stress.

Uncertainty and lengthy waiting process

Case study 4 (Missing Migrant)

Swadhin, aged 26, was student. Sometimes he work with father. There was 8 members in his family. Before going abroad, the economic condition of Swadhin's family was not good. They were struggling to manage their daily needs. For reducing their economic vulnerability, they decided to send their son Italy through Libya following an illegal route. To manage all the money for migration, they took huge loans at high interest and sold their all land, house and other assets. The broker motivated him that Libya route was the better way to go to Italy that used by others and they reached successfully. He also promised that only 12 lakh taka is needed to complete the journey and he would communicate with Swadhin regularly but he did not. Even though Swadhin was seized by traffickers and it was known to him but he could not inform Swadhin's family. Swadhin begged more money to his family that is wanted by the traffickers. Without money the broker denied to help him to release from the traffickers. But his family had no ability to give the demanded money that's why his family had no communication and Swadhin remained missing for the last two years. The family thinks that their decision was wrong to choose the illegal pathways. Now they are facing many challenges like huge loans pressure from money lenders, lack of shelter, uncertainty that break down their psychological well-being. They still do not know, their son is alive or not.

illegal migration is unforeseeable, fear of arrest, with fear of death, violence, trafficking, and sudden route changes that lead to uncertainty among family members. Family members think that anything can be happened, such as safely reaching in Italy, returning home, remaining imprisoned, or dying during the journey. In case study 4, Swadhin's family has suffered from uncertainty for more than two years due to no confirmation of his survival. This continued uncertainty made chronic anxiety, emotional deadness, and mental stress.

Fear of Kidnapping by Mafia or Traffickers

The families of illegal migrants know that the migrants will face many types of challenges in their journey through different illegal migration stories. Kidnapping by the Mafia is one of the main difficulties of those. When the migrants reach in Libya, the family members become worried about kidnapping and start thinking if the migrants are kidnapped, what will happen to them. This fear influences them very much and affects their psychological conditions. Besides, if the migrants are caught by the Mafia, it will totally destroy the psychological well-being of families left behind. The family members also know that they (kidnapped migrants) will be tortured by them (Mafia). It is also a big issue that triggered emotional stress.

Psychological impacts of illegal migration on Family members

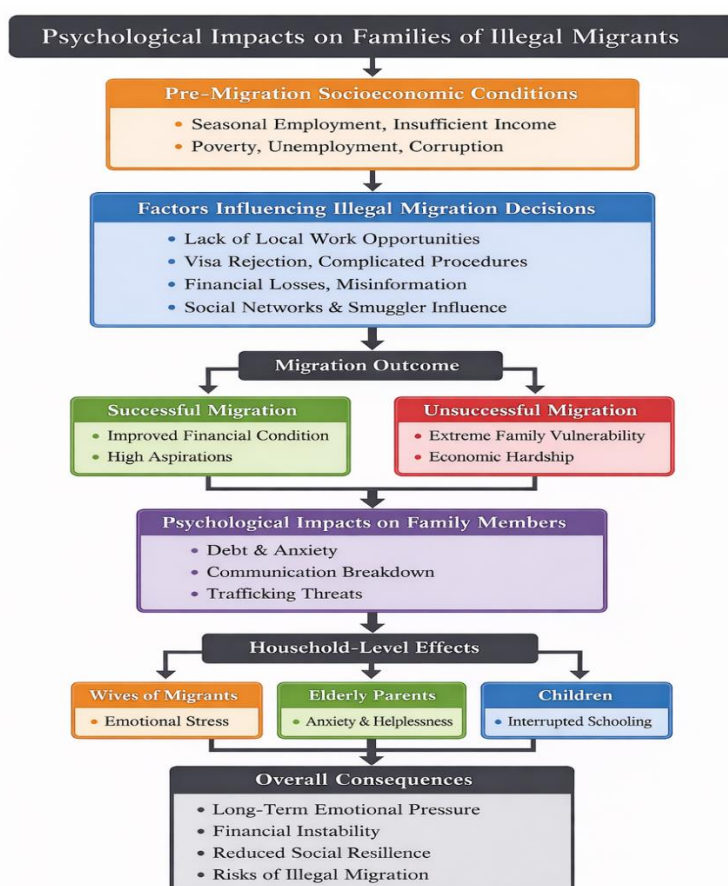
Left behind family of migrants are faced with serious and long-lasting psychological challenges due to illegal migration. Most of the cases of migrant's families suffer from emotional distress because of a long period of uncertainty related to the safety and future of migrants. The daily life of a family is affected by social isolation, fear, and anxiety that lead to permanent worries and emotional breakdown. Moreover, some family members experience poor appetite and irregular sleep as mental stress is expressed in their faces.

