

Asian Social Science 2014 vol.10, pages 174-183

Transformation of sexual and matrimonial behavior of tajik labour migrants in Russia

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Abstract

© 2014, Canadian Center of Science and Education. All rights reserved. This research targets at revealing the influence of labor migration on the transformation of family relations, sexual and matrimonial behavior of the Tajikistan population. Tajikistan is one of the countries that are best known for their active sending labor migrants abroad to work. The majority of labor migrants work in the Russian Federation. The research included combination of quantitative and qualitative methods, including the statistical method, as well as quantitative sociological polls of migrants and their family members, as well as qualitative interviews of expert and migrants. The qualitative sociological poll was carried out in two countries (Russia and Tajikistan) based on two questionnaires similar by structure and coverage of the studied problems in 2012-2013. The research detected transformation of the family relations, matrimonial mindsets, and sexual behavior of the labor migrants, which affected their families and were able to affect the demographic situation in Tajikistan in the future. Two ways of satisfaction of sexual needs of the labor migrants were revealed. The first way is paid sexual services, i.e. using the services of prostitutes. The second way is a "temporary wife", also known as a "guest marriage". During the research, we registered multiple cases, when Tajik labor migrants had a "temporary wife" in Russia. She is often treated as "temporary" only as they try to keep parallel relations and socio-economic ties with their families and wives in Tajikistan. In fact, extramarital relationship in the form of a "guest"/"temporary" marriage is a form of adaptation of a labor migrant to the new socio-economic environment and is based on the Sharia laws regarding the "temporary" marriage. Tajikistan keeps its traditional mindset for the need in solid family relations and giving birth to 3-5 children. This model of a Muslim marriage is extended by the Tajik migrants to the Russia's reality. Because the Muslim law allows marrying women who practice a monotheistic religion (Christianity, Judaism), Tajiks establish various types of polygamous relations with Russian women. Those can be various types of a Muslim marriage (a temporary or permanent marriage, or a marriage without obligations, or a marriage for entertainment) that are set by Islam. Understanding of the traditional Tajiks' vision of sexual and marital relations provides the opportunity to forecast matrimonial behavior of Tajik migrants in Russia. At the same time, such forms of marriage are not traditional for Russia, which causes mixed response of the main part of the population who are not familiar with the standards of the Muslim moral.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n20p174>

Keywords

Family relations, Islam, Labor migration, Matrimonial behavior, Russia, Sexual behavior, Sharia,

Tajikistan