

**INFLUENCE OF MIGRATION OVER THE EDUCATION SYSTEM OF THE  
AZERBAIJAN REPUBLIC**

**By**

**Parvin Gahramanova**

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*Department of Public Policy*

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**Supervisor: Professor Martin Kahanec**

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## **Abstract**

The following thesis discusses influence of migration over the education system of Azerbaijan Republic. The method that is used for the research is interviews from provincial migrant households and school principals. The thesis describes literature surrounding the topic of migration and factors influencing the education system and welfare of the countries of origin, broader description of research methodology and interview strategy, general description of migration and education processes in the country and side factors that might influence these processes. The finding from the research points out the several important points influencing the education of the children from migrant households of Azerbaijan and shows factors differentiating Azerbaijan from other migration source countries and gives policy options.

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**List of Abbreviations:**

CIS- Commonwealth of Independent States

USSR- Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

LDC- Low developed countries

USA- United States of America

OECD- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

CIA-Central Intelligence Agency

GDP- Gross Domestic Product

USD- United States Dollars

UNCHR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

**Key Words:** migration, education, remittances, social welfare

## Introduction

Globalization and better opportunities in the developed world makes people to find better living conditions in other countries. Depending on the living conditions people sometimes may take their families with themselves, sometimes may not. If living conditions are not good enough or too expensive in the host countries migrants would just prefer to leave their families and children back at home and just send remittances. Late 1980's and early 1990's didn't bring only independence to the countries within the Soviet Union but also economic downfalls and waves of migrations. Waves of migration to the western European countries were prevented in some degree by border control and etc. However illegal migration couldn't be prevented completely. Formation of CIS was also relief for unemployed people within the union, so that regulation within the CIS countries gave option to migrate from the economies that was most damaged by collapse of Soviet Union to countries in better conditions, mainly to the Russia.

The following thesis discusses influence of international migration on the education process in Azerbaijan. Scale of migration from Azerbaijan only to Russia (Numbers varies in different sources, according to Yunusov there are 1.2 (2009: 113), according to Mekhtiyev there are 3.2 mln (2006: 4) Azerbaijanis in Russia.<sup>1)</sup> gives motivation to research, since it is obvious that migration in this scale certainly have influence on the education of the children.

Influence of migration from developing countries has been much object of discussion for many years. The issue migration and it is influence over the education process was mainly discussed from the perspectives of host country, for example influence of migration on

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<sup>1</sup> Absence of visa regime between Russia and Azerbaijan makes it impossible to have exact data about the number of migrants. Since most of them do not change their place of registration it is impossible to find exact data from census

European or USA education system is quite famous topic among the researchers. Recent researches (McKenzie and Rapoport 2006; Hanson and Woodruff 2003) focuses on Mexican case investigating influence of migratory processes over education of children from migrant households. So migration processes Mexico by character is very similar to the migration within CIS countries for its several characters: problems in controlling migratory processes because of possible illegal migration or lack of visa regime within the CIS countries. Assumption from previous researches from Mexico argues that having option for migration increases literacy level and education attainment and decreases educational attainment of those older than 15 years old. Decrease rate was higher for the children of educated parents. The intuition being that higher income for low skilled migration in abroad decreases importance of higher education, emigration of parents causes lack of role model in the family and might have psychological cost. This paper shows that higher income from emigration is not only conditionality for migrant parents and their children to prefer labor emigration to higher education, but there are also other factors like labor conditions (other than income) in the host country, culture of migrants, moral value of the education in the society, anxiety about future political decisions like application of visa regime or strengthening border control also influences decisions about the education.

Scale of migration, number of mothers who take care of their children without father's support is also leaving negative effect on the child's education. Pong and other's argue that the single and two parent achievement gap is greater in countries where single parent families are more prevalent (1988).

Although even before the collapse of Soviet Union there was forced labor migration from Azerbaijan to Russia and other countries, mainly to the newly constructed in central and North-east Russia, and Central Asian countries, the paper focuses on migratory processes period after early 1990s, because migrants before 1990's already integrated in the Russian



society, most of them have Russian citizenship have weaker family bonds with Azerbaijan compared to the migrants after 1990's. In addition, migration before collapse of the Soviet had different characteristics than today, so that during USSR migrants were high skilled and appointed to the positions in receiving countries. Although 'at least half of migrants [after 1990's] have higher education' (Yunusov 2009, 93) they do not work in their field of study and usually occupy low skilled requiring jobs.

In the first chapter I will give information about the research methodology, justify case selection and reveal interview strategy, objectives of interview, secondary literature and etc. The second chapter review previous researches related influence of migration on education system of home countries, mainly focusing on the developed countries education system. Furthermore, influence of remittances and labor migration on the human capital formation is discussed from the perspectives of home country. Since children in migrant families usually grow up with one parent even if their parents are not divorced, researches related influence of living with one parent on education of children are reviewed as well. The limitation is a few literatures on migratory or educational processes in post soviet and post communist countries.

The third chapter gives general information given case, Azerbaijan and discusses side factors that make country different from other migrant sending countries. It discusses military system of the country, economy, education system, issues intensifying migration processes, and culture.

The fourth chapter analyses and discusses interviews from the primary research in four directions: (1) influence of parent's absence on child's education; (2) influence of remittances on child's education; (3) the influence migration parents plans on children's education; (4) opportunities abroad.

In the final section I will conclude and give policy recommendations.