Illegal migration affects the psychological status (sadness, crying) of wives, children, and elderly parents in a different way. During the migration process, wives take over all responsibilities of families, and deal with the broker. Failed migrants' children are more vulnerable and their families have no ability to send their children to school. It gets into children mental growth as well as their future, which is the main concern of family members. Besides, unsuccessful cases promote long-term emotional breakdown, and negatively affect mental health and life standard.

DISCUSSION

This research investigated the psychological impacts on left behind illegal migrant's family members through analyzing their socioeconomic situations, influencing factors for choosing illegal migration pathways, and difficulties faced during the migration process. This study reveals that the pre-migration socioeconomic conditions of migrant's family face economic instability due to seasonal employment, and insufficient income, which leads to an inability to fulfill their basic needs properly. In the context of European countries, Idemudia & Boehnke (2020) found that the migrants' families are faced key difficulties, such as poverty, unemployment, corruption, and poor structure, and bad economic conditions before migration. Fojo & Allais (2019) highlighted the same result in the southwest Ethiopia region. On the other hand, the socioeconomic condition of post-migrants' families depend on successful and unsuccessful migration. An unsuccessful illegal migrant's family confronts more extreme vulnerability than a successful migrant's family. In India (Madhya Pradesh), Study & Madhya (2020) found the same result in their study.

Figure 1: Stages of psychological impacts on family members of illegal migration.



This study found that the various types of influencing factors impel the families to choose illegal migration pathways. The lack of work opportunities in local areas, visa rejection, complicated procedures, financial losses, and lack of trustworthy information push the families toward illegal routes. Zakiyyah (2019) argued that the economic opportunities, social networks, and resource availability are the main factors for choosing illegal migration ways. In South Africa, smugglers and family members have a positive impact on families' decision to migrate illegally when they have a huge household size (Fojo & Allais, 2019; Megersa & Tafesse, 2024). Sikder et al. (2025) demonstrated that Bangladeshi migrants follow dangerous routes due to the socioeconomic barriers and limited legal migration opportunities. This study also discovered that successful illegal migration can change their family's financial condition and they stay with high expectations in Italy. The main push and pull factors are unemployment and higher job opportunities in Italy for choosing illegal pathways by Bangladeshi migrants (Mannan & Farhana, 2023). Besides, successful migration stories of neighbors inspire the illegal migrant's family for holding aspirations and reducing perceived risks.

The study further discloses that extreme psychological stress is created by illegal migration among the family members left behind. In India, Agrawal et al. (2015) found that the high prevalence of psychological impacts after migration. This study also found that the debt burden is one of the central sources of stress; the families collect money for illegal migration through high-interest loans and asset sales. Specially, in case of unsuccessful migration, continuous pressure and verbal abuse from money lenders lead to anxiety, sleeplessness, and emotional distress. The same result was found by Amit et al. (2020) that in Asian populations, depression, anxiety, stress, and suicide ideation highly depend on the family's debt burden. Communication breakdown with migrants and ransom demands from traffickers create psychological distress, remained long time silence, fear, hopelessness, and emotional exhaustion. Particularly, in the case of disappearance, it generates uncertainty that leads to chronic anxiety and mental breakdown. Psychological distress is produced among family members for the fear of kidnapping and torture by traffickers.

