

Migration and Empowerment in Transition: Perspective of Bosnian Women

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The aim of the present research project is to give an answer to the question whether own migration or migration of (male) family members has any impact on the empowerment of women. The study focuses on the household unit. The position of women in the family is conceptualized in terms of: control of economic resources (e.g. possible changes in access to paid employment and its effects), relative degree of autonomy (mobility, value system, freedom to choose own lifestyle) and relative degree of decision-making power. Given explanatory nature of the research which focuses on finding out what particular groups of women do think about the impact of migration on their position within their families, focus group interviews have been chosen in order to collect data and construct source/data base. The guiding principles of present research are following:- Gather information about how participants think/feel/percept about the impact, if any, of migration on their empowerment as stated in our research question.- Multiple (six) focus groups – each with different participants to be held in order to ensure reliability.- Sampling was done in accordance with a) homogeneity principle with regard to migration experience. In each group there were women of particular “migration” background: women with own migration experience, women with migration experience in the family, women with no migration experience, and b) heterogeneity principle in relation to age, education, civil and employment status. Regional characteristics have been taken into account by organizing same focus groups in urban and rural areas of the same region. Empirical evidence allows for mapping rather controversial migration-related women's realities. Neither positive nor negative causality migration – empowerment of women is clearly sustainable, the only exception is found in the economic dimension of women's empowerment. Key words: migration, empowerment, women, focus groups.