## **Chapter 1. Research methodology, interview strategy and Case Selection:**

This section explains how the research was organized in order to find an answer to thesis question. It explains reason for choosing Azerbaijan as the case selection, interview strategy and methodology. The purpose of this study is to explore and understand emigration processes and its influence on education process. In this broad perspectives the study attempts to find answer the following questions:

1. How migration of family member might influence child's education, pros and cons of migration?
2. How might migration influence education of boys and girls? Gender aspects of migration.
3. How might remittances influence decisions of parents and students toward education?
4. What are the policy options to balance this influence

The main purpose of this study is understanding and interpretation of Azerbaijani migrants' decisions about higher education.

### **1.1 Case selection**

Case selection of this paper focuses on Azerbaijan Republic. The country is in the middle of Europe and Asia issue of migration influences society in everyway. Azerbaijan is representative case for most of Post Soviet countries: literacy level is very high, break of economic relations with other post-soviet countries after collapse of USSR, economic downfall, crisis, absence of visa regime to Russia and other CIS countries, high rate of emigration of high and low skilled people mainly to Russia and western countries. However there are specific issues that makes Azerbaijan different from Eastern post-soviet countries

and similar to Central-Asian countries. As more conservative culture families put barriers for their younger (older enough to emigrate), single daughters to emigrate. That's why in most of the times it out of question for female secondary school student to stop education for being labor migrant. They usually migrate if their families take them or if they marry to emigrant living abroad.

### **1.2 Interview strategy:**

Two types of interviews were conducted for this paper: first type of interview from the parents and the second type of interview from school principals.

1. Seven migrant and migration related household (families that have one migrant member in abroad) were interview for this topic to have deeper understanding of migration to the student's life and parent's opinion about emigration and education.
2. Three school principals were interviewed to get overall reflection of emigration to the education process- the first two school principals are from city school and one from village school.

The interviews are conducted in such way that to find out educational attainment of students from migrant household - households that have one or both of parents are emigrants, incentives for the migrant parents children to continue or stop their education, influence remittances on their decisions. Due to lack of adequate data paper aims qualitative research only. The interviews were conducted from the people from provinces of Azerbaijan and reflect opinion of rural and more conservative culture than capital Baku.

### **1.3 Secondary Literature:**

The secondary literature mainly focuses on previous researches on emigrational issues in Azerbaijan, newspaper articles and academic researches surrounding topic around the world. Limitation is that the there is not sufficient literature about the Azerbaijan or any other Post-

Soviet countries in the topic because lack of adequate information and data. Further research would need wide scale survey and data from both Azerbaijan and emigrants hosting countries.

## Chapter 2. Literature review

Migration is not new issue for researchers. Through the history people started to move from one place to other in order to find better living condition, food and so on. Globalization, regionalization made work forces more mobile and people are more likely to move to other countries. Since migration is mostly happened from developing countries to developed countries, remittances and other benefits was seen as the gift of migration opportunity and in many cases was seen as the problem for developed countries. Perhaps that's why migration and migration related issues are mostly researched by the perspectives of host country. Despite importance of influence of on the country of origin, a few researches were conducted on the issue. More attention was drawn to the economical issues like remittances send back to home and its influence on the economic growth of the donor country. Lack of the data about the social status, education of migrant also makes it complicated for researchers to find out the influence over the source country.

There are different arguments about social status, gender, family structure and education of the migrants. Hague and Kim argue that people with tertiary education are more willing to move to developed countries from low developed countries than people with secondary or basic education (1995: 579). Jewell and Molina mentions that men with more education more likely migrate at a decreasing rate, although the marginal effect of another year of education is rather small (6.6 percent) (2009: 35). Carrington and Detragiache estimates proves the same so that majority of LDC migrants have a secondary education, and that flows of migrants with primary education or less are quite small both in absolute number and relative to the size of the LDC population in this educational category. They also argue that individuals with little or no education have little access to international migration, and migrants tend to be much

better educated than the rest of the population of their country of origin. The very well educated tend to be the most internationally mobile group, and for the large majority of the countries in their sample migration rates are the highest for this educational category (1998: 6). Hatton and Williamson argue that if there is higher poverty then there is higher selection of skill. They bring evidence that of countries were richer are more positively selected than if there would be less poverty (2004). Indeed Central African countries which are trapped in poverty could be a cleat evidence of situation. Faini shows that the higher the share of migrants with tertiary education, the lower the level of remittances. Richer people are the less remittance sending group of population (2002). Highly educated people tend to move permanently abroad, they have better job opportunities and they have opportunity to take their children with them. Kasnauskiene and Cekanavicius focus on highly educated groups of migrants (people with higher education at least with bachelor degree) and gains from this type of migration country might have: possible increase demand and enrollment to the universities might encourage people to get higher education because of higher wages in abroad; some of those who left might return with greater skills and experience; some of those who leave have been unemployed or underemployed at home, so their departure may not actually result in a huge loss to the donor country. Moreover, they argue that if they cannot find job in domestic market may decrease need for educated people in local labor markets, also incentives for get higher education. Kasnauskiene and Cekanavicius agrue that higher educated people's migration should not be automatically regarded as a calamity, let alone as a waste – if it leads to the higher brain productivity in the long run it brings efficiency gains to all parties, both donor and recipient (2007).