This study highlights that the psychological impact of illegal migration is not equally faced by migrant households. Particularly, wives of migrants are the most affected by the greatest emotional stress because they take on expanded family responsibilities like manage debt and negotiate with lenders, communicate with broker and remain in constant uncertainty about their husband's life safety. Similarly, Arokkiaraj et al. (2021) & Rai et al. (2023) showed that women face more psychological difficulties than other family members after international migration in the South Asian context. On the other hand, Khanal et al. (2018) claimed that due to sons' migration, elderly parents address major psychological complications and physical problems. Besides, children of unsuccessful migrant's households face more vulnerability like interrupted schooling, that's impact on their emotions and social development. Elderly parents of migrants also deeply suffer fear of migrant's safety, anxiety, and helplessness especially when communication completely breaks down with migrants.

Overall, the findings extend that illegal migration has an impact on psychological well-being and financial stability, as well as the social resilience of migrant household. While in some case successful migration can bring short-term improvement on economic and social cohesion, in most of the cases the risk and consequence of illegal migration led to long term emotional pressure and economic hardship for migrant household. As a result, illegal migration has seen as a risky livelihood strategy that highlights the strengthen rural livelihood support.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The study suggests some recommendations by which the families of rural areas can change their decision to choose the illegal migration routes. The study has identified the number of needs of the rural families to follow the legal migration pathways. These are as follows:

- a. The government ought to simplify and improve the legal migration pathway to Italy and other European countries by minimizing bureaucratic harassment, enhancing transparency, and providing authentic information at the local level to decrease reliance on illegal brokers.
- b. The government and NGOs should create stable rural employment through technical training agronomy-based industries, and youth employment programs. These initiatives can minimize economic pressure and that pushes families to stay in their own country.

- c. To prevent information, society needs strong monitoring, awareness programs in the community and strict legal action against illegal brokers are very much needed.
- d. The government should provide financial support and community-based mental health services should be introduced to migrant family to reduce their psychological stress.

This study examined the psychological impacts on the rural families whose family member intended to go to Italy from Bangladesh in an illegal way. The findings show that many migrants leave their country only for progressing their family's economic condition. Poverty, scarcity of livelihood opportunities, lack of the legal migration system, and misleading information from brokers make many migrant households consider illegal migration as a survival strategy. However, this study explores that the illegal migration process exposes households to severe financial strain, long-term uncertainty, and emotional distress. In addition to high debt burden, communication breakdown, fear of being seized by traffickers, and inadequate information about the safety of migrants create persistent anxiety, stress, and psychological pressure among migrant household. The impact of illegal migration is not evenly distributed across migrant households. Wives suffer the greatest emotional and managerial responsibilities, children experience educational disruption and emotional stress, and migrants' parents confront fear of migrant safety, helplessness, and loneliness. Although successful migration may provide short-term economic improvement, unsuccessful or protracted migration increases the vulnerability and protracted psychological distress. Overall, this study illustrates that illegal migration undermines family well-being and social cohesion. Therefore, it is essential to strengthen an effective legal migration system, develop awareness at the community level, and ensure the psychological support for migrant families in Bangladesh.

Ethical Consideration

This study was completely aware of the ethical issues. Firstly, before starting formal interviews and discussion, the data collectors have clearly explained the aims of the study to the participants. The data collectors have asked the participants whether they want to participate in this research or not. They were not to be pressured to participate. If they feel uncomfortable with the questions which are asked, they can easily withdraw at any time. Secondly, participant's pseudonyms has been used with their permission in this research. Only the researcher has the right to use the data. And finally, confidentiality of the respondents was ensured very carefully.

Conflict Of Interest: All authors declared no conflict of interest.

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