Elrick's survey in Polish rural communities reflects situation in the countries with higher emigration rates. Importance of linguistics skill rises, education become more important issue in order to be able to migrate in future. As he puts it "Linguistic skills are now perceived not

only as an additional form of capital but also as a kind of insurance that, if needed, allows children to find a job abroad. When migrants have catered for their basic needs and paid off debts, most of them who have families are also interested in fostering the educational careers of their children. They do this to provide a better future for their children and perhaps to assuage the guilt they experience at abandoning their children while working abroad. As a consequence, the revenues of migration allow more and more students to move on to higher education institutions, even from remote villages” (2008: 1513). Lopez Cordova’s analysis of influence of remittance on economic growth shows that one percent increase in the fraction of household receiving remittances reduces illiteracy among the children by almost 3 percentage points (2006, 23)

McKenzie and Rapoport’s (2006) survey analysis of Mexican migrant families gives different results than Lopez Cordova’s (2006) and Kasnauskiene and Cekanavicius’s (2007) findings. on younger children of migrant families. McKenzie and Rapoport’s found out that migration decreases educational inequality. However this decrease is mainly because migration has positive impact of only in educational attainment of males and females of 12 to 15 years old, but negative impact on education of 16 to 18 years olds mainly to males and children of higher educated mothers (2006). Hanson and Woodruff’s Mexican census data analysis gave almost similar results. They analyzed influence of migration to the educational attainment of 10 to 15 years old children from the families which have migrant member. Their estimations show that migration increase educational attainment of children left in home country. For 10 to 15 year old girls it was an extra 0.2 years to 0.9 years. One significant finding is most significant increases happens in education of girls and in households where mother have less than 3 years of education which always thought as the weakest groups to any hazard. However in older ages in households with more-educated mothers, the gain in accumulated



schooling for children in migrant households is much smaller in absolute value and negative in some cases for girls and all cases for boys' (2003).

Thus probability of Mexican youngsters migration to the USA might be equal to the probability of Azerbaijani youngsters migration to Russia so that the opportunities in abroad encourages teenagers to migrate to the USA instead of continuing their education. Compared to migration from developing world to OECD countries Mexicans migration to the U.S. is illegal in many cases, and Spanish is almost second language in the receiving country and that's why they do not need learn foreign language to migrate or meet any requirements of visa policy of the USA.

Yang analyzed exchange rate shocks in Philippine where Philippine peso depreciated 50% against the USA dollars. Her estimations shows that favorable migrant shocks (appreciation of remittances) lead to greater child schooling, reduced child labor, and increased educational expenditure in origin households. He suggests that "rich-country policies expanding employment opportunities for workers from overseas can stimulate human capital investment and entrepreneurship in poor-country house-holds. By contrast, increasing enforcement against illegal immigrants or eliminating temporary work permissions for overseas migrants should have the opposite effect" (2004: 28).

Cox Edwards and Ureta reached the similar conclusion for El-Salvador. In general remittances significantly increase attendance to school. Effect is greater in Urban Areas, also very effective in rural areas to. But what is interesting in their analysis is they measured influence of remittance on child schooling by controlling amount of income as well. They came to the conclusion that remittance doesn't effect on child schooling in urban areas, however remittance lowers hazard of leaving school by 24% in rural areas compared to the children from the families that receive income from other sources. (2003). It also could mean that having migrant in the family changes families need for education in rural areas.

Chen's conclusion is in line with others; however his analysis differs from the others by including fertility rate and educational decisions of parents in his model. He brings evidence that if income in abroad is higher than income at home country increasing extent migration costs, parents will choose to have fewer children and will invest more in the education of their children to prepare them to the countries with higher migration costs which will result with brain gain. However if migration cost is too low there will be brain drain. Higher probability of migration will lead to a trade-off between quality and quantity of children. It will reduce fertility while increasing educational investment per child (2007: 766). His model of migration is more about the societies where parents plan to send their offspring abroad for employment or educational purposes. It could be true for the medium developed countries and arguable for the societies where mortality rate is very high and having many children are seen as an investment and guarantee for future. Mountford gives some evidence that only high skilled workers emigration is better than general emigration. He argues that if only high skilled workers will be able to move then there will be incentive to get better education, however only some fraction of them will be able to emigrate and it will increase average level of education and it will help to economics to grow (302, 1997).

Beine et al. argues that higher educated people migration for other countries for higher wages might be beneficial for human capital accumulation in longer term and it might happen in two cases 1st the economy is originally closed to an underdevelopment trap and that migration probabilities are not too high, 2nd the economy already exhibits a relatively high growth performance and that migration probabilities take intermediate values." They argue that if country imposes barriers for migration is might damage the economy in longer term and decrease investment for education. In general they offer not to impose barriers and subsidizes if migration of educated people is too high, instead they offer to make policies to increase the wages to decrease brain drain (288, 2001). Fan and Stark argue that suggested "while

controlled migration by skilled individuals may reduce the social welfare of those who stay behind in the short run, it improves it in the long run' (2007, 653-654). They further note that if educated labor migrate abroad and cannot find a job, and then returns back to find a job, it might decrease incentives for education (ibid.).

The researches on migration from developed countries and developing countries gives different results. Lemistre and Magrini brings evidence that in France women are less willing to migrate long distance. However it was mentioned in surveys about the Mexico (McKenzie 2006) that married men migrate more than single young man. In France age and marriage also reduces probability of migration (Lemistre and Magrini 2009). Whereas Kahanec and Zimmerman argue that ethnicity matter significantly for economic performance. They further note that "Assimilation and integration have a positive effect on economic performance, while separation and marginalization do not (2008, 32).

Financing of education policy is also important issues influencing migration and education. Hague and Se-Jik-Kim policy give policy option that in closed economy subsidizing education in all levels can benefit economic growth, while in open economy where migration of educated people is high, it would be better to subsidize only lower levels of education (1995, 577).

Living with one parent is also having side effects on the children in the family. Although migrant families are not divorced, still parents are separated, and children still usually live with one of parents. Thus for certain feature of migrant families, researches about single parent families are applicable to the separated migrant families as well.

Downey and Powell argue that in single parent households girls living with their father show better results than girls living with mother. Difference is higher in late adolescence and less in early adolescence. However when background factors like father income is taken into consideration, there is not that much difference, and even there is some benefits living with

mother (1993). Bogges gives similar arguments by giving empirical evidence that widowed, divorced, or separated mother has little or no effect on the educational attainment once economic status is controlled. (1998). Although given two researches shows that if parents are separated there is not that much difference for child's educational attainment if they stay with father or mother.

However arguments are different when it comes to compare single parent and two parent children. Pong and others argue that "single parenthood is less detrimental when resources are controlled", they further note that "the single- and two-parent achievement gap is greater in countries where single parent families are more prevalent" (2003:681). Krein and Beller's estimates shows that "negative effect of living n a single parent family increases with the number of years in this type of family, is greatest during the preschool years, and is larger for boys than girls" (1988: 221).

In most of researches researchers meet difficulty to find data censuses; in many cases analyses were based interviews and surveys. Another complication was migrants from different countries and different parts of the world had different expectations from migration, which influenced education system of the host country in different ways. In analyses in Eastern Asia's developing countries had more interest to educational migration, which increases educational level of host country, in countries where there is no need for education for migration, it influences primary education positively and discourages people getting higher education.

## **Chapter 3. Case Description and important factors influencing educational and emigrational processes**

### **3.1 Azerbaijan General information**

Azerbaijan is a country located in Southern Caucasus between, bordering with Russia from north, Georgia from North-West, Armenia from West, Turkey from the South-West, Iran from South, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan through Caspian Sea. It has 86.6 thousand square km are, around 9 million population (State Statistical Committee of the Azerbaijan Republic, 2010). It gained its independence after the Collapse of Soviet Union in 18<sup>th</sup> of October 1991. Government form is presidential republic. There are three branches of governance: executive, legislative and judicial branches. Age Composition is 0-14 years 23.9%, 15-64 years 69.4 % and 65 and over is 6.7 % (CIA fact book-Azerbaijan, 2010). Urbanization rate is 52 % percent (World bank, 2010 ).

### **3.2 Military Service:**

Military service plays important role in the educational decisions of males in Azerbaijan. In Azerbaijan all healthy males have to serve in military. For the secondary school graduates this period is one and half years. For the males with bachelor degree military service is one year. The males having candidate of science degree are exempted from military service. In any other case if man is not continuing his education after 18 years old he has to start his military service. Students can get delay from military service only if they can start the first stage of their higher education (bachelor level, profession schools, and two years colleges, schools). They have to start their military service immediately after they finish their first level of higher

education. The exception to delay military service is given to the students who got admission to the universities abroad. Eventually only students who have both Master and PHD from abroad are exempted from military service.

### **3.3 Economy:**

The USSR collapse and conflict with Armenia caused economic recession in the Azerbaijan economy. Previous economic relations with post-soviet countries were damaged. Even joining to the Commonwealth of Independent States did not help. Almost all of the factories and plants stopped functioning. Previous collective farms collapsed. Formation of private farming took over than a decade. By '2001, some 50 percent of the population lived in poverty and 17 percent in extreme poverty. There are significant regional variations in poverty rates with the incidence of income poverty being highest among households in provincial towns'. (World Bank, 2003) According to World Bank statistics current GDP of Azerbaijan Republic is \$43,019,407,813 (World Bank 2009). The main resources are petroleum, natural gas, iron ore, nonferrous metals, and bauxite. Oil and gas consist 90 percent of its export. Industry gives 61.4%, services 33%, agriculture 5.6 % of the GDP. Agriculture gives only 5.6% of the GDP. 52% of the population lives in the cities and 48% of the population in the villages. Labor force is 4.318 million, 38 % of labor force is engaged in agricultural activities, 12 % in industry, 49.6 in services sector. Unemployment rate is 6 % (2009 estimations) (CIA fact book-Azerbaijan, 2010). Population below poverty line is 11 %. Poverty line defined as 45 manats (Parallel, 2010) per person (56,1 USD: Central Bank of Azerbaijan Exchange rate 1<sup>st</sup> October 2010)

The remittances plays significant role in the Azerbaijan Economy. However there is not exact data about amount of remittances because most of the migrants send their savings through the relatives, bus/train drivers. Most significant amount of remittances comes from Russia. There

are different numbers mentioned about amount of the migra-dollars from Russia. It ranges from the 3.5 billion to 500 mln USD (Yunusov 2009, 113-117)

### **3.4 Migration:**

The migration phenomenon is not new for the country. Due to its central location between Asia and Europe, Russia and Iran inflow and outflow of different ethnic groups is usual for the country. During Soviet times forced migration or appointment of new university graduates to Siberia and other parts of Russia was the main reason of migration. Since emigrational issues usually controlled by the government ordinary people didn't feel this issue that much. The end of 1980s and beginning of 1990s as the result of ethnic conflicts between Azerbaijan and Armenia, there were radical changes in the demographics of the Azerbaijan. The Country meet waves of refugees and internally displaced people. According to UNCHR and IOM there were 784,000 refugees and IDP's in Azerbaijan in 1997 (UNHCR global appeal 1999- Azerbaijan, 1999). Immigration to the Azerbaijan was one of the root causes for emigration from the Azerbaijan. Huge army of refugees and internally displaced people was unemployed. On the other hand collapse of Soviet Union and cessation previous economic relations caused crisis in the country. Plant and factories were shut down in all over the country. Collective's farms stopped functioning. Private sector couldn't be formed by that short period of time. Almost all other sectors beside public sector were closed down. Monthly salary in public sector by that time was very symbolic due to inflation. This was accompanied by waves of emigration. Migration became such widespread that its influence was seen in all fields. The provinces and capital become highly depended on remittances. It influenced politics and interstate relations of Azerbaijan; mainly relations with Russian. According Mekhdiyev 3.2 million Azerbaijanis live in Russia (By the time this book was published (in 2006) Azerbaijan

had 8.5 mln. population) (2006, 4-5). According to Azerbaijani Embassy in Russia only in Moscow there are 1.2 mln Azerbaijanis (Yunusov 2009, 125). For the country with 8.5 mln population 3.2 mln migrants expresses importance of migration for both ordinary people and the government. Although most of migrants involved in trade in Russia, at least half of them are rural people with higher education, majoring teaching, engineering, medicine or accounting (Yunusov 2009, 93). In addition labor migration to Russia and Turkey, there was migration of highly educated people and political refugees to the western countries.

For residents of the capital city migrants are more likely to take their families with them, while for provinces migrants are usually breadwinners of the family who is usually male member of the family. They migrate abroad and send remittances. Perhaps this influences Azerbaijan's foreign policy. The country economy receives its benefit by decreased burden of unemployment and receives income which contributes also to the economy. These funds are usually used for consumption in most of the times and rarely for investment.

### **Migration to the west:**

While Russia and other CIS countries were hosting labor migrants from Azerbaijan Turkey and other western countries are the main destination for Azerbaijani refugees. As mentioned in one the Azerbaijani Newspaper none goes to Russia to search law. However there is vast amount of Azerbaijani refugees in western European countries. Unfortunately there is not exact statistics of Azerbaijani migrants to these countries. In UNCHR list there were around 44 000 of people who applied to refugee status in European countries and USA (Yunusov 2009, 146). Since most of them applied refugee status, in case if they succeed they would take their families as well, or if they don't succeed they usually didn't have work permission to earn money to be send to their families and friends. That's why migrants having refugee status didn't have that much relationship with Azerbaijan also not that much impact on country's economy and well as human capital formation. However there are new trends of



migration to the western European Countries. These are educational programs. Young people going to western countries to get education are trying to get residence permit and stay in western countries. Most of them are residents of the capital city. Thus unlike the refugees and asylum seekers they can speak language, can find jobs and integrate to the western communities easily. Since most of are single and family bonds are weaker they don't send significant amount of remittances back to home. This type of migration could also called brain drain because migrants are highly skilled, in most of the at least master and PHD degrees.

### **Migration to the eastern countries:**

Like migration to CIS countries migration to the eastern countries is labor migration, although it is not in wide scale like migration to CIS countries. In rare cases it is educational migration under the influence of missionaries from Iran. Turkey is the most emigrated country among the eastern countries. It involves people from different background from university professors to unskilled rural population. Around 90 000 people migrated to Turkey from 2000 to 2006 (Turkstat in Yunusov 2006, 188). Migration to Arabic countries involves high skilled population like doctors, nurses and engineers. However number is quite small. Their income is around varies between USD 1200-1800 (Yunusov 2009, 191). Because of cultural difference and living conditions migrants do not take their children with themselves to the Arabic countries and Iran.

### **3.5. Education:**

Education was one of the most developed sectors in Post Soviet countries as well as Azerbaijan. 9 years of schooling is obligatory in the country. Due to these measurements literacy level for the people over 15 years old is 99.4 % (State Statistical committee of Azerbaijan Republic). Gross primary, secondary, tertiary school enrollment is 77% (World Bank, 2008)

This raised importance of education among the population. There are five stages of education in current education system of Azerbaijan Republic: Secondary schools, Bachelor level, Master level, candidate of science level, doctor of Science level.

Secondary school is about two stages. First stage lasts nine years and it is compulsory for all children. After graduating from the ninth grade they can stop their education, or go to 4 years profession colleges or continue their education for additional years to graduate from secondary school. After graduating from 11 years secondary schools student again may continue their education in profession colleges which this time would last two years instead of four or go to the universities. Universities and profession school's admission is very competitive in Azerbaijan. Usually four secondary school students apply for each given place in the Universities (Azerbaijan State Committee on University Admission Statistical Analysis, 2009). However for competitive fields ten students apply for one given place. Tests are conducted by State Commission for Student admission which is independent state body and reports only to the country president. The first stage of the university is called Bachelor level which lasts for 4 years and master level which is another two years. Then there is Candidate of Science level which lasts three years. The last stage of education is Doctorate of Science level which is two years. Secondary education is public and free. However there are private schools too. 0.5 % of secondary school students go the private schools (State Statistics Committee Azerbaijan Republic, 2010). There are state and private universities in the country. The first private universities are created after collapse of USSR. Since most of private universities have not resources and their tuition fees are higher than public universities they are not as prestigious as public universities. There are paid and unpaid places for bachelor and master level. Students with highest test scores can get unpaid places and monthly stipends. The latter two levels are free of tuition and the students are getting monthly stipends.

Although interest for getting higher education is very high, totally 12.69% of the population have higher education (master degree and above), 0.98% of the population have unfinished higher education. Unfinished higher education refers to the people with Bachelor level. In previous education system the first level of higher education was five years which was not splitted to master and Bachelor levels. That's why people completed five years of higher education or bachelor and masters level are considered with higher education. 12.9% of population has profession schools or two years college degree. 57, 2% of population has graduated from secondary school (State statistics committee of Azerbaijan Republic, 2010).

## Chapter 4. Interview analysis

Then next chapter of this thesis analyzes interviews. Interviewees were selected for their representativeness of general migrant population; the main requirement was to have at least migrant member (one of the parents) in the family. The interviews were carried among the residents of three neighboring regions Ganja, Samukh, and Goygol of Western Azerbaijan, in other words provinces of Azerbaijan. Parent respondents are Azerbaijanis by their nationality. All of parents are literate and have 8 years of education. Eight years of compulsory education was applied by mid 1960s (Azərbaycan müəllimi, 2008<sup>2</sup>). That's why people with lower education than 8 years are very rare in Azerbaijan. Provinces of Azerbaijan, specifically regions Ganja, Samux, Goygol are moderate conservative. Religious identity Muslim most of the times refers to cultural background more than religion. Family bonds are quite strong. Important factor about the culture is one of the children, usually youngest son have responsibility to live with parents and take care of them when they get old. Interviewees represent lower-middle and middle-middle class. The school principals are also from the same region, two from Ganja and one from Samukh. The interviews are addressed both parents and school principals and will be divided in following categories, (1) influence of parents absence on child's education; (2) influence of remittances; (3) the influence migration parents plans on the their child's education; (4) opportunities abroad

### 4.1 Influence of Parent's absence on child's education

The first section of this chapter discusses influence of parent's absence on child's education. One or two of parents being away may result absenteeism from school, worsened grades,

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<sup>2</sup> Azerbaijanian Teacher Newspaper

health problems, dropping out of school, conflicts with schoolmates, conflicts with other members of the household, anxiety about the future, anxiety from school and etc.

What should be noted in this section is that in Azerbaijani culture father is the one who is responsible to provide biggest part of family's financial need and most of the cases the only person who earns money. That's why father is usually breadwinner of the family and only one who migrates. . In most the interviews this view was visible in responses from both male and female respondents. In some of families children are used to their father's absence. However influence varies from family to family.

[my son] missed us a lot. He tried to make problems for his grandparents, trying to get more attention. My father in law and mother in law couldn't do that much to better his grades. He didn't want to talk to us when we returned back to home.(Gahramanov, 2010)

Or another parent mentioned her husbands help to her daughter's homework and loss of support at home as a reason of problems in their children's education (Mammadova R, 2010). Some of the parents (Valiyeva, 2010; Mammadova L, 2010) are not sure about the difference of their husbands being at home, so that their husbands constantly worked abroad.admits problem in her children's education, while some believe that problem can be solved with additional effort of parents(Lala 2010) or other professional pedagogue in the family (Fizuli). Professional's attitude to this issue was quite similar to the results from parent's interview:

You know student's performance depends from many things, from the family, parent's education, past experience, number of children in the family, number people in family, family support for child's education, housing conditions, number of adults in the family and so on (Hasanov, 2010)

Difference between city and village school was also visible in this regard. School principal Ofelia said that if rate of students from migrant families is high, it decreases inequality among the student, further she notes:

In the village school including our school most of students comes from big families and family bonds and neighbor relationships are very strong. Most of the times there are three; even four generations live in the same house. Uncles are taking most important role if father is absent. They would come to parents meetings in the school, or visit school if there is problem with child. This decreases psychological influence on child (2010).

Culturally mother is the main person who is in charge of children's education in the family. All of respondent had smaller families with 2-3 children maximum in the family. Hasanov points out importance of number of children in family and difficulty of taking care of too many children only by one of the parents (2010).

The interviewed school principals mentioned that in any case if both of parents are absent influence is greater than both parents being absent. In any case students from both parent migrant families have lower grades, absenteeism from school, less problems with their classmates. School principal Ofelia says that exceptions happen when grandparents are very responsible, young and well educated (2010).

Thus responses from the parents matches with previous researches (Krein and Beller 1988; 's estimates shows that "negative effect of living n a single parent family increases with the number of years in this type of family, is greatest during the preschool years, and is larger for boys than girls" (1988: 221).

#### **4.2. Influence of remittances;**

Increasing welfare through of the families is considered to be most beneficial factor of emigration. Remittances decrease child labor especially in the households involved in agriculture. However remittances also might increase incentives for students to stop their education and migrate. Most of parents approved that remittances increased their investment to the education of their children. One of them related changes in increase to their offspring's ability of learning:

I would like to send [my daughter] to university. I even paid for tutors for two years, but she couldn't get admission. After she failed I lost my hope that she will ever be able to pass university exams.....For my son, everything will depend on his grades. If

he has good grades I may pay additional money for tutors and his tuition fee in University. If he is not good at his school works, I'm not going to repeat the same mistake like I did on my daughter by wasting money on tutors. I would rather to take him with me to Russia after he completes his military service (Agasi, 2010)

School principal Hasanova also points out this problem by saying that

‘...sometimes migrant and non-migrant parents live all of responsibilities on the children without giving addition support. For the case of non-migrant parents we can call parents to school and give our recommendations. But for migrant parents sometimes we cannot find someone to tell the problem. Children are left with their elderly grandparents who are not able to overcome this kind of problems. Sometimes police have ride to find students who doesn't attend 9 years of obligatory schooling but we cannot seek for our students in streets everyday and force them to come to school. We need parents to cooperate’ (2010)

All three school principals pointed out vulnerability of students whose both parents are emigrants. Their main complaints were about absence of students from classes and their grades.

For some parents with lower education remittances also was substitute for their own low education. Lala who has nine years of education mention that if she cannot help her children with their homework, she pays for tutors to teach her children the subjects they didn't understand at schools and she spends significant amount of remittances for this purpose (2010). Thus it is possible to say that parents responsibility also plays and important role in child's education.

Ofelia points out that child labor in the villages saying that remittances decreases child labor in the rural areas and increases education attainment. Thus households with migrant member have better income compared to the regular households. That's why school performance of students from migrant house households, rate of getting higher education among the students from migrant households is higher (2010). Lack of role model was also mentioned issues by the school principal, whereas Hasanova points out that sometimes parents believe that they can purchase knowledge at the given point with money or they would argue that they provide

their children with everything (here parents means financial support), but they forget most important, being role model for them (2010).

However respondent don't see difference between female children of migrant and non-migrant because males are most considered most migrating group. The school principal Ofelia points out influence of remittances on early marriage of female students and their drop out from secondary schools in rural settlements:

For girls difference is very little. In most of the times they would get marry on early ages and even wouldn't graduate from the secondary school. This is usually same for migrant and non-migrant families. However there are also plus side of the being in migrant families so that higher income stimulates families to send their daughter to the universities or two years profession colleges instead of pushing them to early marriages (2010).

#### **4.3. The influence migration parents plans on their child's education.**

Being resident of provinces perhaps was one of the most influencing future plans of parents. According to survey conducted by IPD survey residence of capital are ready to leave country for longer periods whereas provincial people believe in bright future of the country and prefer migrating for shorter period of time (Yunusov 2009, 262). This point was quite visible in the interview. However there was a provinces specific issue that was influencing migrants' plans about their children.

Influence of living abroad, change living in different society also important factor influencing parents decisions on their children's education. There were several important issues was mentioned by the respondents. First and foremost was migrant's life satisfaction. Most of respondents complained about the living and employment conditions in Russia. P-L notes:

I want my children to have regular job at home. Of course I would like to see my son to study abroad, but for the labor I would like to have my children close to me. I would



not like our children to work in the markets, or as a taxi driver. We are not sure about our future, we don't know when Russia will deport him or use visa regime like they did with Georgia. He already was deported once 6 years ago. He stayed in Azerbaijan for a year; earned very little, not even enough even for our food. Although he pays a lot of bribe to Russian police when they ask for his documents, he earns better than here. Even all of his documents are ok, he has to pay bribe or they will find another reason to arrest him. He was beaten up several times by police, by nationalist groups, but he has to work to take care of our children. I don't want my children to have that torture. (Interview 20 September, 2010)

In general parents living in the urban areas had almost similar views from the interviews. No matter on parents' own education they see opportunities brought by the education better than opportunities from migration to Russia. Lala (2010), Bakhtiyar (2010), Afat (2010) related this choice to the low working condition in Russia. P2 also mentioned that she wouldn't mind if her offspring migrates to work abroad, but education of her son is insurance for his son in future, if there is political instability. For the parents of males options not being able to migrate without doing military service was also push factors for continuing their education and should not be ignored as the side factor influencing educational and emigrational decisions. Hasanov mentions one of the side factors which push emigrant parent's children to finish at least secondary school:

'For boys I can say that no matter if parents are migrant or non migrant they would do their best to their sons to the university as the full time students. Because if they are not in the university when they are 18 they have to go to army. There even procedural difficulties if they want to change their registration place after they are 16. That's why even if they want emigrate after they graduate from nine years of compulsory education they cannot migrate because of the difficulties in custom check. They are not allowed to go out of country as a labor migrant if they don't complete military requirements and parents believe that their children will be more ready or mature for the military service if they start it after university. In addition university education decreases period in military by 6 months. That's why almost all of parents would like to send their children to the universities or at least 2 years colleges to delay military service for some years (2010).

The another important finding from the interviews is that parents and students who had option to get their higher degree preferred Azerbaijan education system to Russian education system, Western education to Azerbaijan universities.

#### 4.4. Opportunities Abroad

Parent's opinion about the migration abroad was different as well. Some (Gahramanova 2010; Babayev, 2010) mentioned not knowing language of migrated country as the problem for them to help their children's education; Babayev mentioned accreditation of their children's diploma as the main reason of migrating back to country. Culture of migrated country was also among the factors influencing parent's educational decisions. Babayev pointed out conflicting cultures, saying that he doesn't want his children to integrate to Russian Culture (2010). Perhaps conservative culture of Azerbaijanis is one of the reasons why many encourage their children to get education in Azerbaijan, prevent them to integrate to other cultures. For migrants living in Russia and eastern countries migrants mainly complained about educational institutions and problems with accreditation of diplomas in Azerbaijan. For instance (Babayev 2010) said:

[one of the] reason[s] was our children's education. My son started his studies in Moscow State University. I wouldn't like my children to live in Russia. There are difficulties in accreditation of diplomas of Russian universities in Azerbaijan. Sometimes it takes years, sometimes it is impossible. I worried for my other children's future that they won't be able to find a job with non-accredited diploma in Azerbaijan.

In general provincial culture has stronger bonds with their culture and parents rarely want their children to migrate and stay in Russia for a long time. While analyzing one of the surveys Yunusov notes:

Azerbaijanis are a nation of people not inclined towards emigration and such notions as the homeland, family, and friends play a major role in their consciousness. They leave country mainly for the sake of their children's future, as well as because of low wages, lack of work, or the emigration of their relatives. But all of them consider this to be a forced and temporary measure. Though the number of Azerbaijanis keeps increasing outside of homeland, this has not lead to a strong Azerbaijani Diaspora, because Azerbaijanis, particularly the residents of the provinces are ready and want to return home once the situation improved. (2009, 262)

In fact the main finding from interviews is that migration doesn't decrease incentives for education, no matter later they can use their diploma or not. However the main cost of migration for the children is the psychological cost. Thus children growing up in single parent households usually experience lacks of role model. If family is big, it gets difficult for mother to cope with all responsibilities.

## **Conclusion and Policy Options:**

Using interview results this paper analyzed impact of migration on educational attainment in Azerbaijan. Focusing on secondary and higher education levels I found that influence of migration on education system of Azerbaijan has positive effect on educational attainment of children from migrant households. As the result student from migrant households are more likely to finish 11 years of secondary school and more likely to continue their education and more likely to be able to afford tuition fees and more likely to use private tutors for preparation to the universities.

There are several important issues in defined influence of migration on education system of Azerbaijan. They are gender, military service, political relations, policies of host country, parents own education, absence of visa regime, language and so on.

Although at least half migrants from Azerbaijan to Russia have higher education, most of migrants work in trade and do not work according to their profile result of interviews (Yunusov 2009, 255). Like one of the migrants mentioned it was enough for them to know basic calculations in order to be able to work in the markets. Thus higher education in Azerbaijan doesn't give better job opportunities in the country that their parents work. So in this regard neither migration can trigger for better education, nor better education can increase will for migration as Hague and Kim argue (1995). Fanini argues higher share of migrants with tertiary education, lower level of remittances as it was seen from the responses of interviewed parents and school principals education (2002). Fanini's argument is true for the case of Azerbaijan so that migrants in Russia works as the low skilled workers and their

families also being poor requires them to sent remittances to their families. As the consequence remittances two important features for the population in the country:

1. It decreased child labor in rural areas where children help their parents in agricultural works.
2. It provides students from low income group with an option of continuing their higher education.

Thus this was expected positive influence over the education of the children's. But here question arises, why students prefer to choose going to the university instead of migrating abroad. Especially in the case that, where almost half of migrated people have higher education and in abroad most of them work as low skilled labor and there is option migrate to most of CIS countries since there is not visa regime between Azerbaijan and other CIS countries, and there is not language barriers since most of Azerbaijanis can speak Russian.

For female students in most of the case it was justified with culture which is stronger in the provinces than capita, so that young woman usually cannot make her own decision of migration and families wouldn't let her migrate alone. She has to be accompanied either by her parents or by husband. Bu staying in the country she usually has three career options - employed in low paid jobs, unemployed, to go university. Thus migration is usually not in the list of options and additional income from remittances increase possibility of going to university.

**For males migration of several factors was defined to migrate:**

-Unstable migration policy of the host country- as some of the respondents also mentioned, although there is not visa regime between Azerbaijan and CIS countries, they are not sure about the future. Any political problems with host countries worry migrants, especially those

who experienced deportation himself, or witnessed deportation of acquaintances. They do not see migration as the reliable option for future

- Employment conditions in the host country- Since most of population works as low skilled labor in Russian markets, they had to meet several obstacles, problems with Russian police, nationalist groups, criminal groups and etc.

-Values left from USSR times and parent's education- Since most of parents lived during the Soviet times most of parents believed that education is important no matter they are going to use it or not and it was considered a shame to be involved in jobs like trade.

-Belief for future welfare of the country- Belief in future welfare of the country played important role in the educational decisions of parents. Parents believe in government propaganda about economic propaganda and believe that higher education as the insurance for future problems if there is problem in the migrated country.

-Importance of family bonds - Family bonds are very important for Azerbaijanis. Traditionally children, especially youngest son of the family is responsible to take of their parents. Thus by sending their children to the universities in Azerbaijan they increase probability of their children to stay with them.

This paper discussed issues related to the migratory processes influence over the education system in qualitative way in the provinces of Azerbaijan. Quantities analysis of influence of migration on the education system in capital city and have comparative study of influence of migration to the Western countries and CIS countries is broad research area and beyond the limits of this paper and suggestion from me for further researches in future.

### **Policy options:**

Develop and promote psychological centers at public schools: Currently there are psychological centers in schools, however there are stereotypes against the psychologist, in provincial culture people believe that only mentally disabled people use this center. By promoting this kind of centers, it is possible to overcome stereotypes and increase usage of these centers by the students.

Help centers for migrant parents: This kind of centers would support parents by giving advice to the migrant parents having problems with their children, give advice, and .

Putting family care courses in the school programs: Although many believe in the bright future of the country, migration rates are still high. Putting family care in the school programs students would learn skills to cope with problems as the 'single parents' in the future. This kind of skill would be useful to them not only in the case of migration but also divorces, widowed.

Developing school programs in the ways that it would be centered on school work instead of homework- difficulty of homework forces both migrant and non-migrant parents to find additional tutors to help their children. If students cannot cope with their homework and receive support they lose their self-confidence, incentives to do better in school. Putting decreasing homework load for students and

**Big Brothers and Big Sisters-** Lack of role model was mentioned as the most notable problem both by school principals and parents. Thus employing big brothers and sisters students would decrease psychological damage of absence of parents. Thus sisters and brothers can help students to spend their free times, constantly keep in touch with students, give them additional care.

**Office hours** – There is not notion of office hours for secondary schools, however schools with emigrants children are in need of this kind of support. Adding office hours to teachers

work plan would encourage students and parents to resort for help in case of any problem, individual approach would be more efficient.

**Increasing financing on secondary level and decreasing financing to upper level-** This policy was suggested by Hague and Se-Jik (1995) for the open economy countries. Today 36% (Yearly Admission Test Analysis of State Committee on Student Admission 2009, 11) of first level of higher education is funded by the government. As an open economy migration of educated people is still high, even though they do not work abroad according to their profile. Increase investment for secondary education, especially for the purpose of decreasing hazards of being in single parent families, would decrease inequality among the migrant and non-migrant children.



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